What Influences IT Professional Psychological Contract Violation?

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Abstract
As the requests for technical solutions to meet the changing demands of the struggling US economy grow, the IT professional is once again in the spotlight. While a significant stream of research has studied IT professionals within the context of the job and/or organization, to date little research has focused on the context of the IT profession. We address this gap with a study of the psychological contract that IT professionals have with their profession. We surveyed 686 IT professionals working in a variety of industries to explore the potential antecedents to psychological contract violation. In this exploratory study, we found that six variables explained 45% of the variance in psychological contract violation.

1. Introduction
The down turn in the US economy and subsequent large number of layoffs coupled with the high fluctuation in demand for IT professionals globally, affords an opportunity to investigate elements of the IT profession that have been to-date largely ignored. “IT professionals asked to do more work for less pay and fewer benefits might be able to forgive their employers' financial choices, but industry watchers say high-tech workers won't soon forget being treated poorly during the most recent economic recession” [12, p. 2]. One of the areas where more research is needed is in the domain of an IT professional’s attachment to the profession [7]. Admittedly, a plethora of studies have been conducted on the relationship between the IT professional and his/her organization. However, a broader focus is called for and thus more attention should be given to the profession and not just a particular job or organization.

IS has long been viewed as a profession with high turnover and turnover (i.e., occupational turnover) [28] and one impacted dramatically by economic shifts, and changes in traditional organizational boundaries. The historical idea of ‘the workplace’ has been replaced with the concept of a boundaryless environment. As a result, IT workers may be less likely to focus on their place within the organization and more on their place within the profession.

Based on the theoretical model of psychological contract violation of the organization that includes both antecedents and processes which lead to the development of a violation [32], as well as theoretical models of turnover intention [29], and self-efficacy theory [3], we present a model of potential antecedents to psychological contract violation of the profession. We begin our research review with a definition of psychological contract followed by a discussion of the dependent variable, psychological contract violation.

2. Related Research and Hypotheses

2.1. Psychological contract

Rousseau [36] defined psychological contracts within an organizational setting as, “individual beliefs in a reciprocal obligation between the individual and the organization” (p. 121). Stated another way, a psychological contract exists when one party believes that another party is obligated to perform certain behaviors [36]. Pavlou and Gefen [33] further state that psychological contracts are unwritten agreements, that are much broader than economic and legal contracts, and include several perceptual aspects that cannot be formally incorporated into legal contracts.

Psychological contracts have traditionally been used in work settings, but have also been applied to other types of relationships (e.g., student-advisor relationship – [6]; internet sellers and buyers – [18]). Psychological contracts have also been found to represent employees’ beliefs about obligations between them and the organization rather than any specific agent of the organization [32].

Consistent with the extant literature, it is fitting to extrapolate the definition of psychological contracts from the organizational level to that of the profession,
and conclude that an individual may also have an unwritten perception about the benefits a profession will afford him, and what he would be expected to, in turn, provide to his profession.

As a contract exists, it can also be broken. When a psychological contract is broken, the feelings of violation are separate from the cognitive evaluations. Morrison and Robinson [32] refer to the cognitive component as a breach and the emotional/affective component as a violation. With psychological contract violation, responses are more intense because a ‘promise’ has been broken and it is more personal [36], and thus, in this research we focus on the violation component.

2.1.1. Psychological contract violation. Psychological contract violation (PCV) occurs when the implicit, unwritten contract between an employee and his/her profession (i.e., psychological contract) is broken or violated. In the work by Morrison and Robinson [32], they define violation as an emotional experience which comes from a cognitive interpretation process. Pavlou and Gefen [33] point out that within the context of an online marketplace, “PCV may occur when people think they are not getting what they expect from a contractual agreement.” We define PCV with the IT profession as the perception that the IT profession has failed to adequately fulfill its obligations to the individual. Admittedly, most prior research (e.g., [32, 35]) has addressed the psychological contract violation between an employee and an organization. However, this idea of a psychological contract violation can also be extrapolated to the level of the profession and may occur if individuals feel (1) the profession is not providing them the level of financial and/or job stability they had expected, (2) the profession is not providing them the creative freedom they had expected, or (3) the profession is not providing them with the challenge they had expected. Next, we explore potential antecedents to this understudied dependent variable.

