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**POSITIVELY REAL OR REALLY POSITIVE: WHY AND WHEN ARE AUTHENTIC  
ORGANIZATIONAL EMOTIONAL CULTURES ATTRACTIVE?**

A Thesis in

Psychology

by

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**ABSTRACT**

There has been a recent push toward authenticity, yet there is a lack of understanding of how authenticity influences attraction to organizations. This study examined how organizational emotional cultures influence attraction to organizations through the mechanisms of anticipated surface acting and anticipated interpersonal justice. Further, this study identified how gender and neuroticism differentially influence who is attracted to which emotional culture. Results show that a non-expressive culture is seen as less attractive than a positive or authentic emotional culture. Further, both anticipated surface acting and interpersonal justice mediate the relationship between emotional culture and attraction. However, there were no conditional indirect effects, such that gender and neuroticism do not differentially predict attraction.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

As organizations become more and more service-oriented and team-based (Mathieu et al., 2014; Tannenbaum et al., 2012), the expectations organizations place on interpersonal interactions become increasingly important. Traditionally, organizations held the belief that employees should show no emotion, as it interferes with logic (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). This view has since become outdated with the emergence of the service industry, as expectations shifted to placing emphasis on positive emotions (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). For example, Southwest Airlines posits that a key tenet of their success is employees having fun on the job (Southwest Airlines, n.d.) and Riverbed Technology prides themselves on having a “positive work environment” in which they advocate for “happiness in the workplace” (Riverbed Technology, n.d.). Such a description of the expected or normative emotional expressions among employees is known as the organization’s emotional culture, or the “behavioral norms and artifacts, as well as the underlying values and assumptions, that guide the expression (or suppression) of specific emotions and the appropriateness of displaying those emotions within a social unit” (O’Neill & Rothbard, 2017, p. 78).

How emotional cultures differ for employees’ experiences is an emerging area of study (Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2018; Seo & Parke, 2017). Positive emotional cultures like Southwest and Riverbed sound like pleasant places to work and some evidence exists to support that cultures of love and fun (Barsade & O’Neill, 2014; O’Neill & Rothbard, 2017) are positively associated with employee satisfaction. Yet, expecting employees to be positive all the time may not be an attractive work culture for everyone. For example, employees recently complained about T-Mobile’s mandate for a positive emotional culture (Lutkus, 2016) to the National Labor

Relations Board (NLRB), which ruled that employees have a right to be unhappy in their jobs and, therefore, a right to express that unhappiness. Ultimately, this pushback from employees suggests workers may desire more authenticity, rather than enforced positivity, in their work environments.

The idea that organizations should have authentic cultures is becoming more widespread by organizational scholars (Barsade & O'Neill, 2016; Parke & Seo, 2017) and popular management books and media (Buote, 2016; Forbes, 2016; Samuel, 2016; Showkier & Showkeir, 2008), whereby organizations are suggested to encourage employees to express their real feelings their day to day interpersonal interactions. Many organizations have already embraced this idea. For example, one of Zappos' core values is to "build open and honest relationships with communication" (Zappos, n.d.). Authentic cultures may be *attractive* to job candidates because it suggests one can just express internal feelings, resulting in less dissonance and less required regulation of emotions (Hewlin, 2003; Grandey, 2000). Yet, authenticity may be *unattractive* to job candidates since that same lack of effort by *others* may mean less consistently positive behavior from coworkers. Further, how authenticity is perceived may depend on certain characteristics of the job candidate.

To explore this notion that emotional culture affects employees, I start at the very beginning of the employee-organization relationship: the recruitment process. When job seekers are attracted to an organization's culture they are more likely to remain in the selection process, accept an offer when made (Cable & Judge, 1996), and then ultimately feel positively toward the organization and remain with the organization over time (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Schneider, 1987). Despite increased social media attention to authenticity in organizational cultures, and despite years of research on organizational culture as shared values

or cognitions (e.g., learning culture and achievement-orientation, respectively; Judge & Cable, 1997; Marsick & Watkins, 2003), there is currently little to no empirical evidence concerning whether or how organizational emotional cultures affect recruitment efforts and how applicants perceive them.

My primary goals in this paper are to 1) identify whether authentic emotional cultures are more (or less) attractive than positive or neutral emotional cultures, 2) propose and test competing mechanisms, specifically effortful emotion regulation and interpersonal treatment from others, for why authenticity could be attractive and unattractive, respectively, and 3) examine what types of individuals – specifically gender and personality - are more likely to be attracted to authentic emotional cultures given these mechanisms.

This research study provides a number of theoretical, empirical, and practical contributions to the literature. To develop my novel ideas, I apply signaling theory (Spence, 1973), which explains how organizations use signals to influence attraction to the organization and why people may interpret messages differently. I am applying signaling theory to a new domain by examining what organizational emotional culture signals to individuals and whether individuals detect and value signals differently depending on individual differences. Empirically, I experimentally manipulate authentic emotional culture with other emotional cultures and assess reactions to them, providing the first known comparison of emotional cultures on attraction to an organization. From a practical standpoint, the results of this study inform management about the potential value of communicating certain emotional cultures as part of recruitment information, and how those may vary by individual differences. In particular, I consider whether certain emotional cultures may be less attractive to women and more attractive to highly neurotic persons, which has implications for self-selection into certain types of organizations.

