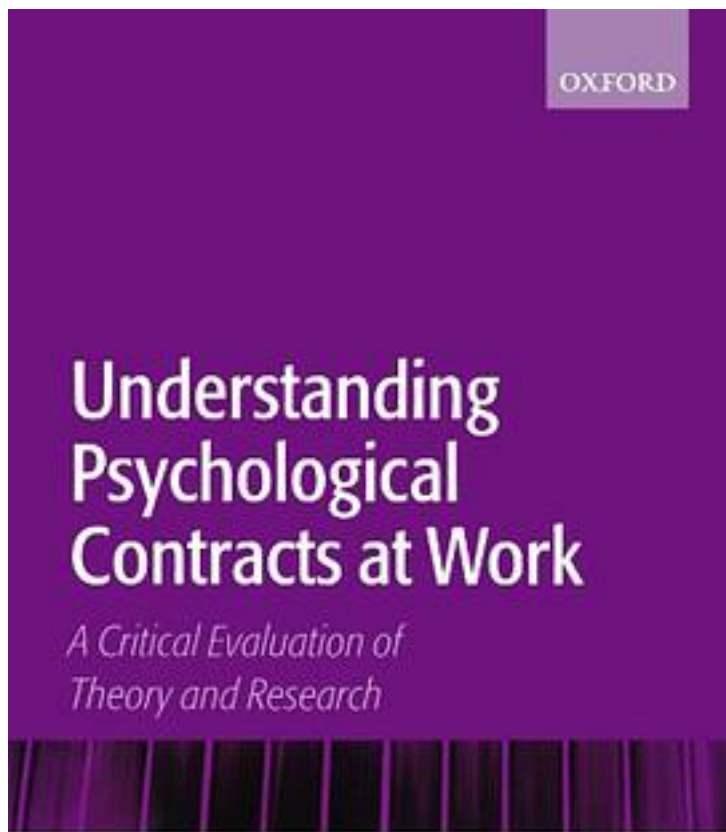


Understanding Psychological Contracts at Work



**Neil Conway and
Rob B. Briner**

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How can we understand the relationship between employer and employee? What determines the give and take of such relationships and what happens when they go wrong? This book is the first to provide a comprehensive and critical overview of what is now the major way of trying to understand the employment relationship - the concept of the psychological contract. Written contracts often specify very little in terms of the important details about what we are prepared to do for our employer and what we want back in return. The psychological contract considers these implicit or unwritten aspects of the employment relationship. What do employees really expect from work? What happens when the contract, or 'the deal', with their employer is broken? How well does the psychological contract help us understand what happens at work between an employee and their employer? Is the idea of practical value in managing employees? How can our understanding of this important concept be developed in the future? Starting with a history of the concept, from its emergence in the 1960s through to it finding wider acceptance in the 1990s, the authors trace the conflicting and changing definitions of the psychological contract. The shifting meaning of the concept allows possible methodological and conceptual weaknesses of the psychological contract to be explored, such as the conceptual emphasis on process within the employment relationship, which has so far been neglected by researchers. The authors start to address this issue by considering whether employees and employers can use what is known about the psychological contract to better manage the employment relationship. Written to provide a comprehensive yet critical introduction to the topic, *Understanding Psychological Contracts at Work* will be key reading for advanced students, lecturers, and researchers in Organizational Psychology, Organization Studies, Management Studies, Human Resource Management, Occupational Psychology; and professionals and practitioners in Occupational Psychology, Management Consultancy, Human Resource Management, Careers and Career Management, Career Counselling, Workplace Training.

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