2.1.2. Psychological contract – profession. As previously addressed, an individual has an unwritten agreement with his profession; a general belief that his/her profession will provide certain things for him (e.g., opportunities for advancement, job security, job challenge), and expect a certain level of effort in return (e.g., continuing education requirements, average number of hours worked during a standard workweek, off-hours work requirements).

Furthermore, an individual’s desire to pursue one profession over another (e.g. career orientation) is at least partly based on an evaluation of the psychological contract that individual correlates with a profession. That is, upon pursuing any particular profession, an individual will evaluate the overall favorability of the psychological contract present in each profession. It is fitting to assume that varying professions will naturally form different psychological contracts. For example, someone pursuing a career within the food-service industry will likely not form similar psychological contracts with that profession as someone whom is pursuing a career in aviation. King [24] identified one of these differences as the varying levels of expected job security (as part of their psychological contract) by white collar workers.

The greater the prominence of a psychological contract with a profession, the greater the chance of violation of this psychological contract. That is, a strong psychological contract indicates a profound belief in what the individual owes the profession and what the profession owes the individual. If an individual has a strong psychological contract with a particular profession, the obligations of the profession are quite salient to the individual, and thus there is a greater chance that this psychological contract can be violated, thus leading to the following hypothesis:

H1: Psychological contract will positively influence psychological contract violation with the IT profession.

2.2. Self-efficacy

Originally proposed by Bandura [3, 4], self-efficacy theory postulates that individuals’ beliefs about their competence in specific behavioral domains influences their choices, performance, and persistence in endeavors utilizing that competence. Self-efficacy is defined as “individuals’ perceptions of their ability to perform across a variety of different situations” [22, p. 170]. Self efficacy has been found to be negatively related to burnout [8] and emotional exhaustion [26] for teachers, and negatively related to burnout [42] and emotional exhaustion [27] at the job level. We chose to include the self-efficacy construct because it seems fitting for studying PCV of the profession. Considering the research findings on the influence of self-efficacy with regard to an individual’s job, it is possible that self-efficacy can be extrapolated to explore whether or not it also influences one’s perception of their chosen profession. We assert that as an individual’s self-efficacy increases the likelihood that he/she will perceive a psychological contract violation with the profession decreases. As individuals in the IT field have a strong sense of their capabilities [7] and their ability to adapt to change [5], they may be less likely to perceive changes in the field as violations, and more as norms of the profession. Therefore, we hypothesize the following for the profession:
Hypothesis 2: Self-Efficacy will negatively influence psychological contract violation with the IT profession.

Generally speaking, support helps individuals cope with stressful situations, and we consider both supervisor support of the family and supervisor support of the career as antecedents to PCV. Each of these constructs is discussed below.

2.3. Supervisor support - family

Organizational and supervisor support have been shown to impact overall well-being for individuals [41]. As previously stated, PCV addresses the affective perception that an entity has failed to meet its commitment(s) to an individual [32].

According to Morrison and Robinson [32], a key cause of PCV is incongruence, which “occurs when there are different expectations or understandings about the agreed-upon obligations, even when there is no explicit contract violation” [33, p. 374]. Employees expect that firms through their agents, like human resource personnel or their immediate supervisors, support them in professional or career advancement. Thomas and Ganster [43] conducted one of the first studies to investigate the impact of providing family-friendly benefits. Their findings indicated that reporting to a supportive supervisor (e.g., one who was willing to change work schedules in order to accommodate family responsibilities) was associated with less work-family conflict. Perceived organizational support has been found to directly impact work-family conflict for a group of salespersons and through this impact influenced emotional exhaustion [20]. Several studies have confirmed the negative relationship between family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB) and WFC (e.g., [15, 19]). Anderson et al. [1] found that employee perceptions of managerial support and perceptions that family needs would not negatively impact one’s career are significant determinants in reducing work-family conflict. Therefore, it is feasible that when one’s supervisor provides support for the family he/she can potentially offset the negative emotional effects of PCV. Employees have been found to identify treatment by their supervisor as indicative of organizational support, and that perceived supervisor support leads to perceived organizational support [13]. In view of the profession perspective, we expect to observe that employees who perceive they are consistently supported by their supervisors throughout their career regarding their family obligations (e.g., flexible schedule to accommodate family responsibilities) are less likely to perceive a PCV with the profession. Therefore, considering the support from prior research between supervisor support of the family, work-family conflict and perceived organizational support, we contend that supervisor support for the family should decrease the PCV that one experiences over his or her career. We therefore hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Supervisor support for the family will negatively influence psychological contract violation with the IT profession.

