In this chapter, we explore in detail the constructs of work and well-being. By exploring the motivational properties of work through the lens of job design we investigate how traditional views of jobs have been challenged (Grant and Parker 2009), how the behaviors valued by organizations are being reshaped (Griffin et al. 2007), and how jobs can be designed to do good (Grant 2008b). In terms of well-being, we explore the pursuit of happiness and the changing nature of positive individual functioning in organizations (Kesebir and Diener 2008), the structural components of well-being (Diener 1984), the shifting orientations of happiness through pleasure, fulfillment, and engagement (Peterson et al. 2005), and the change in emphasis of those processes underlying well-being (Diener 2000).

WORK

The nature of the work experience, and those aspects of the job which contribute to that experience, has had “many organizational scholars spend[ing] the majority of their waking hours trying to understand the trials and tribulations of work” (Grant and Parker 2009, p. 318). Much of this work has focused on identifying which job characteristics have the potential to motivate employees, and how jobs should best be designed to capture those qualities. The field of job design has “generated substantial theoretical and empirical interest in the twentieth century” (Fried et al. 2008, p. 586), and has played a key role in contributing to our understanding of work motivation and performance. For almost half a century, job design theories and practices have offered researchers and practitioners a context for explaining work experiences. We begin our discussion by reviewing this “golden
age” (Grant and Ashford 2008) of job design and the contributions it has made.

This historical interlude leads us to consider whether, as Ambrose and Kulik suggest, “after twenty years of research a clear picture of the psychological and behavioral effects of job design has [now] emerged” (1999, p. 262), and whether, therefore, work is finished in this area. Not so, argue reviewers, quite the reverse in fact (Parker et al. 2001; Grant and Parker 2009). The turbulence and dramatic nature of the changes to work that ushered in the new millennium raise “timely question[s]” about job design (Fried et al. 2008, p. 587), clearly requiring it to remain as a significant item on the research agenda (Parker et al. 2001). We review how these changes to the nature of work affect the “role and characteristics of job design” (Fried et al. 2008, p. 587), and the way researchers have begun, as Grant and Parker suggest, “to redesign theories of work design” (2009, p. 319) in the light of these changes. It is clear that in this rapidly changing work environment if individuals are to achieve meaningful work and experience intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan 2000; Humphrey et al. 2007) advances must continue to be made in how work is “crafted” and designed to “capture the work context of the twenty-first century” (Grant and Parker 2009, p. 319).

**Job design – A historical interlude**

Job design has a long and rich history, with roots that can be traced as far back as the Industrial Revolution. But it took until the beginning of the twentieth century to establish the significance of job design, helped by the work of Frederick Taylor and the growth of the Scientific Management movement, with its emphasis on efficiency of effort and the practice of job specialization. The seeds, once sown, quickly flourished and it wasn’t long before “the intuitively evident view” that poorly designed jobs had harmful consequences for health and well-being was confirmed by research (Parker et al. 2001, p. 414). While by the 1950s, techniques like job enlargement and job rotation had achieved a level of popularity, it was in the 1960s that there was a shift in focus, with developments in motivation theory and practice, and the emergence of the quality of working life movement to usher in the drive for a more theory driven approach to job design. During a time that offered economic growth, prosperity, and stability,