ATTRIBUTIONS FOR IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR: CAN BEING AUTHENTIC AND TACTICAL BOTH BE GOOD?

By

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To Susie
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In this dissertation, I explore the target's perspective of the impression management process. Scholars agree that impression management is one of the most pervasive social influence processes (Leary, 2011), and ubiquitous in organizations (Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995). Most of the research on impression management has been from the actor's perspective, with the focus on predictors and outcomes of various impression management tactics. However, little is known about how targets view the impression management process. Contrary to popular assumption, perhaps actors get more credit for managing impressions, and more blame for not. As such, I outline and test a model that incorporates this perspective. In particular, this model suggests that: (a) the target perceives specific behaviors of an actor as either authentic or tactical (i.e., strategic, managed), (b) the combination of the behavior and the perception can have a direct positive or negative impact on the target's perception of the actor's ability, integrity, and affect toward the actor, (c) as well as an indirect impact on the perceived effectiveness of the actor. This model was tested on a sample of 103 supervisors at a large national retail organization, over three time waves. The
results suggested that authenticity evoked positive cognitive and emotional reactions from supervisors, and ultimately led to supervisors’ higher rating of associates’ effectiveness. However, for tacticalness, the results were predominantly neutral in their impact on supervisors' cognitive and emotional reactions, suggesting that tacticalness, although not positively viewed by supervisors, is not negatively viewed either. Also, the results show that supervisors' preference, or desire for authenticity in others moderated the link between authenticity and supervisory positive affect towards associates.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts.”
-Shakespeare (from As You Like It)

Shaping the right (or wrong) impression in others' eyes can affect many key decisions that impact desired outcomes. For instance, how one presents oneself to a blind date will usually determine any likelihood of a second date opportunity. Similarly, depicting the right image during a job interview could lead to a job offer, and portraying a valued image to one's boss can play an influential hand in promotions, job assignments, reward allocations, and ultimately, career success. Indeed, many of the best-selling books on management and self help speak directly to the value of making the right impression (e.g., Carnegie, 1936).

Impression management, or self-presentation, is an attempt by actors to influence how a target perceives them, and is arguably the most pervasive of all social influence processes (Leary, 2011). Scholars have noted that even when impression management is not at the forefront of interaction goals, people still act so as not to jeopardize the image that others currently hold of them (Leary, 1995). In fact, scholars argue that interpersonal behavior is invariably linked to impression concerns, with the exception of uncontrollable emotion (e.g., anger, joy), flow due to task absorption, or when one desires to display one's authentic self, as one might during therapy sessions or medical treatment (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). As one scholar wrote, “impression management is a universal and ubiquitous feature of social life” (Schneider, 1981 p. 23).
Concealed in the ubiquity of impression management lurks a puzzling controversy. From the actor’s perspective, attempting influence via self-presentation is predominantly straightforward and non-controversial. Actors view impression management as non-duplicious (Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995), and instinctively understand that successful self-presentation involves maintaining a delicate balance among self-enhancement, accuracy, and humility (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Actors focus their behavioral efforts on projecting a desired image, determined by what one wants to be, and not necessarily by what one is (Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Marcus, 2009; Roberts, 2005). As some scholars have noted, actors must only appear consistent, and not feel consistent, when displaying a desired image (Leary, 2011; Tedeschi, Schlenker, & Bonoma, 1971).

From the targets’ perspective, however, impression management may well be controversial, and for two overarching reasons. First, the general sentiment regarding impression management ranges from deplorable to encouraged (Fedlman & Klich, 1991). Whereas ethicists condemn impression management as something tainted or deceptive (Dubrin, 2011; Moberg, 1989), career strategists advocate it, acknowledging that it can help an employee get ahead (Feldman & Klich, 1991; Riordan, 1989). Second, target attributions of, and subsequent reactions to actors who display impression related behaviors can vary wildly. According to attribution scholars, attributions are made as a way to make sense of an actor’s behavior, and those attributions can correspond directly to an actor’s disposition or characteristics, or indirectly to some underlying intent (Ferris, Bhawuk, Fedor, & Judge, 1995; Jones, 1990). Therefore, targets who observe behavior that appears likeable (e.g., politeness),
or dedicated (e.g., loyalty), can take that behavior at face value, and attribute those actions to the actors’ authenticity, or, they can attribute those actions to some tactical or impression management motive. Targets are then left to process and react to these attributions, and despite some evidence that targets will react positively to an actor’s “authenticity,” and negatively to an actor’s “tacticalness,” this process has predominantly gone uncharted in research on attributions and impression management (Pandey & Singh, 1987).

As clear as it may seem that in the eyes of a target, an actor’s authenticity is good, and tacticalness is bad, it is plausible that reactions to these attributions might not be so straightforward. Tactical and managed behavior could arguably elicit positive reactions, as targets might give credit to actors who try hard to impress while at work (Wexler, 1986). Conversely, authentic behavior could be seen in a less positive light (Pandey, 1980), particularly if the target is not someone who has a strong preference for authentic treatment. The lack of a theoretical roadmap beyond a target’s initial attribution of an actor’s authenticity or tacticalness has hindered progress toward a clearer understanding of the effects of actions often linked to impression management behavior.

Unfortunately, few studies exist that take the target’s vantage, after an initial attribution of an actor’s behavior. Those studies that do have been restricted to experimental studies (e.g., Gilbert & Jones, 1986; Pandey & Singh, 1987, Schlenker & Leary, 1982; Wood & Mitchell, 1981), or studies that exclusively investigate reactions to citizenship (e.g., Eastman, 1994, Halbesleben, Bowler, Bolino, & Turnley, 2010; Johnson, Erez, Kiker, & Motowidlo, 2002) or prosocial motives (e.g., Grant, Parker, &
Collins, 2009). Furthermore, these studies have yielded inconsistent effects among attributions and outcomes.

The primary purpose of my study is to explore the target’s perspective on the impression management process, by investigating target reactions to attributions made for an actor’s behavior that make the actor appear likeable and dedicated. The behaviors associated with likeability (e.g., flattery), and dedication (e.g., working long hours), which are commonly used by an actor concerned with making a good impression, could be perceived as authentic, or as tactical as is usually implied in the impression management constructs of ingratiation and exemplification.

Using attributional models (e.g., Jones, 1990; Kelley, 1973; Weiner, 1995), I examine if target perceptions of and attributions to these behaviors influence the target’s affect towards, and perceived ability and integrity of an actor, as well as the mediating effects of these reactions on perception of the actor’s overall job-related effectiveness. I also investigate if a target's desire, or preference for authenticity influences the relationship between attribution and reaction. In doing so, I will step beyond traditional models of impression management, and pivot toward a clearer understanding of the target’s attribution process. Furthermore, I will demonstrate that not all targets are created equal, and that a dispositional desire for authenticity can be influential to this process.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Impression Management Defined

An investigation of the relationship between target perceptions of an actor’s behavior, and the subsequent reaction to those perceptions must begin with a clear understanding of impression management. I define impression management (i.e., self-presentation) as *an actor’s attempt to influence the image that one holds of the actor* (Bolino & Turnley, 1999; Rosenfeld et al., 1995. This definition is purposively broad, as the pervasiveness and variety of impression management requires that any definition have enough breadth to capture not only the array of impression management, but the idiosyncrasies and nuances of the tactics and behaviors associated with impression management (see Bolino et al., 2008).

Several literatures in sociology, social psychology, and organizational psychology include separate yet related definitions of impression management. A common thread implicit in these definitions is that impression management is social, behavioral, involves power augmentation via influence, can be conscious or unconscious, and is strategic in the sense that the actor is attempting to manage others’ attributions in order to create an image that is self-desired (Bolino & Turnley, 2003b; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Leary & Kowalksi, 1990; Schlenker, 1980; Tedeschi & Riess, 1981).

Two subtle distinctions have formed, however, in how scholars define and interpret impression management. The first distinction surrounds the term self-presentation. Some scholars suggest that self-presentation is a closely related cousin to impression management, but different in that impressions can be managed by means (e.g., third party) other than the self, and self-presentation can be used for goals (e.g.,
information seeking) other than shaping an impression in others (Schlenker & Pontari, 2000; Schneider, 1981). Other scholars, however, suggest that impression management and self-presentation are one in the same (Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Lee, Quigley, Nesler, Corbett, & Tedeschi, 1999), as they both concern attempts to influence others’ rather immediate perception, regardless of origin or ultimate goal. I adopt the view that they are one in the same, because like perception, they involve attributions, as actors perform behaviors with the intent of earning specific attributions from their targets (Jones & Pittman, 1982).

Similarly, a second distinction involves influence tactics, which have been defined as the ways in which individuals influence others to obtain personal benefits or to satisfy goals (Kipinis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980). Some scholars have lumped influence tactics - which include exchange, persuasion, and other tactics, together with impression management (e.g., Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003; Wayne & Ferris, 1990), while others have attempted a finer distinction by suggesting that influence tactics are commonly part of the downward influence by leaders, while impression management is more universal among actors at all levels (Dubrin, 2011). Interestingly, scholars have predominantly allowed impression management and influence tactics to develop in separate literatures. This is likely due to differing objectives - impression managers attempt to influence the attitudes and attributions of others, while influence tacticians attempt to influence behavioral outcomes controlled by others. My sentiment is that they are conceptually similar enough to be included together in reviews and summaries of interpersonal and social influence (e.g., Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, Blass, Kolodinsky, & Treadway, 2002; Higgins et al., 2003), but they are theoretically distinct enough to be
kept separate when investigating outcomes of influence attempts. Therefore, for this present research, I focus on specific aspects of impression management.

Impression Management Literature

Long before Shakespeare penned his famous quote from *As You Like It* (see p. 11 of this manuscript), people were aware that projecting the necessary image to others made a difference to how they lived, and whether they survived. Eventually, academicians began to pay attention to self-presentation. First, drawing on symbolic interactionism, Erving Goffman wrote about “actors” who performed on “stages” for “audiences,” and he believed that self-presentation was not only functional for the individual, but it was essential for smooth interactions (Goffman, 1959; Leary, 1995). In large part to Goffman’s burnishing the metaphor of the theatrical play, others soon began to take notice of and focus effort on understanding impression management. Subsequently, E. E. Jones, while studying how people view one another (a term he called interpersonal perception), began to conduct research on flattery. This stream of research led to his influential writing on ingratiation (Jones, 1964). Due to Jones’ and Goffman’s seminal research, interest in impression management spread to other disciplines, including organizational psychology (for a review, see Dubrin, 2011; Gardner & Martinko, 1988). The combined efforts have culminated in more than twenty-five different types of impression management strategies (Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008).

Taxonomies of Impression Management

Scholars have introduced several taxonomies of impression management. The taxonomy that has received the most research attention is from Jones and Pittman’s (1982) influential chapter on self-presentation. Their taxonomy identified five separate
classes (i.e., types) of impression management: *ingratiation*, where an actor desires to be viewed as likeable by flattering, showing interest in, and doing favors for targets; *exemplification*, which involves an actor seeking to be viewed as dedicated and going the extra mile by volunteering for extra assignments, staying late, and taking work home; *supplication*, where actors want to be viewed as needy by showing weaknesses or by broadcasting one’s limitations; *intimidation*, where actors hope to be viewed as threatening by bullying others; and *self-promotion*, where actors seek to be viewed as competent by touting personal abilities and accomplishments (Dubrin, 2011; Jones & Pittman, 1982).

Other taxonomies were created in an effort to marshal some of the initial research on impression management, and to better conceptualize the impression management process. For instance, Arkin (1981) suggested that impression management tactics could be distinguished by their fundamental goal. Acquisitive tactics, such as ingratiation, have a collective aim of making the actor more attractive to others (Jones, 1990; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Protective tactics, on the other hand, involve steps taken to repair or prevent a spoiled identity. Making excuses, offering apologies or justifications, and accounts of an event are all part of repairing an image, while self-handicapping and making performance disclaimers are strategies an actor uses in anticipation of a spoiled image (Rosenfeld, et al., 1995). Additionally, Cialdini (1989) noted that impression opportunities existed by managing information about the people and things with which one is simply associated, a term he called indirect tactics. He classified his indirect tactics as “connection-focused,” if one was bringing attention to a personal link with another, or as “other-focused,” if one was
directing attention to the features and qualities of another. As an example, name dropping is a prototypical connection-focused tactic, as one attempts to impression manage by highlighting a positive link to someone notable (e.g., a famous celebrity, a company executive).

Still other taxonomies were developed that offer a different way to classify impression management. Wayne and Ferris (1990) categorized impression management as either being job-focused, self-focused, or supervisor-focused. These categories suggested that actors have three different approaches to building a desired image. Bolino et al. (2008) have criticized this taxonomy as having redundancy with other taxonomies. For example, supervisor-focused tactics involve favor-doing and other-enhancement, both of which are included in Jones and Pittman’s ingratiation tactic. The measure developed for this taxonomy appears quite often in impression management research (Bolino et al., 2008), but the items included in the measure have apparent face validity concerns. As an example, items from the scales for job-focused ("agree with my supervisor"), self-focused ("be friendly with my supervisor"), and supervisor-focused ("praise my supervisor") categories all focus on one’s supervisor, and also appear to be similar to ingratiation.