2.4. Supervisor Support – Career

Employees in the short term are concerned about monetary rewards, but in the long term however their main preoccupation has to do with career advancement [44]. IT professionals often expect their immediate supervisors over the course of their career to support them in their professional or career advancement. This expectation constitutes a relational psychological contract [37, 38] between the individual on the one hand and the profession through the delegate of the supervisor. Relational contracts are marked by beliefs that situate the employment relationship beyond monetary benefits, and extend to include provisions for training and career advancement [7]. We expect to observe that employees who perceive they are consistently supported by their supervisors over the course of their career regarding their career success / advancement (e.g., learning opportunities, increased responsibilities) are less likely to perceive a PCV with the profession. We thus hypothesize that:

H4: Supervisor support for the career will negatively influence psychological contract violation with the IT profession.

2.5. Career orientation

Individuals hold varying orientations toward work. Career orientation is defined as the “pattern of job related preferences that remains fairly stable over a person’s work life” [9]. If an individual has a high career orientation their preferences indicate that they value their career over their organization, and make decisions accordingly. Derr [11, p. 415] claims that professionals “formulate their own cognitive map of what constitutes career orientation” and the map is constructed through the interplay between work, relationships, and self-development. Therefore, Derr [11] acknowledges that it is possible for an individual’s
career orientation to change over time due to a variety of circumstances and life events.

Extant literature is scant on addressing how career orientation relates to perceptions of psychological contracts. However, it is known that career orientation tracks closely with personality types [23] and personality determines person-organization fit [2, 33]. Extrapolating from this, it is reasonable that an individual will select a field in which he/she perceives a fit with regard to a career. This constitutes some form of implicit contract or a belief system that one is in an environment which provides opportunities for a successful career. Given the potential lack of full information given a priori to students and applicants (i.e., limited realistic career preview), a potential source of conflict between one’s career orientation and opportunities for success and advancement in his/her chosen profession can arise.

Individuals who perceive they are on a given career path implicitly assume that the firm and/or supervisor, as an agent of the profession, will provide the support, both material and psychological, necessary to realize their career aspirations. A lack of fit between the organization and one’s career orientation has been found to lead to perceptions of psychological contract violation and intentions to leave [39, 40]. We assert this same process may occur with the profession in that an IT professional with a high career orientation may perceive less violations from the profession than an individual with a low career orientation. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H5: Career orientation negatively influences psychological contract violation with the IT profession.

### 2.6. Investiture / divestiture

Van Maanen and Schein [45] developed a typology on newcomer adjustment and presented investiture as the institutionalized social aspect, while divestiture is the individualized social aspect, of the socialization tactics that organizations use to orient new employees. Employees initially get attracted to organizations based on their own perception of fit with the firm. After a successful selection process, firms take the newly recruited employees through investiture which is part of the broader process of socialization to orient the employees to the ethos of the workplace and narrow the gulf between the expectations of the employees and the reality at the workplace.

Feldman [14] identified general satisfaction, mutual influence, internal work motivation and job involvement as the outcome variables of any employee socialization process. Thus investiture shapes psychological contracts by perceptively narrowing the conflicts that arise as a result of misrepresentations of employee schema and employer commitment towards the employees. Employees, who experience a lack of congruence between their perceived psychological contract and that of the firm, lapse into a state of divestiture with heightened negative consequences for job satisfaction and organization commitment [25]. Institutionalized investiture processes, it would seem are not tailored to individual personalities [23] thus leading to gaps which can lead to conflicts and divestiture on the part of employees. We hypothesize that the investiture/divestiture construct may apply similarly to a career. An individual makes an investment in his/her career and receives support from colleagues and network contacts within the profession as to his/her suitability, match with the profession, and even the variety of positions held over a career in the profession. As this investment (and resulting increase in information) decreases the gap between perceptions and reality, investiture in the profession should mitigate perceptions of PCV. Therefore, we state:

H6: Investiture will negatively influence psychological contract violation with the IT profession.

