The Side-Hustle: An Emergent Typology of Entrepreneurs as Employees

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Abstract. In this paper we present the experiences of high-tech entrepreneurs who have become employees in high-tech companies. The entrepreneurs in this study are all hybrid entrepreneurs who returned to full-time employment and continued to engage in what we define as '*side-hustles*'. An emerging, albeit small, body of literature around the term *side-hustle* uniquely captures the combination of, often informal, entrepreneurial activity performed alongside a foundation of full-time employment. Fifteen interviews were conducted online during July and August 2020. Our analysis of the interviews supports the development of a typology of entrepreneurial employees. Specifically, our findings indicate that there are three types of employees who engage in *side-hustles*: transient, reluctant, and autonomous entrepreneurial employees. Each of the three types engage with *side-hustles* differently, depending on their background, motivations for returning to employment and their entrepreneurial mindset. The typology can be used to compare differences in attitudes and abilities towards employment. We also provide insights into managerial implications in relation to the supports needed to recruit, engage and retain entrepreneurs as employees. This is an important issue because treating employees who engage in *side-hustles* as a homogeneous group may result in a misunderstanding of the diversity of impacts that they have on an organization.

Keywords: entrepreneurs, employees, intrapreneurship, typology, side-hustle.

1. Introduction

Research has both profiled entrepreneurial motivations and barriers and has explored how to encourage employees to be more entrepreneurial, although little is known about the drivers and barriers of employees who gradually transition into entrepreneurship (Demir *et al.,* 2022) or indeed those who transition back to employment. Rapid advances in innovative technologies, new business models and the fourth industrial revolution require new people ready to drive forward a culture of entrepreneurship (Cohen *et al.*, 2017; Nambisan, 2017; Solesvik, 2017; Beliaeva *et al.*, 2019; Sangwan *et al*., 2019; Dragomirescu-Gaina and Elia, 2021). Technology has also created new work and employment relationships, rendering changes that would have been unimaginable just a decade ago (Dunn, 2020). The

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extant literature on corporate entrepreneurship emphasizes encouraging, facilitating, training, rewarding and/or stimulating employees to enhance entrepreneurial characteristics rather than employing talent with entrepreneurial experience. In this paper we explore the recruitment, engagement and retention of former entrepreneurs in high-tech corporate organisations. While there is a significant body of literature exploring how employees can engage with entrepreneurial attributes (Glinyanova *et al.*, 2021; Guerrero *et al.*, 2021; Kreiser *et al.*, 2021), there is limited analysis of those employees who have taken their entrepreneurial activities beyond the firm. Rodell (2013) proposes that it remains unclear whether employees engage in external work to build on meaningful work experiences or to compensate for the lack of them. Therefore, there is a need to explore how previous and ongoing experiences as an entrepreneur relates to employment. In this paper we present data from in-depth interviews with fifteen entrepreneurs who, after high-tech entrepreneurship, became employees in large high-tech corporate entities. All fifteen maintain an interest and open mind in relation to entrepreneurial opportunities. The three main research questions addressed in this paper are:

RQ 1: What are the factors that result in entrepreneurs becoming employees?
RQ 2: How does their entrepreneurial mindset manifest itself as an employee?
RQ 3: What circumstances would lead them to return to (full-time) entrepreneurship?

The paper continues with a review of the literature on entrepreneurship within organizations. We exam the key reasons, motivations and triggers of an individual that has gone through the hybrid entrepreneurship two-step process resulting in full-time entrepreneurship, becoming an entrepreneurial employee again. Then we present an overview of the literature on external work by employees. Next, we present the findings from our interviews. Finally, we propose a typology of entrepreneurial employees and end with additional discussion, implications and conclusions on the impact of *side-hustles* and the entrepreneurial employees who engage in them.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Entrepreneurial Motivation

