

FREEDOM WITHIN A FRAMEWORK

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Introduction

Autonomy is generally viewed as a key element for business success, but what exactly does it mean to have autonomy at work? Does the same meaning apply to everyone?

Research Questions:

- How do salaried professionals construct the meaning of autonomy in their own jobs?
- How do salaried professionals feel about the amount of autonomy they have, and how that compares to the amount they feel they should have?

Research Goal

Understand employee lived experiences dealing with the contingent nature of autonomy - as they define it.

Methods

A mixed method approach consisting of semi-structured narrative interviews, supplemented by a literature review.

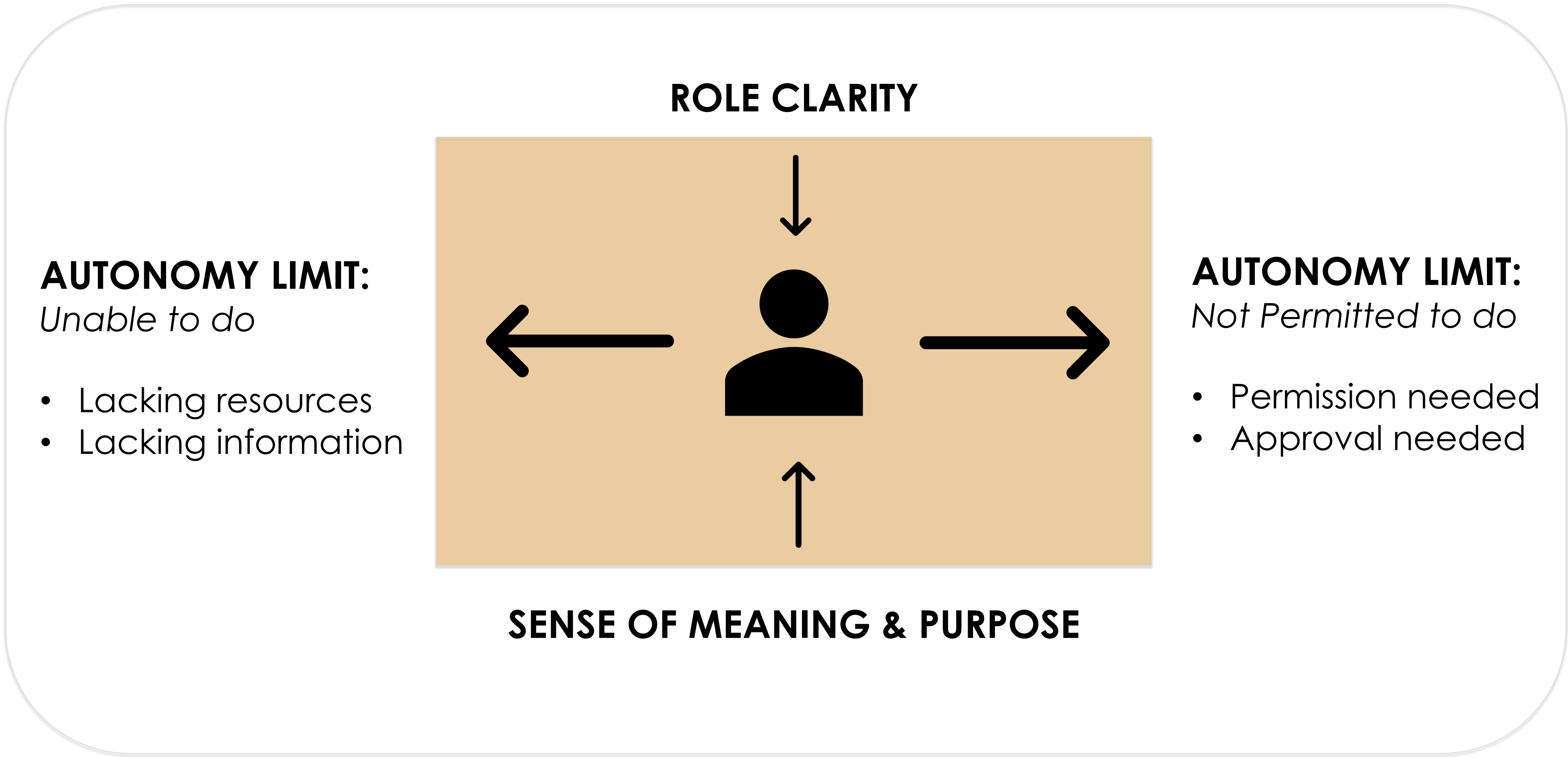
- Ten (10) salaried professionals participated in interviews
 - All participants were self-described mid to senior level professionals
- Literature review focused on:
 - Autonomy correlation with workplace factors, such as job satisfaction, engagement, and performance
 - Autonomy perceptions stemming from individual/leader behavior

Results

Participants generally perceived autonomy as a sense of self-governance which is dependent upon role clarity and grounded by a sense of meaning and purpose.

PERCEIVED AUTONOMY FRAMEWORK:

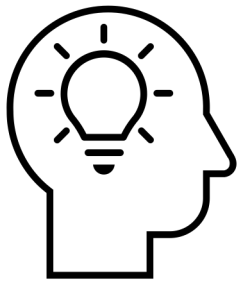
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How big is my box?*



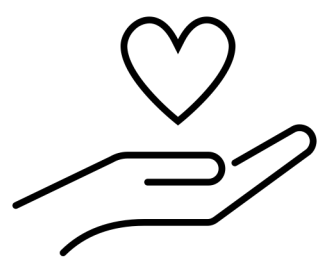
Acknowledgments

Thank you to my amazing cohort and professors - especially my advisor, Mary Rose. A very special thanks to my incredible fiancé, who encouraged me to pursue my Master's degree and supported me along the journey.

Conclusions



Structure and limits resulting from role clarity increase employee perceptions of autonomy



A sense of meaning and purpose is integral to perceived autonomy



Participants only interpreted autonomy limits negatively when they felt an "undue burden" associated

Questions?

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