The next section explains the methodology used in the study followed by a discussion of the findings, limitations, and conclusions.

### 3. Method

Participants for the study were drawn from IT personnel working in industries as diverse as transportation, healthcare, IT services, software development and government, among others. The data for this study was collected as part of a larger three-year study. Initially, the researchers contacted the CIO of several firms in the south central United States. Each CIO solicited input and participation from his/her IT employees. This sample consisted of 686 respondents. The average age of participants, the majority of whom were male (61%) is 37.3 years. The sample was predominantly white (82.5%) with the other ethnic groups accounting for 17.5%. Most of the participants indicated they had college or graduate degrees with just about a tenth of the participants not indicating their educational qualifications. Overall, 83% of the responded indicated either having married currently, being divorced or widowed with 14% of them never being married.

A questionnaire was used to test our proposed model. We had 33 items measuring a total of 7
constructs which were modeled reflectively. A number of existing validated items from work in this stream of research were used. Where items did not exactly match the context of the profession, the items were adapted accordingly. The scale assessing psychological contract violation was based on measures previously used by Robinson and Morrison [35], and asks the respondent to reflect on their feelings regarding the profession’s contributions to the relationship in comparison to what the individual has given to the relationship. The scale assessing psychological contract was based on measures previously used by Robinson [34], and asks the respondent to reflect on the extent to which the IT profession has kept its promises regarding specific aspects of the relationship (i.e., contract). All the items (with the exception of psychological contract which was measured on a 5-point scale) were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) and are shown in the Appendix with the source for these items.

In preparing to investigate the research model, we began by examining the items in the dataset. Of the 812 original cases obtained through the survey instrument, 45 were eliminated due to missing values across all variables of interest in this study. A second missing values analysis revealed missing responses from 48 respondents across all items for the construct of supervisor support: family, which were subsequently eliminated to control for possible method bias. A third round of missing values analysis revealed missing responses from 33 respondents across all items for the construct of investiture/divestiture, which were also subsequently eliminated, leaving a total sample size of 686 cases. After elimination of these cases, a final round of missing values analysis was performed with mean replacement.

The dataset was analyzed using SmartPLS (v2.0.M3), a Partial Least Squares (PLS) Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) tool that tests for statistical conclusion validity. PLS was chosen for its ability to model the relationships among the independent and dependent latent constructs simultaneously (among other factors), thereby making it a preferable choice over traditional regression analysis. Additionally, PLS is suitable for this work since it makes no distributional assumptions about the data hence the estimated parameters [10]. We began the assessment of items by reviewing the results of a factor analysis. Issues involving low loadings of some items and high cross-loadings of others prompted the elimination of IVD1, IVD2, IVD4, IVD6 and SSFR3.

The analysis of the final dataset commenced by examining the convergent validity, which is evidenced when items thought to theoretically reflect a given construct do indeed converge on their assigned factor. One common measure of convergent validity is the average variance extracted (AVE), which depicts the amount of error free variance within the measurement items that is captured by their assigned latent construct. After examining the AVE values in Table 1, evidence is provided supporting convergent validity, as the AVE values for each latent construct are well above the recommended minimum of 0.50 [16].