Becoming an entrepreneur can be a result of a change in an individual's life, a triggering event or it can also be a deliberate career choice (Huovinen and Tihula, 2008; Kerr *et al.,* 2018; Scarmozzino *et al.*, 2017; Broomé and Ohlsson, 2018). An extensive body of literature exists on the motivations for entrepreneurship,

and its characteristics and attributes. Background variables such as gender, age, education and former experience, in addition to life experiences and access to networks all affect the success of entrepreneurs (Douglas, 2013; Kerr *et al.*, 2018; Figueiredo-Belchior and Lyons, 2022). Black *et al.* (2010) report that previous research has attempted to define the personality of entrepreneurs, hoping to show that entrepreneurs are intrinsically different from other people. Studies have also found that personal qualities and traits such as self-efficacy, resilience, self-confidence, work ethic and communication skills are synonymous with entrepreneurs (Huovinen and Tihula, 2008; Laguir and Den Besten, 2016; Sahin *et al.*, 2019; McLaughlin *et al.*, 2022; Salmony and Kanbach, 2022) and are also associated with corporate entrepreneurship (Covin and Miles, 1999; Zahra *et al.*, 1999; Ireland *et al.*, 2009; Kuratko and Morris, 2018).

Leaders and managers in high-tech industries often want their employees to be entrepreneurial and innovative. Indeed, many high-tech companies actively encourage employees to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset. Companies do this to generate opportunities, to address immediate challenges in novel, unorthodox ways, and to act with urgency to create new value for the organization and its stakeholders (Fisher *et al.*, 2020). Employees acting in entrepreneurial ways can be referred to as corporate entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship or strategic entrepreneurship and is seen as a means to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of an organization (Honig, 2001; Ireland *et al.*, 2009; Hitt *et al.*, 2011; Kuratko *et al.*, 2014; Centeno-Martins and Leitão, 2020). Previous research has highlighted that fostering entrepreneurial behaviour among employees often clashes with other explicit or implicit organizational norms and processes (Kuratko *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, one of an employer's controllable areas of corporate entrepreneurship is creating a work environment highly conducive to innovation and entrepreneurial behaviours.

Hackman and Oldham (1974) proposed the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) based on the idea that the task itself is key to employee motivation. The model has been applied to a diverse range of studies in business and work settings (DeVaro *et al.*, 2007; Pierce *et al.*, 2009; Smrt and Nelson, 2013; Blanz, 2017; Simonet and Castille, 2020). The model proposes three dimensions: job characteristics, psychological outcomes and work outcomes. In the model there are five core job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) with three psychological outcomes (experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of the actual results), in turn influencing work outcomes (job satisfaction, absenteeism, work motivation).

As research on corporate entrepreneurial activity has evolved, researchers have acknowledged the importance of internal organizational dimensions for promoting and supporting an environment of innovation (Hornsby *et al.*, 2013; Broomé and Ohlsson, 2018; Salim *et al.*, 2019). Attracting and retaining talent with appropriate experience, that fits with an organizational culture is a

significant challenge in an environment where remote and flexible working is increasing in prevalence (Chen *et al.*, 2011; Pichault and McKeown, 2019; Tirrel *et al.*, 2021), especially when employees have an entrepreneurial mindset (Gonthier and Chirita, 2019; Rodriguez *et al.*, 2019).   This is especially significant for employees that are exposed to entrepreneurial opportunities. Klarner *et al.* (2013) argue that spin-alongs can attract, retain and develop entrepreneurial employees, although increasingly, employees are engaging in contemporaneous entrepreneurial activities facilitated by the recent trend towards a gig-economy (Dokko *et al.*, 2015; Clark, 2017, 2018; Ashford *et al.,* 2018; Congregado *et al.*, 2022).