## **Signaling Emotional Culture**

I conceptualize emotional culture information as a signal to the public about the organization's interpersonal expectations and norms (i.e., culture). As such, signaling theory is an appropriate theoretical paradigm for understanding applicant reactions to emotional culture.

### **Signaling Theory**

Signaling theory argues that organisms use cues, or "signals", to communicate needed information to receivers, who then interpret the signals and use the conveyed information to guide their future decision-making (Spence, 1973). In the context of recruitment, the organization is the signaler of information regarding organizational qualities to potential applicants, who receive the information to learn about those qualities. Due to their limited knowledge about potential employers, applicants use any information provided as signals about job and organizational attributes (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991) to evaluate their attraction to the organization.

Signaling theory has been applied to explain how organizations send information to job seekers regarding their values or qualities, such as executive racial diversity and firm reputation (Miller & Triana, 2009). Signaling theory has also been used to explain how firms signal prestige with their boards of directors (Certo, Covin, Daily, & Dalton, 2001) or top management teams (Lester, Certo, Dalton, Dalton, & Cannella, 2006). Yet, no known studies have considered how signaling theory can be used to understand how perceivers react to the emotional social context of an organization. This is notable because organizations are placing more emphasis on these types of emotional cultures, as shown by the description of such interpersonal interactions on their webpages and social media. Further, although research on emotional cultures is nascent, applicants do respond to messages of social and environmentally responsible organizational

values (Gully et al., 2013), suggesting that other organization values, such as emotional culture, may also convey information to potential employees that may influence job seekers' behaviors.

### **Organizational Emotional Cultures**

One way to attract individuals to an organization is to describe the way individuals in the organization interact and what organizational norms exist around the expression of emotions. We know that employee affect can exist at the individual or group levels (Ashkanay & Humphrey, 2011; Barsade & Knight, 2015) and can also emerge at the organizational level (Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2018). Organizational emotional culture is defined as the “behavioral norms and artifacts, as well as the underlying values and assumptions, that guide the expression (or suppression) of specific emotions and the appropriateness of displaying those emotions within a social unit” (O’Neill & Rothbard, 2017).

To signal the emotional culture to job applicants, organizations can describe norms and examples for how people interact while performing their work. There are a variety of emotional cultures<sup>1</sup> that organizations may communicate in recruitment. For example, organizations can be characterized as having a jovial culture (O’Neill & Rothbard, 2017) in which there are norms surrounding the regulation of emotions. A recent typology (Parke & Seo, 2017) theorizes organization-level affect as varying in affect valence and authenticity and provides examples of organizations categorized into different types. Building off this idea, I focus on three types of emotional cultures that range from a lack of emotional expression (non-expressive or neutral emotional culture) to expression of only pleasant emotions (i.e., positive emotional culture), to

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<sup>1</sup> Both of the terms climate and culture have been used to describe the ways in which affect can be studied at the organizational level. Climate has been studied traditionally as a bottom-up phenomenon that originates in an individual’s perceptions of organizational characteristics, such as policies and practices (Schneider, 1975). Because organizational messages for recruitment are less what policies and practices are actually in place in an organization and more about the way in which an organization conveys an image, I will be using the term emotional culture.

expression of any felt emotions (i.e., authentic emotional culture). I focus on these three as cultures that are likely to be signaled during recruitment by organizations (i.e., it is unlikely that organizations would signal a negative emotional culture in their recruitment materials). I begin with a neutral, or non-expressive culture, which was the norm for organizations for many years (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), and contrast this with two more recently emergent expressive cultures: positive and authentic.

*Non-expressive emotional culture: The traditional workplace.* The traditional view of affectivity at work is that emotions are the antithesis of rationality, having no place in the workforce (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). A non-expressive emotional culture is aligned with that traditional view and is a culture in which employees are discouraged from showing emotional expressions or affect (Parke & Seo, 2017). This view is described in case studies popularized by Brenner (1988), who discussed how emotional turmoil broke apart a family-run newspaper dynasty, and Burrough and Helyar (1990), who describe how feelings of pride and greed interfered with the buyout of RJR Nabisco. The tradeoff between emotions and rationality in the workforce has been described as “the great paradox of managerial behavior” (Argyris, 1985, p 51). Parke and Seo (2017) suggest that this type of emotional culture is most common in environments where there are expectations for objectivity, such as for judges and medical personnel, and emotions may bias one’s thinking or appear to be biased. For example, in medical school students begin to learn “affective neutrality” in preparation for their interactions with patients (Smith & Kleinman, 1989). Employees use neutralizing and suppressing felt emotions as a way to conform with this emotional culture (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995), and in order to perform the job effectively (Troughakos, Jackson, & Beal, 2011).

As such, I expect that signals of a non-expressive culture are perceived by as indicating value for logic and pragmatism over relationships and self-expression, and should result in behavioral expectations for the suppression of any strong emotions by the self and others at work.

***Positive Emotional Culture: Rise of the Service Economy.*** With the emergence of the service industry, emotional expressions – specifically positive expressions - were recognized as valuable to job performance rather than the antithesis of productivity (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Hochschild, 1983). In other words, showing *certain* emotions, rather than suppressing all emotions, became part of organizational norms.