Table 1. Construct validity and reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Composite Reliability</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Orientation</td>
<td>0.723</td>
<td>0.886</td>
<td>0.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest/Divest</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td>0.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC Violation</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td>0.887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Contract</td>
<td>0.634</td>
<td>0.838</td>
<td>0.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup. Support Career</td>
<td>0.760</td>
<td>0.950</td>
<td>0.937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup. Support Family</td>
<td>0.771</td>
<td>0.931</td>
<td>0.901</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next we examined the internal consistency, which assesses whether the measurement items all measure the same latent construct. Two common measures used to address the internal consistency are composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha. All constructs composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha scores were well above the minimum thresholds of 0.70 [17] except for investiture/divestiture which was .68. However, since this construct was very close to .70, we conclude sufficient support for the internal consistency of these measurement items. Discriminant validity, which measures the extent to which measurement items assigned to one latent construct differ from measurement items assigned to other latent constructs, was examined next [30]. A common measure used to address discriminant validity is the square root of each construct’s AVE compared to the correlation between all other constructs. As shown in Table 2, the discriminant validity values for each construct are greater than their correlation with any other construct, providing adequate support for discriminant validity [17]. As expected the correlation between psychological contract violation and psychological contract is .52, since these constructs are related to each other.
Lastly, we examined the factorial validity, which is another method of assessing both convergent and discriminant validity. Factorial validity is established when each item correlates with a much higher correlation coefficient on its proposed construct than on any other constructs. The traditional recommendation is that each measurement item should have a loading of 0.70 or greater on its assigned construct, and a loading of 0.40 or less on any other construct [17]. All measurement items load very highly on their assigned construct, with very few cross-loadings that were greater than the recommended maximum of 0.40; however of those that were greater, we felt that this did not warrant a cause for concern as our convergent validity (as measured through AVE) and discriminant validity (as measured through the square root of AVE) were well above the recommended thresholds. Due to space limitations contact the first author for detailed construct loadings and cross loadings.

4. Results

Results of our analysis validate the predictive power of the measured constructs (Figure 1 and Table 3) as determinants of psychological contract violation. Collectively, the constructs explain 45.2% of the variance in the dependent variable, psychological contract violation. Causal path results are presented in Table 3, with a discussion following.

Psychological contract had a significant, positive relationship with PCV ($\beta = 0.316$, $p < 0.01$), providing evidence that the opportunities and rewards a worker has experienced over their career positively influence their feelings of psychological contract violation. Investiture/divestiture had a significant, negative relationship with PCV ($\beta = -0.154$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that the level of acceptance of one’s personality to the career negatively influences feelings of psychological contract violation. Self efficacy had a significant, positive relationship with PCV ($\beta = 0.101$, $p < 0.01$), providing evidence that the feelings of one’s ability to perform in their career positively influence feelings of psychological contract violation. The relationship was supported but in the opposite direction of the hypothesis. Supervisor support: family had a significant, negative relationship with PCV ($\beta =-0.151$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that the willingness of an employer to accommodate for family-related issues negatively influences a worker’s feelings of psychological contract violation. Supervisor support: career had a significant, negative relationship with PCV ($\beta =-0.179$, $p < 0.01$), providing evidence that an employer’s willingness to provide support for career related issues such as discussion of goals and opportunities negatively influence a worker’s feelings of psychological contract violation.

Career orientation had a significant, positive relationship with PCV ($\beta = 0.195$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that the allegiance a worker has to his/her career over his/her employer positively influences feelings of psychological contract violation. Once again, this relationship was supported but in the opposite direction of what was hypothesized.

5. Discussion

The results indicate that there are several factors that positively and negatively affect PCV. On the positive side, the strongest predictor of PCV was the existence of a psychological contract, followed by career orientation. Thus as anticipated it seems an individual’s focus on his/her career and the profession highlights the expectations of the profession for the individual thus increasing the
potential for violations. In contrast, investiture/divestiture was the strongest predictor on the negative side. Thus to counter the negative effects of a strong psychological contract and career orientation (while maintaining the positive effect of a strong obligation from an individual toward the field), educators and professional organizations may wish to develop interventions aimed at increasing investiture via support opportunities such as mentoring and networking.

An interesting/surprising finding was the positive relationship between self-efficacy and PCV. We predicted that higher self-efficacy would lead to lower PCV because of an individual’s belief in their ability to meet the challenges presented by a career in IT. Our findings indicate this is not the case. One reason for this finding may be that because individuals have a strong belief that they can meet the rigorous challenges of the profession (i.e., continuous adaptation to new technologies) (mean = 1.74), they are more demanding of the profession. The lower the mean score on self-efficacy indicates a higher confidence of the IT professional. Thus perhaps as IT professionals believe their contribution to the profession is extremely high through their expertise, they in turn expect a high level of support from the profession. This finding should be explored in future research.

Another interesting finding was the positive relationship between career orientation and PCV. We believe that mechanisms similar to those influencing
self efficacy may also influence career orientation. If an individual has a high career orientation he/she values his/her career and profession over the organization. These values influence individual perceptions and decision making. Thus in this study, IT professionals who value their career highly seem to be more sensitive to the perceived promises made by the profession and the lack of fulfillment of those promises.