2.2. Portfolio Workers and Hybrid Entrepreneurs

Handy (1985) coined the term *portfolio worker* for those workers who create a portfolio of work for themselves, an increasingly common occurrence in the gig economy and workplaces characterised by at-home and remote work. Terms such as freelancer, independent professional, contractor or gig worker are also used to describe the role of these *portfolio* workers (Burke, 2011; Van den Born and Van Witteloostuijn, 2013; Dunn, 2020).   However, these terms typically do not consider full-time employment within the work portfolio.   When full-time employment is considered within the work portfolio, this arrangement has been referred to as moonlighting or multiple jobholding (Burke, 2011; Sliter and Boyd, 2014; Scott *et al.*, 2020; Sessions *et al*., 2021). However, these terms consider a work portfolio only comprising employment rather than a mix of employment and entrepreneurial activity.   Burke (2011) reflects that in the entrepreneurship literature, portfolio workers are often categorised as a small and underperforming version of entrepreneurial owner managers while in the industrial relations literature they are often depicted as a form of exploited worker.
    In attempting to address the phenomenon of portfolio work within the entrepreneurship literature, the term *hybrid entrepreneur* has been used (Folta *et al.*, 2010; Thorgren *et al.*, 2014; Solesvik, 2017; Viljamaa *et al.*, 2017; Bögenhold, 2019; Pollack *et al.*, 2019; Ferreira, 2020; Kurczewska *et al.*, 2020) to describe a two-step process where a full-time employee starts a new venture while employed (step 1) and gradually leaves employment until they are a full-time entrepreneur (step 2), although the first step may be an equilibrium state of maintaining a portfolio of work, including salaried employment and entrepreneurial activity (Solesvik, 2017; Viljamaa *et al*., 2017). Hybrid entrepreneurship is important because a significant portion of entrepreneurs use employment as a transition path into entrepreneurship (Burke *et al.*, 2008; Folta *et al.*, 2010; Thorgren *et al.*, 2014; Pollack *et al.*, 2019; Ferreira, 2020), although the proposed hybrid entrepreneurship process is unidirectional, ending in entrepreneurship, while ignoring the potential fluid transition back to

employment. Since most new ventures fail, individual career paths do not terminate with the new venture. Although many entrepreneurs continue through serial entrepreneurship, other entrepreneurs return to full-time employment. This return to employment is understudied in the literature and presents an opportunity to extend the hybrid entrepreneurship process to include a third step of entrepreneurial employment, often as portfolio workers with continued external entrepreneurial activity.

Demir *et al.* (2022) propose three theoretical rationales for employees to engage in hybrid entrepreneurship. These are for supplementary income, nonmonetary benefits and as a way to transition to self-employment. Scott *et al*. (2020) explain that the motivations for engaging in activities external to the primary employer are typically grouped into two broad categories. First, workers may be "constrained", motivated to seek additional earnings if their primary employment does not allow them to earn sufficient income. Second, workers may "job package", choosing to work a second job or portfolio of jobs to gain flexibility in their working hours and/or the opportunity to engage in a variety of tasks. Because *side-hustles* take place outside organizational boundaries, supervisor control, and strictly formalized systems, they offer freedom to choose how work is done, when and where work takes place, and often what work one performs (Ashford *et al*., 2018; Petriglieri *et al*., 2019).

There are both negative and positive impacts on employees and employers. *Side-hustles* may have negative connotations for employers because they can be in conflict with primary employment (Parham and Gordon, 2011; Sørensen and Sharkey, 2014; Urbig *et al*., 2021) or have negative effects on family life for employees (Besnik, 2014; Luc *et al*., 2018). However, engagement in *side-hustles* can also deliver positive impacts for employees such as job satisfaction (Rodell, 2013; Sessions *et al*., 2021) or additional income (Honig, 2001; Betts, 2006; Scott *et al.*, 2020) and upskilling (Betts, 2006; Forster-Holt, 2021). For employers, portfolio working can improve job performance (Rodell, 2013; Sessions *et al.*, 2021) and organizational commitment (Rodell, 2013; Fisher *et al*., 2020).

The literature review reveals that there are a range of motivations and impacts of entrepreneurial employees. We aim to expand the understanding of hybrid entrepreneurship beyond the two-step process resulting in full-time entrepreneurship, to include the possibility of a return to employment often alongside continued entrepreneurial activities, which has substantial implications for employers as well as for the potential for further entrepreneurial activity.