This type of emotional culture, while popularized by the service industry and required in interactions with customers or clients, can also be seen in many other types of organizations. For example, the prior TMobile example demonstrated that positive social interactions among employees were expectation outlined in the employee handbook. NetApp, a data management company, prides themselves on fostering a culture in which there is a “healthy balance between work and play” (NetApp, n.d.). Further, positive cultures are normative among coworkers because positive group affect is linked to team creativity, cohesion, collaboration and performance (Amabile et al., 2005; Baas, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2008; Knight & Eisenkraft, 2015).

This requirement or expectancy of positivity may seem attractive, but may also be interpreted as constraining, as illustrated by the TMobile case mentioned in the introduction. In fact, when employees perceive display rules for showing positive and hiding negative - as would be expected in a positive emotional culture - they are more likely to put effort into regulating their emotional expressions (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Such requirements for emotion

regulation as part of the work role threaten the autonomy needs of employees (Grandey, Rupp, & Brice, 2015).

Recruitment materials communicating a positive emotional culture signal that an organization values the expression of positive emotions, such as joy and happiness, though not the expression of negative emotions, such as stress, anger, or boredom. As such, with a signal for a positive emotional culture, the receiver is likely to perceive that employees consciously regulate to hide negative emotions and to show positive emotion during all interactions as part of job performance (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

***Authentic Emotional Culture: Rise of the Self Expression Generation.*** More recently, there has been a swing in momentum toward a different emotional culture: authenticity. Authenticity refers to owning one's values, emotions, and beliefs, and behaving in a consistent manner with one's real self (Harter, 2002). This shift coincides with the description of the current era as a self-expressive era (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, & Tipton, 1985; Finkel, et al., 2015) in which individuals are focused on authenticity of the self. Self-expressive norms may be a part of today's generation and, as such, authenticity is moving from a construct that takes place outside of the workplace, such as with family and friends, to a construct within work environments as well (Robinson, Lopez, Ramos, & Nartova-Bochaver, 2013). For example, Twitter's homepage states that they want their employees to "feel comfortable being yourself every day you're here" (Twitter, n.d.) and Facebook encourages their employees to "Be unique. Be authentic." (Facebook, n.d.).

Even two decades ago, the idea of authenticity within reason - "bounded emotionality" - was described in the case study of one organization. Martin, Knopoff, and Beckman (1998) describe an authentic organizational culture in The Body Shop International: the encouragement



of a wider expression of emotions at work in order to foster well-being and felt safety among teams, while still maintaining positive emotions with customers. In this organization, employees commented that emotions are not frowned upon at work, and researchers noted that employees were franker with both coworkers and customers (Martin, Knopoff, & Beckman, 1998). More recently, Grandey, Foo, Groth, and Goodwin (2012) found that norms for authenticity among hospital units help employees cope with requirements for positive expressions with patients. In an experimental study manipulating expressive authenticity versus positive expressive requirements with customers (Goldberg & Grandey, 2007), participants were less likely to regulate their emotions (and feel less exhausted) in the former but were also more likely to act in positive ways toward others (i.e., perform better) in the latter.

The above studies were about interactions with outsiders. We know little about how people interpret messages of organizational emotional culture for authenticity among coworkers and whether they would find authentic emotional cultures as more attractive than other cultures. Recruitment messages communicating authenticity are likely to signal values for self-expression and autonomy (Goldberg & Grandey, 2007), but positivity emotional cultures are likely to signal values for other-enhancement and affiliation. I discuss these mechanisms in the next section.

### **Emotional Culture and Attractiveness**

Organizational attraction is an “attitude or expressed general positive affect toward an organization” (Aiman-Smith, Bauer, & Cable, 2001) that is positively related to job pursuit toward an organization (Chapman et al., 2005) and future retention (Schneider, 1987). Currently it is unknown if some emotional cultures are more attractive than others to today’s population.

I propose that, on average, an authentic emotional culture is more attractive than a non-expressive culture, particularly to new entrants to the work force (i.e., in their 20s). Authentic

emotional culture provides high levels of autonomy and freedom for self-expression, a key value to Americans and something that is sought and valued at work (Deci & Ryan, 1987; Spector, 1986). In contrast, a non-expressive culture suggests low autonomy, such that the company controls what can be shown and employees must suppress how they really feel. In particular, this generation of job entrants was raised on Facebook and Instagram, with norms for sharing their momentary events and feelings with others; to be told how to express and suppress their emotions would be contradictory to their values (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, & Tipton, 1985; Finkel, et al., 2015). As such, I predict:

*Hypothesis 1:* Attraction is higher to an organization with an authentic emotional culture compared to a non-expressive emotional culture.

It is less clear, however, whether authenticity will be more or less attractive than positivity. Organizations' messages available to individuals during the recruitment process relay signals to employees about what the organization is like. I propose there are two competing reasons for why an authentic emotional culture is likely to be perceived as similarly attractive compared to a positive emotional culture, though more attractive than non-expressive culture. Authentic culture is likely to have tradeoffs in terms of how much anticipated emotion regulation effort, or anticipated surface acting, is necessary and expectations for how others will treat the job seeker, or anticipated interpersonal justice.

