Dear Professor Lepak:

We were pleased to have an opportunity to revise our paper now entitled, "HUMAN RESOURCE SYSTEMS AND HELPING IN ORGANIZATIONS: A RELATIONAL PERSPECTIVE" (AMR 09-0402). In revising the paper, we have carefully considered your comments and suggestions, as well as those of the reviewers. As instructed, we have attempted to succinctly explain changes made in reaction to all comments. After providing a brief overview of ways in which the paper was revised, we reply to each comment in point-by-point fashion. For brevity's sake, in responding your respective comments, we used abbreviations "E" and "R" in place of "editor" and "reviewer."

We greatly appreciate your understanding regarding the resubmission deadline. Your and the reviewers' comments were very helpful overall, and we are appreciative of such constructive feedback on our original submission. After addressing the issues raised, we feel the quality of the paper is much improved and hope you agree.

Overview of Responses to Editor and Reviewers

Originally, we interwove the major substantive elements in the paper—strategic HR systems (formerly HR practices/bundles), relational climates, and helping—attempting to maximize integration among them. We relied on the tables to illustrate these same elements by example (old Table 1—HR systems; old Table 2—helping in each relational climate). Given the tenor of your and the reviewer comments, we can see this strategy led to confusion about the elements and their origins. It also left logical gaps in our explanation of how these elements were interconnected.

In the revision, we sought to unpack these elements, first emphasizing each in its own right, and then integrating them. This approach allowed us to better establish connections between HR systems, relational climates, and helping behavior, and led to several key modifications: a) helping behavior is defined at the outset of the paper; b) stronger theoretical foundations for the HR system and relational climate constructs are provided; c) relational climate is grounded within the theoretical lineage of organization climate rather than structuration theory; and d) HR practices are used to exemplify HR system operationalizations. The Discussion section has also been revised in accordance with these changes and specific reviewer requests.

1. **Nature/Extent of contribution**. When considering manuscripts for publication in AMR one of the key requirements is that the paper must make a clear theoretical contribution to the literature. After reading the paper several times and considering the reviewers comments in detail, I think it is fair to say that we believe there is the potential for your manuscript to make an important contribution to the literature. At the same time, however, we do have several concerns regarding the specific nature of that contribution. A good part of these concerns are actually spelled out in the next section regarding your theoretical model but I think it is worth taking a moment to emphasize the importance of this issue. For example, reviewer 3 (Comment 10) provides an excellent point regarding a concern of your manuscript. S/he writes, "*I believe my fundamental confusion can be linked to this statement in beginning the Discussion section: "identifying three sets of strategic HR practices, a relational climate supported by each particular set, and the form of helping behavior expected to emerge in each climate" (p. 24). This statement suggests that the HR practices/systems need to "align" with (i.e., are supported by) a particular climate and that this will result in the form (and what does "form" mean?) of helping behavior. I do not see these elements and their relationships stated here as consistent with your actual propositions. I also don't see this*

general argument as being consistently presented throughout the manuscript. I really believe this can be (and needs to be) clarified and the writing/arguments tightened throughout in regards to how these constructs relate."

In addition to this commentary, there are some general questions that you might want to consider as you revise your manuscript. For example, are you suggesting that HR predicts relational climates or that each HR system is associated with a particular relational climate or that each HR system needs to be aligned with the proper relational climate to impact helping behaviors. As you will see in my comments below, I have additional concerns about the fundamental logic of your theoretical model. Moving forward, it is important that you are able to articulate and develop a clear contribution to the literature. We believe that you have some very interesting ideas here, but this concern must be addressed for a successful revision.

> E1. In our view, the major contribution of the paper is that it proposes a framework for considering how different HR systems can affect the climate for relationships in organizations and helping behavior that occurs within such relationships. We are unaware of another paper that attempts to bring together macro level organizational influences on this increasingly important micro level behavior. In the revision, we underscore the role of relational climate as an intermediary between the three HR systems and helping. Our paper contains what could be the first formal recognition of relational climate in the management literature, and maps out key dimensions it comprises. We note these contributions early in the Discussion. Although our paper is more theoretically oriented, we also illustrate how helping behavior is connected with selected HR system practices.

> With regard to R3 (comment 10) and your comments, we propose that HR systems (formerly HR "practices") give rise to particular relational climates, and in turn each relational climate promotes or discourages helping that occurs between employees working within the climate. We clarify that the propositions involve relational dimensions commonly used to describe the promotion and maintenance of helping in relationships. Our original use of "form" was more consistent with Fiske, who did not always emphasize the separation of relational behavior from the motives and dynamics surrounding it. Also, his model pertains to a broader range of relational contexts and does not distinguish behavior from the relationships in which it occurs as stringently as scholars typically would in the organizational research domain. For clarity's sake, we no longer refer to forms of helping when addressing the behavior itself, and have defined helping behavior in keeping with organizational behavior literature.

2. **Model specification and construct conceptualization**. Beyond the contribution of your manuscript, the reviewers and I also have a number of concerns regarding the constructs and structure of your model and the development of your arguments. I discuss these below.

Definitions
One of my first concerns that I would like to discuss rests on the definition / treatment of some of the key constructs in your framework.

Helping. The reviewers and I had a number of concerns with your treatment of helping. For example, reviewer 2 (Comment 2) writes, "I'd like to see 'helping' better defined and established within one or more literatures. You mention that it has been investigated under various guises, but then do not ever define or explain these different guises. In this vein, the dimensions on Table 2 were not explained. Why these, and not others? And how do these relate to various helping behaviors? As I understand it, these capture the characteristics of helping behavior, but this isn't explained much, and it certainly isn't defined early in the manuscript. Do these dimensions relate to different types of helping, such as prosocial behavior and OCB? Are they all of equal value to the organization?" This reviewer adds in comment 3,

"…on p.10 you noted that in compliance-based climates "helping is less likely to emerge unless it is rewarded." This suggests the model will eventually address general or overall level of helping. However, as I understand it, the model addresses characteristics of helping rather than level of helping. Please consider how you might address this discrepancy. Can you add a general or overall level of helping to what is now Table 2? Perhaps moving from low to high? If you do not expect helping to differ in amount but instead only in kind, then please edit the paper carefully to remove language that implies such a hypothesis is forthcoming." Reviewer 3 (Comment 1) raises a similar point and writes, "I would like to see a clear definition of "helping behavior" early on in the manuscript. You cite the literature on OCBs, but it is unclear if you are equating OCBs and helping behavior. Related, it is not completely clear who the helping behavior is directed toward, though the targets as those at "similar hierarchical status" is briefly noted at the top of page 5 in discussing authority ranking."

In addition to the definition of helping, one suggestion that has been made is that it might be beneficial to move your discussion of helping to earlier in the manuscript. Specifically, reviewer 2 (comment 2) suggests that you might discuss table 2 prior to your discussion of the HR climates. I think this is an interesting and potentially helpful suggestion and would help provide clarity regarding the focus of your contribution. This is not to suggest that you must do this, rather, it is to reinforce the notion that there is some confusion with some of your key constructs and clearly articulating the different behaviors would provide clarity to draw upon for your discussion of HR and its relationships with these behaviors.

> E2a. Our focus is on interpersonal helping, as this type of prosocial behavior is most salient for discussing help exchanged in the context of employee relationships (i.e., a relational perspective). In response to R2 (comment 2) and R3 (comment 1), we now define helping behavior at the outset of the paper (p. 3) in a manner consistent with the research on interpersonal helping in the organizational literature. Interpersonal helping behavior has been generally discussed in terms of task- and person-focused needs. As such, we discuss these as the two types of helping behavior of concern in the paper. Interpersonal helping is distinguishable from other prosocial behaviors (e.g., helping directed at the organization—e.g., civic virtue). As to the value of different types of prosocial behavior, there are several and various criteria that might be considered in evaluating them, depending on the circumstances of the organizations and their employees. Because discussing the value of various types of prosocial behavior would take us beyond the focus of the paper, we felt it best not to broach this issue.

> E2b. Regarding R2 (comment 3), it is difficult to divorce a discussion of the characteristics or qualities of help from issues pertaining to the quantity of help. For each HR system-relational climate pairing, we describe characteristics that are important for promoting and sustaining help across the three relational climates (see Table 1). In the section entitled "Relational Climates: Schema and Dimensions," we briefly explain how these dimensions were identified for use and how they relate to the motivation and sustenance of helping.

> E2c. R2's (comment 3) additional query about our discussing characteristics vs. level of helping has been addressed on two fronts. First, as noted above, we clarify in the text that the dimensions displayed in Table 1are used to explain the motivation and sustenance for helping behavior within different relational climates. This thrust has both theoretical and practical implications for dealing with helping behavior.