3. Methodology

Authors including Brush *et al.* (2009) and Roundy (2016) propose that exploring the entrepreneurial narrative can make a unique contribution to our understanding

of the phenomenon. Indeed, Smith (2009) explains that to be made meaningful for others, experiences, values, and achievements must be communicated to others via language, narrative and storytelling. Therefore, we use narrative structuring (Kvale, 2006) to create a coherent story of the entrepreneurs' experiences. The narrative is presented in the next section and recommendations are made in our conclusion. The unit of analysis is an individual who is in full-time employment, having previously gone through the hybrid entrepreneurship process. Our study explores the narratives of employees that engage in contemporaneous, often informal entrepreneurial activity with the aim of classifying them into appropriate categories that can support improved human resource strategies.

   The sample emerged from a unique, microlevel database created by combining a directory of high-tech entrepreneurs in Ireland and their career histories from social media. Ireland presents a unique context for this research because it is characterised by a concentration of the European headquarters of the majority of the world's leading high-tech companies (IDA Ireland, 2022). A review of individual career profiles allowed us to identify individuals who had been employed in a high-tech firm and worked to create high-tech start-ups, and then moved back to full-time employment with a high-tech company. We identified 31 individuals that appeared to have overlapping entrepreneurial and full-time employment activities. Given the time pressure and constraints of full-time employment and contemporaneous entrepreneurial activity, especially in a time of crisis (Stephens *et al.*, 2021a, 2021b), we chose to limit our sampling by choosing a set of participants that would be representative of the general Irish high-tech entrepreneurship across gender, age, location and activity (see TechIreland, 2022, for high-tech founder population). In total fifteen interviews were conducted online during July and August 2020. A profile of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants

Name	Age	Gender	Education	Skills	Entrepreneurship	Snr Manager Role
Andy	34	Male	2nd Level	Sales	Property	Sales Manger
Conor	40	Male	Degree	Finance	App Dev	Product Dev
Dean	35	Male	DBA	Programmer	Consultancy	Product Dev
Lewis	30	Male	Degree	Finance	Booking Website	Product Dev
Ivan	42	Male	2nd Level	Sales	Event Management	HRM
Gavin	38	Male	2nd Level	Sales	Beauty	Finance Manager
Cian	28	Male	Degree	Finance	Health Tech	Product Dev
Jay	34	Male	2nd Level	Wed Design	Web Analytics	Product Dev
Denise	35	Female	DBA	Software Dev	Education	Partnership Manager

Mark	50	Male	2nd Level	Sales	App Dev	Sales Manger
Calum	35	Male	Degree	Manufacturing	Capital Markets	Product Dev
Anita	40	Female	Masters	Sales	Computer Games	Service Dev
Louise	30	Female	Degree	Web Design	Health Food	Brand Manager
Lianne	30	Female	Degree	Manufacturing	Health Tech	Product Dev
Andrew	40	Male	Degree	Programmer	Online recruitment	Partnership Manager

Four of our participants are female and eleven are male. The youngest is 28 and the oldest 50. Seven hold a higher education degree and three a postgraduate qualification. Their key skills include: Finance (3), Sales (5), Web Design (2), Programming (2) Software Dev (1) and Manufacturing (2). There was significant diversity in terms of the industry within which the participants developed their original business. Only Application Development was reported more than once. Finally, the current management roles of the participants are as follows: Product Development (7), Partnership Management (2), Sales Manager (2), Brand Manager (1), Sales Manager (2), and Finance Manager (1).

Interviews with participants lasted on average one hour. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Pseudonyms were used to ensure anonymity. The interviews were semi-structured and questions in the interview protocol explored the entrepreneurs' background, prior experiences, motivations, activities and future plans.

4. Findings

4.1. Motivations for Entrepreneur Employment

For many of the participants, developments in their personal lives led to a reassessment and a revaluation of their work status:

> "I had a young family, and the pressure was on me to bring in revenue, so I had to walk away from [start-up] and go work for [high-tech firm]. I was delighted with it to be honest. I got a really nice salary, that I didn't think it was possible for someone like me to get, and all these fringe benefits like a PA, pension plan. They even gave me an AMEX card which was really a dream come true – they basically gave me cash flow every month on a card and the credit card company wouldn't have given me money at this stage."

> "I had some family pressure. My wife had a good job so it wasn't financial, but I still needed to settle down."

