



Role Transitions in Organizational Life: An Identity-based Perspective (Organization and Management Series)

By Blake Ashforth

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Identity-based approaches to understanding thoughts, feelings, and actions in organizations have produced, particularly in recent years, an array of rich insights that have broadened the domain of organizational behavior. This book brings these insights together in one complete source and uses them collectively to stretch further the boundaries of the discipline. Blake Ashforth accomplishes this goal by creating new ways of viewing the many forms of role transitions evident in organizational life. He looks at role transitions people make during the workday (i.e., from spouse/parent to employee) and studies the identity and status issues faced.

This unique authored book also creatively accomplishes two scholarly objectives. First, it provides a needed review, critique, and integration of what is known about being socially defined in an organizational context; and second, it provides fresh and intriguing perspectives on the dynamics of role engagement and disengagement both within and between organizations.

This book will appeal to psychologists, managers, and lifespan development researchers interested in the transitions people make as they go through life.

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Editorial Review

Review

The chapters are concise and yet thoroughly documented and grounded in the most current research literatures....the author uses interesting examples....the book is provocative and stimulating....this book makes a significant contribution to role theory. It ties together a diverse set of literatures and focuses on an under-explored area: transitions between roles....I guarantee that once you've read the book you will hardly be able to go through your day without thinking about all of those role transitions you are experiencing.

—Personnel Psychology

This book is a very thorough presentation of the role-theory literature, similar in quality to what one would expect in a handbook. Its audience will be researchers and graduate students who are immersed in role-theory development and validation, and it should be considered essential for that audience....this volume is a valuable resource for scholars who want a comprehensive and thoughtful presentation of the role theory literature and how it is integrated with the identity literature.

—Administrative Science Quarterly

In this era of dazzling complexity and protean careers, the game is called survival of the smartest. And the smartest are those who know themselves and know how to transform themselves. These are the ultimate 'metacompetencies': identity and adaptability. Anyone who wants to learn the essentials of identity and personal transformation should read this lucid account of Blake Ashforth's research and his journey through the literature. If research programs were start-ups, I'd want to invest in his!

—Douglas T. Hall

Boston University

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