> Second, we introduce propositions concerning the type and amount of helping expected for particular HR system-relational climate pairings (propositions 1e, 1f, 2e, 2f, 3e, and 3f; see pp 15, 20, and 25, respectively). We chose to insert the propositions at these locations because type and amount of helping exchanged reflects the gestalt of a particular relational climate rather than any one specific climate dimension displayed in Table 1. Although it is possible to address the issue

of type and amount of helping in the Discussion section, we interpreted reviewer comments as requesting we address this issue using propositions. At this stage of theory development, we felt more comfortable expressing the propositions in relative terms. First, we describe the amount and type of help occurring in compliance HR systems/market pricing relational climates (propositions 1e and 1f). Next, we describe the amount and type of help occurring in collaboration HR systems/equality matching relational climates relative to that in compliance HR systems/market pricing relational climates (propositions 2e and 2f). Subsequently, propositions concerning the amount and type of helping in commitment HR systems/communal sharing climates (3e and 3f) are expressed in terms relative to the two preceding relational climates. If using a discussion format to address the type and amount of helping issue is preferable, we would be glad to do so.

These actions also address issues raised by R3 (comment 1). We clarify the target of helping behavior as part of offering a more specific definition of helping. Finally, in response to R2 (comments 2 and 5), we moved forward the table containing dimensions used to characterize helping, making it Table 1 in the revision.

Relational Climates. Reviewer 2 (Comment 4) also raised some concerns about your definitions of the three relational climates. As this reviewer notes, "*The three relational climates are explained starting on p.5, but they are never defined separately (that is, a general definition is provided, and then each is described in detail without a formal definition). I think the reader would find it useful to have a 1-2 sentence definition of each climate. As it reads now, the climates are defined in terms that come awfully close to the helping characteristics in Table 2. For example, in equality matching climates, it was noted that relationships are based on the idea that, "matching the others' contributions over time is a cardinal principle." If that's a cardinal principle, then it is hardly surprising that reciprocity is the motivation for exchange, and equality is the justice norm. Thus, the relationship between relational climate and helping behavior characteristics appears in this draft to be a definitional/logical one rather than a causal one. One way to address this concern is to define relational climate in more abstract terms, giving a general definition rather than listing detailed characteristics that overlap with Table 2*."

Reviewer 3 (Comment 8) raised a potentially even greater concern and noted that "*It seems that the HR structures are being somewhat defined by the relational climates. I noticed this to a great extent in the discussion of collaborative-based HR practices but also for the commitment-based. This may stem from an unclear conceptualization of the HR systems (comment 7) but it also goes back to my question in comment 4 regarding the link between HR systems and relational climates (alignment vs. HR facilitating climates for helping?) I just worry about whether HR systems are being confounded with relational climates for helping; the descriptions of the HR systems seem to greatly reflect the nature of the helping*." In your revision it is imperative that you ensure that your key constructs have clear conceptual distinction.

E2d. Regarding R2 (comment 4), we now separately define "relational climate," and briefly describe it in connection with Fiske's (1992) relational models theory (see pp. 6-7). We also provide one to two sentence definitions of the three relational climates, as R2 suggested (p. 8). Broadly speaking, relational climate refers to employee perceptions and appraisals of policies, practices, and behaviors that affect interpersonal relationships in a given setting. We suggest varying relational climates exist in organizations, as has been the case for other facet-specific climates like service, safety, and ethics (Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). Although researchers have considered relational issues and contexts in organizations, relational climate per se has not been directly examined. However, organizational researchers considering how relationships operate as a context for interaction (e.g., Blatt, 2009; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Sheppard & Sherman, 1998) have relied on Fiske's (1992) relational models theory to convey how contextual differences can affect important organizational outcomes. Therefore, we proposed Fiske's framework as a theoretical means for differentiating among particular relational climates.

Originally, our paper followed the relational models tradition, which does not emphasize separating relational behaviors from the relationships (i.e., contexts) in which they occur. To avoid confusion, we should have noted that the dimensions appearing in revised Table 1 were used to delineate the motivation and sustenance of helping across three relational climates, rather than to define helping itself. In the revision, we devote much more attention to relational climate—its definition, underlying dimensions, and delineation of three theory-based variations of relational climate. In preparing the original submission, we had conducted a focused review of the relevant organizational literature to uncover characteristics or dimensions commonly used in organization-relevant studies dealing with relational phenomena. We now report this search activity (p. 8) in the revision, and provide references that are representative (but not exhaustive) from areas reviewed.

As an aside, the issue that R2 raised of separating climate and behavior causally is more challenging when relationships and interpersonal behavior are concerned. Some researchers have noted this happens because behavior that is relational is labeled as such because it occurs within the context of a relationship (cf. Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). MacNeil's (1987: 273) comment on exchange behavior exemplifies this perspective: "All exchanges occur in relations." Organizational researchers have not confronted this issue as much as scholars in other fields (e.g., family studies). We prefer to not delve into this broader issue at this juncture, feeling that it is more important to focus on links between HR systems, relational climates, and helping.

E2e. Regarding R3 (comment 8) and your concerns about a confounding of HR systems with relational climate, we recognize (as noted in the overview of responses above) that our attempt to integrate HR systems and relational climates blurred distinctions between them. Recognizing these concerns, we took the following actions. First, we unpacked these elements by emphasizing each separately before moving to their interconnections and associations with helping behavior. In the revision, we present our ideas in more linear fashion and convey that each HR system facilitates the development of a particular relational climate.

Related, we removed from the paper material concerning Giddens' (1984) structuration theory. We used the structuration concept to suggest HR systems affect relational climates and vice-versa. Although this is a conceptually defensible position, we believe the HR systems have a stronger affect on relational climate than the reverse. Because a central purpose of our paper coincides with this notion, it seems best to convey it through conceptual arguments found in the organizational climate literature.

HR Systems. In your arguments you suggest that collaborative HR systems are an intermediate structure between compliance and commitment based HR approaches. This is an interesting point. At first glance, this is certainly plausible but, upon further reflection, I'm not sure it is this simple. This is a point noted by the reviewers. For example, reviewer 2 (Comment 9) writes, "*I do not understand why collaboration-based practices are a middle ground between compliance and commitment-based HR practices. Even if this is described in Lepak & Snell, please provide an explanation here.*" Reviewer 3 (Comment 8) raises a similar point and writes, "*I believe you need to offer a clear conceptualization of this HR system beyond being "intermediate" or a mix of the other two in order to then pose arguments for the link to a specific relational climate (e.g., equality matching) vs. the other forms of relational climates.*"

Related, you note that compliance and commitment are at opposite ends of a continuum. This is an interesting question and one that has been presented in different ways in the strategic HRM literature. Why do you posit that they are opposite ends of a single continuum? Is it possible to have practices that strive to encourage commitment while also encouraging compliance – it might not be likely but does

scoring high on one scale require scoring low on the other?

Where are you getting your practices for your arguments? It seems as though you are drawing on a lot of different studies to support your points but, I am wondering, if all these studies focus on a clear set of practices within a particular HR system. For example, you suggest that "the close relationships experienced [in commitment HR systems] bring instrumental and expressive benefits." This is certainly plausible but how this is limited to a commitment approach and not applicable to a collaborative approach. You also note that "work design within a commitment-based HR context features greater interdependence and involvement than in compliance-or even collaborative-based structures." This is certainly plausible but I could make a counter point that it would be the same between collaborative and commitment.

Perhaps more to the point, do you really need to differentiate specific practices for a particular HR system? The point of the HR systems is that their combination of practices drives their effect (i.e., commitment, collaboration) rather than a single practice. In other words, interdependence could be equally high on both and that would not detract from your point, though it might require revising your arguments some. Conceptually, what is included in your HR systems should be grounded in well-established theory. Right now, I'm not so sure that there is a coherent logic as to what practices are considered commitment, collaborative, or compliance and why they are only in one and not another.

Related, with the introduction of multiple HR systems, I have a couple of additional questions that I would like to raise.
- Are these mutually exclusive?
- Is the system in use reflective of a single HR system or of bits and pieces of others? Your discussion of these systems is very much implying that a single coherent system is in place that reflects the system you discuss. How realistic is this and, that the system in place would reflect one of these three? Or, is it more logical that the more a system resembles some ideal type – the more strongly they will predict the helping behaviors?
- In a single organization, different groups are managed differently. If two people are managed differently (exposed to different HR systems), what impact does that have on helping within the organization? Does it matter or are you really focused solely on how one person is oriented toward helping – rather than the helping exchange? For example, your equality matching climate implies that we are familiar with each other's needs. But, if you are managed via a compliance oriented HR systems, and I am managed under a collaborative, this balance is thrown off. I might be aware of your situation but you would not be of mine (or not care). So, does this imply that you are model only applies to people sharing an HR system?