### **Authenticity Culture Signals Lower Emotional Effort**

The three emotional cultures outlined above differ in the norms around showing felt emotions. When employees are expected to show emotions that are not aligned with what they are currently feeling (Diefendorff, Richard, & Croyle, 2006), they must effortfully manage emotional expressions to match the demands of the situation, also known as surface acting

(Hochschild, 1983). Based on signaling theory, I expect that the emotional culture signals the extent of anticipatory surface acting necessary to act in a way acceptable to the organization. Specifically, cultures that are more expressive (i.e., authentic) suggest that less surface acting is needed than cultures that are less expressive (i.e., non-expressive).

I expect that the more anticipatory surface acting, the less likely that the organization is attractive to the audience. In general, people do not like to put on false fronts, especially those in individualistic cultures where individual self-expression is valued (Butler, Lee, & Gross, 2007). In fact, when employees create false representations of themselves at work to fit in with the culture, they feel less satisfied and are more likely to leave an organization (Hewlin, 2009; Hewlin, Kim, & Song, 2016). Further, performing surface acting is unpleasant and creates dissonance and tension, which is linked to job dissatisfaction, burnout, and turnover (Goodwin, Groth, & Frenkel, 2011; Hülshager, Schewe, 2011). I propose that the amount of surface acting one anticipates performing in response to the emotional culture will influence their attraction to the organization, such that authentic cultures are more attractive due to lower anticipated surface acting than positive (or non-expressive) cultures.

*Hypothesis 2:* There is an indirect positive effect of authentic (versus others) emotional culture on attraction via lower anticipated surface acting.

### **Authenticity Culture Signals Lower Interpersonal Justice**

Emotional culture communicated by an organization also signals to the social context and how people will be treated. One indicator of such a social context is interpersonal justice. Interpersonal justice is the dignity, courtesy, and respect with which employees are treated within an organization (Colquitt, 2001). Positive emotional cultures are designed to ensure that such interpersonal justice occurs, though at a cost to personal autonomy over expression, as

shown in the TMobile case. Employees may anticipate more interpersonal justice in a positive emotional culture than an authentic emotional culture. Authentic cultures signal an increase in autonomy and freedom of self-expression, but they also signal freedom of the behaviors of others rather than following positive display rules. The push toward “informality” in organizations – where there are few rules about courtesy and demeanor - has been speculated to be a contributing factor to an increase in uncivil behaviors in organizations (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Barron & Neuman, 1996), as the lack of rules means fewer signals for what is considered appropriate. The lack of expectations around emotional displays in an authentic culture may signal that others are free to treat one with less justice, whereas the rules in place in positive and non-expressive cultures limit the behaviors of others.

Moreover, I expect that perceptions of interpersonal justice contribute to whether an organization is attractive. The promotion of interpersonal justice within organizations is generally perceived desirable by employees (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001) and a lack of interpersonal justice has been linked to increased stress levels and withdrawal and decreased organizational commitment, and withdrawal (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Judge & Colquitt, 2004). This suggests that individuals have a basic human need for decency and when that need is not met, they experience negative consequences. Further, justice perceptions can inform individuals of the type of relationships they may form within the organization (Bauer, Maertz, Dolen, & Campion, 1998), which has been linked to positive relational certainty (Walker, et al., 2013). Because of this, I propose that an authentic emotional culture is actually less attractive to perceivers than positive (and non-expressive) emotional culture, due to lower expectations for interpersonal justice by coworkers.

*Hypothesis 3:* There is an indirect negative effect of authentic (versus others) emotional culture on attraction via lower anticipated interpersonal justice.

### **Individual Differences and the Attractiveness of Emotional Culture**

A key assumption of signaling theory is that the same organizational messages will be attended to and interpreted differently by different people. In a review of signaling theory, Connelly et al. (2011) discussed how the effect of the signal depends on characteristics to the receiver because those characteristics determine how the signal is interpreted. In predicting attraction, while there are some organizational characteristics that are preferred by most individuals (Judge and Bretz, 1992), the strength of individuals' preference for certain organizational characteristics depends on individual differences in their values, goals, expectations, and characteristics (Rynes & Cable, 2003). In fact, it has been shown that job applicants differ in the way they use the same signals during recruitment to understand and make conclusions about organizations (Rynes, 1991), depending on their concerns about employment (Highhouse et al., 2007). Receivers apply weights to signals or distort signals in a way that alters the original intent of the signaler (Branzei et al., 2004; Ehrhart & Zieger, 2005).

Thus, signaling theory suggests messages from organizations relay information that can be used to influence potential job applicants, but also receivers distort the meaning based on their characteristics, suggesting attraction may depend on individual differences. I propose that the extent to which emotional cultures are signals of surface acting or interpersonal justice depends on the applicants' socio-emotional tendencies, specifically gender and neuroticism.

### **Anticipated Surface Acting: Gender and Neuroticism by Emotional Culture**

In general, I expect that job applicants with characteristics that represent more negative emotionality will interpret expressive cultures (i.e., autonomy) as being a better fit than less

expressive cultures (i.e., positive or non-expressive), due to the extent to which they must regulate their (negative) emotions to fit into the social norms via surface acting.

Many researchers have noted the belief that both felt emotion and emotional expression differs between genders in the United States (Robinson & Johnson, 1997; Simon & Nath, 2004). Women are believed to show more empathy and love toward others (Hochschild, 1981) and there is an association between being a woman and reporting higher levels of anxiety and sadness (Simon & Nath, 2004). Further, in several studies, women have been shown to express more emotion, in general, than males (Blier & Blier, 1989; Brody, 1997; Kring & Gordon, 1998) and women are more likely to use expressing their emotions as a way to cope with stress (Thoits, 1989).