**Impression Management Strategies**

In this study, I focus my research questions around the behaviors that are typically associated with ingratiation and exemplification, two impression management strategies from the Jones and Pittman (1982) taxonomy. Ingratiation involves an actor doing favors for, flattering, showing interest in, and enhancing a target, in an effort to elicit the attribution of being likeable (Jones & Pittman, 1982). Ingratiators are the ones who slap the boss on the back, and offer to pick up the boss from the airport. They also
compliment the boss’ attire, and laugh at the boss’ jokes. As Rosenfeld et al. (1995) note, the ingratiator subscribes to a philosophy that “you can catch more flies with honey than vinegar” (p. 32). Exemplification, on the other hand, involves an actor arriving early to work, staying busy, volunteering for certain extra duties, staying late, and taking work home, in an effort to elicit the attribution of being dedicated (Gilbert & Jones, 1986; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Rosenfeld et al., 1995).

The behaviors associated with ingratiation and exemplification are of consequence for several reasons. First, scholars have noted that these are two of the more pervasive impression management tactics in organizations (Feldman & Klich, 1991). This assertion is supported by others who highlight the importance of “making the right impression” during job interviews and performance appraisals, and for adhering to organizational values (Katz & Kahn, 1966; Villanova & Bernardin, 1991).

Second, of the five tactics from the Jones and Pittman (1982) taxonomy, ingratiation and exemplification most represent what Baumeister (1982) calls “pleasing the audience,” as targets value actors who are likeable and dedicated. Moreover, organizations have expectations about how employees should behave while at work or when representing the organization (Eddleston, Kidder, & Litzky, 2002), and employees will often act in response to these normative pressures (Jones, 1990). Many of those expectations relate to work ethic and positive social interaction. Unlike their ability or skill, actors do have considerable control over their displayed attitudes and dispositions, so appearing dedicated to work (a valued attitude), and likeable (a valued disposition) can have a positive impact on how an actor is evaluated (Kacmar, Harris, & Nagy, 2007). In fact, there are numerous behaviors associated with ingratiation and
exemplification, such as kindness, and a devoted work ethic, respectively, which if displayed can have a positive impact for an actor.

Third, of the Jones and Pittman (1982) tactics, these tactics are clearly the most positive, and research has shown that positive impression management tactics are more effective in organizations (Gordon, 1996), because they place the actor in a favorable light in the view of others. To this point, Bolino and Turnley (2003b) classified individuals as “positives” if they demonstrated higher levels of ingratiation and exemplification, and lower levels of intimidation, and “aggressives” if they used more negative tactics. Furthermore, when considering other tactics, certain behaviors associated with supplication (whining), intimidation (threatening), and self-promotion (bragging) can place the actor in a negative light, as they place attention on the actor and are less valued in organizations (Kacmar et al., 2007).

**Ingratiation**

Of the two focal tactics in this dissertation, ingratiation, by far, has received the most individual attention, and is arguably the most basic and ubiquitous of all self-presentation strategies (Gordon, 1996; Jones, 1990; Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Much of social behavior is attributed to the desire to be seen as attractive, friendly, humorous, kind, and respectful (Cooper, 2005; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Leary, 1995). In organizations particularly, ingratiation has garnered extensive attention, and rightfully so. From passing compliments to the boss about his or her ideas, to a pat on the back for a distressed coworker, ingratulatory behaviors are everywhere.

Once considered illicit (Jones, & Pittman, 1982; Jones & Wortman, 1973), researchers eventually began to destigmatize ingratiation, largely due to its frequency and effectiveness in organizational settings (Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Ralston (1985)
implied that previous scholars had given ingratiation somewhat of a bad name, and noted that ingratiation should only be considered detrimental when used in excess. Ralston also suggested that ingratiation could be “a form of social glue that builds cohesive work groups in the absence of compatibility” (p. 478). Going one step further, Gardner and Martinko (1998) asserted that ingratiation is only dysfunctional when it results in misallocation of rewards. One could even argue that that as long as malicious intent is not at its root, then ingratiatory behavior is desired and beneficial in organizations.

Ingratiation, which is commonly used in an upward influence manner (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), is often used by actors’ as a substitute for certain behaviors that are formally sanctioned (e.g., task performance) by the organization (Ralston, 1985). How successful actors’ are at ingratiation often depends on how transparent their actions are, or whether their targets perceive them as having an ulterior motive (Gordon, 1996; Jones, 1990). Ultimately, being liked and seen as attractive can be extremely beneficial, as it reduces the power differential between the actor and the target (Kumar & Beyerlein, 1991).

Four strategies of ingratiation were originally identified by Jones (1964): (1) opinion conformity, which involves agreeing with the opinions, and imitating the attitudes and behaviors of a target, in order to be seen as similar; (2) self-enhancement, which includes hand-picking information (e.g., characteristics) to make salient to a target to appear more coveted and attractive; (3) favor-doing, which involves doing nice things in order to be seen as caring and considerate; and (4) other-enhancement, which involves positive target reinforcement through the use of flattery and compliments, in order to be
seen as perceptive and likeable. More recently, Copper (2005) has suggested that humor should be added to this list, although humor has not been incorporated into existing taxonomies or measures of ingratiation. According to Cooper, humor often operates like other forms of ingratiation, and the effective use of humor influences targets to perceive actors as witty, fun, and likeable.

A review of the more recent literature on ingratiation indicates that favor-doing and other-enhancement are evolving, ahead of self-enhancement and opinion conformity, as the more precise indicators of ingratiation, and the more popular among researchers. I argue that this trend is not so much a testament to the importance of favor-doing and other-enhancement, as it is due to the conceptual and empirical deficiencies associated with self-enhancement and opinion conformity. Actors who self-enhance focus on themselves, which is logically more consistent with self-promotion (Godfrey, Jones, & Lord, 1986; Westphal & Stern, 2007). Furthermore, behaviors not directed toward a target (i.e., self-enhancement, humor) are often transparent to the target (Gordon, 1996), rendering them somewhat less effective as influencing mechanisms (Baumeister, 1982). In addition, opinion conformity, although target directed, often goes undetected as well, as actors become “social chameleons,” adopting the mannerisms and viewpoints held by the target (Baumeister, 1989; Chartrand & Bargh, 1999). In fact, researchers, when developing one widely used ingratiation scale, only considered other-enhancement, favor-doing, and opinion conformity, ultimately dropping the latter after validation, leaving the former two to represent the underlying construct of ingratiation (Bolino & Turnley, 1999). Thus, one of
the more recent and validated measures of ingratiation in the management literature only includes other-enhancement and favor-doing.

Therefore, for this dissertation, I concentrate on the ingratiation behaviors involved with other-enhancement (e.g., compliments, kindness, praise, showing interest, flattery) and favor-doing (e.g., personal favors, good deeds for another). These types of behaviors are direct, overt, conspicuous, and quite obvious to the target. Moreover, they play to a target’s vanity, making them most pertinent for studying reactions to the attributed motives behind the behaviors. For clarity purposes, I group these behaviors into one term - likeable, that I will use throughout, because these behaviors naturally make a target more susceptible to being well liked by a target.

Other-enhancement is noted to be ingratiation in its purest form (Deluga, 2004; Raslton & Elsass, 1989). Actors who adopt an other-enhancement strategy increase their appeal by boosting their target’s self-esteem by generously handing out compliments, praise, and flattery. Adept actors will highlight their target’s positive qualities, while minimizing the negative ones. Furthermore, they will positively affirm attributes about which the target is insecure, such as appearance or presentation skills (Dubrin, 2011; Deluga, 2004). Many scholars have noted that individuals like those who like them (see Ralston & Elsass, 1989). In essence, other-enhancing actors exploit the simple maxim that “flattery will get you everywhere.”

Favor-doing, is based on the axiom that a good way to instill liking is by doing favors for others (Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Actors engaging in favor-doing will offer to buy targets lunch, will “back-up” targets by keeping them informed of upcoming events, and will look for ways to help them, all in an effort to be liked. Shifts of power are
fundamental to favor doing, as actors attempt to capitalize on reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) by receiving the attribution of likeability in return for their favors. As such, targets will often perform favors that induce indebtedness, and can't easily be repaid except though gratitude and liking (Rosenfeld et al., 1995).

**Empirical Research on Ingratiation**

Previous research indicates that several individual differences are related to the use of the behaviors associated with ingratiation (Bolino et al., 2008; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Most of these individual differences are related to actors’ propensity to engage in ingratiation and self-presentation. For example, social awareness concerns, such as self-monitoring, self-consciousness, and social anxiety are all significant predictors of these behaviors (Bolino et al., 2003b; Gardner & Martinko, 1988; Leary & Allen, 2011; Turnley & Bolino, 2001). Similarly, status concerns also have been shown to be influential. Particularly, Machiavellianism, need for achievement, approval motivation, and fear of negative evaluation precede an actor’s attempt to be liked (Bolino et al., 2003b; Leary & Allen, 2011).

Research also points to several situational factors that influence the use of ingratiation. Particularly, perception of workplace politics, role ambiguity, and high accountability are key determinants (Fandt & Ferris, 1990; Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989; Kacmar, Carlson, & Bratton, 2004; Yun, Takeuchi, & Liu, 2007). Also, employees are more likely to use ingratiation during job interviews (Stevens, 1997), as well as during performance evaluations (Treadway, Ferris, Duke, Adams, & Thatcher, 2007). Moreover, employees who work remotely were found to engage in higher levels of ingratiation and impression management, whereas those who were more centrally
located, or had smaller networks used lower levels (Barsness, Diekmann, & Seidel, 2005).

Some researchers have been able to separate several specific antecedents unique to the ingratiation subclasses of favor-rendering and other-enhancement. In one example, Kacmar et al. (2004) found these strategies to be positively related to self-esteem, need for power, and job involvement, and that other-enhancement was also related to leader-member exchange. In another example, Bolino and Turnley (2003b) were able to show that high self-monitors were more likely to engage in favor-rendering and other-enhancement as a way to shed positive light on themselves, and to avoid negative light by steering away from potential confrontation.

Research in both the lab and field suggests that other-enhancement can have a positive impact on many desired outcomes for an actor. In the lab, for example, successful other-enhancement has been linked to higher ratings of actor performance (Kipinis & Vanderveer, 1971), competence (Pandey & Kakkar, 1982; Watt, 1993), as well as target affect (Pandey & Singh, 1987). In the field, other-enhancement has been linked to promotions (Westphal & Stern, 2007), performance evaluations (Wayne & Liden, 1990), career success (Judge & Bretz, 1994), high-quality leader-member exchanges (Deluga & Perry, 1994), and job applicant evaluations and hiring recommendations (Varma, Toh, & Pichler, 2006).

Most of the research on favor-doing exists in the literature on the influence tactic of exchange (for a review see Ferris et al., 2002). Similar to the other dimensions of ingratiation, favor-doing can have a positive impact on many outcomes. For example, doing personal favors for a target can influence performance evaluations (Rao, Schmidt,
& Murray, 1995), leader-member exchanges (Deluga & Perry, 1994), and career success (Dreher, Dougherty, & Whitley, 1989).

However, some research also points to the perils of ingratiation (Gardner & Martinko, 1998). When used in excess during job interviews, applicants received lower ratings, as interviewers are likely to consider their behavioral excess as “too much of a good thing” (Baron, 1986). Similarly, observers of an actor’s ingratiation towards a superior consider that person to be “slimy” and unappealing (Vonk, 1998). There is also evidence that the outcomes of ingratiation are often not in the best interest of the organization, as promotions, rewards, and job placement are often based on politics, and not on merit (see Gardner & Martinko, 1998).

**Exemplification**

Exemplification, as opposed to ingratiation, has largely escaped the attention of researchers. In fact, using a title-only keyword search of peer-reviewed journals in psycINFO, “exemplification” returned only 19 results (“ingratiation” returned 82 results). Three likely reasons explain this paucity of attention. First, a validated measure of exemplification did not appear in the literature until 1999, when two separate groups of scholars independently developed measures based on the Jones and Pittman (1982) taxonomy (see Bolino & Turnely, 1999; Lee, Quigley, Nesler, Corbett, Tedeschi, 1999). In contrast, measures of ingratiation had existed for nearly twenty years prior (Kipinis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980). Second, some scholars have lumped exemplification into a broader category of self-promotion (e.g., Barrick, Shaffer, & DeGrassi, 2009). This seems problematic, as self-promoters desire attributions of skill and mastery, while exemplifiers desire attributions of dedication and moral worthiness (Jones & Pittman, 1982). Third, on the surface, the behaviors associated with exemplification share many
similarities to organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Both exemplifiers and good citizens are helpful, frequent volunteers, and do more than what’s required by an organization. However, beneath the surface, these are separate phenomenon. As Bolino and Turnley (1999) argue, the key difference between OCB and exemplification is the underlying intent, as OCBs are guided by altruism, and exemplification is guided by self-enhancement. In fact, scholars have noted that many of the behaviors that have been previously attributed to citizenship were likely exemplification (Bolino, Turnley, & Niehoff, 2004; Schnake, 1981).

Exemplifiers desire to be seen as dedicated and model employees, and typically present themselves as honest, self-sacrificing, and sanctimonious (Jones & Pittman, 1982). They arrive to work early, always look busy, willingly suffer to help coworkers, proclaim that they rarely take a break, leave late, and take work home on the weekend (Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Exemplifiers proudly and publicly carry the badge of going “beyond the call of duty” for their organization, team, and boss.

Successful exemplifiers are not only perceived as dedicated, but they also make others feel guilty, often priming them to emulate the behavior of, or offer rewards to the exemplifier (Feldman & Klich, 1991). To be successful, however, exemplifiers must skillfully walk a fine line, and not cross over into self-righteousness (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Rosenfeld et al., 1995). This poses a challenge, as exemplifiers must call others’ attention to their behavior, exposing them to hypocrisy and speciousness.