Adopting a broader perspective, a significant concern I have with these systems is that I'm not sure where their boundaries lie and why they are where they are.

E2f. R2 (comment 9), R3 (comment 8), and you voiced concerns with our depiction of the HR systems along a unidimensional continuum and positioning of the collaboration system simply as an intermediate relative to the others. The "continuum" issue is not a simple one, as reflected by debates in the strategic HR literature. In the initial submission, we framed compliance and commitment systems as embodying divergent philosophies of how human/social capital is valued and controlled. We suggested that features of a collaboration system are not as extreme, but should not have implied its singular distinction was as an intermediary of the other two. Recognizing that philosophies concerning the human side of enterprise do not provide sufficient rigor for developing our arguments, we have taken a different tack. To provide a more theoretically rigorous foundation, we draw on Lepak and Snell (1999) in defining the three HR systems. Specifically, we focus on the HR system dimensions that would be most relevant to shaping relational climates—the employment relationship and employment mode—and also

describe each HR system's broad approach to managing employees. Because our purpose in discussing the HR systems differs from Lepak and Snell's, the revision does not cover all topics they addressed (e.g., value and uniqueness of employees).

Defining a collaboration system is more challenging than with the other two systems because they have been addressed more frequently in the literature. In defining collaboration systems, we again rely on Lepak and Snell, but also on Walton (1985) for precedent (see pp. 15-16). We (and these authors) describe a collaboration system as including elements of compliance and commitment systems, but not so as to render it merely a middle-ground entity. We feel collaboration systems are unique and accomplish ends varying from those of compliance and commitment systems. Thus, we suggest collaboration systems can also lead to a distinct relational climate.

In terms of practices, we now discuss these separately from our introduction and description of the three HR systems. Consistent with much strategic HR literature, we acknowledge on pp. 13 and 30 that there likely are multiple combinations of practices by which each HR system could be represented. Drawing from salient research, we discuss select practices to exemplify instances of how each HR system might be operationalized. The cited work also illustrates how practices supporting a given system can influence task-focused and person-focused helping, and the overall level of helping anticipated within HR systems and associated relational climates.

We feel these illustrative practices are reasonable to expect, given the overarching approach to managing employees, the employment relationship, and the employment mode of each HR system. It should be noted that we are not citing these studies to derive the practices; the practices are derived based on the broader elements of the HR systems. We feel an advantage of discussing specific HR practices is to show that scholars have examined helping-related issues in ways relevant to our proposed framework. This also provides a look at how our framework ties in with some specific HR practices.

Regarding your additional questions about the HR systems, we now state in the manuscript that the HR systems are ideal types (i.e., archetypes, see pp. 4-6). Thus, as conceptually ideal types, we envision them as mutually exclusive. We recognize, however, that organizations will not necessarily apply these as single coherent systems—a point we now discuss on pp. 29-30. To the extent an HR system resembles one of these ideal types (i.e., has a particular approach to employees, relies on a particular employment relationship and mode, and implements a conceptually consistent configuration of practices), the corresponding relational climate and types of helping will be more likely to emerge. Updated material in the Discussion also mentions that a strong climate might fail to emerge when the HR system is not internally aligned, and thus employees receive ambiguous signals.

Related to this issue is your question about use of multiple HR systems within a single organization. Thank you for prompting us to consider this important question, now broached in the Discussion on p. 30. When two people who normally operate under different HR systems (and thus different relational climates) must interact, they might not be comparably motivated to engage in helping behavior. The ways they negotiate helping exchanges could vary dramatically. As you note, differences in the motivation and sustenance of helping can inhibit cross-climate helping over time. When two climates are at odds and employee exchanges must occur, the strength of either or both could result in conflicting or ambiguous helping interactions. By (a) defining the three HR system archetypes in terms of employment relationship, employment mode, and overall approach to valuing and controlling employees and (b) emphasizing the systems in their own right, we attempted to make their theoretical boundaries more apparent.

Propositions
I think you have raised some interesting connections between HR systems and helping behaviors. However, I think the theoretical logic of these connections can be stronger. For example, in proposition 3a you suggest that with commitment HR practices helping behaviors will be motivated by pro-social values and affective bonds. This certainly seems reasonable but the question I would ask is: why. In the preceding section you discussed how commitment HR systems relate to team support, willingness to help, etc. But you haven't made a connection to a particular type of helping behavior. The question then is why particular motivations for helping would vary across HR systems. In your manuscript, these connections between your HR systems and particular motivations for helping (ie. compliance and self-interest), the standards for judgment (ie compliance and norms of equity), or perceptions of risk (ie. compliance and insufficient return on invested behavior) are quite interesting but my concern is that that the theoretical rigor of why these propositions are being offered is not as compelling as it needs to be.

The reviewers also keyed into some concerns about the general logic of your arguments. For example, reviewer 3 (Comment 4) writes, "*I am confused by the statement that "when helping exchanges are aligned with the appropriate relational climates..." (pp. 7-8). This seems to suggest that the type of helping behavior and HR practices are independent and thus should be "aligned" (matched) for positive outcomes. Yet, isn't the argument that HR practices influence the helping behavior and the characteristic of the behavior? So, I'm quite confused by the discussion regarding alignment. I would encourage you to be more careful in discussing "correspondence" between HR practices and relational climates vs. helping behavior influenced by or emerging from HR practices. I assume the latter is your argument, but this is not clear and there is quite a bit of inconsistency throughout the paper. This is the overarching idea of your paper, so how these constructs (i.e., HR systems, relational systems, helping behaviors) relate to one another needs to be made very clear*." As noted above, as you revise your manuscript I think it would be very helpful to be very clear about the specific nature of the relationships underlying your logic.

E2g. Thanks for your comment; we believe the connections are interesting as well. Research is beginning to link strategic HR systems with specific climates (e.g., concern for employees) that affect attitudinal antecedents of helping (affective commitment—Takeuchi, Chen, & Lepak, 2009) and helping itself (Chuang & Liao, 2010). Part of our paper's potential contribution is that it offers an initial framework for understanding how and why HR systems could be expected to influence helping behavior in organizations. Unfortunately, in the original submission we did not clearly frame relational climate as a motivating and sustaining context for helping behavior. We also should have developed the concepts of relational climate and helping behavior independently before attempting to integrate them. In some respects, we interpreted your comments on the propositions as arising from these shortcomings.

An abbreviated answer to the question of why particular motivational and sustaining mechanisms for helping would vary across HR systems is that these systems give rise to distinct relational climates. As we noted above (see responses to comments E1and E2e), HR systems should give rise to particular relational climates, and in turn each relational climate promotes or discourages helping behavior in ways congruent with relationships prototypical for that climate. We have attempted to answer the question of "why" motivations, etc. for helping vary across relational climates by buttressing our whole description of HR systems-relational climate-helping behavior connections (see especially pp. 6-9). We believe that sufficiently clarifying these connections should assist in resolving uncertainties you expressed.

Regarding questions about the alignment of HR systems, relational climates, and helping behavior (R3's comment 4), we did not intend to imply that HR systems and relational climates

arise independently. In revising the paper, we heeded his/her cautions about the terms "alignment" and "correspondence." We revised the Discussion section particularly to avoid giving the impression that systems and climates are independent and require alignment for helping to occur.

Reviewer 3 (comment 6) also raises an important point about the degree of clarity /confusion caused by the introduction of risk, trust, and identity. I think this reviewer is raising an important point about the amount of information underlying your arguments. For example, I agree with this reviewer that "*the relevance of these constructs is not well integrated. I simply wasn't expecting the focus of the proposed relationship to be on trust, identity, and risk. The paper is framed around HR practices and helping behavior, but introducing the notion of trust, risk, and identity seemed at first a bit "off track." I believe I understand, but the approach is a bit confusing to follow as you are linking systems of HR practices to elements of relational climates (e.g., trust), but also discuss specific HR practices and broad relational climates (e.g., market pricing) – these latter variables are not directly incorporated in your propositions but are in large part the basis for the arguments/propositions*." This reviewer makes some excellent comments regarding the structure of your propositions in comment 6 that I encourage you to visit carefully.

E2h. Although relational climate was a central organizing concept in its own right, we attempted to describe its manifestation using key relational characteristics (i.e., Table 1 dimensions). Not discussing relational climate independently caused undue confusion. Therefore, in the revision we first briefly describe what relational climate entails, and then we discuss how the key dimensions were identified for inclusion. We inserted this material on pp. 8-9. We would not argue that all key dimensions have been incorporated. However, our review of the relational literature supports that these are fundamental considerations in most relationships, especially ones formed in organizations between employees.