These gender differences in emotionality are commonly attributed to social roles, or the shared expectations that correspond with particular social positions (Biddle, 1986). Specifically, Prentice and Carranza (2002) identified the expression of emotions as an intensified prescription, or a trait high in social desirability that women should possess solely due to their gender. Society's prescription for men, on the other hand, is that they should possess traits such as rationality and consistency (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Further, role congruity theory suggests that groups will be evaluated negatively when their characteristics do not align with the group's social roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly & Diekmann, 2005). Men, who are societally trained not to show emotion, may find an emotionally expressive work culture to fit less with their behavioral tendencies due to norms around what is typical and socialized over time.

A second individual difference that has influence over emotionality is neuroticism, or "the disposition to interpret events negatively" (Watson & Clarke, 1984). Neuroticism has generally been associated with the tendency to experience negative emotional states (Costa &

McCrae, 1987) such as nervousness, anxiety, moodiness, and worry (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002) and to experience higher levels of trait negative affect (Gross, Sutton, & Ketelaar, 1998). Higher neuroticism is linked to lower performance motivation (Judge & Ilies, 2002) and lower job satisfaction (Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002), which in turn leads to less altruistic behaviors at work (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983), and the negative tendencies can result in turnover from an organization (Iverson & Deery, 2001), job stress, and counterproductive work behaviors (Penney & Spector, 2005).

I expect that gender and neuroticism interacts with emotional culture to affect attractiveness, due to anticipated need for surface acting. A key component of both positive and non-expressive emotional cultures is the norm for suppression of negative emotions; within a positive culture, negative emotions are suppressed and within a non-expressive culture, all emotions, including negative, are suppressed. This norm may be harder for women and individuals high in neuroticism to conform to, since both report feeling moodier and more negatively than their counterparts (Connor-Smith & Flachsbart, 2007). For individuals who are likely to feel strong negative affect at work, positive and non-expressive cultures create interpersonal expectations that are not aligned with their natural tendencies. For men, those expectations are not aligned with their practiced and socially normative tendencies as they are for women. This misalignment with tendencies may result in greater need to manage emotions at work, or surface act.

I suggest that this means an authentic organizational culture – one that permits expression of felt positive and negative emotions – is more likely to be attractive to women and those high in neuroticism, compared to a context that expects positive or no emotional expression. This is because women and people who tend to feel more negatively are likely to be more attentive to,

and give more value to, organizational signals about their felt emotions and their expression. In particular, an authentic culture is more congruent with their natural tendencies, and thus there is less effortful surface acting needed, than is a positive or non-expressive culture. In contrast, men and people who are more emotionally stable are less likely to be attentive or reactive to the emotional culture, thus not differing in attractiveness if the culture is authentic, positive, or neutral.

Thus, I propose that signaling *authentic* work cultures compared to other cultures leads to greater attraction for women compared to men and individuals higher in neuroticism compared to those lower in neuroticism, via anticipated surface acting in that organization.

*Hypothesis 4:* The indirect effect of authentic (versus others) emotional culture on attraction via lower anticipated surface acting is more strongly positive for (4a) women than men and (4b) people higher in neuroticism than people lower in neuroticism.

### **Anticipated Interpersonal Justice: Gender and Neuroticism by Emotional Culture**

The above arguments might suggest that people who are more aware of feeling negatively (i.e., women compared to men and those high in neuroticism compared to those low in neuroticism) are generally more attracted to authentic culture more than the less expressive cultures. Yet, there is a counteracting effect that may make this less likely to occur. Job applicants also interpret the emotional culture as a signal about how they will be treated by others. For example, women tend to be more attentive to interpersonal cues than men (Hampson, van Anders, & Mullin, 2005; Wild, Erb, & Bartels, 2001;), which suggests they may be more attuned to the emotional, interpersonal aspect of an authentic culture compared to men. Given high needs for affiliation and belonging (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Cross & Madson, 1997), women value the signal for positive expressive norms or even hiding negative expressions more



than authentic expression, since negative emotions can differentiate and ostracize others (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1998). Similarly, those higher in neuroticism who experience an increased level of general negative affect are more likely to interpret neutral or ambiguous stimuli as negative compared to those lower in neuroticism (Lanyon & Goodstein, 1997). This suggests that applicants high in neuroticism may be more likely to interpret the authentic emotional culture as a signal that they will be treated more negatively compared to positive and non-expressive cultures require people to treat others positively or politely.

Thus, I propose a competing argument, such that signaling authentic work cultures compared to other cultures leads to *less* attraction for women compared to men and individuals higher in neuroticism compared to those lower in neuroticism, via anticipated interpersonal justice.

*Hypothesis 5:* The indirect effect of authentic (versus others) emotional culture on attraction via lower anticipated interpersonal justice is more strongly negative for 5a) women than men and 5b) people higher in neuroticism than people lower in neuroticism.