For others, the move to employment was attractive and was viewed as a respite from the challenges of life as an entrepreneur:

> "For two years of my life I worked at least 10 hours every day, including weekends. I burned out really hard. So, I called it quits and left. We had released the (computer) game which I considered a massive success. I just went and worked for a (high-tech) company for a couple of years."

> "I didn't necessarily want to go back into my own business at that stage. I had lots of ideas but knowing the reality of what it takes to execute on them was another thing."

Other high-tech entrepreneurs were enticed into employment by a project that was technically challenging and offered the opportunity to contribute to a solution or key innovation:

> "I get very passionate and very excited about taking on a challenge with a business and fixing it."

> "I'm not a kid. I don't care about foosball machines or having lunch in the office, or even having an office. I just want to work with people who know how to work or want to learn, and to work on something that's interesting that doesn't kill everyone"

4.2. Experience in the Workplace

The corporate entrepreneurship literature typically laments the low levels of entrepreneurial mindset among employees. However, our interviewees report that employees with prior entrepreneurial experience are a common occurrence:

> "If I looked around me in [high-tech company], there were a lot of people who had had their own businesses."

Most of the high-tech entrepreneurs had a positive experience of the recruitment process. Their prior entrepreneurial experience and entrepreneurial mindset was seen as an asset by the high-tech firms:

> "The sales and technical knowledge probably benefitted me in the interview."

> "I don't think I would be in the role if it wasn't for that (start-up) experience."

> "I brought two skillsets [from my start-up] - speaking to customers and translating that into technical requirements - both commercial and technical skills."

"When I showed [CEO of high-tech corporate] my software, I think it helped my profile within the company. He likes that people were taking a chance, that they went out and did their own thing."

However, the interview process did not always reflect the experience of working in a high-tech corporate, leading some of our interviewees to move on to seek a high-tech corporate employer that embraced their entrepreneurial mindset:

"They kept telling me how valuable my experience was. I was told they need people with an entrepreneurial spirit, they need entrepreneurs, they need people who think differently. However, the problem was I never really got to use that. As soon as you come up with different ideas to challenge them, it's super tricky to get that through.

"In an ideal world, it would be great to find a corporate that was more flexible."

Autonomy, flexibility, being valued and invested in were key factors in the workplace satisfaction of our interviewees. In addition, the successful outcomes associated with large work-based projects were frequently mentioned as the source of job satisfaction:

"I do expect autonomy. I wouldn't work in a role or a company whereby there are very strict conditions around the kinds of creativity or impact that I can have on a business"

"I have a huge amount of direct ownership in relation to where the company is going and what we do and I also have a stake in that as well."

"I don't think I could work anywhere where I didn't have a sense of ownership and leadership of what was happening. It's very difficult once you go into the real entrepreneurial world to go into say, a normalised corporate setting."

"The two reasons I joined would be because I had enough latitude and ownership of where investment was going, the direction we were taking, and also enough stake in the outcomes as well. So not just a salary."

"At this company it is like being your own mini CEO, and you got a lot of flexibility. You get paid to build stuff for other people."

However, autonomy, flexibility and passion were not only expressed in terms of employment. Many of the entrepreneurs retained an entrepreneurial mindset and this was manifested not only in their employee role but also through *side-hustles*:

"There were quite a few people [at my high-tech employer] with a side-hustle - some other form of income or something - most sales guys are, aren't they?"

"I've never been able to have 1 job only, hopefully one day…"

For some of the interviewees, employment was an opportunity to earn an income while they consider the possibility of getting their new venture established and/or starting a new venture:

"Over the next 18 months, I *grew* this business, within my current role."

"We built it up (the side-hustle) to a point that we were able to take a salary - nearly the same as what I was on at my company. This is something that I enjoyed with the opportunity to grow."

For others, a *side-hustle* was as an opportunity to develop networks, skills and resources that would enhance their career:

"A thing that I find is helpful for me is that when you are rotating in the same circle of ideas, it makes you closed and difficult to brainstorm outside that circle. But if you have experience somewhere else, it will help you to think slightly differently and helps your venture get somewhere different rather than produce the same ideas as others."