Our approach in defining relational climate and its constituent dimensions is consistent with that used in establishing other climates (e.g., service climate—see Burke, Borucki, & Hurley, 1992; Schneider, 1990). Descriptions of specific climates tend to have a functional bent, perhaps because of the sense of imperative they project in being "climates for something." In our case that "something" involves relationships. In reviewing the literature to identify dimensions appropriate for describing relational climate, we focused on ones not only apt for describing relationships, but those which had been shown to critically affect relationship viability. Displayed in Table 1, we consider these dimensions as actionable because research has shown that changes in them can influence behaviors exhibited between involved parties.

Because the concept of relational climate is at an inchoate stage, we relied on Fiske's (1992) model as theoretical underpinning. Although relational climate has not been investigated empirically, researchers have compiled a large body of work on relationships (and related phenomena). Through a review of such work, we identified dimensions (trust, risk, etc.) fundamental to relationships and the helping behavior exchanged within them.

"*No Helping Behavior.*" Both reviewers 2 and 3 raised some questions about predicting no

helping behavior. For example, reviewer 3 (comment 3) writes, "*I believe it would be helpful to discuss the role of HR in facilitating "no" helping behavior. That is, the emphasis in your arguments is on differing HR systems facilitating a range of helping climates, but what would likely be the HR system that is likely to hinder helping behavior (e.g., no HR?)? Could it be that a compliance-based HR system is unlikely to stimulate helping behavior but if there is helping, then it would be market-pricing based? Though this notion seems in contrast to your argument on page 11. I'm just wondering when helping behavior is unlikely and the role of HR practices in such a situation.*" Related, reviewer 2 (Comment 7) writes, "*It would seem that some HR policies and management behavior interfere with relationship development, or at least foster competitive rather than cooperative relationships (for example, ranking of employees and limiting bonuses to top employees). Not having a negative relationship climate in this model seems to miss an opportunity to identify how HR can inhibit relationship development and helping. Again, such a radical addition is not necessary but could be used an opportunity to describe why some HR practices have negative side-effects.*"

> E2i. We agree that some HR systems constrain relationship development and encourage competition rather than cooperation. We think this is most likely in compliance systems because of their view of employees as externally driven, reliance on short-term and transactional employment relationships, and emphasis on external employment modes. We stop short, however, of suggesting that helping will not exist in such HR systems and resultant market pricing relational climates. Instead, we argue that helping will be more limited in such situations and more likely task-focused. The new propositions added in response to concerns about the amount and type of helping address this issue (see also response E2c).
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> Even in compliance systems, some employees will need help from others and form relationships to allow this. Perlow and Weeks (2002) described this situation, but in the context of organization culture rather than HR systems. The more fragile nature of relationships formed in a compliance system could mean helping would be harder to deliver as well as seek, lowering the overall level of helping. The closest we come to envisioning a "no help" scenario is when an organization signals incoherently about employee relationships. Something like this might occur when an HR system is in disrepair. This would create a situation in which employees would have difficulty doing their own work much less assisting others. On p. 29 of the Discussion, we address the potentially constraining effects of incoherent HR systems on helping.

Finally, I encourage you to consider revising your propositions. As they stand now, they only make sense with the sentence leading up to the propositions. As noted by Reviewer 2 (Comment 12), "I would modify the hypotheses to include the HR bundle involved. This would allow others to quote the hypotheses directly. It would also help reader skim without confusion."

> E2j. Thank you for this suggestion. We have reworded the propositions accordingly.

3) Incorporating Relevant and Recent Literature. The reviewers also provided some excellent suggestions for additional research that you might consider. For example, Reviewer 1 (comment 4) notes that "Kabanoff's (1991) discussion of equality, equity, and need would fit nicely with your work and … Pfeffer and Langton's (1993) article on the effects of pay dispersion might be relevant." Reviewer 3 raised an additional point that I think is more critical to consider. S/he noted in comment 2), "How are your arguments similar or distinct from arguments surrounding psychological contracts? While I am not

necessarily questioning your theoretical framework, I was surprised to see that the psych contract literature was not incorporated given the relevant to relational exchanges of focus here." I realize that you already reference a wide ranging literature but I share this reviewer's concerns about the relationship between your ideas and psychological contracts. I think at a minimum, incorporating this literature would provide additional theoretical logic to your arguments.

> E3a. We included Kabanoff (1991) as well as Pfeffer and Langton (1993) in the revision.

> E3b. We thank R3 and you for stimulating us to reconsider the relevance of psychological contracts for the paper. Although the psychological contract literature contains parallels with our arguments, we had cited it but once (Robinson, Kraatz, & Rousseau, 1994), because it pertains to informal exchanges between employees and the organization rather than just between employees. However, in revising the paper, we realized the psychological contract concept was very useful in conceptualizing our three archetypal HR systems and their connection with relational climates. In particular, we now reference this concept in discussing: a) the employment relationship element of HR systems (especially p. 5); b) HR system signaling that can influence employees' perceptions of relational climate (pp. 5-6); and c) the process of identifying dimensions that describe the maintenance and sustenance of helping across the relational climates (p. 8).

4) Future Directions. Looking across the reviewers and my own sentiments regarding your manuscript, our advice for moving forward is to consider doing more with less. As noted by reviewer 3 (Comment 6) suggests you might be better served be doing more with less. S/he writes, "*you are incorporating quite a lot of different and rich constructs such as trust, risk, and identity, yet this seems a bit "off track" from the general focus on HR systems and helping behavior. There is certainly a rich literature on trust development, for example, and I'm not sure you can do this literature justice in this paper. Would it make sense to perhaps focus in a bit and drop the propositions for trust and identity (for example)*?" While this is only a suggestion and I encourage you to pursue the avenue you believe best to clearly portray compelling arguments, this reviewer is correct that you are covering a lot of material in your manuscript. You can certainly retain all of it but you might consider the potential benefits of greater depth on these arguments.

Reiterating my comments in point 1, I strongly encourage you to focus on a clearer theoretical contribution. For example, the paper is set up as focusing on HR systems and helping behaviors, yet, your propositions focus on risk, identity, trust, etc. What is the essence of the arguments you want to make? Currently, it seems as though you have several different potential foci and providing clarity to the contribution of your manuscript to the literature would be very helpful and instrumental for a successful revision.

Viewed in combination, you can see that the reviewers and I have a number of concerns that we believe you need to address. I recognize that successfully addressing the reviewers' concerns will require a great deal of effort and a moderate amount of risk. However, I do encourage you to try to address our concerns, as we all like the basic idea of what you are trying to do

> E4. We were mindful of your advice to "do more with less" in revising the paper. When working to buttress the rigor of our explanations involving major elements of the paper (i.e., HR systems, relational climates, and helping), we deleted material that became less central to our arguments.

For example, we used the organizational climate literature to explain connections between HR systems and relational climates, and consequently removed structuration theory. We removed consideration of identity orientation (as R3 suggested), recognizing that this construct pertained more to an individual than that person's relational exchanges with others. We still include trust, however, because our review reveals it as fundamental in exchange relationships. In all, we added over 25 new references, but deleted about the same number.

We suspect the perception of trying to do too much arose partly because we did not explain clearly enough what we were trying to do in proposing our framework. Clarifying connections between major elements of our framework will hopefully alleviate this perception. Our focus involved integrating concepts from two areas (i.e., HRM and OB). Although we would have liked to discuss certain constructs in greater detail (e.g., trust, justice, risk), in the space available it seemed more important to emphasize linkages among the major elements of the paper. In short, we added depth to better explain the key linkages. The issue of bandwidth versus fidelity can surface when integrating concepts that have been studied as domains unto themselves. If you perceive we have not struck the correct balance on this issue, we welcome an opportunity to address it going forward.

References cited in the responses but not contained in the paper

Cameron K. S., & Quinn, R. E. 1998. **Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework**. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Giddens, Anthony 1984. **The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration.** Cambridge: Polity.

MacNeil, I. R. 1987. Relational contract theory as sociology: A reply to Professors Lindenberg and de Vos. **Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics**, 143: 272-290.

Burke, M. J., Borucki, C. C., & Hurley, A. E. 1992. Reconceptualizing psychological climate in a retail service environment: A multiple-stakeholder perspective. **Journal of Applied Psychology**, 77: 717-729.

The authors propose to develop linkages between HR practices and forms of helping behavior. Their assumptions are many, but two in particular are noteworthy: (a) that appropriate HR practices can help influence the nature of the relationships and character of helping within organizations, and (b) that these relationships influence employee behaviors and establish social capital as a source of competitive advantage.