**Empirical Research of Exemplification**

In addition to the antecedents common to all forms of impression management (e.g., Machiavellianism, self-consciousness), some research does point to antecedents unique to exemplification. In one study, Lewis and Neighbors (2005) used a self-
determination lens to predict self-presentation. They found that a controlled orientation (i.e., extrinsic motivation) led to higher levels of exemplification. They also found that higher levels of self-monitoring led to an increase in exemplification (see also Turnley & Bolino, 2001). In another study, Nagy, Kacmar, and Harris (2011) found that core-self evaluations negatively influenced exemplification, whereas frequency of interaction with one’s supervisor positively influenced exemplification.

Research on exemplification, though somewhat limited, has shown that exemplification is relevant to several important outcomes in organizational psychology. For example, establishing a virtuous image can inspire others to perform at higher levels (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). In one lab study, exemplifiers who were caught cheating seemed to catch a break, as participants rated them as less exploitive than morally adaptable pragmatists who were also caught cheating (Gilbert & Jones, 1986).
CHAPTER 3
THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

Given the pervasiveness of impression management in organizations, and the paucity of research from the target’s perspective, this dissertation is an important step toward understanding the target’s view of this common organizational phenomenon. Specifically, I will investigate how targets react to the causal explanations they make for an actor’s likeable and dedicated workplace actions. I will first establish if a target attributes these actions to the actor’s tacticalness or impression management, authenticity, or both. Then, drawing from attribution theory, I will investigate the target’s emotional and cognitive reactions to this attribution and how these reactions impact a target’s rating of an actor’s effectiveness. I will also determine how a certain characteristic, specifically a target’s desire for authenticity from others, can influence those reactions.

My work will make two important theoretical contributions. First, I will fill critical voids in research on attributions, and impression management, by examining target reactions to an initial causal explanation for an actor’s behavior. Much of the research on attributions, particularly in the impression management literature, focuses on the process of determining the self or other oriented motives of an actor (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998). Unfortunately, not much is known about how targets react once this initial attribution is made, limiting our understanding of the more complete, or full attribution process (Fein, 1996).

Second, I will investigate the effects of a target’s desire for authenticity from others, as a possible moderator of targets’ reactions to attributions of others’ behavior. I will argue that less value placed on authenticity will mitigate some of the negative
effects of impression management. In fact, essential to both impression management and attribution theory are certain target characteristics and mitigating circumstances that could impact how a target reacts to an actor's behavior (Gardner & Martinko, 1988; Thomson & Martinko, 2004; Weiner, 2004). Although some have called for more research on these characteristics and circumstances, they have largely been ignored in impression management research (Bolino et al., 2008).

In addition to the theoretical contributions highlighted above, this dissertation will make three significant strides toward a more precise test of theory. First, from a methodological standpoint, I introduce measures of target attributions to specific actor behaviors that are common to impression management. An actor's likeability and dedication, as well as other self-presentation behaviors, can be either managed (i.e., tactical) or authentic (Leary, 1993). Allowing targets to attach causal explanations for those behaviors to an actor's authentic disposition or tactical motive provides for a better understanding of attribution and impression management processes.

Second, by using target reports instead of actor self-reports of the behaviors linked to impression management, I will help to alleviate some of the common method issues that plague the impression management literature (Stone, 1989). Typically, actors are hesitant to willingly admit to impression management (Rosenfeld et al., 1995), which can weaken the construct validity of representative measures (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991). Target reports of an actor's behavior, however, are less susceptible to social desirability biases (Rosenfeld et al., 1995), allowing for a more accurate test of theory (Ganster, Hennessey, & Luthans, 1983; Paulhus, 1991).
Third, from an overall impression management perspective, how successful an actor is at self-presentation attempts is ultimately determined by the target of influence, and not the actor. Failing to account for the target’s perspective paints an incomplete picture of the impression management process, as actors are biased by a tendency to overestimate their performances (see Leary, 2007; Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Therefore, by capturing the target’s perspective, I will not only limit that bias, but I will be better able to understand an actor’s success or lack of success.

These contributions are depicted in Figure 3-1. Using attribution theory as a guide, I developed a model that links attributions directly to target cognitive and emotional reactions, and indirectly to target evaluations of an actor. Specifically, my model suggests that targets, once they attribute actors’ likeable and dedicated behaviors to the actors’ authenticity or to the actors’ attempt at impression management (i.e., tacticalness), will follow an attribution process in which they: (a) react to the attributions with positive or negative affect toward the actor; (b) cognitively evaluate the integrity and ability of the actor based on the attribution, and; (c) evaluate the actor’s effectiveness indirectly through the affective and cognitive reactions. To unpack this model, I first introduce attribution theory, and highlight how it has been used in organizational research to explain both initial attributions to, and subsequent reactions by targets to actors’ behavior. I then describe both authenticity and tacticalness, before making the predictions from Figure 3-1.

**Attribution Theory**

At the midpoint of the twentieth century, the prominent psychologist Fritz Heider brought the importance of social perception and causality of behavior to the attention of theoreticians and researchers. His most influential contribution came from his notion of
how people understand and explain the causes of their own and others’ behavior - a term he called “attributions” (Heider, 1958). Heider’s claim was that we are all naive psychologists, monitoring our own and others’ behavior, and then passing judgment based on those observations.

After Heider’s seminal contribution, others built from his theory, in an effort to better understand attributions. In fact, three separate yet influential streams of attribution theory and research emerged. As several prominent attribution scholars have noted, there is no single attribution theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980; Thomson & Martinko, 2004). Instead, the more appropriate term is “attribution theories,” or attribution models, which applies to a broad group of theories that are concerned with causal reasoning (Martinko & Thomson, 1998; Thomson & Martinko, 2004).

One stream that Heider’s work gave rise to came from Kelley (Kelley 1967; 1971), who developed a model to explain how people use informational cues to make attributions for the behavior and outcomes of others (Kelley, 1973; see Martinko & Thomson, 1998). Based on Kelley’s other-attribution model, which is also known as covariation theory, or Kelley’s “cube,” attributions are a function of three informational components that covary with the observed behavior of a person under consideration: consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness (Kelley, 1973). Consensus, which is between-person behavior, is information regarding the behavior of others in the same situation. Consistency and distinctiveness are within-person behavior, and relate to information regarding the person’s previous behavior in similar, and other situations, respectively.
Based on the target’s perception and understanding, these informational components can range from high to low. When combined, they lead observers to attribute the causes of the behavior to the either the person, the entity (e.g., organization), or the situation (Kelley, 1973; Jones, 1990). As a clarifying example relevant to the present research, if Amanda stops by her boss Tanya’s office one morning and offers to pick up her dry cleaning after work, Tanya will look for informational cues to guide her attribution for Amanda’s behavior. If Tanya observes that no other employees have asked to pick up the dry cleaning (low consensus), that Janet frequently stops by in the morning to ask if there is anything she can do for Tanya (high consistency), and that Janet has been known to do little favors for Tanya during meetings, at office parties, and in other work-related situations (low distinctiveness), then according to Kelley (1973), Tanya would attribute Janet’s behavior to Janet’s internal self (e.g., she cares about me), and not to something external, like pressure from peers or the organization.

Other researchers also developed models that were similar in focus to Kelley’s model on other-attributions. Evoking the term “person perception,” Jones and Davis (1965) articulated that a perceiver of another’s behavior is like an information processor, trying to make sense of what he or she had seen (Jones, 1990). Jones and Davis developed correspondent inference theory to explain a person’s attributions for others’ behavior. They argue that behavior is informative to the extent that it is seen to involve freedom of choice among alternatives, and that inferring an actor’s intention, motive, or disposition depends on the consequences of the chosen behavior on the environment. According to their theory, a corresponding inference treats another person’s action at
face value, or as a straightforward extrapolation that links the behavior to the “cause,”
which can be a disposition, intention, or motive (Jones, 1990: 46). Alternatively, non-
corresponding inferences could also be drawn, as the behavior could be indicative of
something hidden. Using the previous example, Tanya could infer Janet’s offer to pick
up the dry cleaning to her kind disposition (a corresponding inference) because in
Tanya’s opinion Janet did not have to do that. Conversely, Tanya could attribute her
offer to her flattery and intended seduction (a non-corresponding inference) because
Janet thinks that is Tanya’s effort to merely impress her.

Although similar in many ways, the two previously discussed models can be
differentiated by key fundamental differences. Kelley’s (1973) model focuses on
attributions made after observing behavior over time while Jones and Davis’ (1965)
model emphasizes behavioral choice among alternatives. These differences allow the
models to be used in different contexts and research settings if needed. For example,
Kelley’s model is very appropriate for established actor-observer relationships, as
multiple behavioral observations in various situations over time are likely. Jones and
Davis’ model, however, could be more appropriate for research on first impressions, as
observations over time are less relevant. In fact, Jones (1990) has argued that these
theories complement each other in many ways, as they feature the same underlying
logic, and their application would often lead to the same predictions.

A second stream originated from Weiner (1985), who developed an
achievement-motivation model, focusing on individuals’ causal explanations for the
outcomes of their own (i.e., self-attributions) behavior (see Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed,
Rest, & Rosenbaum, 1971). The main premise of Weiner’s theory is that individuals’
attributions for their own successes and failures impact their affect, future expectancies, and subsequent behavior. This was the first of the attribution models to exclusively focus on self-attributions, and the consequences of those attributions (Martinko & Thomson, 1998).

According to Weiner et al. (1971), as well as researchers who have expanded on his original model (e.g., Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978), attributions vary along several dimensions, such as locus of causality, stability, and globality. Locus of causality, which can be internally or externally attributed, refers to the degree to which an outcome is perceived as being caused by one’s own actions. Stability, which refers to whether or not the cause can change over time, is largely based on stable attributions to one’s skill or ability or unstable attributions of one’s effort or luck. Globality, which refers to the degree to which the casual explanation for the outcome is generalizable across situations, is “specific” when causality is unique to a certain situation, or “global” when causality applies across settings. The interaction of these three dimensions lies at the heart of the theory, and explains how others make sense of their own outcomes (Weiner, 1985).

A third stream came from the work of Martinko and Thomson (1998). Based on their argument that other-attribution models (e.g., Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1971) and self-attribution models (e.g., Weiner et al., 1971) present different perspectives of the same process, they recommended a synthesis of the two perspectives into one combined attribution model. They argue that based on the dynamics and complexities of organizations, there is a need for theory that can explain both self and other attributions. As evidence for their argument, these scholars point out that organizational
researchers, when first using attributional lenses, used both self and other-attribution models, without clearly specifying the reasons for doing so (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Martinko & Thomson, 1998).

The combined perspective proposes a direct relation between the informational dimensions of Kelley’s (1971) model - consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness - and the attributional dimensions of Weiner’s (1985) model - locus of causality, stability, and globality, respectively. According to Martinko and Thomson (1998), these dimensions can be paired allowing for their synthesis. For example, if a behavior in question is low in consensus, it is also internal, and therefore attributable to the person (i.e., self or other). Furthermore, they suggest that their model can be used to synthesize previous research that used separate perspectives, and will allow a better understanding of the leader-member attribution process.

Attributional research in management and organizations has predominantly focused on causal explanations for one’s own performance (Martinko, 2004). Other uses of attributional theory have been for explaining others’ performance (Green & Mitchell, 1979), burnout (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004), aggression (Martinko & Moss, 2004) and leader behavior (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002). However, there is still much to be done, particularly in impression management. As Martinko (2004) noted, “impression management is another area that would appear to benefit from the integration of attribution theory” (p. 303).

In this dissertation, I draw from the previously discussed attributional models to better understand specific target reactions to causal explanations for an actor’s likeable and dedicated behavior at work. In this context, using the combined perspective of self
and other-attributions is paramount, as it allows for testing a more thorough and developed attribution process, which includes attributions for observed behavior. As others scholars have suggested, there is additional attributional processing to occur after attributions to an initial motive (Reeder & Brewer, 1979). Unlike casual observers merely passing judgments on others’ behavior, supervisor targets are at some level tied to their subordinate actors (Martinko & Gardner, 1987). Based on this entrenched relationship, an actor’s behavior will not only impact the target’s attributions for that behavior, but also the target’s affective, cognitive and evaluative reactions based on that attribution (Martinko & Thomson, 1998).

Furthermore, this combined perspective is most appropriate for research on impression management. An actor’s decision to participate in self-presentation is discretionary (Leary, 1993), as are the specific impression forming behaviors an actor chooses to present. This freedom of choice creates a rich environment from which the target can draw inferences (Jones, 1990). Moreover, these choices are largely self-determined. Not everyone will participate in impression management, and not everyone who participates will display the same behaviors. From the target’s perspective, these types of informational cues place the target’s attribution focus squarely on the actor (Kelley, 1973; Weiner, 1995), and leaves the target to cope with and process the fallout.

**Attribution of Actors’ Behavior:** By using an attributional perspective, some management researchers have tried to better understand how targets make causal explanations for actors’ positive behaviors (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998; Bolino, 1999). Most of this research has been in the context of OCB, prosocial behaviors, and leadership (e.g., Dasoborough & Ashkansay, 2002; Grant et al., 2009; Johnson et al.,
2002), and has focused primarily on making attributions to underlying motives - which are typically understood to be either impression management, or other self-desired motives (e.g., proactive, prosocial, helping). This research has been instrumental by acknowledging that targets do make attributions for an actor’s behaviors, and that target’s are aware that actors are concerned with forming impressions (Bolino, 1999; Rioux & Penner, 2001), but it has assumed that motives are at the root of behavior, and overlooked the possibility that an actor’s authenticity can also be a cause. As such, researchers who have also studied reactions to attributions have predominantly looked at reactions to motives (e.g., Eastman, 1994). When pitting tactical impression management motives against helpful and altruistic motives, predicting the types of reactions becomes quite obvious - impression motives will be seen as bad, and altruistic motives will be seen as good. However, the story becomes less clear when pitting tacticalness against authenticity, because one is an actor’s motive to be both liked and seen as dedicated, and the other is an actor’s natural disposition.