And for others, a *side-hustle* was more a desire to continuing engaging with the start-up community:

"I sit on the boards of start-ups. For me, it's more mentorship …"

"Because I've had the start-up experience I was able to share that with others. It's super rewarding."

"Because I run these not for profits that do meetings for people in the gaming environment. I created this because it's for the people. I'm giving a framework for people to come together. I'm not going to close that because I have a job."

The data captures the eclectic mix of reasons for why employees engage in *side-hustles*. To some extent this explains why some corporate employers have concerns about the potential problems in terms of energy, commitment and time.

"There's always a little bit of wariness as to 'will it detract from what you give a company or how much you invest'. "

"They are wary about the time cost, as in, will it impact what you give to the company."

"I wasn't discouraged. The founders of [high-tech company] said that if you go and do your own thing, as long as it doesn't affect your day to day, you're probably going to learn a lot of skills and bring that back to the business."

Because our sample represented prior employees with a track record of leaving for full time entrepreneurship and then returned to full-time employment,

it appears that firms embraced the potential benefits despite these potential conflicts.

4.3. The Future

The interviewees had differing expectations for their future. These expectations were determined by a combination of their experience of entrepreneurship and of employment. For some, a return to entrepreneurship was very unlikely:

> "That failure certainly leaves an impression on you both financially and mentally, when it comes to taking risk again."

> "I loved the start-up but I had to move on. It's in the past. I'm extremely proud of what I did."

> "I wouldn't be able to decide to give up this job and start a start-up, it's much harder when you have more responsibilities, when you're actually making money."

> "I'm going to stay here [at employer X]. I believe in our product. I believe that it's still at the early stage. There's a lot of promise, a lot of projects and opportunity to engage, and to be honest, I have a young daughter, so all that my employer offers in terms of perks and everything else, is quite nice, so I'm in no hurry to leave."

For others a return to entrepreneurship was likely and the timing was dependent on their current employment experience as well as them being able to identify an appropriate opportunity:

> "The challenge with corporate employment is that there's a lot of certainty, but there's a lot outside your control. When you've got certainty but no control, that can be problematic. That would lead me to believe that this is a means to an end at the moment. I'm always looking to see what's happening. I'm working on one or two opportunities at the minute. I like to have options."

In the next section we use the insights from the data to develop a typology of employees.

5. Discussion and Emergent Typology

The findings provide evidence that the three theoretical rationales for hybrid entrepreneurship (Demir *et al.*, 2022) (income, satisfaction and autonomy) also explain the motivations that drive entrepreneurial employees in our sample. To interpret our descriptive findings, we adopt the JCM model as our lens to evaluate

employees in terms of four sub-headings: 1) background; 2) motivation; 3) work type and outcomes and 4) entrepreneurial mindset. In doing so we identify three types of entrepreneurial employees, each with unique motivations, experience of employment and their expectations for the future. An overview of each of the three types is as follows:

Type 1. The Transient Employee

1. Background: this type of employee will have a track record of multiple entrepreneurial ventures with experience in sales and new product development.

2. Motivation and Rewards: this employee will be seeking tangible measures of success and a secure financial base. Their identity as an employee will be related to project success. But they will retain a dual identity as an independent entrepreneur. This type of employee will respond very positively to flexible working arrangements and commission-based systems.

3. Work type and outcomes: this type of employee is looking for short-term flexible contract-based work. They will be happy to work independently, especially, if their work is associated with performance based pay. They will want project-based work with clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). They will prefer client facing roles. They are unlikely to engage with the senior business leaders but they will look to establish a rapport with their line manager, to facilitate flexibility. Transient entrepreneurial employees are likely to leave once they have medium-term financial security and an appropriate new venture opportunity is available.

4. Entrepreneurial mindset: This type of employee will be proactive, and independently find ways to meet employment objectives (that are rewarded). They will engage in *side-hustles* with the intention of expanding this to full-time effort venture. They will view themselves as primarily an entrepreneur throughout the period of employment.

Type 2. The Reluctant Employee

1. Background: Entrepreneurial activities will have left theses employees financially and mentally depleted. However, their technical skills remain valuable and they have extensive commercial experience gained from entrepreneurship.