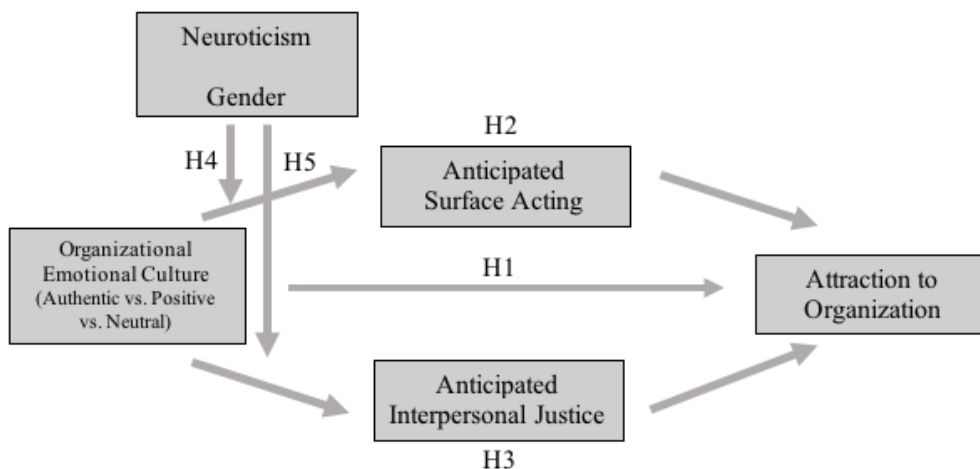


Figure 1-1: Study Model.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Method**

Since there is no prior research comparing these three emotional cultures, I first developed and validated stimuli to manipulate the three cultures for a job recruitment context in a pilot study. In my main study I obtained a new sample and then assessed attraction to these three cultures and the mediators and moderators of those effects.

#### **Pilot Study: Stimuli Development**

To test the predictions, stimuli were developed to manipulate the values and norms of an organization's emotional culture. I then conducted a within-subject pilot study to ensure these descriptions were accurately manipulating emotional culture without manipulating unintended organizational characteristics.

#### **Stimuli Development**

To test my predictions, I needed descriptions of emotional culture as if they were on a company website that is available to individuals pursuing a job in the organization. No existing materials were available to represent the three emotional organizational cultures, authentic, positive and non-expressive, in a recruitment context. I wrote descriptions that were realistic for an organizational website, using the definition of culture as the company's values, expectations, and behavioral norms that guide the expression of emotions at work. I attempted to differentiate the three cultures based on the extent to which the expressions of emotion – and which types of emotions - are valued as information and for relationships and whether they tend to be shown in the organization. To do this, I used both corporate mission and value statements as well as employee testimonials, as are found on company websites. These initial descriptions were reviewed for clarity by research assistants, with further edits made to improve how well they

represented the intended culture. Once the descriptions were clearly worded, we then proceeded to gather pilot data from a larger sample of participants. The final manipulations can be seen in Appendix A.

### **Participants and Procedure**

Participants were 34 senior college students who had previous work experience. They were recruited from senior-level (400-level) psychology classes. All participants received class credit or extra credit, and all had the opportunity to earn credit in other ways if they chose not to participate. The majority of students were female (61.8%) and Caucasian (82%) with four Asian, one African American, and one Hispanic participants. A majority of the participants (82%) currently or previously worked in a formal business organization.

Participants received a link to an online survey. After reading the online consent form, they clicked 'next' if they agreed to participate. A repeated-measures design was used, such that participants were presented with all three emotional culture manipulations in a randomized order. After being presented with each manipulation, they answered the same series of questions as described below and then clicked a separate link to enter their names in order to receive extra credit.

### **Measures**

To ensure that participants perceived differences among the emotional organizational cultures in the intended way, I asked about perceived norms for emotional expression within the organization they read about: "To what extent are employees expected to openly share and show their feelings while working at this company?". Participants were also asked "To what extent does the company value autonomy: freedom over choice and behavior?".

To confirm the emotional culture is being manipulated rather than other qualities of the organization, I also needed to ensure that the descriptions of emotional culture were not confounded with perception of success within the organization. The specific item to assess that perception was: “To what extent are employees at this company able to get work done successfully?”. Responses were anchored on a scale from not at all (1) to a great extent (4).

## **Results**

A repeated measures ANOVA confirmed that, as intended, expectations for *showing* feelings were significantly different across cultures,  $F(1, 66) = 26.39, p < .001$ . Tests of within-subjects contrasts showed that expectations for showing emotions were higher in the authentic emotional culture ( $M = 3.50, SD = .66$ ) than in the positive culture ( $M = 2.53, SD = .83$ ),  $F(1, 33) = 28.59, p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.60, -1.34], which was higher than the non-expressive culture ( $M = 2.03, SD = .90$ ),  $F(1, 33) = 5.78, p = .02$ , 95% CI [.08, .92]. Further, expectations for the amount of autonomy significantly differed across cultures,  $F(1, 66) = 15.55, p < .001$ . Specifically, authenticity was seen as providing more autonomy than positivity,  $F(1, 33) = 19.93, p < .001$ , but positive and non-expressive cultures were not significantly different,  $F(1, 33) = .43, p = .52$ . Importantly, there was no significant difference between conditions in the extent to which employees successfully complete their work,  $F(2, 66) = .29, p = .75$ . Thus, all three cultures differed in terms of expressivity, authenticity differed from the other two in terms of autonomy, but the descriptions did not unintentionally manipulate the perception of success.

## **Main Study**

Having demonstrated that the conditions are perceived as intended in a repeated-measures design, I proceeded to again test the manipulations and to test the hypotheses using a between-person design.