**Tacticalness and Authenticity**

According to Leary (1995), impression management involves controlling how one is perceived by other people. Although not necessarily deceptive or deceitful, impression management is still managed and tactical by nature. Therefore, if targets perceive actors as behaving in an attempt to manage their impressions or the impressions of others, the targets will likely attribute the cause of the behavior to the actors being tactical (Jones, 1990). This attribution, which is referred to here as “tacticalness,” reflects the perception that behaviors are occurring because of impression management reasons (Bolino, 1999). If over time, or across situations, a
target perceives that an actor is engaging in impression management, this tacticalness label will strengthen (Kelley, 1973).

On the other hand, being authentic (i.e., real) represents the other side of the attributional coin, as an “either or” causal explanation for an actor’s behavior. If an actor does not appear to be managing impressions, then the observed behavior can be attributed to dispositions underlying the actor’s real or authentic self (Jones, 1990). Authentic individuals are in fact driven by a desire to behave with integrity, and are less susceptible to external pressures which often lead to impression management (Baumeister, 1989; Erickson, 1995). Several definitions of authenticity exist, but common to those is the notion that authenticity involves individual’s aligning one’s actions with one’s core, internalized beliefs (Harvey, Martinko, & Gardner, 2010; Swann, 2012). Authenticity has four basic dimensions: self-awareness, unbiased processing of information, relationship transparency, and authentic behavior (Kernis, 2003). The first three dimensions are core to an individual’s internal values, and the last is the manifestation of these values in words and actions. It is this final dimension, authentic behavior - defined as behavior that is aligned with one’s values, needs and preferences (Kernis, 2003) - that from a target’s perspective, stands in contrast to tactical behavior.

As part of the attributional process, targets will try to determine if the behaviors associated with ingratiation (e.g., flattery, compliments, and personal favors), and exemplification (e.g., working overtime, taking work home, and looking busy) are caused by an actor’s authenticity or by an actor’s tacticalness. On the surface, these behaviors are all positive, and the actors who perform them could be considered as contributing to smooth interpersonal interaction and organizational effectiveness.
However, targets will dig beneath the surface, and ultimately label actors as being either tactical or authentic (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2004; Ferris et al., 1995), and then react to those attributions accordingly.

**Reactions to Tacticalness and Authenticity**

**Cognitive Reactions**

According to Jones and Davis’ (1965) attributional model, targets, when making attributions, infer certain characteristics of the actor (Jones, 1990). In Figure 3-1, a target, after initially inferring an actor’s tacticalness or authenticity, will likely draw inferences regarding specific aspects of the actor’s trustworthiness, defined as the characteristics or attributes of an actor that inspire trust (Mayer, Davis, Schoorman, 1995). According to Mayer et al. (1995), there are three dimensions of trustworthiness: ability, which is the knowledge and skills needed to do a specific job, along with the interpersonal skills and wisdom needed to succeed in an organization; integrity, defined as the extent to which an actor is believed to adhere to moral and ethical principles; and benevolence, or the extent to which an actor is believed to want to do good for the target apart from any profit motives. The latter two dimensions, integrity and benevolence, are sometimes combined into one dimension labeled character (see Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007). Following the lead of other trust scholars (e.g., Gabarro, 1978, 1987), in my model I only include the integrity dimension to represent the character aspect of trustworthiness.

**Perceived Ability**

Of consequence to an actor’s trustworthiness are target expectations of how an actor should behave, as expectations can play an instrumental role in the attribution process (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Jones, 1990; Weiner, 1995). When observing an
actor’s behavior, targets coordinate what they observe with what they expect, based on the situation and the specific actor. If the observed behavior meets or exceeds expectations, then favorable attributions are likely (Eddleston et al., 2002; Miller & Turnbull, 1986). Furthermore, if an actor consistently meets expectations, this indicates stable performance from an actor, which will be attributed to the actor’s ability (Kelley, 1973; Martinko & Thomson, 1998).

One expectation that targets have involves an actor showing effort at work and trying to perform one’s job, and actors who display high levels of effort at work are seen as possessing a good work ethic (Eddleston et al., 2002). Logically, targets who perceive actors to be high in tacticalness see them as showing effort and wanting to engage in more positive behaviors, which makes them seem more able. Moreover, targets signal to actors what they value and expect (Ralston, 1985). Actors who purposively acknowledge these signals and make effort to meet expectations are seen as having the ability to conduct themselves in a manner the target wishes, and they are evaluated more positively, as the actor becomes a direct reflection of the target’s own abilities (Leary, 1995).

Targets can also carry biases that impact their attributions of actors. These biases often influence the initial attribution (i.e., tacticalness or authenticity), but some biases can also impact reactions to those attributions. The halo bias can occur when subsequent judgments are influenced by previous impressions (see Arkin, Cooper, Kolditz 1980; Leary, 2007). Therefore, if targets perceive an actor to be showing effort and trying to make a good impression, this perception could bleed over into judgments of their ability in other areas (Arkin et al., 1980). Similarly, a hedonic relevance bias can
occur, where actor behavior that benefits the target results in favorable attributions (Martinko & Gardner, 1987). Actors showing effort, if perceived to be beneficial to the target, could elicit favorable attributions of their skills and ability.

In fact, there is some research that supports a positive link between perceived tacticalness and ability. In one lab study, exemplifying actors who were seen as inauthentic were rated just as highly in ability as those who were seen as authentic (Gilbert & Jones, 1986). In another lab study, participants perceived as ingratiators were rated the same on effort as participants who were seen as non manipulative (Pandey & Singh, 1987). In a final study, employees who were seen as having self-focused motives were given higher evaluations, regardless of their underlying intent (Kipinis et al., 1981).

**Hypothesis 1:** Target perceptions of tacticalness will be positively related to the perceived ability of the actor.

Targets also expect actors to behave authentically (Schlenker & Leary, 1982), as is evident by the recent interest on the topic of authentic leadership (see Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Authentic leaders are not fake and self serving, and various attribution models have indicated that these types of attributions will results in positive evaluations (Bolino, 1999). Research has supported this assertion, and shown that targets appreciate accuracy and a certain amount of humility in actors (Brickman & Seligman, 1974). In one study, when an actor showed authenticity by ensuring that claims of performance were congruent to his actual performance, targets rated the actor higher on competence (Schlenker & Leary, 1982).

**Hypothesis 2:** Target perceptions of authenticity will be positively related to the perceived ability of the actor.
Perceived Integrity

Impression management scholars have suggested that the success of impression management ultimately rests on whether the actor is suspected of an ulterior motive (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Leary, 1995), as ulterior motives are perceived as manipulative and indicative of someone untrustworthy (Gardner & Martinko, 1998). For example, those who are suspected as being exemplifiers run the risk of being seen as sanctimonious, exploitative, and hypocritical (Jones, 1990). If an ulterior motive is detected, a target might only give the actor tasks that require less trust (Liden & Mitchell, 1988). Moreover, as some have contended, there is contempt for those who manage impressions (Moberg, 1989). This implies that for an actor, being perceived as tactical could have a detrimental impact on the actor’s integrity.

From an attribution perspective, people have the choice to be either authentic or tactical in their behavior, and whichever they choose will likely covary with how targets perceive their integrity (Jones, 1990; Jones & Davis, 1965; Martinko & Thomson, 1998). Therefore, if actors decide to engage in positive behaviors as a way to shape others’ impressions, then targets who make corresponding inferences will see them as immoral, or deceitful. In fact, one experiment showed that exemplifiers who were found to also be cheaters were seen as hypocritical and self-deluding (Gilbert & Jones, 1986). Also, Vonk (1998) found that observers of an actor’s ingratiatory behavior toward a superior attributed that behavior to an ulterior motive, which resulted in the actor being perceived as “slimy.”

Conversely, targets who draw corresponding inferences from actors who choose to display authentic behavior will likely see those actors as being more honest and fair. In fact, research indicates that politicians who did not take a self-interest stand when
communicating a message were seen as having higher integrity than those who did (Combs & Keller, 2010). In another study, sales associates who were perceived by customers as having greater ethical sales behavior were rated as higher in trust from those same customers (Roman & Ruiz, 2005).

**Hypothesis 3:** Target perceptions of tacticalness will be negatively related to the perceived integrity of the actor.

**Hypothesis 4:** Target perceptions of authenticity will be positively related to the perceived integrity of the actor.

**Affective Reactions**

In Weiner’s (1995) attribution model, the target’s attribution is followed by an affective reaction. Using this lens, scholars have predicted that target affective reactions to attributions will covary with the valence of the attribution (Dasoborough & Ashkansay, 2004; Halbesleben et al., 2010). In this present research, I continue that line of reasoning, and predict that attributions to an actor’s authenticity will be associated with a positive affective response, while attributions to an actor’s tacticalness will be associated with a negative affective response. Both types of affect can be defined as a condition of feeling (Watson & Clark, 1994), with positive affect representing changes in enthusiasm, pride, or cheerfulness, and negative affect reflective of changes in anger, anxiety, or guilt in response to an actor (Larsen & Diener, 1992; Russell, 1980; Watson & Tellegen, 1985).

Using Weiner’s (1995) model as a guide, actors who display a negative behavior when they are in control of that behavior elicit negative affective responses from targets. Although the behaviors aligned with tacticalness are positive, the motive itself is negatively valenced. Therefore, targets are likely to react negatively to those actors. This model is congruent with research on impression management that suggests that
targets react negatively toward actors suspected of having a hidden agenda (Gordon, 1996). Interestingly, Weiner’s (1995) model does not address positive affective reactions. However, other attributional models do point toward positive affect as a potential target reaction to an attribution. Based on Jones and Davis’ (1965) model, targets see actors’ behavior as volitional, and scholars argue that attributions of intentionality are closely linked to affect (Smith, Haynes, Lazarus, & Pope, 1993). Affective reactions are impacted by the amount of cognitive processing required to make an inference about an actor’s chosen behavior (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988). Behavior taken at face value (i.e., a corresponding inference) requires little to no cognitive processing which evokes positive affect, however, having to make a correction (i.e., non-corresponding inference) requires cognitive processing which causes negative affect (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). In this present research, positive behavior attributed to authenticity is a correspondent inference, and triggers positive affect. However, making an attribution of tacticalness is a non-correspondent inference which would trigger negative affect.

Extant research further supports the link between attribution and target affect. In the emotional labor literature, customers are shown as being happier with employees who are displaying authentic as opposed to fake behavior (Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005). Also, in a leadership study, Dasoborough and Ashkansay (2004) found when followers attributed manipulative intentions to leaders who were demonstrating transformational leadership behaviors, they had more negative and less positive emotions. Conversely, when leaders where perceived as having sincere
intentions, followers had more positive and less negative emotional reactions. In both cases, the authors controlled for mood.

**Hypothesis 5 and 6**: Target perceptions of tacticalness will be negatively related to state positive affect, and positively related to state negative affect.

**Hypothesis 7 and 8**: Target perceptions of authenticity will be positively related to state positive affect, and negatively related to state negative affect.

**Evaluations of Effectiveness**

In the context of work, there is reason to speculate that actors whose behaviors are attributed to authenticity or tacticalness will in both instances be perceived as being effective organizational members. Unlike other dyadic contexts (e.g., parent-child, observer-actor), the supervisor-subordinate dyad is unique in that the job behaviors performed by the actor can potentially have an impact on the target’s career (Arkin, 1981; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). Because the behaviors associated with ingratiation and exemplification are valued, they could help the actor and target “get ahead” in the organizations, regardless of motive.

Based on attribution theory, the attribution process eventually results in some evaluative component that is based on the initial attribution and subsequent reactive process. The model in Figure 3-1 indicates that attributions are indirectly linked to a target’s evaluation of an actor’s effectiveness. Several definitions of effectiveness exist, originating from various literatures that discuss the effectiveness of different types of entities (e.g., organization, group, team), and common among them is both high performance and goal accomplishment of the entity (Cohen, Ledford, & Spreitzer, 1996; Etzioni, 1964). Perceived effectiveness, in this context, therefore refers to a target’s perception that the actor is a strong performing and valuable member of the organization, and that the actor is successfully working towards fulfilling personal career
goals (Lee, 1971; Medoff & Abraham, 1981). For the present study, I include perceived value to organization (i.e., actor is perceived as demonstrating value to the organization), and perceived career opportunities (i.e., actor is perceived as effectively managing his or her career by creating career advancement opportunities) as constructs that represent the overall perceived effectiveness of the actor (Gould & Penley, 1984; Lee, 1971; Medoff & Abraham, 1981; Thacker & Wayne, 1995).

Guided by my prior prediction that tacticalness and authenticity are related to perceived ability and integrity, I turn to the literature on ability and integrity to ground my downstream effectiveness predictions. First, there is a clear link between ability and job performance (e.g., Schmidt, Ones, & Hunter, 1992). Actors higher in ability perform their jobs better, and receive higher performance evaluations from targets. Second, there is also a clear connection between ability and success at work. Using a longitudinal analysis over 50 years, Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, and Barrick (1999) found that participants who were higher in their ability had higher levels of career success across multiple facets (e.g., promotions, income). This study also found that individuals who were high in conscientiousness also experienced high levels of career success. Actors high in consciousness are ambitious, hardworking, and persevering (Saucier, 1994) - all characteristics of someone high in both tacticalness and ability.