2. Motivation and Rewards: these employees will have a financial and/or family related reason for entering employment. Personal circumstances mean that they need a consistent income and stability of both tenure and location. Their focus is on having a stable job with clear roles and responsibilities. They want to work on projects that use their technical skills to solve meaningful problems. These employees will want clearly established hours of work. The skills and talents of their colleagues will be an important contributary factor to their work satisfaction.

3. Work outcomes: These employees will work effectively alone, but they will also be open to the opportunity to work as part of a team on creative/innovative

projects. They are unlikely to engage with business leadership. But they will respond well to seeing their outputs used and valued. They will pursue *side-hustles* which are predominantly linked to a hobby or community project.

4. Entrepreneurial mindset: Personal circumstances will be the primary reason for them remaining in employment, although their interest in another project may lead them to other employment opportunities. They are unlikely to start a new venture again but will bring a strong work ethic and independence to their workplace that can significantly contribute to innovative projects.

Type 3. The Autonomous Employee

1. Background: These employees will have significant experience, including business development, product development and business leadership. They will have experience of both entrepreneurial success and failure. They may also still have investments and board positions in start-up companies.

2. Motivation and Rewards: For these employees fatigue and possible burnout will be the main reasons for pursuing employment. They will view a corporate career as the foundation for their future goals. They will align themselves with a new identity as a top executive. They will embrace having resources, budgets and staff to manage. They will respond to performance related incentives and career progression opportunities, seeking to play a role in shaping the strategic direction of the company.

3. Work outcomes: After an initial establishment period to transition from several previous entrepreneurial activities, they will align their efforts with the organisational objectives. They will want the right role and flexibility to make use of their entrepreneurial tendencies, including the opportunity to build a well-resourced team and portfolio of projects. They will look to establish clear lines of communication and to develop their profile. Once established, their significant energy and work ethic will be focussed on organisational objectives and career progression.

4. Entrepreneurial mindset: Ongoing engagement in entrepreneurship will be linked to career development, continued professional development, the maintenance of networks and new skill development with a focus on new technology. These employees value loyalty and are likely to stay because they know that the alternative (entrepreneurship) has numerous challenges.

In presenting the three types we propose that there are five job design dimensions that are important determinants of an environment that influence entrepreneurial behaviour and the propensity to engage in side-hustles: (1) work type, (2) motivation and rewards, (3) work outcomes, (4) top management support, and (5) autonomy. To aid comparison between the three types we have developed Table 2 which summarizes the three types based on each of the five dimensions. In addition, we have added examples from the extant literature in support of our three types (please refer to column 1 in Table 2).

Table 2: Types of entrepreneurial employees

	Work	**Motivation**	**Outcomes**	**Management**	**Autonomy**
Transient Guerrier and Lockwood (1989) Garsten (1999) Byrne (2001) Bezdrob and Šunje (2021)	Project Based with clear deadlines and pay related outputs.	Personal necessity and the need for an income	View work as a transaction but will make a positive impact.	Low commitment but will work hard in a performance-based pay system.	Ambitious but the independence will result in their departure.
Reluctant Mulki *et al.* (2012) Wang *et al.* (2012) Rubenstein *et al.* (2019) Singh (2021)	Technical, skill based role with clear career progression.	Need stability and financial security after burnout.	Will want long-term job but will continue to engage in external interests	Will respond to a manager who values their skill sets and approach.	Will work on their own and/ or as part of a team. Unlikely, to choose to leave.
Autonomous Gillet *et al.* (2013) Wang (2016) Kuratko and Morris (2018) Weske and Schott (2018)	Any skill or project based task that provides progression opportunities.	Driven by a desire for career progression.	Passionate, team player working for a senior leadership role.	Minimal management required but may benefit from mentoring.	Will want to be included in strategic decisions and be part of the senior leadership team.

