

Special Issue: Call for Papers

Stemming the Tide: An Expanded Focus on Employee Turnover

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Recognizing Thomas Lee (1952-2021)[†]

In January 2020, our editorial team introduced a special issue entitled “Stemming the Tide: On the Retention and Careers of STEM Professionals”. Realizing the disproportionately high rate of occupational turnover in STEM, our mission sought to promote a greater understanding of the causes of this “leaky STEM pipeline”. In response, we received many high-quality submissions. Several of these manuscripts are at various stages of the revision process. However, in June 2021, we were shocked to learn that our colleague Dr. Tom Lee unexpectedly passed away. Of course, our mission soon shifted towards dedicating this special issue to Tom. Thanks to the support and encouragement from JOB Editor Christian Resick, we were able to expand this special issue to befittingly recognize Tom’s impact on the study of employee turnover and retention.

There are many ways to articulate Tom’s impact. One way to say it, is that Tom was simply one of the most highly cited and acclaimed scholars in the field of Organizational Behavior. Tom spent time early in his career testing and elaborating on the then dominant turnover theory by Steers and Mowday (1981). Then 23 years ago, he introduced the *unfolding model of voluntary turnover* in the *Academy of Management Review* (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). At the time, the prevailing view was that accumulated job dissatisfaction, developed slowly over time, was the primary cause of leaving a job (besides job

opportunities). The unfolding model identified multiple psychological paths for departure with the majority initiated by shocks—or jarring events precipitating thoughts of leaving. Tom went on to test and refine this model in multiple publications. In addition to focusing on why people leave, he turned his attention to why they stay. His work on the development, measurement and validation of the *job embeddedness* (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001) construct inspired an entire new area of study recognized by scholars from across the world. Simply stated, Tom’s theory and research has invoked paradigm shifts in our understanding of turnover and retention for 30 years.

In this Special Issue we seek to showcase cutting-edge theory and research that duly recognizes Tom’s contributions to the field and advance the understanding of employee turnover and retention. Some research questions that might be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- **What is, and what is not, occupational turnover? Below is a comment from Tom while editing one of our documents:**

For what it’s worth, studying occupations is a great idea and a wonderful new direction for scholars (in my opinion). Whereas it’s common among sociological studies, OB/HR scholars have almost totally ignored occupation, whereas strategy scholars “simply” control it away.

- **To what extent can leaders and organizational practices facilitate occupational retention?**
- **What are the individual and contextual correlates of occupational versus organizational turnover?**
- **When it comes to leaving organizations, what are turnover destinations of different types of leavers (e.g., Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012).**
- **What are the impacts of identity threat and stereotyping in the turnover process, particularly for women, racial minorities, people with disabilities, or other demographic minorities?**
- **What are the implications of the “boomerang” phenomenon (or leavers who later return)?**
- **What are the effects of “perceived volitional control” in the turnover process?**

- **What is the role of family influence or demands in the turnover process?**
- **How do factors in employees' non-work lives (e.g., the context in which they or their families reside) influence their staying or leaving?**
- **How does the trajectory of change in turnover predictors (e.g., decreasing satisfaction) influence turnover propensity over time?**
- **What lies in the “black box” of the collective turnover process?**

These exemplary research questions are by no means exhaustive. In the spirit of what this special issue seeks to achieve, we encourage papers that are cutting-edge; that promote new or distinctive lines of inquiry to advance scholarly understanding of turnover and retention. We welcome both empirical (e.g., qualitative, field, experimental, meta-analytic reviews) and conceptual (e.g., theory development and integrative reviews) contributions that stimulate discourse in the research agenda, significantly advance coherent bodies of knowledge, and provide clear and actionable recommendations to guide future scholarship.

Contributors Should Note

This call is open and competitive. Submitted papers must be based on original material not under consideration by another journal or outlet. For empirical papers based on data sets from which multiple papers have been generated, the editors must be provided with copies of all other papers based on the same data and a data transparency table following the recommendations of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and ethical guidelines (Kirkman & Chen, 2011) for navigating the use of data sets in more than one paper. The editors will select a number of papers to be included in the Special Issue, but other papers submitted in this process may be recommended for non-Special Issue consideration.

Papers to be considered for this Special Issue should be submitted electronically via JOB's online submission system (selecting the name of the Special Issue where prompted) during the submission window (of **February 15 through April 15, 2022**) and adhere to the

style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (www.apastyle.org/manual). Manuscripts will be handled by the Special Issue guest editors and reviewed by at least two anonymous reviewers who will be blind to the identity of the author(s).

Please direct questions about the submission process, or any administrative matter, to Dr. Martina Wiesenberger, the Managing Editor at JOBedoffice@wiley.com. The editors of the Special Issue are very happy to discuss initial ideas for papers and can be contacted directly: Kohyar Kiazad (kohyar.kiazad@monash.edu); Simon Restubog (simonldr@illinois.edu); Peter Hom (peter.hom@asu.edu); Brooks Holtom (brooks.holtom@georgetown.edu); and Alessandra Capezio (alessandra.capezio@anu.edu.au).

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