There is also a connection between individuals with higher integrity and effective behaviors and evaluations. In one experiment, participants who scored higher on integrity also scored higher on volunteering and helping behaviors, both valued extra-role performance dimensions in many organizations (Schlenker, 2008). Additionally, there is meta-analytic evidence that integrity is related to being an effective employee.
In one quantitative review of the trustworthiness literature, Colquitt et al. (2007) showed a positive zero-order correlation between integrity and two facets of job performance - task performance and citizenship behaviors.

There is also prior evidence from the literature on influence tactics that points toward a link from both tacticalness and authenticity to effectiveness. Using a student sample, Thacker and Wayne (1995) found that subordinates were rated as being more promotable when supervisors were aware that they were using reasoning as an influence tactic. Based on the empirical evidence addressed, I conclude the following:

**Hypothesis 9.** There is a positive indirect effect of tacticalness on perceived effectiveness through perceived ability.

**Hypothesis 10.** There is a positive indirect effect of authenticity on perceived effectiveness through perceived ability.

**Hypothesis 11.** There is a negative indirect effect of tacticalness on perceived effectiveness through perceived integrity.

**Hypothesis 12.** There is a positive indirect effect of authenticity on perceived effectiveness through perceived integrity.

According to Weiner’s (1995) attribution model, negative affect towards an actor elicits some punitive reaction from the target, and the link between target (e.g., evaluator) affect and subsequent performance evaluations are well established in the literature (e.g., Judge & Ferris, 1993; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Even though actors are “doing the right thing” by behaving in a way that is in alignment with organizationally sanctioned norms and personal preferences of the target, target affective reactions to the attributed motives are ultimately what drives a positive or negative evaluation (Baumeister et al., 2001; Weiner, 1985). This point is supported by research showing that those who are perceived as behaving more genuinely are evaluated more positively, and those perceived as behaving less genuinely are evaluated less positively (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998; Eastman, 1994; Johnson et al., 2004).
Therefore, I take the perspective from attribution theory and research that links a target’s causal explanation of an actor’s behavior to the target’s emotional reaction (e.g., Halbesleben et al., 2010; Weiner, 1995), and combine it with theory and research that directly links attributions toward others to subsequent evaluations (Jones, 1990; Jones & Davis, 1965). As such, I expect that affect will mediate the relationship between initial attribution and downstream evaluations of effectiveness.

**Hypothesis 13.** There is a negative indirect effect of tacticalness on perceived effectiveness through state positive affect.

**Hypothesis 14.** There is a positive indirect effect of authenticity on perceived effectiveness through state positive affect.

**Hypothesis 15.** There is a negative indirect effect of tacticalness on perceived effectiveness through state negative affect.

**Hypothesis 16.** There is a positive indirect effect of authenticity on perceived effectiveness through state negative affect.

**Desire for Authenticity**

One of the interesting ironies of impression management exists in how the process itself is interpreted. On the one hand, it is difficult to argue that people who are concerned about how they look in the eyes of others is a bad thing. In fact, every aspect of organizational behavior, at some level, requires employees to manage impressions. From the job interview, to socialization, to customer and coworker interaction, and to performance appraisals, every facet requires that actors manage their impressions to the expectations of targets and others. As Leary (1995) appropriately remarked: “Think for a moment what the world would look like if no one ever cared about what other people thought of him or her. Think about how people might act if they didn’t care what others thought. Think how they would look, what they might say, how they’d probably smell!” (p. 2).
On the other hand, it is also hard to argue that actors who tactically manage their behavior instead of being fully genuine is completely a good thing. Just the labels alone that scholars have used to define, or associate impression management with (e.g., tactical, strategic, controlling, calculated) invoke negativity. This paradox makes it hard to reconcile the positive aspects of impression management behaviors with the negative aspects of the labels associated with it.

On way to approach this paradox is to focus on the interpreter (i.e., the target) to see if there is something unique about some targets that would make them more or less aversive to an actor’s tacticalness. According to attribution theory there are certain conditions that might play a role in how targets make attributions, and then react to those attributions. For example, Weiner (2004) suggests that there are mitigating circumstances that guide our attributions of others. Moreover, attribution scholars also suggest that some people carry certain attributional styles that can influence their judgment (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Heider, 1958). For example, some people have a pessimistic style, and they attribute many unsuccessful events to their lack of skills or intelligence (Harvey & Martinko, 2010).

Similarly, the impression management literature points to certain target needs which help to shape how targets process and interpret impression management. For example, Gardner and Martinko (1988) indicated that targets who possess a high need for approval (i.e., approval seeking) would be less likely to consider an actor’s ingratiation to be out of context, because ingratatory behaviors (i.e., compliments) fills the target’s needs.
Impression management scholars have also suggested that people differ in the degree to which they value honesty and authenticity (Leary & Allen, 2011). In the context of the present study, one potential target difference that could influence reactions to an attribution is the target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), which I define as a target’s *need for behavior from others that is representative of their true self* (Kernis, 2003). Based on one of the key tenets of authenticity - transparency (i.e., openness and trustfulness in one’s close relationships) - I argue that at some level, targets desire actors to behave with authenticity. Higher levels of DFA would determine the extent to which they hold expectations that actors will behave according to their own core values, identity, emotions, and goals (Luthans, Norman, & Hughes, 2006). I argue that targets with a strong DFA will see tactical behavior as unsettling, and will have stronger negative reactions to corresponding attributions. Conversely, targets with a low DFA will have weaker negative reactions, as they are somewhat apathetic to tactical behavior.

**Hypothesis 17:** The negative relationship between tacticalness and perceived integrity will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low.

**Hypothesis 18:** The positive relationship between tacticalness and perceived ability will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be less positive when DFA is high, and more positive when DFA is low.

**Hypothesis 19:** The negative relationship between tacticalness and state positive affect will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low.

**Hypothesis 20:** The positive relationship between tacticalness and state negative affect will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low.

**Hypothesis 21:** The positive relationship between authenticity and perceived integrity will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more positive when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low.
Hypothesis 22: The positive relationship between authenticity and perceived ability will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more positive when DFA is high, and more positive when DFA is low.

Hypothesis 23: The positive relationship between authenticity and state positive affect will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low.

Hypothesis 24: The negative relationship between authenticity and state negative affect will be moderated by a target’s desire for authenticity (DFA), such that the relationship will be more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low.
Figure 3-1. Model of hypothesized relationships.
Sample and Procedure

Participants were recruited through The Home Depot, a Fortune 500 home-improvement retail chain headquartered in Atlanta, GA. Specifically, participants came from eleven retail stores located in the vicinity of Norfolk, VA. The size of each store varied, but the typical store had approximately 130 associates (i.e., employees), including 4 salaried managers, 16 departmental supervisors, and 110 hourly associates. A retail store sample was well suited for this dissertation, due to the high frequency of workplace interaction between supervisors and associates.

An overview meeting was set up with the district manager who oversees all eleven stores, as well as the eleven individual store general managers (GMs), to go over the study details. During this meeting, it was explained to the managers that the surveys included in the study were designed to measure how supervisors react to certain frequent and positive workplace behaviors, and that it was necessary for the surveys to be administered over three separate time waves to help reduce method bias (Doty & Glick, 1987; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The managers were assured that participant survey answers would be kept confidential, and once returned to me, would be stored in a secure location at the University of Florida. It was suggested and agreed upon that the surveys would be administered during each store's bi-weekly staff meeting. These meetings are held in a break room at the back of each store, offering a space for store personnel to meet away from customers and other potential distractions. The bi-weekly meetings also provide an opportunity for supervisors and managers to meet in private away from other non-supervisory
associates, creating an adequate environment for survey completion. All surveys were paper-based, and once completed, were placed in sealable envelopes to help ensure confidentiality of responses. Survey envelopes were to be collected by the GM, and returned to me for data entry and analysis. A $1000 donation to the district’s morale fund was made for participation.

At Time 1, supervisors were asked to select an associate to serve as the focal subject of the surveys. They were asked to… “Please choose an hourly associate at random, with the stipulation that the associate has worked for you for at least 1 month. Please do not just choose the associate that you like the most, or the one that is the best performer. Choose one in some random fashion. Please write the name of the chosen associate below.” The supervisors were then asked to complete measures of the authentic and tactical behaviors of the focal associate, and the measure of desire for authenticity that had been developed for this study. One hundred and fifty-two supervisors completed the Time 1 survey. The supervisors were 59% male, on average were 42.5 years old ($SD = 10.63$), and had been a department supervisor for 3.0 years ($SD = 1.2$). They had worked for Home Depot for an average of 5 years or more. The ethnicity of supervisors was 67% Caucasian, 19% African American, 8% Hispanic, and 8% of other heritage. The supervisors on average had 5.8 direct report associates ($SD = 3.97$). Two weeks after completing the Time 1 survey, supervisors were given the Time 2 survey. This survey included the measures of perceived ability, perceived integrity, and positive and negative affect towards the associate. Of the one hundred and fifty-two supervisors who completed the first survey, 112 also competed the Time 2 survey, for a response rate of 73%. Finally, two weeks after completing the Time 2
survey, supervisors were given the Time 3 survey. This survey included measures of the perceived effectiveness (perceived value, career opportunities) of the associate. The Time 3 survey was completed by 103 supervisors, for a completion rate of 67%. A comparison between Time 1 and Time 3 did not reveal any statically significant difference in participant demographic variables. Complete data, which includes surveys from all three time waves was available for 103 supervisors.

Measures

Time 1

Desire for authenticity. The DFA scale used in this study was created following Hinkin and Tracey’s (1999) content validity method. This method suggests that when creating items for potential inclusion in a survey measure, researchers should start with more items than will be used in the final measure and rely on participant assessment of these items to make the inclusion determination (Hinkin, 1998; Hinkin & Tracey, 1999). Accordingly, twelve authenticity adjectives (i.e., items) were created to reflect the definition of authentic behavior provided in the theory overview above: “acting in a way that is consistent with one’s true self.” Authenticity was measured using adjectives that could be evaluated against words that represent an actor appearing either likeable or dedicated. Therefore, I also created an additional twelve adjectives, six each for definitions representing “likeable” and “dedicated” (see Table 4-1). Undergraduate students ($N = 212$) were recruited from a large southeastern university to complete an online survey that contained the three definitions. Participants were randomly assigned to either the authentic (“acting in a way that is consistent with one’s true self”), likeable (“acting in a way to get others to ‘like them’ “), or dedicated (“acting in a way to get others to view them as ‘dedicated’ ”) condition, and were asked to rate how well the
items matched the definition using the following scale: 1 (the adjective is an extremely bad match to the definition provided above), 2 (the adjective is a very bad match to the definition provided above), 3 (the adjective is a somewhat bad match to the definition provided above), 4 (the adjective is an adequate match to the definition provided above), 5 (the adjective is a somewhat good match to the definition provided above), 6 (the adjective is a very good match to the definition provided above), and 7 (the adjective is an extremely good match to the definition provided above). By using 5.4 out of 7 as a natural break in the mean responses to the authentic items, and 5.7 out of 7 as the natural break for the likeable and dedicated items, the top six highest rated adjectives were retained for each of the three definitions, and used in the subsequent field study. One-way ANOVA indicated that the means for the retained adjectives were different when compared to the adjective means from the alternate conditions (see Table 4-2). Further, an exploratory factor analysis revealed that the retained items loaded on three separate factors explaining 86.1% of the variance. The average factor loading was .91 (item level factor loadings are presented in Table 4-2). Additionally the retained adjectives for the authenticity, likeable, and dedicated definitions demonstrated good reliability (the coefficient alpha was .96, 97, and 97 respectively).

For the field study, supervisors were asked to read the following statement - “When you consider what you think of other people, do you care more about them being...,” and then respond to twelve items that pitted an authenticity adjective against either a likeable or a dedicated adjective. Supervisors were asked to distribute 10 points among each item, based on their preference (i.e., desire) for how other people act, with higher scores indicated a stronger preference for the
representative behavior. A sample item for authenticity versus likeable was “genuine/polite.” A sample item for authenticity versus dedicated was “true/committed.” For example, if a supervisor allocated 7 points to “true,” and only 3 points to “committed” then that supervisor would have a stronger preference for authenticity (true) over dedication (committed) for that item. Similar techniques have been previously used to measure preference and degree (e.g., Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1985). However, only the scores for the authenticity adjectives were utilized, given concerns about non-independence in these types of measures (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The coefficient alpha for this scale was .78.

**Authenticity.** Using a 1 (Never) to 5 (Very often) scale, supervisors were asked “to what extent does your associate engage in the following behaviors because it’s who they are—because it’s in their nature to act that way?” - followed by items from the Bolino and Turnley (1999) ingratiation and exemplification impression management scales, modified to remove the motive component from the item. For example, Bolino and Turnley’s first ingratiation item, “compliment you so they will see you as likeable” was changed in my version to “compliment you.” The other three modified items were, “take an interest in your personal life,” “praise you for your accomplishments,” and “use flattery and personal favors.” Four modified exemplification items included, “stay at work late,” “try to appear busy, even at times when things are slower,” “arrive at work early,” and “come to the office at night or on weekends.” The coefficient alpha was .80.

**Tacticalness.** Supervisors were asked “To what extent does your associate engage in each of the following behaviors to influence the image you have of them—to
manage your impressions?” - followed by the same Bolino and Turnley (1999) scale and modified items included in the authenticity measure. The coefficient alpha was 90.