As with all studies, there are limitations that need to be acknowledged. While all of the scales were adapted from validated instruments, and demonstrated acceptable reliability, a few were modified and many were worded to fit the context (i.e., profession as opposed to job). As such, our results cannot be compared directly with the results of previous research. Additionally, because all of the variables were measured by self-report methods, common method variance must be addressed. Steps were taken to reduce the likelihood of this bias such as the inclusion of control variables and reverse coding items. Even so, future research to further assess the construct validity is necessary and would benefit the literature.

6. Conclusion

This study makes two principle contributions to research. Our first contribution is the exploration of the psychological contract construct at the level of the IT profession. This study is one of the first to examine the antecedents of psychological contract violation of IT professionals. Our second contribution is the development of a parsimonious model of the antecedents of psychological contract violation with the IT profession. We found that 45% of the variance in psychological contract violation was explained by the antecedents.

Future research may want to explore other antecedents (e.g., professional identity) and other structural models (e.g., moderation). Future work should also expand the model to include other facets of psychological contracts (e.g., breach) to more fully understand the phenomena.

7. References


8. Appendix A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PC Violation</td>
<td>Robinson &amp; Morrison, 2000</td>
<td>When I think about what I’ve given to the IT profession and what I think I should receive in return, I feel…</td>
<td>7 Angry&lt;br&gt;7 Cheated&lt;br&gt;7 Pleased – (R)&lt;br&gt;7 Disillusioned&lt;br&gt;7 Frustrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support: Family</td>
<td>Shinn et al. 1989</td>
<td>In my experience in the IT profession, supervisors have generally…</td>
<td>7 Switched scheduled (hours, overtime hours, vacation) to accommodate my family responsibilities.&lt;br&gt;7 Listened to my family-related problems.&lt;br&gt;7 Criticized my efforts to combine work and family. (R)&lt;br&gt;7 Juggled tasks and duties to accommodate my family responsibilities.&lt;br&gt;7 Were understanding of my family-related needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support: Career</td>
<td>Greenhaus et al., 1990</td>
<td>7 Taken time to learn about my career goals and aspirations.&lt;br&gt;7 Cared about whether or not I achieved my career goals.&lt;br&gt;7 Kept me informed about different career opportunities in the profession.&lt;br&gt;7 Made sure I got the credit when I accomplished something substantial on the job.&lt;br&gt;7 Given helpful feedback about job performance.&lt;br&gt;7 Given helpful advice about improving job performance when it was needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Orientation</td>
<td>Derr, 1986</td>
<td>7 I would not leave my current organization to meet my career goals for advancement in the IT profession. (R)&lt;br&gt;7 I have more allegiance to IT, my career, than to my current employer.&lt;br&gt;7 IT is important for me to succeed in the IT profession even if it means leaving my current organization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>Sherer et al., 1982</td>
<td>7 I give up on things before completing them.&lt;br&gt;7 If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.&lt;br&gt;7 When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.&lt;br&gt;7 I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too different for me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construct</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investiture/ Divestiture</td>
<td>Jones, 1986</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>As I have interacted with people in the IT profession, I have gotten the message that my skills and abilities are well-matched to what is desired in this profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>In general, my colleagues in the IT profession have been supportive of me personally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I have had to change my attitudes and values to be accepted in this profession. (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>My IT colleagues have gone out of their way to help me adjust to this profession.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>As I have interacted with people in the IT profession, I have often felt that they hold me at a distance until I conform to their expectations. (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>My personal characteristics fit well with those that are valued in the IT profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>As I have worked in the IT profession, I find that there are aspects of my personality that are not well-accepted in the profession. (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Contract</td>
<td>Robinson &amp; Morrison, 2000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Throughout my career as an IT professional …</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>My rate of promotion has been:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>My salary increases over the years have generally been:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The career opportunities I currently have are:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 – indicates use of a 7 point Likert scale with “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” as anchors

5 - indicates use of a 5 point Likert scale with “much quicker than I expected it to be” and “much slower than I expected it to be” as anchors