In terms of comments I have only a few.

1. The paper is thorough, very well written, and systematically addresses the HR characteristics and important linkages within each of the different relational climates. I found that the emphasis on relationships that promote helping behaviors was refreshing and the authors offer important insights. The authors actually make more linkages that are explicitly stated. For instance, the relational emphasis brings together not only many aspects of HR but also many important organizational behavior issues. I particularly appreciated the section on page 28 addressing when some practices might be counterproductive. I can sincerely say that this is one of the better papers I have had the pleasure of reviewing.

> R1#1. Thank you for your kind compliments. We endeavored to improve the paper by incorporating comments from the editor, you, and the other reviewers. We hope you will view our revision attempt positively.

2. As I was read the paper for the second time, I could not help but wonder why you did not also make some links between the relational climates on the one hand, and organizational competitive strategies (e.g., Barney, or Porter) on the other. Some of climates are vertically congruent (or incongruent) with a cost leadership strategy. Some climates are congruent (or incongruent) with product or service differentiation strategy. You might close the loop with organizational strategy.

> R1#2. We agree that some climates will be congruent or incongruent with certain HR strategies. Specifically, on p. 5 we now note there are legitimate strategic reasons why an organization would or would not pursue a given HR system. However, the purpose of our paper is not to explore these reasons, but rather to consider what might happen relationally after an organization implements a particular HR system. As prior work has addressed strategic links between strategy and HR systems (e.g., Lepak & Snell, 1999, in particular), we thought it best to leave this issue to others who can address it in greater depth. We assume an HR system misaligned with organizational strategy will create a host of difficulties beyond relational climates and helping and briefly address this issue in the Discussion (p. 27).

> We had considered parallels between an organizational culture model, the competing values model (see Cameron & Quinn, 1998), and our relational climates. After considering integrating this macro level framework, we worried that the richness gained might be offset by additional complexity. Incorporating another level of analysis in the paper also seemed at odds with the editor and other reviewers' comments that we might be trying to do too much in the paper. Thank you for the suggestion. If you feel it vital, we could attempt to bring the competing values model into the revision.

3. I would like the author(s) to place in the paper a caveat or two that effective systems in and of themselves do not guarantee success in terms of helping behavior. You touch on this lightly on page 28, but I would like the point made explicit. As Frost (2003) described, for example, a toxic leader can screw it up.

> R1#3. We have reinforced the idea you expressed, adding two references—Frost (2004) and Macoby (2000)—to the Discussion (p. 31). We mention how managers can all but block the development of employee helping behavior, but did not feel we had the space to discuss this issue at length. We can add to this material if necessary.

4. Although your literature review is impressive, I think that Kabanoff's (1991) discussion of equality, equity, and need would fit nicely with your work and should be cited. Moreover, I thought that Pfeffer and Langton's (1993) article on the effects of pay dispersion might be relevant.

> R1#4. Thank you for having us to revisit this article. We did not cite Kabanoff (1991) in the original submission, thinking his focus on power differentiation conflicted with our decision to exclude relational climates where parties to the relationship differed in hierarchical status (as noted on p. 8). However, the introductory part of his paper does recognize the justice norms (equity, equality, needs) in our framework—"Equity, equality, and a number of other distributive rules (e.g., need) are called on, depending on the nature of the social context or the form of social interdependence that is involved" (p. 417). We can see parallels between Kabanoff's and our work, and now cite it in connection with justice norms (p. 9).

> We were not aware of Pfeffer and Langton (1993). Their research on pay range compression works well where we discuss compensation practices in collaboration systems. We have included this article in the revision (p. 20). Thanks again for bringing it to our attention.

5. There are places in the paper that would benefit from concrete examples to make your points more clear. For instance, what industries or business context might exemplify the climates that you describe? Alternatively, you might denote situations where these climates might succeed or fail. For instance, would a widely dispersed global company find it difficult to achieve communal sharing?

> R1#5. We did not feel expanding to the industry level and maintaining the theoretical rigor of our framework would be possible, without lengthening the paper. We had alluded briefly to organizations in different industries in the original Discussion section. We bolstered this material by mentioning that some work has looked at helping across companies but not across units within them. This whole issue could be relevant especially from a cross-cultural perspective, and we hope to develop this idea in future work.

> Additionally, at the editor's and another reviewer's requests, we reworked the Discussion section to underscore helping's connections with flexibility. We also revised paragraphs in the "Implications and Future Research" section to provide some general examples. If you have a specific concrete example for us to address, we would like an opportunity to do so.

6. Given your understanding into these systems, what counsel might you offer researchers who might consider empirically testing some of your propositions?

R1#6. Given the likely empirical complexity of testing our proposed framework, this is an important issue and we thank you for stimulating us to address it. On p. 28, we added a paragraph discussing some key empirical considerations for future research. Issues we highlight include study design and data sources.

7. The paper contains the word "may" I would estimate between 20-30 times. The word "may" has to do with granting permission, and does not make sense in the way you use it. Please substitute alternatives words such as "can" or "will" or "might." This point is worth noting because it distracted me and I know distracts other writers.

R1#7. As you suggested, we have eliminated our overuse of "may" from the revision. Thank you for noting this.

We are quite appreciative of your comments and suggestions, and have attempted to respond as fully as possible. For various reasons, we felt unable to expand the paper to fully incorporate particular macro-level material you suggested. Where this occurred, we attempted to explain the rationale for our actions. We feel like the revision presents a more clearly integrated perspective on connections between HR systems, relational climates, and helping behavior. If there are issues that you feel remain to be addressed, we would welcome an opportunity to do so.

Comments from Reviewer 2:

This paper describes a theory describing the relationship among HR bundles and relational climates and between relational climates and characteristics of helping behavior. The theory seems a natural extension of prior models on HR bundles, applied to a unique and important criterion domain. The paper is easy to follow because it is logically structured. My suggestions for improvement:

> Thanks for the positive comment on the paper's readability. We have attempted to strengthen the paper by incorporating comments from the editor, you, and the other reviewers. When one of your comments was related to one of the editor's, we sometimes refer you to our response to his comment also.

1. The language used in the introduction seems loose to me. For example, you note that helping behavior is a robust predictor of performance (paraphrase from second and third sentences) and "has become more important in light of movement toward greater employee involvement, interactive work structures, and the development of social capital within organizations." It seems to me that helping behavior is not more important because of social capital, but is enabled by it. I think the argument here should focus on the nature of work, which has become increasingly complex and thus requires people to work together. The phrase, "as helping behavior involves an agentic process though which individual positively affect others…" also held little appeal for me. It seems overly wordy and stuffy. I found most of the rest of the paper well-written but this first paragraph was rough.

> R1#1. Our wording was loose with regard to the statement involving social capital. We agree helping is enabled by social capital and thank you for catching this. Rather than mention social capital in this sentence, we now cite Beltran et al.'s (2008) piece on human resource flexibility. Also, we modified the sentence you mentioned. We assumed that the phrase "agentic process" stimulated your reaction, and removed it. If our introduction still needs smoothing, we stand ready to do so.

2. I'd like to see 'helping' better defined and established within one or more literatures. You mention that it has been investigated under various guises, but then do not ever define or explain these different guises. In this vein, the dimensions on Table 2 were not explained. Why these, and not others? And how do these relate to various helping behaviors? As I understand it, these capture the characteristics of helping behavior, but this isn't explained much, and it certainly isn't defined early in the manuscript. Do these dimensions relate to different types of helping, such as prosocial behavior and OCB? Are they all of equal value to the organization? It seems to me that the ultimate implications of different relational climates are explained only in terms of these dimensions without any connection to more typical DV's used in organizational research.

> R2#2. On p. 3, we now define helping and state that it differs in important ways from other OCBs. This positions helping in the broader OCB literature, and contrasts it with prosocial behaviors like voice, whistle blowing, and civic virtue. Additionally on p.8-9, we mention the literature from which the dimensions in Table 1 (old Table 2) were derived, and our rationale for choosing these particular dimensions. In our previous draft, the origin of these dimensions was unclear (see also responses E2b, E2c, E2g, and E2h to the editor). In the revision, we clarify that motivation for exchange, justice norm, perceived risk, and emergent trust are keys for understanding how the motivation and sustenance of helping differs across the three relational climates.

3. Related to this point, on p.10 you noted that in compliance-based climates "helping is less likely to emerge unless it is rewarded." This suggests the model will eventually address general or overall level of helping. However, as I understand it, the model addresses characteristics of helping rather than level of helping. Please consider how you might address this discrepancy. Can you add a general or overall level of helping to what is now Table 2? Perhaps moving from low to high? If you do not expect helping to differ in amount but instead only in kind, then please edit the paper carefully to remove language that implies such a hypothesis is forthcoming.