**Time 2**

**Perceived ability.** The perceived ability dimension of trustworthiness was measured using the 6-item scale developed by Mayer and Davis (1999). Using 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), supervisors were asked to “think about this associate, and circle the number that best describes how much you agree or disagree with each statement.” The following items were included, “This associate is very capable of performing his/her job,” “this associate is known to be successful at the things he/she tries to do,” “this associate has much knowledge about the work that needs to be done,” “I feel very confident about this associate’s skills,” “this associate has specialized capabilities that can increase our performance,” and “this associate is well qualified.” The coefficient alpha was .92.

**Perceived integrity.** The perceived integrity dimension of trustworthiness was measured using the 6-item scale developed by Mayer and Davis (1999). Using 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), supervisors were asked to “think about this associate, and circle the number that best describes how much you agree or disagree with each statement.” The following items were included, “This associate has a strong sense of justice,” “I never have to wonder whether this associate will stick to his/her word,” “this associate tries hard to be fair in dealings with others,” “this associate’s actions and behaviors are very consistent” (reverse worded), “I like this associate’s values,” and “sound principles seem to guide this associate’s behavior.” The coefficient alpha was .88.
**State affect.** Positive and Negative affect was measured using the 20-item PANAS-X (Watson & Clark, 1994). Using a 1 (Very slightly to Not at all) to 5 (Extremely), supervisors were asked “to what extent you typically feel this way when thinking about or interacting with this associate?” The positive affect (PA) items include “active,” “alert,” “attentive,” “determined,” “enthusiastic,” “excited,” “inspired,” “interested,” “strong,” and “proud.” The negative affect (NA) items include “afraid,” “scared,” “nervous,” “jittery,” “irritable,” “hostile,” “guilty,” “ashamed,” “upset,” and “distressed.” The coefficient alpha for positive affect was .94. The coefficient alpha for negative affect was .96.

**Time 3**

The final outcome variable in this dissertation was the supervisor’s perceived effectiveness of the focal associate. Perceived effectiveness represents a higher-order construct, composed of two separate subscales (perceived value and career opportunities), both measuring a facet of perceived effectiveness.

**Perceived value to organization.** Perceived value to organization was measured using the 9-item scale from Long, Baer, and Colquitt (2013). Using 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree), supervisors were asked “when thinking of this associate, rate your level of agreement with the following items. This associate...” Items included, “adds value to the company,” “makes the company more effective,” “helps the company achieve higher performance,” “makes a strong contribution to the company,” “is very useful to the company,” “makes the company more collaborative,” “is very important to the company,” “gives us an advantage over other companies,” “is held in high regard in the company,” and “is a ‘go to’ employee for many things.” The coefficient alpha was .96.
**Perceived career opportunities.** The perceived career opportunities dimension of the Gould and Penley (1984) effective career management scale was measured using 6-items. Using 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree), supervisors were asked “when thinking of this associate, rate your level of agreement with the following items. This associate...” Items included “effectively keeps career options open,” “effectively develops new skills which may be needed in future career positions,” “effectively prepares for career opportunities which may materialize,” “effectively obtains broadly-based work experiences in this organization,” “effectively assumes leadership in work areas where there appears to be no leadership,” and “effectively develops expertise in areas that are critical to my department’s operations.” The coefficient was .87.

**Control Variables**

**Neuroticism.** Although not a subject of formal hypothesis, the supervisor’s neuroticism was included as a control in the hypothesized model. Neuroticism reflects a person’s tendency to be moody, emotional, and on edge (Goldberg, 1981). Prior research has suggested that neuroticism can influence both attributions of others’ behavior, and subsequent reactions to those attributions (Corr & Gray, 1996). Moreover, controlling for neuroticism is one statistical remedy for dispositional sources of common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Neuroticism was measured using 7-items from scales developed by Donnelan, Oswald, Baird, and Lucas (2006), and Goldberg (1999). Supervisors were asked to consider how each item described them, and included “I have frequent mood swings,” I am relaxed most of the time” (reverse worded), “I get upset easily,” I grumble about things,” I panic easily,” I get stressed out easily,” and “I change my mood a lot.” The coefficient alpha was .82.
Factor Structure

I assessed the factor structure of the tacticalness, authenticity, and desire for authenticity measures using a confirmatory factor analyses in Mplus 6.11 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010). All measures were treated as latent factors with item-level indicators, in which the four likeable-tactical and the four dedicated-tactical items were allowed to load on a latent tacticalness variable; the four likeable-authentic and the four dedicated-authentic items were allowed to load on a latent authenticity variable; and the twelve desire for authenticity items were allowed to load on a latent desire for authenticity variable. Using this structure, the three factor model provided a good fit to the data: $\chi^2 (df = 325, N = 103) = 522.36, p < .01$; comparative fit index (CFI) = .91; root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .06; standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .07. Based on this fit, I analyzed all hypotheses at a two-factor tacticalness and authenticity level of abstraction. The average factor loading was (.74) for tacticalness; (.67) for authenticity; and (.50) for desire for authenticity.

I also assessed the factor structure of the Time 2 and Time 3 dependent variables. With respect to Time 2, a four-factor model including perceived ability, perceived integrity, supervisor positive affect, and supervisor negative affect provided a good fit to the data: $\chi^2 (df = 437, N = 103) = 879.27, p < .01$; CFI = .90; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .07. With respect to Time 3, a two-factor model including perceived value and career opportunities provided a good fit to the data: $\chi^2 (df = 95, N = 103) = 220.16, p < .01$; CFI = .93; RMSEA = .10; SRMR = .06. Subsequently, I treated these two factors as scale-level indicators of a latent, higher order perceived effectiveness factor (Law, Wong, & Mobley, 1998). To illustrate the internal consistency of those two scale scores,
the higher-order composite formed from the two indicators would have a coefficient alpha of .95 at the item level, and .80 at the scale level.
### Table 4-1. Authentic, likeable, and dedicated adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic</th>
<th>Likeable</th>
<th>Dedicated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real</td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Committed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincere</td>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>Devoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Hard working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True</td>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Motivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic</td>
<td>Likeable</td>
<td>Dedicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factual</td>
<td>Appreciative</td>
<td>Faithful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candid</td>
<td>Favor-doing</td>
<td>Unselfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate</td>
<td>Flattering</td>
<td>Conscientious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>Sugary</td>
<td>Steadfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>Unwavering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4-2. Desire for authenticity items assessed for content validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Authentic condition</th>
<th>Likeable condition</th>
<th>Dedicated condition</th>
<th>F-test</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>19.04</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>19.46</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincere</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>8.43</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>12.95</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>41.36</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>36.01</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>42.67</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>45.92</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>44.47</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likeable</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>53.66</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>30.16</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devoted</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>25.62</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard working</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>39.62</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>51.58</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>41.34</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. n = 68-73 for each condition. Only retained items are shown. Values listed are item means. All mean comparisons significant at p < .05.*
CHAPTER 5
RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of the variables used for hypotheses testing are presented in Table 5-1. Table 5-2 presents the means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of all variables at a facet level. As shown in Table 5-1, the mean level of authenticity was higher than the mean level of tacticalness. This is of note, because as pervasive as impression management concerns purportedly are in organizations, the supervisors in this sample perceived their associate’s likeable and dedicated behaviors as occurring more for authentic than for strategic or tactical reasons. Moreover, surprisingly, the data here suggests that as a group, supervisors were somewhat neutral in their preference for authenticity from others, as indicated by the reported mean desire for authenticity score of 5.04 out of 10 (SD = .71). Table 5-1 also shows that tacticalness and authenticity are only moderately correlated (r = .24), offering some evidence of discriminant validity between the two categorizations. Independently, authenticity is positively related to perceived ability (r = .19), perceived integrity (r = .43), and the supervisor’s positive affect toward the associate (r = .41). These correlations provide initial indication that the likeable and dedicated behaviors that are attributed to an associate’s authenticity are highly regarded by supervisors. In contrast, tacticalness was unrelated with many outcome variables, showing only a weak positive correlation with the supervisor’s positive affect towards the associate. These results suggest that perhaps tacticalness, when compared to authenticity, is held in neither high nor low regard by supervisors. Moreover, it is authenticity, and not tacticalness, that has a significant relationship to a
supervisor’s perceived effectiveness of an associate \((r = .46)\). At a zero-order level, this hints at the possible benefits for associates who are perceived as showing authenticity at work.

**Tests of Hypotheses**

The hypotheses in this study were tested using structural equation modeling in Mplus version 6.11 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010). Given the relatively small sample size, I tested the hypothesized relationships in Figure 3-1 using a partially latent model in which scale scores were used as single indicators of latent variables with error variances set to \((1 - \text{alpha})^{*}\) the variance (Kline, 2011).

In addition to the hypothesized paths, I allowed the residuals of the exogenous variables to covary in order to represent unmeasured common causes. Mediation hypotheses were tested in the structural model by using the product of coefficients approach advocated by MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, and Sheets (2002). From that approach, mediation can be shown if an independent variable has a significant indirect effect on a dependent variable when a direct effect is also modeled. Moderation hypotheses were also tested within structural equation modeling following past recommendations (see Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Cortina, Chen, & Dunlap, 2001; Little, Card, Bovaird, Preacher, & Crandall, 2007; Mathieu, Tannenbaum, & Salas, 1992). Independent variables were centered in order to reduce nonessential multicollinearity. Product terms were then created from these centered variables, and set in Mplus as single indicators of the latent variables. As with the other latent variables, the error variances were set to \((1 - \text{alpha})^{*}\)variance. The product term alphas were created using formula 14 from Cortina et al. (2001): 
\[
(\text{reliability}_X^{*}\text{reliability}_Z) + r^2_{xz}/(1 + r^2_{xz}),
\]
where \(X\) is the independent variable, \(Z\) is the moderator, and \(r_{xz}\) is the
correlation between these two latent variables. In order to accurately interpret these moderation effects, direct effects were added from the moderator to the respective dependent variable even though these paths are not formally hypothesized. Moderation is shown when the product term is significant, and plotted to interpret the resulting pattern. Specifically, a direct effect was modeled from desire for authenticity to perceived ability, perceived integrity, supervisor positive affect, and supervisor negative affect. Finally, I controlled for the supervisor’s dispositional neuroticism in the tests of all hypotheses. To do this, paths were included from neuroticism to all endogenous variables in the model. A comprehensive model of the tested paths is depicted in Figure 5-1. Fit statistics for this model were as follows: $\chi^2 (17, N = 103) = 40.25, p < .01; \chi^2/df = 2.36; CFI = .93; SRMR = .07; RMSEA = .11$. Figure 5-1 shows the unstandardized path coefficients from the default Mplus output.

**Reactions to Tacticalness and Authenticity**

Hypotheses 1 and 2 made predictions about the impact of tacticalness and authenticity on the supervisor’s perceived ability of the associate (i.e., actor). The portion of the tested structural model relevant to these predictions is summarized in Table 5-3. The control variable, neuroticism, showed a non-significant relationship with perceived ability. Hypothesis 1 predicted that attributions of tacticalness would be positively related to perceived ability. The table shows that although positive in sign ($b = .06$), the effect size was non-significant. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Hypothesis 2 predicted that attributions of authenticity would also be positively related to perceived ability. As seen in the table, authenticity was positively related to perceived ability ($b = .24$, thus lending support to Hypothesis 2.)
Hypotheses 3 and 4 made predictions regarding the impact of tacticalness and authenticity on the perceived integrity of the associate. As was the case with ability, neuroticism was not related to perceived integrity. Specifically, Hypothesis 3 predicted that tacticalness would be negatively related to the perceived integrity of an associate. Table 5-3 shows that the effect size is negative (b = -.10), but non significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported. Hypothesis 4 predicted that authenticity would be positively related to an associate’s perceived integrity. As seen in the table, this was the case (b = .44), lending support to Hypothesis 4.

Hypotheses 5 through 8 made predictions for the impact of tacticalness and authenticity on the supervisor’s positive and negative affect towards the associate. As seen in Table 5-3, the control variable neuroticism was negatively related to positive affect (b = -.31), and positively related to negative affect (b = .22). I had predicted that the supervisor’s perception of an associate’s tacticalness would be negatively related to the supervisor’s positive affect (Hypothesis 5), and positively related to the supervisor’s negative affect (Hypothesis 6). From the table, it is shown that tacticalness was not related to positive (b = .02) or negative affect (b = .04). As such, neither Hypothesis 5 nor 6 was supported.

Hypothesis 7 predicted that authenticity would be positively related to a supervisor’s positive affect. Table 5-3 indicates that there was a positive relationship between authenticity and positive affect (b = .39), lending support to Hypothesis 7. Hypothesis 8 had predicted a negative relationship between authenticity and a supervisor’s negative affect. As shown in the table, the negative relationship was not significant (b = -.12), failing to provide support for Hypothesis 8.
Consequences of Tacticalness and Authenticity

Hypotheses 9 through 16 predicted indirect effects of tacticalness and authenticity on the perceived effectiveness of associate. The output from Mplus’s effect decomposition is shown in Table 5-4. Neither tacticalness nor authenticity showed a significant direct effect on perceived effectiveness, so any significant indirect results (i.e., significant product term from predictor → mediator and mediator → outcome) would indicate full mediation (Sobel, 1982).

Hypotheses 9 and 10 predicted the indirect effects of tacticalness and authenticity on perceived effectiveness through perceived ability. Specifically, Hypothesis 9 predicted a positive indirect effect of tacticalness on effectiveness through ability. As seen in Table 5-4, the indirect effect was not statistically significant for tacticalness (.06 * .36 = .02), failing to support Hypothesis 9. Hypothesis 10 predicted a positive indirect effect of authenticity on effectiveness through ability. In this case, the positive indirect effect was statistically significant (.24 * .36 = .09), lending support to Hypothesis 10.