Table 2 highlights that while there are some shared characteristics between the types, the typology also includes distinctive characteristics across the five dimensions which merits the proposition that there are three types of former high-tech entrepreneurs engaged in *side-hustles* while working full-time in the high-tech companies. Each of the three types engage with *side-hustles* differently, depending on their motivations for returning to employment and their entrepreneurial mindset. The typology can be used to compare differences regarding the entrepreneur's attitudes towards employment; their abilities related to employment; and the support needed to recruit, engage and retain the entrepreneurs as employees.

The findings address the three research questions of what factors result in entrepreneurs becoming employees, how their entrepreneurial mindset manifests as an employee, and what circumstances would lead them to return to entrepreneurship.

The factors motivating entrepreneurial employees include financial necessity, family circumstances and burnout. All three can lead to a permanent decision to leave entrepreneurship. None of the three will stop the individual from searching for new opportunities. Indeed, changes in relation to all three can be a trigger for the continuation of their entrepreneurial journey. In the workplace entrepreneurial characteristics such as self-efficacy, resilience, self-confidence

and work ethic are evident for all three employee types. Rather, the difference between the three types of entrepreneurial employees are their motivation and future entrepreneurial intentions. There is a strong likelihood that transient employees will begin the gradual hybrid entrepreneurship process back to entrepreneurship while a transition back to entrepreneurship is unlikely for reluctant and autonomous entrepreneurial employees unless there are substantial changes to the circumstances that motivated them to return to employment.

6. Conclusion

This research contributes to the emerging literature on hybrid entrepreneurship and side-hustles by differentiating between three types of entrepreneurial employees with contemporaneous entrepreneurial activity. This contributes to our understanding of the hybrid entrepreneurship process, showing that not only do full-time employees gradually transition into entrepreneurship, but that they may gradually transition back to full-time employment for differing reasons and with differing results, summarised in our typology. The typology can be used to compare differences regarding the attitudes of the entrepreneurial employee towards engaging with colleagues, embracing organizational culture and contributing to innovation within the organisation. There are significant implications for employers. Firstly, some *side-hustles* can enhance an employees' wellbeing, skillsets and networks, while others can detract from employment objectives. The typology can facilitate the design of human resource policies and interventions based on clusters of employees who share similar needs, experiences and activities. Secondly, employers can benefit from using the typology to inform recruitment. This will help to ensure that some types of *side-hustles* are prioritised and promoted, while others are identified and discouraged. Finally, entrepreneurs who become employees will need reassurance during recruitment regarding human resource policies and intellectual property practices. Reassurances need to be aligned with their actual practice or employees will shift their focus to entrepreneurial activities (side-hustles), culminating in them becoming disengaged and/or leaving employment.
    Our contribution also adds to existing findings and knowledge in the entrepreneurship and industrial relations literature. Scholars have reported the detriments of *side-hustles*, arguing that they are a distraction that harms job performance (Betts, 2006; Burke, 2011; Clark, 2017, 2018; Dunn, 2020). The basis of these assertions is that a *side-hustle* drains an employee's finite resources, thereby diminishing their capacity to perform well in a full-time job. An alternative perspective is that employees may accrue benefits from *side-hustles* that, in turn, enrich full-time work performance. Both perspectives are in evidence in our data and reflected in the emergent typology. In addition, we propose that *side-hustles* provide opportunities to personalize, direct, and take

ownership of work. However, we would caution that treating *side-hustlers* as a homogeneous group may result in a misunderstanding of the diversity of impacts that they can have on an organization. Indeed, evidence from our study indicates that career-making (for entrepreneurs) should be understood as the construction of a career in terms of not only how it unfolds, but also how it is actively shaped by an inter-play between the individual and his/her work environment (Betts, 2006; Nabi *et al*., 2010; Chen *et al*., 2011; Besnik, 2014; Clark, 2017, 2018; Luc *et al*., 2018).

    We conclude by acknowledging the limitations of our study. A greater number of respondents would add additional perspective. Although the transcripts are detailed and represent a biographical account, an extended longitudinal study may provide greater insights. There is significant scope for further research. A study with employers would also provide significant additional insights about how previous and ongoing experiences as an entrepreneur relate to employment absorption and performance. The emergent typology will serve as the basis for further empirical research, as an example, QCA fuzzy sets could be used to validate the typologies using an appropriate dataset.

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