> R2#3. In defining helping behavior in the revision, we note two variants (i.e., task- and person-focused) commonly recognized in the literature. Regarding your suggestion about overall level of helping, we included propositions that address the level of these two helping behaviors likely to be manifested with each HR system-relational climate combination. The propositions are expressed in terms of the relative (rather than absolute) amount of these helping behaviors.

> The editor referred to your comment (R2#3) in a few of his. Additional detailed responses relevant to concerns you raised are found in responses E2b, E2c, and E2i to the editor.

4. The three relational climates are explained starting on p.5, but they are never defined separately (that is, a general definition is provided, and then each is described in detail without a formal definition). I think the reader would find it useful to have a 1-2 sentence definition of each climate. As it reads now, the climates are defined in terms that come awfully close to the helping characteristics in Table 2. For example, in equality matching climates, it was noted that relationships are based on the idea that, "matching the others' contributions over time is a cardinal principle." If that's a cardinal principle, then it is hardly surprising that reciprocity is the motivation for exchange, and equality is the justice norm. Thus, the relationship between relational climate and helping behavior characteristics appears in this draft to be a definitional/logical one rather than a causal one. One way to address this concern is to define relational climate in more abstract terms, giving a general definition rather than listing detailed characteristics that overlap with Table 2.

> R2#4. We inserted a new section in the paper, "Relational Climates: Schema and Dimensions" to address concerns you expressed. Following your recommendation, we offer a general definition of relational climate, followed by one to two sentence definitions for each of the focal relational climates (see pp. 7-8). Our definition of relational climate was grounded in both the broader organizational climate literature and Fiske's (1992) relational models theory. As noted in the paper, his theory is the source for the three climates. We also outline our rationale for selecting certain relational processes as key dimensions (shown in Table 1) for describing relational climate (pp. 8-9). In subsequent sections of the paper, we offer propositions that characterize the motivation and sustenance of helping in each relational climate using these dimensions. These actions underscore that a contribution of the paper is to describe how relational climates emerge and how the motivation and sustenance of helping varies in the three climates along the proposed dimensions (see response E2d to the editor for additional detail).

5. Table 2 seems misplaced to me. I'd like to see more detail on helping behavior and relational climates before HR systems are described. So as suggested in my point #2 above, I think this table

should come earlier. This is perhaps my general preference for starting theory development with the DV in mind. Such a radical re-ordering might not be necessary but you might consider it.

> R2#5. As noted in an above response (R2#2), we followed your counsel. Table 2 from the original submission is now Table 1, and it is introduced much earlier in the paper (p. 9).

6. On p.3, you note that "Becker and Huselid argue for research on differentiating among practices toward specific employees." I do not think your theory addresses that, as it does not differentiate between core and non-core workforce, or between employees serving different roles. Therefore, I think you should delete this sentence.

> R2#6. We agree. We recognize, however, that organizations can implement multiple HR systems directed at different employees and, as such, multiple relational climates may exist within a single organization. As the purpose of the paper is not to describe strategic reasons why an organization might choose to use different systems with different employees, we simply deleted the sentence you mention above.

7. The language used on p. 3 raises a question for me: "relational climates refer to employee perceptions and appraisal of policies, practices, and behaviors that foster and support interpersonal relationships and exchanges among employees." This assumes that all relational climates support relationships. It would seem that some HR policies and management behavior interfere with relationship development, or at least foster competitive rather than cooperative relationships (for example, ranking of employees and limiting bonuses to top employees). Not having a negative relationship climate in this model seems to miss an opportunity to identify how HR can inhibit relationship development and helping. Again, such a radical addition is not necessary but could be used an opportunity to describe why some HR practices have negative side-effects.

> R2#7. We suggest that each relational climate supports a form of relationship. As you note, in a market pricing climate relationships are constrained and likely to involve competition as much as cooperation. However, the relationships are likely to exist nonetheless. We believe the new propositions (1e, 1f, 2e, 2f, 3e, and 3f) regarding the nature and prevalence of helping get at the heart of this issue (see pp 15, 20, and 25, respectively). Specifically, we describe how compliance HR systems minimize opportunities for ongoing, cooperative relationships to develop. Helping in the resulting market pricing climate is motivated and sustained by concerns built on cost-benefit assessments. In turn, helping is most likely to be constrained and largely task-focused (see pp. 14-15). Alternatively, because the other two HR systems provide more opportunities for cooperative, long-term relationships to develop, helping will be more likely overall and person-focused helping should be more prevalent than in compliance HR systems (see pp. 19-21 and 24-25).

> We did not attempt to include a negative relationship climate in our framework at this juncture. We can see how this would open the conversation to ways of repairing problems caused by negative climates. However, given that relational climate is a new concept, we wanted to devote more space to firmly establishing it before considering its "dark side." This would be an interesting direction to explore in the future.

8. The language on p. 6 also raises question for me: "HR practice bundles can be viewed as coherent social structures." HR practice bundles are not social structures; they are policies and procedures that influence social structure. I think this is just a concern over wording but please clarify whether you see these as structures or as influencing structures.

> R2#8. We agree that HR systems influence structures. The above quote reflects terminology common to structuration theory, which is appearing more often in the organization-related literatures (Dutton, Worline, Frost, & Lilius, 2006; Perlow, Gittell, & Katz, 2004; Toh, Morgeson, & Campion, 2008). However, in the revision, we grounded relational climate within the theoretical lineage of organization climate rather than structuration theory, and removed mention of the latter from the paper. This change also eliminates the quoted sentence. Please see response E2e to the editor for related information.

9. I do not understand why collaboration-based practices are a middle ground between compliance and commitment-based HR practices. Even if this is described in Lepak & Snell, please provide an explanation here. This is an important issue to address on p.7.

> R2#9. We believe a collaboration HR system has sufficiently different qualities and leads to a distinguishable relational climate. However, as noted in our response to the editor on this point (E2f), our original description of HR systems was not exacting enough. We initially portrayed compliance and commitment systems as embodying divergent philosophies of how human/social capital is valued and controlled. We suggested that features of a collaboration system are not as extreme, but should not have implied its singular distinction was as an intermediary between the other two along a single continuum. We removed the continuum idea from the revision, and better explain the collaboration HR system.

> We now draw on Lepak and Snell (1999) in defining the three HR systems. Specifically, we focus on the HR system dimensions that are most relevant to shaping relational climates—the employment relationship and employment mode—and also describe each HR system's broad approach to managing employees. Rudiments of the other two systems have been addressed more frequently in the literature, but defining the collaboration system was more challenging. To do so, we rely on Lepak and Snell (1999) and Walton (1985) for precedent (see pp.4-5 and 15-16). We depict a collaboration system as including elements from compliance and commitment systems, but do not render it as only a middle-ground entity. We feel collaboration systems are unique and accomplish ends varying from those of compliance and commitment systems. Thus, we suggest collaboration systems lead to a distinct relational climate. We hope these actions address your concern. If you desire further explanation, we would appreciate an opportunity to provide it.

10. On p.10 you introduce the idea of "unsuccessful helping attempts." I think this language is confusing because it introduces the idea that helping may have good or bad outcomes, and this outside the scope of the theory (as I understand it). I think the same point can be by simply discussing when people will request and provide help (and set aside whether that helping will be successful or unsuccessful).

R2#10. Thank you for noting the ambiguity of this statement. Indeed it deals with issues outside our focus, and was removed from the revision.

11. When you discuss the effects of training on social climates, you might consider reading Brown and Van Buren (2007), who address how training can influence social relationships (see citation in Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009, Annual Review of Psychology).

R2#11. Thank you for this suggestion. We now cite Brown and Van Buren's work when discussing training and development in collaboration systems, noting that training in interpersonal interactions can increase the density of social networks (p. 19).

12. I would modify the hypotheses to include the HR bundle involved. This would allow others to quote the hypotheses directly. It would also help reader skim without confusion.

R2#12. Thank you for this suggestion. We have altered the propositions accordingly.

13. On p.26 you note that you "portrayed helping behavior… that can increase organizations' flexibility to meet competitive demands." I don't think that benefit of helping behavior was really emphasized in the introduction. I would suggest either beefing up that part of the introduction, or adding some material on flexibility in the discussion prior to making this claim.

R2#13. In the paper's first paragraph, we now mention HR flexibility as an important benefit of helping. We also added material regarding flexibility to the Discussion on pp. 26-27, stating that a contribution of the paper is to recognize helping as a means of achieving behavioral flexibility. Our framework is consistent with Wright and Snell's (1998) description of behavioral flexibility as partly emerging through scripts which employees gain knowledge of during workplace interactions. In a sense, our framework describes three helping "scripts" associated with specific relational climates.