Hypotheses 11 and 12 predicted the indirect effects of tacticalness and authenticity on perceived effectiveness through perceived integrity. Specifically, Hypothesis 11 predicted a negative indirect effect of tacticalness on effectiveness through integrity. The indirect effect in Table 5-4 was not significant (-.10 * .43 = -.04), failing to support Hypothesis 11. Hypothesis 12 predicted a positive indirect effect of authenticity on effectiveness through integrity. The positive indirect effect in the table was significant (.44 * .43 = .20), lending support to Hypothesis 12.

Hypotheses 13 and 14 predicted the indirect effects of tacticalness and authenticity on perceived effectiveness through the supervisor’s positive affect towards
the associate. Specifically, Hypothesis 13 predicted a negative indirect effect of tacticalness on effectiveness through positive affect. The indirect effect in Table 5-4 was not significant (.02 * .29 = .01), failing to support Hypothesis 13. Hypothesis 14 predicted a positive indirect effect of authenticity on effectiveness through positive affect. The positive indirect effect in the table was significant (.39 * .29 = .12), lending support to Hypothesis 14.

Hypotheses 15 and 16 predicted the indirect effects of tacticalness and authenticity on perceived effectiveness through the supervisor’s negative affect towards the associate. Specifically, Hypothesis 15 predicted a negative indirect effect of tacticalness on effectiveness through negative affect. The indirect effect in Table 5-4 was not significant (.04 * -.14 = -.01), failing to support Hypothesis 15. Hypothesis 16 predicted a positive indirect effect of authenticity on effectiveness through negative affect. As shown in the table, the indirect effect was not significant (-.12 * -.14 = .02), failing to support Hypothesis 16.

**Desire for Authenticity as a Moderating Variable**

Hypotheses 17 through 20 suggested that the relationships between tacticalness and supervisory reactions would be moderated by the supervisor’s desire for authenticity (DFA). Specifically, Hypothesis 17 predicted that DFA would moderate the negative relationship between tacticalness and integrity, such that the relationship would be more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low. Table 5-2 indicates that the Tacticalness * Desire for Authenticity product term was not statistically significant, thus failing to support Hypothesis 17. Hypothesis 18 predicted that DFA would moderate the positive relationship between tacticalness and ability, such that the relationship would be less positive when DFA is high, and more positive
when DFA is low. The table shows that the Tacticalness * Desire for Authenticity product term was not statistically significant, failing to support Hypothesis 18.

Hypothesis 19 predicted that DFA would moderate the negative relationship between tacticalness and positive affect towards the actor, such that the relationship would be more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low. Table 5-2 shows that the Tacticalness * Desire for Authenticity product term was statistically significant \( b = .26 \). However, as shown by the plot in Figure 5-2, rather than being more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low, the pattern indicated that the relationship was more positive when DFA is high, and more negative when DFA is low. Based on this pattern, Hypothesis 19 was not supported. Hypothesis 20 predicted that DFA would moderate the positive relationship between tacticalness and negative affect towards the actor, such that the relationship would be more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low. Table 5-2 shows that the Tacticalness * Desire for Authenticity product term was statistically significant \( b = -.22 \). However, as shown by the plot in Figure 5-3, rather than being more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low, the pattern indicated that the relationship was more negative when DFA is high, and more positive when DFA is low. Based on this pattern, Hypothesis 20 was not supported.

Hypotheses 21 through 24 suggested that the relationships between authenticity and supervisory reactions would be moderated by the supervisor’s desire for authenticity. Specifically, Hypothesis 21 predicted that DFA would moderate the positive relationship between authenticity and integrity, such that the relationship would be more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low. Table 5-2 indicates that
the Authenticity * Desire for Authenticity product term was not statistically significant, failing to support Hypothesis 21. Hypothesis 22 predicted that DFA would moderate the positive relationship between authenticity and ability, such that the relationship would be more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low. The table shows that the Authenticity * Desire for Authenticity product term was not statistically significant, failing to support Hypothesis 22.

Hypothesis 23 predicted that DFA would moderate the positive relationship between authenticity and positive affect, such that the relationship would be more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low. Table 5-2 indicates that the Authenticity * Desire for Authenticity product term was statistically significant (b = .33). Figure 5-4 indicates that as predicted, the relationship was more positive when DFA is high, and less positive when DFA is low, thus lending support to Hypothesis 23. Hypothesis 24 predicted that DFA would moderate the negative relationship between authenticity and negative affect, such that the relationship would be more negative when DFA is high, and less negative when DFA is low. The table shows that the Authenticity * Desire for Authenticity product term was not statistically significant, failing to support Hypothesis 24.
Table 5-1. Mean, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for hypothesis testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tacticalness</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>(.90)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Authenticity</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>(.87)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Desire for authenticity</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Associate perceived ability</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Associate perceived integrity</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Supervisor positive affect</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.15†</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>-.26*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Supervisor negative affect</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Perceived effectiveness</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.46*</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.52*</td>
<td>.56*</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
<td></td>
<td>(.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Supervisor neuroticism</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>(.82)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * = p < .05, † = p < .10. Desires for authenticity uses a 10-point scale. All other variables use a 5-point scale.
Table 5-2. Mean, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of faceted tacticalness, authenticity, and outcome variables

| Variable                        | Mean | SD  | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8    | 9    |
|---------------------------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Tacticalness-Likeable        | 2.23 | 0.92| (.86)|     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 2. Tacticalness-Dedicated       | 2.49 | 1.06| .66* | (.87)|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 3. Authenticity-Likeable        | 2.88 | 0.99| .31* | .07  | (.87)|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 4. Authenticity-Dedicated       | 3.15 | 0.97| .08  | .31* | .57* | (.80)|      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 5. Desire for authenticity      | 5.04 | 0.71| -.22*|.23* | -.06 | .03  | (.78)|      |      |      |      |      |
| 6. Associate perceived ability  | 4.23 | 0.66| .06  | .13  | .09  | .24* | .15  | (.92)|      |      |      |      |
| 7. Associate perceived integrity| 4.01 | 0.68| -.06 | .39* | .37* | .04  | .40* | (.88)|      |      |      |      |
| 8. Supervisor positive affect   | 3.56 | 0.78| .13  | .15  | .33* | .39* | -.26*| .28* | .32* | (.94)|      |      |
| 9. Supervisor negative affect   | 1.38 | 0.65| .14  | .12  | -.03 | -.09 | -.23*| -.22*| -.24*| -.23*| (.96)|      |
| 10. Perceived value to org      | 3.90 | 0.73| .02  | .06  | .30* | .35* | -.03 | .55* | .58* | .57* | -.36*| (.96)|
| 11. Perceived career opp        | 3.44 | 0.72| .15  | .27* | .18† | .28* | -.17†| .49* | .50* | .44* | -.15†| .67* | (.87)|

Note. n = 103-152. Coefficient alphas are presented along the diagonal. * p < .05, † p < .10. Desire for authenticity uses a 10-point scale. All other variables use a 5-point scale.
Table 5.3. Structural equation modeling results for perceived ability, integrity, positive and negative sentiment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Perceived ability</th>
<th>Perceived integrity</th>
<th>Supervisor positive affect</th>
<th>Supervisor negative affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor neuroticism</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>.22†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacticalness</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for authenticity</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.37*</td>
<td>-.21†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacticalness * Desire for authenticity</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.26†</td>
<td>-.22†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity * Desire for authenticity</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R²

|                | .10† | .21* | .32* | .12* |

Note. n = 103. * p < .05, † p < .10.

Table 5.4. Effect Decomposition Results for Mediation Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor Attribution</th>
<th>Mediators [Specific path]</th>
<th>Perceived effectiveness of associate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indirect Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacticalness</td>
<td>Perceived ability (H9)</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived Integrity (H11)</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive affect (H13)</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative affect (H15)</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>Perceived ability (H10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived Integrity (H12)</td>
<td>.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive affect (H14)</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative affect (H16)</td>
<td>.12*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n = 103. * p < .05, † p < .10.
Figure 5-1. Summary of the tested model. Moderator and control variable direct paths to outcomes not shown.
Figure 5-2. Interaction plot for Tacticalness-Positive affect

Figure 5-3. Interaction plot for Tacticalness-Negative affect.
Figure 5-4. Interaction plot for Authenticity-Positive affect.
CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION

From the actor’s perspective, impression management is a straightforward process with two components—the desire to manage one’s impressions, and the subsequent action (i.e., behavior) chosen as a means to try and elicit a certain desired attribution from a target (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Although straightforward, scholars have argued that for an actor this process can be a tricky business, because what one desires is not what one always realizes (Cialdini & De Nicholas, 1989). This trickiness exists to a large extent because an actor’s actions must be received, interpreted, and reacted to by an observing target before the action can be evaluated in terms of success or failure. As noted by one pair of scholars when describing the precariousness of image management, “the same behavior may be seen as friendly, warm, and cooperative, or as devious, manipulative, and ingratiating…the perceiver of a congenial, agreeable person faces an attributional problem of inferring intent and motivation” (Jones & Baumeister, 1976; p. 654).

Despite the ubiquity of impression management in organizations, and the momentum that has been gained by research in general on the topic, little is known about impression management from the target’s perspective, particularly with how targets react to different attributions for the same behaviors. Therefore in this dissertation, I sought to address two overarching questions about the target’s perspective of impression management. First, how does a target react to different attributions regarding the nature and intent of common, positive workplace behaviors by a direct report actor, and additionally do those reactions ultimately impact how the actor is perceived in terms of overall effectiveness in the organization? Second, what is the
impact of a target’s preference, or desire for authenticity on initial reactions to both tactical and authentic attributions for these positive behaviors? In the following sections, I summarize the results that are relevant to these research questions, and then discuss the theoretical implications, practical implications, and limitations of this research.

Summary of Results

Outcomes of Tacticalness and Authenticity

In the first section of this dissertation, I sought to investigate the cognitive and affective reactions that targets (i.e., supervisors) have towards actors (i.e., associates) who display likeable and dedicated workplace behaviors in either a tactical or authentic manner. Most research on these behaviors has predominantly existed in the literature on impression management, and suggests that an individual who successfully creates an impression of someone who is likeable and dedicated at work stands to reap positive benefits for doing so (Bolino et al., 2008; Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1989; Gordon, 1996; Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Little research exists from the target’s perspective, and I proposed that reactions to an actor’s behavior were contingent on the target’s attribution for that behavior.

Specifically, I suggested that when an associate’s authenticity was the perceived origin for likeable and dedicated behaviors, then the supervisor of that associate would see such behavior as a positive indicator of that associate’s ability and integrity at work. Additionally, I suggested that authenticity would invoke stronger positive and weaker negative affect from the supervisor towards the associate. Clearly, the results show that authenticity was positively related to a number of outcomes, and highly regarded by supervisors in the organization (Harvey et al., 2010). As expected, authenticity was positively linked to perceived integrity, perceived ability, and positive affect. Authenticity
was not related to negative affect. These results suggest that regardless of the actual nature of an employee’s likeable and dedicated behaviors, if the boss attributes these behaviors to that employee’s authenticity, then the boss will likely have positive reactions towards that employee (Allen & Rush, 1998; Dubrin, 2005; Eastman, 1994; Johnson et al., 2002). From a theoretical standpoint, these results suggest that when observers are able correspond positive behaviors to attributions for those behaviors that are also positive in nature or intent, then those observers are more likely to react favorably (Jones, 1990; Jones & Davis, 1965). These particular results are noteworthy because, unlike many field studies that have relied on measures of behaviors that are laden with an actor’s self-presentational motive (e.g., Bolino & Turnley, 1999; Lee et al., 1999; Wayne & Ferris, 1990), my results rely on a measure that excludes this potential artifact, and are thus able tease out the effects of likeable and dedicated behaviors attributed exclusively to an actor’s authenticity.

Also, I had speculated that the more proximal cognitive and affective reactions to authenticity would serve as a channel towards more distal evaluative outcomes. I predicted that authenticity would lead to higher ratings of an associate’s perceived effectiveness, indirectly through perceived integrity, perceived ability, and supervisor affect. Building from leadership scholars who note that there is a premium placed on a leader’s behavior that is deemed authentic by followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2004; Ilies, Morgeson, Nahrgang, 2005), particularly when compared to the inauthentic alternative (Dasborough & Ashkansay, 2004), I predicted similar implications for supervisors when assessing their associates. My results indicate that indeed there are indirect effects of authenticity on perceived effectiveness through perceived ability, perceived integrity,
and a supervisor’s positive affect. That is, associates who are perceived as authentic, or true to themselves when behaving in a likeable and dedicated manner, are seen as better career managers, and more valuable to the organization (Allen & Rush, 1998). My results did not show a direct effect between authenticity and perceived effectiveness, so the results occur at least in part because of what the supervisor thinks about the associate’s ability and integrity, and how positively the supervisor feels towards the associate.

The overall takeaway for likeable and dedicated workplace behaviors is that an attribution of authenticity for these behaviors is well regarded and highly valued by supervisory targets in an organization. However, perhaps the overall takeaway for these same behaviors being attributed to tacticalness is that an attribution of tacticalness is neither highly regarded and valued, nor is it poorly regarded and negatively valued by supervisors in an organization. In fact, tacticalness appears rather neutral when it comes to their cognitive and emotional reactions.

