Service with a smile: Linking employee emotional displays to customer outcomes

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“Management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display”
SERVICE WITH A SMILE
ORGANIZATIONAL DISPLAY RULES

Norms and standards of behaviour indicating which emotions are appropriate in given situation but how these emotions should be publicly expressed
Have I smiled & greeted you?
If not, your next personal pan pizza* is on us!

* Terms and conditions apply.
SMILE GUARANTEE

If we don’t smile before you pay you get a free small French Fries or Hash Brown (on your next visit) Please play.... Try to catch us!
BEHAVIOURAL GUIDELINES THAT DEMAND POSITIVE AND CHEERFUL MANNER

‘HIGH ENERGY AND VIBRANCY’
‘PRET BEHAVIOURS’

DON’T WANT TO SEE

WANT TO SEE

PRET PERFECT
‘Don’t be moody’

‘Create a sense of fun’

‘Happy to be themselves’

‘Be genuinely happy’

‘Don’t agree blandly with others’
‘PRET BEHAVIOURS’

TEAM MEMBERS: 6
MANAGERS: 10
EXECUTIVES: ALL
Inauthentic emotions
Feign or suppress emotions

Authentic emotions
Induce authentic emotions within self

Surface acting
Deep acting
Emotional labour leads to positive customer outcomes

Emotional labour leads to negative employee outcomes
Emotional labour meets customer needs and defuses emotional events.

Emotional labour is costly to health and future performance.
LOWER ENGAGEMENT & SATISFACTION
HIGHER BURNOUT
LOWER JOB PERFORMANCE
INCREASED STRESS
HIGHER TURNOVER
DIRECT COST: A$1,400 PER EMPLOYEE PER YEAR
SO WHAT ABOUT THE CUSTOMER?
2 X 2 between-subjects factorial design, N=223
- Extent of employee smiling (high vs. low)
- Emotional labor strategy (surface acting vs. deep acting)

Measures of customer experience:
- Pre-encounter: filler items, customer affect
- Post-encounter: customer affect, customer-employee rapport, satisfaction, loyalty intentions

Objective measures by raters
Note: Solid lines indicate significant paths at p < .01. Dashed line indicates insignificant path.
## VIDEO STORE SIMULATION - RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer positive affect</th>
<th>Time 1: Pre-encounter</th>
<th>Time 2: Post-encounter</th>
<th>Change in customer positive affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of smiling</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.84</td>
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<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.25</td>
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Quantity of smiling: no effect

Quality of smiling: contagion, satisfaction, rapport, loyalty
DYNAMICS OF EMOTIONAL LABOR
COUNSELING STUDY - METHOD

- Three time points: beginning, middle, end
- Two strategies: deep acting and surface acting
- 1-factorial design with 8 between-subject conditions (N = 174)
- Controlling for affect
- Customer satisfaction: overall and at each time point
## COUNSELING STUDY - METHOD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>Steady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>Steady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface acting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>Erratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep acting</td>
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<td>Erratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td>Decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep acting</td>
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Primacy and recency effects

Improvement superior to erratic and decline, but not steady trends

Steady superior to decline trend
COUNSELING STUDY - RESULTS

- Improvement
- Decline
- Erratic
- Steady

Graph showing data points from Beginning, Middle, and End with different trends.
THANK YOU!