14. In the discussion the following idea is introduced: "managers should consider the form of helping behavior that is most congruent with particular strategic objectives." This seems to be a critical idea. So critical in fact, that it should probably be introduced earlier, and probably not be introduced in the middle of a paragraph halfway through the discussion. I'd like to see this idea described in a standalone section in the discussion.

R2#14. We addressed this issue closer to the front of the Discussion (p. 27) in a standalone paragraph beginning with, "When implementing HR systems to increase flexibility..." To create a link with the flexibility material added in response to your comment R2#13, we discuss organizations' flexibility needs and illustrate how each HR system-relational climate pairing can be appropriate under certain conditions.

We sincerely appreciate your insightful comments and suggestions for revising the paper. We earnestly attempted to incorporate changes and address points you raised. We believe the paper has been improved and represents more of a contribution to the literature. We hope you think so too.

<u>Comments from Reviewer 3:</u>

This research examines the link between HR practices, relational climates, and employee helping behavior. I found this to be a generally well-written and very interesting paper. I believe that it holds a lot of potential but also believe there are aspects in need of significant clarification and/or further explanation.

> Thank you for the positive comments about the paper. We attempted to provide the requested clarification and explanation, attending to comments from the editor, you, and other reviewers. Our responses to your comments follow below. When a comment of yours is related to one of the editor's, we refer you to our response to his comment also.

1. I would like to see a clear definition of "helping behavior" early on in the manuscript. You cite the literature on OCBs, but it is unclear if you are equating OCBs and helping behavior. Related, it is not completely clear who the helping behavior is directed toward, though the targets as those at "similar hierarchical status" is briefly noted at the top of page 5 in discussing authority ranking.

> R3#1. Our focus is on interpersonal helping, as this type of prosocial behavior is most salient for discussing help exchanged in the context of relationships between employees. We now more fully define helping behavior at the outset (p. 3), and include that it concerns task- and person-focused needs. With regard to targets, we also note that helping connotes relations among employees at similar rather than different hierarchical levels. Thus, we focus on helping targeted at coworkers and others at comparable organizational levels. Finally, we distinguish helping from other prosocial and proactive behaviors. Please see response E2a to the editor's comments for additional detail.

2. How are your arguments similar or distinct from arguments surrounding psychological contracts? While I am not necessarily questioning your theoretical framework, I was surprised to see that the psych contract literature was not incorporated given the relevant to relational exchanges of focus here.

> R3#2. We addressed your question and the editor's comments on this point together in response E3b. We do want to sincerely thank you for encouraging us to incorporate the psychological contract construct in the paper. In the revision, the concept of psychological contracts served as a parallel to our relational climates, and was useful in defining our three archetypal HR systems.

3. I believe it would be helpful to discuss the role of HR in facilitating "no" helping behavior. That is, the emphasis in your arguments is on differing HR systems facilitating a range of helping climates, but what would likely be the HR system that is likely to hinder helping behavior (e.g., no HR?)? Could it be that a compliance-based HR system is unlikely to stimulate helping behavior but if there is helping, then it would be market-pricing based? Though this notion seems in contrast to your argument on page 11. I'm just wondering when helping behavior is unlikely and the role of HR practices in such a situation.

> R3#3. For a more detailed response regarding this issue, please see response E2i to the editor. In brief, it would be surprising for a functional HR system to completely extinguish helping. We do, however, expect helping to be more constrained in compliance HR systems than in collaboration or commitment systems. The new propositions regarding amount of helping (propositions 1e, 1f, 2e, 2f, 3e, and 3f; see pp. 15, 20, and 25) address this expectation in a relative sense. We also mention in the

Discussion that helping may be hindered when the HR system is not internally coherent and employees receive conflicting signals regarding expectations for helping behavior (p. 29).

4. On the other hand, I am confused by the statement that "when helping exchanges are aligned with the appropriate relational climates…" (pp. 7-8). This seems to suggest that the type of helping behavior and HR practices are independent and thus should be "aligned" (matched) for positive outcomes. Yet, isn't the argument that HR practices influence the helping behavior and the characteristic of the behavior? So, I'm quite confused by the discussion regarding alignment. I would encourage you to be more careful in discussing "correspondence" between HR practices and relational climates vs. helping behavior influenced by or emerging from HR practices. I assume the latter is your argument, but this is not clear and there is quite a bit of inconsistency throughout the paper. This is the overarching idea of your paper, so how these constructs (i.e., HR systems, relational systems, helping behaviors) relate to one another needs to be made very clear.

R3#4. We argue HR systems should give rise to particular relational climates, and in turn, helping behavior in each relational climate is promoted in ways congruent with that climate. In the original submission, our approach to integrating HR systems and relational climates obfuscated distinctions between them. To rectify this, we emphasized each in its own right before discussing their interconnection and links with helping behavior.

Regarding alignment specifically, we did not mean to imply that HR systems and relational climates arise independently and then must be appropriately fitted together. The correspondence between HR systems and relational climates occurs because the latter emerge out of the former. We added material explaining and supporting this notion in the revision (see especially pp. 5-7). We heeded your cautions about the terms "alignment" and "correspondence." We also revised the Discussion section particularly to avoid giving the impression that systems and climates are independent and require alignment for helping to occur.

5. There seems to be a lot of important caveats and explanations in the paragraph immediately before the section on Compliance-Based HR… (p.8); yet I was not sure what you are trying to emphasize here. You mention variance across climates, trust being relevant, and identity orientation but none of these ideas are fully developed.

R3#5. On p. 8 and in the paragraph you mention, we were attempting to outline how the paper would proceed from that point. As noted in the overview of responses to editor and reviewer comments, our initial approach in developing the paper was not sufficiently linear. As a result of other changes made in the revision process, this paragraph is no longer in the manuscript.

On pp. 9-10 of the revision, a new paragraph is used to outline how the paper unfolds from that point. Because HR systems and relational climates have already been introduced prior to this juncture, we could more clearly state how the paper is subsequently developed.

6. I'm struggling a bit with the propositions offered and in particular those related to risk, trust, and identity. This also relates to comment 5 above – the relevance of these constructs is not well integrated. I

simply wasn't expecting the focus of the proposed relationship to be on trust, identity, and risk. The paper is framed around HR practices and helping behavior, but introducing the notion of trust, risk, and identity seemed at first a bit "of track." I believe I understand, but the approach is a bit confusing to follow as you are linking systems of HR practices to elements of relational climates (e.g., trust), but also discuss specific HR practices and broad relational climates (e.g., market pricing) – these latter variables are not directly incorporated in your propositions but are in large part the basis for the arguments/propositions. Piecing this altogether is thus a challenge and leaves the reader a bit confused as to where you're going based on the front-end positioning and where you've ended up in regards to the propositions. At the minimum, these propositions need to be clarified – for example, "compliance-based HR practices" should be stated within the text of Prop 1(a-d) as each proposition read without that context does not make sense. In addition, perhaps some clarification and elaboration in the front-end on the approach and link across constructs would help. In addition, you are incorporating quite a lot of different and rich constructs such as trust, risk, and identity, yet this seems a bit "off track" from the general focus on HR systems and helping behavior. There is certainly a rich literature on trust development, for example, and I'm not sure you can do this literature justice in this paper. Would it make sense to perhaps focus in a bit and drop the propositions for trust and identity (for example)?

> R3#6. Although relational climate was a central organizing concept, we attempted to describe its varying manifestations using key relational characteristics (dimensions in revised Table 1). In the original submission, not fully establishing relational climate as a distinct construct created some ambiguity. Therefore, in the revision we first briefly describe what relational climate entails, and then we discuss how the key dimensions describing it were identified for inclusion. This material was inserted on pp. 8-9 of the revision. We would not argue that all key dimensions have been incorporated. However, the relational literature supports these as fundamental considerations in most relationships, especially ones formed in organizations between employees.

> Our approach in defining relational climate and its constituent dimensions is consistent with that used in establishing other specific climate types (e.g., service climate—e.g., see Burke, Borucki, & Hurley, 1992; Schneider, 1990). Descriptions of specific climates entail a sense of imperative, perhaps because they involve "climates for something" (Schneider, 1990). In our case that "something" involves relationships. In reviewing the literature to identify dimensions comprised by the relational climate construct, we focused on ones shown to critically affect the viability of relationships in organizations. Displayed in Table 1, we view these dimensions as actionable because research shows that changes in them influence behaviors exhibited by parties to the relationship.

> In regard to the wording of the propositions, they have been altered. Thank you for this suggestion.