I had speculated that supervisors would cognitively react to tacticalness by rating associates as higher in ability, because tacticalness was an associate’s way of explicitly and purposefully demonstrating workplace behaviors (e.g., kindness, hard work) that are positive for both the supervisor and the organization. However, I had also speculated that although the behaviors were positive in nature, an associate having an impression management motive would still be interpreted as somewhat dishonest, and this would lead to lower ratings of perceived integrity. Surprisingly, as indicated by the results, both perceived ability and perceived integrity were not impacted by an associate’s tacticalness, as overall the supervisors were ambivalent with their cognitive
reactions. This result was despite previous research that suggests that known
impression managers are rated higher in effort and ability (Gilbert & Jones, 1986;
Pandey & Singh, 1987), and are seen as seen as duplicitous and suspicious by many
observers (Vonk, 1998).

The aforementioned findings on cognitive reactions are also in accordance with
the results on affective reactions that supervisors had to an associate’s tacticalness. I
had predicted that attributions of tacticalness for likeable and dedicated behaviors would
elicit more negative, and less positive affect from a supervisor. Instead, tacticalness had
no impact on the supervisor’s positive or negative affect towards the impression-
managing associate. Similar to their cognitive reactions, supervisors were benign in
their affective responses to tacticalness. These findings stand in contrast to other
theoretical arguments that have suggested that attributions of intentionality are followed
by affective reactions (Weiner, 1995), and that affect will covary with the valence of the
attribution (Halbesleben et al., 2010).

The lack of any positive reaction (i.e., higher perceived ability) to tacticalness can
potentially be explained by how attributions are made. When making attributions for
behaviors, observers (e.g., targets) credit the person (e.g., actor) for any outcome that
is connected with that behavior (Jones, 1990; Martinko & Thomspson, 1998). For
example, if a basketball player misses a shot, an observing fan will attribute that miss to
the player’s lack of skill, and not the noise from the crowd. Therefore, if an associate is
perceived as tactically doing a personal favor for the supervisor, or stays late to work
overtime, then the supervisor places this “motive to look good” squarely on the
shoulders of the associate, and not on some external cause, such as the organization’s
environment. Therefore, it is conceivable that instead of detecting higher ability as predicted, a supervisor could see tacticalness as a signal of some unpredicted, and other innate characteristic of the associate, such as basic effort, or trying at work.

The lack of any negative reaction (i.e., lower perceived integrity and positive affect, higher negative affect) can also be explained, but for several different reasons. First, the likeable and dedicated behaviors included in this dissertation represent actions associated with the impression management concerns of ingratiation and exemplification, respectively. Neither of these concerns involves associates acting egoistically and self-promotional, but instead involves them behaving in a manner that deflects attention away from themselves and towards their supervisor and work duties. By doing so, image management becomes seen as less selfish and duplicitous (Mealy, Stephan, & Urrutia, 2007; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Liden, 1995). Second, it is possible that supervisors, who are the targets of impression management, are less sensitive to tacticalness than are non-target bystanders and observers (Baumeister, 1982), who might easily see tacticalness as bootlicking or deceitful (Ferris, Kacmar, & Wayne, 1995). Moreover, supervisory targets, in contrast to non-targets, benefit directly from the positive behaviors included in this study. Therefore, although done for image enhancing reasons, targets might not react as adversely as non-targets to these behaviors. Third, there could be an offsetting effect between behaviors that are beneficial and expected (Eddleston et al., 2002; Pandey, 1980), and motives that are seen as surprising, or even detrimental (Baumeister, 1982; Buss & Briggs, 1984; Fein, 1980; Ham & Vonk, 2011). Any positive reactions to kindness and hard work, when combined with any negative reactions to image management as the main driver of those
behaviors, could create a net-zero effect when it comes to measuring supervisor reactions. Finally, some scholars have argued that impression management is not necessarily synonymous with inauthenticity (see Leary & Allen, 2001). As such, instead of viewing tacticalness as lying and fakery, perhaps the supervisors in this study see tacticalness as associates’ harmless attempts at drawing appropriate, and even accurate images of themselves at work, and thus react more neutrally to impression management.

**Desire for Authenticity as a Moderator**

In the second section of this dissertation, I sought to investigate how certain dispositions inherent to supervisors might influence how they react to attributions of tacticalness and authenticity. Specifically, I measured each supervisor’s desire for authenticity in others, to see if that preference would moderate the relationships between behavioral attribution and subsequent reaction. For authenticity, I had predicted that a higher DFA would amplify the links between an associate's authenticity, and the subsequent supervisor ratings of perceived ability, integrity, positive affect, and negative affect. Unfortunately, as indicated in the results, DFA did not moderate the links to ability, integrity, or negative affect. However, as expected, DFA did moderate the link to positive affect. Supervisors who held a higher desire for authenticity in others also showed a more positive link between associates’ authenticity and positive affect towards those associates. It is likely that for supervisors who are high in DFA, attributions of authenticity for these actions are pleasing because not only is the associate meeting their expectations for what they consider appropriate workplace behavior, but the supervisors can also claim credit for being good bosses (Miller & Turnbull, 1986).
For tacticalness, I had suggested that a higher DFA would weaken the positive connection between tacticalness and perceived ability, and amplify the negative connections to perceived integrity and positive affect, as well as amplify the positive connection to negative affect. Unfortunately, as indicated by the results, I found no moderating effects on the links to perceived ability and integrity. Supervisors’ desire for authenticity in others did not influence the connection between their initial ratings of an associate’s tacticalness and their subsequent ratings of the associate’s perceived ability and integrity. Somewhat surprising however, desire for authenticity did influence the links between tacticalness and affective reactions, but in a manner that was unpredicted. For instance, although tacticalness had no main effect on supervisory affect, higher DFA did positively influence the link between tacticalness and positive affect, and negatively influence the link to negative affect. A possible explanation for these findings comes from research suggesting that those who perceive themselves as having power and authority over others respond favorably to ingratiation (Dubrin, 2005; Pandey & Singh, 1987). Perhaps supervisors who self report that they prefer authenticity in others also see themselves as morally superior, and holding a power advantage over others. Therefore, they respond more favorably and less negatively to impression management, particularly when it is performed to win their favor. As such, perhaps for these high DFA supervisors, impression management is possibly a stimulus that evokes positive affect (see Pandey & Kakkar, 1982).

**Theoretical Implications**

This dissertation has several important theoretical implications. First, this dissertation contributes to attribution theory by testing a fully developed model that includes the complete process from an initial attribution of another’s behavior to a later
evaluation of that same person. Much of the research on attributions in organizations has focused on theory that explains how individuals search for and attach causes for another’s behavior (see Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011), leaving a relatively blank canvass about what happens once those causes have been determined. By separating likeable and dedicated behaviors into two different causal categories, I was able to leverage attribution theory to predict how targets react to attributions of tacticalness and authenticity—therefore exploring a more developed and expansive attribution picture (Halbesleben et al., 2010). Furthermore, I answered calls for attribution research to include more key characteristics that might influence how individuals process attributions (Harvey et al., 2010), as it is likely that not all who make attributions are created the same, and there is ground to gain by considering aspects other than the attribution itself. Therefore, I created and included a measure of an individual’s desire for authenticity. This measure has the potential to help explain how individuals react to attributions in general, and could be instrumental when analyzing specific reactions to attributions made for image management and other egoistic behaviors. Moreover, research using this measure could help shed light on why some individuals react more or less favorably to these types of actions (Nguyen et al., 2008; Turnley & Bolino, 2001).

Second, this dissertation contributes to research on impression management. Since much of what we know about impression management is from the impression manager’s perspective, this research makes a contribution by unpacking the target’s perspective of impression management. This vantage is critical, as both the target and the actor are arguably of equal importance for evaluating the success of impression
management (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Currently, impression evaluation has been limited to an actor's discernment of how others perceive efforts at creating an image (Leary & Allen, 2011). However, this paints an incomplete picture, and incorporating the target's understanding is beneficial to our understanding of the success or failure of efforts to impression manage.

Additionally, the results in this dissertation add to the established debate surrounding when impression management behaviors are seen as acceptable or even desirable, and when they are not (Bolino, 1999; Crant, 1996; Nguyen, Seers, & Hartman, 2008; Turnley & Bolino, 2001). A body of research exists showing that impression management is common, and fosters an environment that is socially appealing to both actors and targets alike (Leary, 1995; Rosenfeld et al., 1995). However, other research has shown that once targets become aware of the underlying motives behind impression management, their reactions sour (Moberg, 1989; Vonk, 1998). In this study, I showed that both camps have valid arguments. Clearly, the results show that actors' behaviors are well regarded by targets when perceived as originating from authenticity, and that this positive regard basically disappears when the behaviors are perceived as originating from tacticalness. However, the results in this dissertation do indicate that tacticalness is not as abhorred as some would suggest, and that although not as well regarded as authenticity, it does not necessarily evoke negative reactions from target others.

Third, and finally, this dissertation contributes to the growing literature on authenticity in organizations. Most of the current momentum in this literature focuses on leaders who are authentic (Harvey et al., 2006; Gardner et al., 2011), and how those
who are associated with authentic leaders are influenced and impacted. In this dissertation, I place the authenticity label on the associate (i.e., follower), and not on the supervisor (i.e., leader). By doing so, I establish that authenticity creates the potential of upward influence for employees towards their boss, as authentic associates were more likely to elicit positive reactions and evaluations from those who supervise them.

**Practical Implications**

This dissertation offers a number of practical implications for both employees and organizations. For employees, perhaps most glaring is the importance of drawing attributions of authenticity from influential others when performing likeable and dedicated behaviors at work. Employees should be apprised by mentors and leaders that being high in authenticity when demonstrating these behaviors is a functional approach to being successful at work, as doing so can not only lead to positive cognitive and emotional reactions from supervisors, but it can impact how effective one is determined to be in an organization. Ratings of effectiveness can ultimately impact other important workplace outcomes, such as performance ratings, pay and promotions. Moreover, employees should understand that supervisors who feel that they are benefiting directly from the authentic behaviors are more likely to repay those individuals who perform them with currencies (such as performance ratings, pay and promotions) that are valuable or beneficial (Foa & Foa, 1980).

Organizations could also benefit from this research as well. First, employee selection should incorporate measures of an applicant’s perceived authenticity, and selection decisions could incorporate the likelihood that a potential employee will be construed as authentic on the job. Second, managers, when measuring an employee’s job performance, should reflect on the employee’s workplace behaviors, and consider
whether or not these behaviors are occurring authentically, for tactical reasons, or both. Gaining this perspective and insight can help managers better understand how and why they react in certain ways to some employees, and in different ways to others. Moreover, the goal of performance evaluation systems is to accurately identify and rate performance (Barsness et al., 2005), and considering both authenticity and impression management motives can potentially improve the accuracy and effectiveness of these systems.

Also, the research herein can be a useful tool for developmental purposes, as it can offer managers the opportunity to communicate to their employees that although they are demonstrating positive and valued workplace behaviors, it is the perceived cause or intent behind those behaviors that can impact how one is evaluated. Occasionally, organizations will place a great deal of emphasis on the types of behaviors that are valued at work, through job descriptions and behavioral focused rating scales. This research suggests that focusing solely on behaviors is limited in scope, and that organizations should also consider the causes behind behaviors, and incorporate ways to capture and articulate these causes.

**Limitations**

As with any study, this dissertation was subject to several limitations that should be recognized and commented on. One limitation is that I did not include the associate's self rating of likeable and dedicated behaviors, and instead relied on supervisor reports of these actions. By doing so, I excluded a second source that could potentially reduce same-source bias (Avolio, Yammarino, & Bass, 1991), and left open the possibility that what is recognized by a supervisor as authentic behavior could in fact be reported by an associate as tactical behavior, or vice versa. In fact some research has suggested that
successful impression managers are very skilled politically, or are high self monitors able to leverage their abilities and the situation in creating and shaping desired images (Dubrin, 2011). However, paramount to this current research was the attribution made by a supervisor regarding the associate’s behavior, and not whether the associate was actually being tactical or authentic. Moreover, based on the relatively low correlation between tacticalness and authenticity, it did appear that supervisors were able to make a distinction between the two attributions, even though they were referred to the same likeable and dedicated behaviors.

Second, the sample size is small for this research, particularly when considering the use of structural equation modeling and interaction tests. The sample size was unfortunately limited by what was made available by the participating organization Home Depot. Also, as reported by several GMs, due to the somewhat sensitive nature of some of the questions regarding perceptions of associates, some supervisors decided to withdraw from the study after the first time wave.

Third, the context is possibly a boundary condition for this study, and potentially poses a challenge for generalizing these results across other situations. The data in this dissertation were collected in a “big-box” retail chain. Big-box chains, like Home Depot, often only have a handful of associates assigned to work in each department, which for this study left only a few associates for supervisors to choose from. Although I encouraged supervisors to be random in how they selected a focal associate, the reality is that many supervisors were left with a limited sample to choose from. Therefore, it could be that supervisors were unable to be as objective about ratings as they would like to be. Also, supervisors completed their surveys while at work. As such, the location
could have created random error, as the environment could have influenced survey responses.
LIST OF REFERENCES


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David M. Long was a doctoral student in the Department of Management at the University of Florida’s Warrington College of Business Administration. He received a BS in business administration from Presbyterian College in May 1995. While serving in the US Navy, he went on to receive his MBA from the University of Florida in 2004. After spending four years at The Home Depot, he began the Ph.D. program in August 2008. After receiving his Ph.D., David joined the faculty at the College of William & Mary as an Assistant Professor in Management. His research interests include impression management, organizational justice, and employee motivation.