

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF LATE REACTIVATION OF IMPAIRED PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS

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ABSTRACT

This research examines late reactivations of the initial psychological contract between employees and their organization in the aftermath of a violation and first negative impairment. The results from the 42 in-depth interviews conducted as part of this study confirm that psychological contract impairment is often the result of persistent high negative emotion moderating the effect of self-regulation and employer responsiveness on psychological contract reactivation. However, in some cases, the evidence indicated (1) a slow fading of emotion during the maintenance phase allowing minor progress in terms of behavioral commitment, (2) possibly escalating into further commitments and (3) finally creating a major positive discrepancy requiring a transition toward psychological contract reactivation. The management of intertwined emotional, cognitive and behavioral processes involved in psychological contract reactivation and forgiveness is discussed.

Keywords: psychological contract, violation, impairment, reactivation, forgiveness