> Finally, both the editor and you mentioned we might be attempting to cover too much conceptual ground. We addressed this concern in our response to him, and respectfully refer you to response E4.

7. I'm not clear on the conceptualization of collaborative-based HR. It seems to be a mix of the other two, but I don't see this explanation as helpful. What distinguishes collaborative from commitment based HR, for example? I believe you need to offer a clear conceptualization of this HR system beyond being "intermediate" or a mix of the other two in order to then pose arguments for the link to a specific

relational climate (e.g., equality matching) vs. the other forms of relational climates.

> R3#7. The editor and reviewer 2 also commented on this point. Our previous wording was inexact, and we clarify that collaboration HR systems do not fall simply along a continuum with compliance and commitment systems at either end. We view compliance and commitment systems as built on diverging philosophies of how human resources are valued and controlled, but neglected to elaborate where this left collaboration systems.

> Recognizing that human resource philosophies do not comprise a sufficiently rigorous platform for developing our arguments, we now draw on Lepak and Snell (1999) in defining the three HR systems. Specifically, we focus on the HR system dimensions that are most relevant to shaping relational climates—the employment relationship and employment mode—and also describe each HR system's broad approach to managing employees. Because rudiments of the other two systems have been addressed more frequently in the literature, defining the collaboration system is more challenging. To do so, we rely on Lepak and Snell (1999) as well as Walton (1985) for precedent (see pp.4-5 and 15-16). We depict a collaboration system as including elements from compliance and commitment systems, but do not render it as only a middle-ground entity. We feel collaboration systems are unique and accomplish ends varying from those of compliance and commitment systems. For this reason, we suggest collaboration systems can also lead to a distinct relational climate.

> Perhaps the simplest way of describing the distinction between collaboration and commitment HR systems is in terms of the organization-employee relationship sought. In collaboration systems, employees are viewed similarly to partners in an alliance. There is a need for them to adopt the goals of the organization, and it is assumed this must be achieved through both transactional and relational means. In commitment systems, there also is a need for employees to adopt the organization's goals, but employees are viewed almost as family and the collectivity becomes the preeminent focus.

8. It seems that the HR structures are being somewhat defined by the relational climates. I noticed this to a great extent in the discussion of collaborative-based HR practices but also for the commitment-based. This may stem from an unclear conceptualization of the HR systems (comment 7) but it also goes back to my question in comment 4 regarding the link between HR systems and relational climates (alignment vs. HR facilitating climates for helping?) I just worry about whether HR systems are being confounded with relational climates for helping; the descriptions of the HR systems seem to greatly reflect the nature of the helping.

> R3#8. In the original paper, we intertwined HR systems, relational climates, and helping as a means of integrating them. We see this approach resulted in concerns about conceptual confounding, as expressed by the editor, R2, and you. As we note in responding to your comment R3#4, we now address each of these elements independently before attempting to integrate them, or discuss their link with helping behavior. We hope that presenting our ideas in a more linear fashion ameliorates the confounding issue.

9. I found the paragraph leading up to Proposition 2e somewhat confusing to follow. This relates to my previous concern regarding a lot of constructs being involved (comment 6), but I am simply not clear on the nature of the relationships among constructs and what is being argued in regards to linking knowledge based trust, identity, appropriate role behavior, reciprocity… and then the role of collaborative-based HR.

> R3#9. This and comments from other reviewers led us to reconsider our initial

propositions about identity. As described in our responses to the Editor (E4), we recognized that identity orientation is somewhat different than the other climate dimensions because it pertains more to the self than to relational exchanges with other employees. As such, we removed consideration of identity orientation from the manuscript, as well as the paragraph to which you refer.

10. I believe my fundamental confusion can be linked to this statement in beginning the Discussion section: "identifying three sets of strategic HR practices, a relational climate supported by each particular set, and the form of helping behavior expected to emerge in each climate" (p. 24). This statement suggests that the HR practices/systems need to "align" with (i.e., are supported by) a particular climate and that this will result in the form (and what does "form" mean?) of helping behavior. I do not see these elements and their relationships stated here as consistent with your actual propositions. I also don't see this general argument as being consistently presented throughout the manuscript. I really believe this can be (and needs to b) clarified and the writing/arguments tightened throughout in regards to how these constructs relate. More minor comments:

> R3#10. Questions of alignment among the major elements of our framework (i.e., HR systems, relational climates, and helping behavior) and related issues surfaced in some of your preceding comments (R3#4, R3#7, and R3#8). At the risk of being redundant, we suggest ambiguities regarding connection between these elements occurred because we did not clearly distinguish relational behavior from the motives and dynamics surrounding the behavior. Moreover, we attempted to describe how HR systems could affect helping by way of example rather than relying more on a particular theoretical framework. As we note in responding to comments R3#4, R3#7, and R3#8, we believe HR systems will be associated with particular relational climates, and in turn each relational climate promotes or discourages helping behavior in ways congruent with that climate. Instead of a particular HR system being supported by a specific climate, we would rather think of the HR system as a stimulus and relational climate an effect.

> Over time, organizational systems and their associated climates could exert some influence on each other. This idea is reflected in the process of structuration, which is why we included structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) in the original submission. To do more with less, we thought it best to remove structuration revision and leave the question of mutual influence between HR systems and relational climates for the future.

11. Can you offer a more compelling rationale for the focus on HR practice-individual level behaviors (pp. 23) beyond the notion that prior/recent work calls for such an approach? I am not questioning the value but would like to see a more compelling rationale, perhaps linked to behavior-based perspective in SHRM research.

> R3#11. We could not find any discussion of the need to make a practice-individual behavior link on p. 23 of the original paper. So, we assume this comment refers to the last sentence of the original paper's second paragraph, which spanned pp. 2-3. We revised this sentence, and inserted another (see second paragraph of the revision) citing Jackson, Schuler, and Rivero (1989) and mentioning the behavioral perspective. Thank you for suggesting the behavioral perspective, as its fits well with our framework.

12. It might be helpful to elaborate a bit on the "traditional predictors" (p. 4) of helping behaviors to get a better sense of what would be viewed as relational versus other variables in this literature.

> R3#12. In revising the paper, we added a paragraph to better define helping (p. 3), and

placed more emphasis on relational climate (p. 4). Traditional predictors include individual differences (e.g., empathy, agreeableness) and affect-based variables (e.g., affective organizational commitment). We felt that addressing such predictors would lengthen the paper without really contributing to its central thesis. For efficiency's sake, we deleted the sentence—"As antecedents of helping, relational variables show promise for explaining significant incremental variance over traditional predictors (Venkataramani & Dalal, 2007)." — to which you refer.

To partly address your request, we mention briefly on pp. 29 that individual-level influences on helping (e.g., personality) become more important in weak relational climates. If you prefer us to insert more on traditional predictors of helping, we can do so.

13. Please offer a "reminder" of what is meant by "equality matching climates" (p. 14) when discussing collaborative-based HR.

R3#13. The material stimulating your request was moved down in the paper as part of the revision process. The section containing this material is now found on p. 17. As requested, we added the following reminder: "As such, collaboration HR systems are likely to stimulate equality matching climates, which are characterized by shared feelings of social obligation and turn-taking in exchanges."

14. In the discussion of compliance-based HR system, I did not see a clear link between evaluative performance feedback (and performance goals) and market pricing climate. I believe this discussion needs to be strengthened.

R3#14. Again, the paragraph containing material to which you refer has been moved and is now located on pp. 14-15. This part of the revision more explicitly discusses compliance HR systems and market pricing climates. Regarding connections between market pricing climates and the appraisal approach utilized therein, we now say on pp. 15 "Consistent with independent work design and behavior-based pay likely in market pricing climates, judgments evaluating employee activity will tend to focus on individual accomplishments (Connelley & Folger, 2004). Performance feedback will be more evaluative than developmental and, again, emphasize technical competence over social fit. This emphasis aids organizational decisions concerning employees who should be retained, but also makes employees maintain discretion when seeking help to avoid creating detrimental impressions of their technical competency." We hope this change sufficiently addresses your concern.

15. I don't see that Table 2 is needed.

R3#15. At the suggestion of the editor and another reviewer, we moved old Table 2 forward and changed it to Table 1 in the revision. Along with other changes made in the front part of the paper, moving this table forward should convey more comprehensively the substance of relational climate. As relational climate is addressed more extensively now than in the original paper, we hope you understand our preference to retain this table.

I enjoyed reading this manuscript and do hope that my comments help you to further clarify your ideas/arguments and ultimately lead to a stronger contribution.

We thank you for your constructive feedback. It caused us to reconsider our approach to developing and conveying the core of our theoretical framework. We tried our best to address each of your points in detail. We feel the revision represents an improvement and hope you do also.