## **Participants**

Participants in the main study were undergraduate students from a large Northeastern university who were likely to have job experience or be looking for employment in the next year. They were recruited through a psychology participant database and upper level (400-level) psychology classes. All participants received class credit or extra credit at the professor's discretion and were given the opportunity for other credit opportunities if they did not wish to participate in this research study. Out of the 405 participants who completed the survey and gave consent, 69 participants incorrectly responded to attention checks in which they were told to select a particular response (Meade & Craig, 2012), reducing the final sample to 335. This final sample was 63% female with a mean age of 19.69 years ( $SD = 2.23$ ) and a majority of the participants (56.1%) currently or previously worked in a formal business organization. Given the focus on recruitment, it is important to note that 83.7% of the participants reported they will be looking for an internship or short-term employment within the next year. Participants were majority Caucasian (74%), with 15% Asian, 10% Hispanic, and 5% Black participants. Because participants were able to report as many racial identities as they felt applied, participants with multiple racial identities were counted multiple times causing the total percentage to be higher than 100%.

## **Procedure**

As in the previous study, participants accessed the survey via an online link. After reading the consent form and agreeing to participate, participants saw one of the three emotional culture stimuli and then responded to the dependent variables in order to test the direct relationship of Hypothesis 1 (i.e., attraction) and the indirect effects of Hypothesis 2 and 3 (i.e., anticipated surface acting and interpersonal justice as mechanisms). I also obtained measures of

gender and neuroticism (plus extraversion and agreeableness as comparisons) to test the conditional indirect effect Hypotheses 4 and 5.

## Measures

**Manipulation Check.** The manipulation check for showing emotions was the same single item as in the pilot study. For the measurement of autonomy I used a 3-item subscale of the Need Satisfaction Scale (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000), including “I have a say in what happens and can voice my opinion” and “I feel controlled and pressured to be certain ways”. The same question perceptions of success at the organization as the pilot was asked: “To what extent are employees at this company able to get work done successfully?”. Because it is possible that a more expressive culture indicates more opportunities for social interactions and teamwork, participants were also asked “to what extent do employees at this company need to work on a team?” to ensure that this did not unintentionally vary by condition.

**Organizational Attraction.** Organizational attraction was assessed using Highhouse et al.’s (2003) 5-item General Attractiveness scale ( $\alpha = 0.94$ ) ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). A sample item is “A job at this company is very appealing to me”.

**Anticipated Surface Acting.** To assess surface acting, participants responded to an adapted version of Grandey’s (2003) 5-item measure ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ), ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*). The items were adapted to address expectations of surface acting. A sample item is “To what extent to you agree or disagree that you would need to fake a good mood in order to do this job effectively?”.

**Anticipated Interpersonal Justice.** Anticipated interpersonal justice was assessed using an adapted version of Colquitt’s (2001) 4-item measure ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ) ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 4 (*To a great extent*). The items were adapted to be about anticipation of interpersonal justice

rather than current levels of justice. A sample item from this scale is “To what extent do you expect you would be treated in a polite manner?”.

**Gender.** Gender was measured using a 1-item measure that asked participants to indicate their gender identity. Response choices for this item were “Male”, “Female”, and “Other”, in which participants were provided with the option to write in their gender identity. Only one person put “other”, thus the data analyses focused on those who entered male or female.

**Neuroticism.** Neuroticism was measured using Goldberg’s (1992) Big-Five Factor Markers 10-item measure accessed via the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) plus the addition of 3 items from the 20-item measure ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ). The additional 3 items were: “I get angry easy”, “I feel threatened easy”, and “I take offense easily”. Participants were asked how accurately each item describes them using response choices from 1 (*very inaccurate*) to 5 (*very accurate*).

## Chapter 3

### Results

#### Manipulation Checks

As found in the repeated-measures pilot study and shown in Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1, expectations for showing feelings were higher in the authentic emotional culture ( $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = .88$ ) than in the positive culture ( $M = 2.35$ ,  $SD = .90$ ), which was higher than the non-expressive culture ( $M = 1.95$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ). Further, expectations of autonomy were higher in the authentic emotional culture ( $M = 4.99$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) than the positive culture ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ), which was higher than the non-expressive culture ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ). As expected, there were no significant differences between conditions in expectations of work success  $F(2, 332) = 2.22$ ,  $p = .11$  or teamwork  $F(2, 332) = 1.13$ ,  $p = .33$ . Thus, emotional culture was manipulated effectively.

Table 3-1

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Among Measured Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	1	3	4	5	6
1. Gender <sup>a</sup>	-	-	335	-				
2. Attraction	3.32	1.10	335	.04	(.91)			
3. Surface Act	4.60	1.62	335	.07	-.42**	(.74)		
4. Inter. Justice <sup>b</sup>	3.38	0.56	335	-.05	.31**	-.10	(.91)	
5. Neuroticism	3.79	1.12	335	.29**	-.15**	.28**	-.17**	(.95)

*Note.* Parentheses contain the Cronbach's alphas for the measures used in the study. All tests are two-tailed.

<sup>a</sup> Gender: 1 = Male; 2 = Female.

<sup>b</sup> Inter. Justice = Interpersonal justice

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ .



Table 3-2

*Descriptives and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for Emotional Culture*

	Authentic (n = 111)	Positive (n = 109)	Non-Express (n = 115)	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Dependent Variables</b>					
Org. Attraction	3.45 (.96)	3.55 (1.07)	2.99 (1.18)	8.47	< .001
Surface Acting	3.98 (1.70)	4.92 (1.55)	4.89 (1.45)	12.99	< .001
Interpersonal Justice	3.22 (.60)	3.53 (.51)	3.39 (.53)	8.90	< .001

*Note:* Bolded values are effects that have 95% confidence intervals that do not include zero. Values in parentheses indicate SDs.

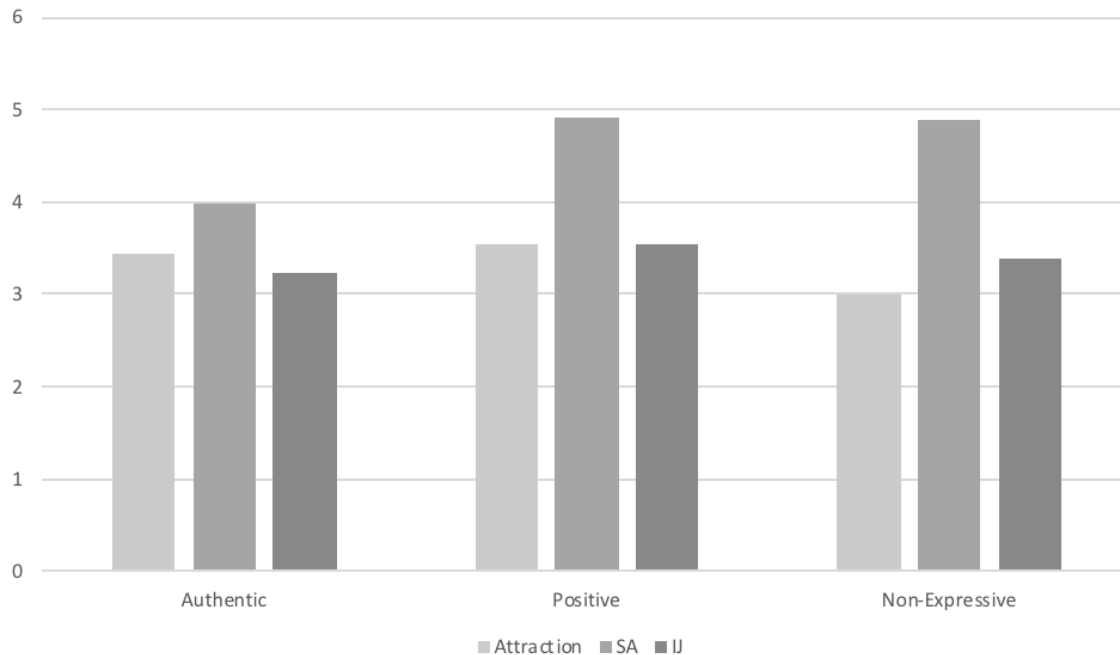


Figure 3-1. Average ratings for dependent and mediation variables by organizational emotional culture.

## Hypotheses Tests

**Hypothesis 1.** Hypothesis 1 stated that, in general, individuals will perceive higher levels of attraction to an authentic emotional culture compared to a non-expressive culture. As shown in in Table 3-2, hypothesis 1 was confirmed as an authentic culture was more attractive ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ) than a non-expressive culture ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ),  $F(1, 332) = 10.05$ ,  $p = .002$ . Also as expected, an authentic emotional culture was not seen as more attractive than a positive culture ( $M = 3.55$   $SD = 1.07$ ), as there was no significant difference in level of attraction between the two,  $F(1, 332) = .46$ ,  $p = .50$ .

**Hypothesis 2.** According to hypothesis 2, the effect of emotional culture on attraction is mediated through anticipated amount of surface acting. To test this mediation, I used Hayes's (2012) PROCESS macro in IBM SPSS version 25 (Model 4). Confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrapped samples. The predictor variable was coded using indicator codes with authenticity as the comparison group, such that in code 1, authenticity = 0, positive =

1, and in code 2, authenticity = 0, non-expressive = 1. To control for the possibility that one's gender and tendency to see things negatively can have a direct effect on attraction, I included gender and neuroticism in the model as covariates<sup>2</sup>.

As shown in table 3-3, for both sets of indicator codes, emotional culture significantly predicted surface acting as expected, such that authentic culture predicted lower levels of surface acting than the other condition: code 1:  $b = 1.04$ ,  $t(330) = 5.13$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI[0.64, 1.44]; code 2:  $b = 0.90$ ,  $t(330) = 4.54$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI[0.51, 1.30]. As expected, surface acting was associated with less attraction,  $b = -0.29$ ,  $t(329) = -8.00$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-0.36, -0.22]. As predicted in hypothesis 2, there was an indirect effect of emotional culture on attraction through anticipated surface acting for both indicator codes: code 1 effect = -0.27, 95% CI [-0.40, -0.16]; code 2 effect = -0.24, 95% CI [-0.35, -0.13]. Thus, the effect of emotional culture on attraction was mediated by anticipated surface acting such that an authentic culture was seen as requiring less surface acting than both positive and non-expressive cultures. That is, an authentic culture was seen as *more* attractive because it signaled reduced likelihood for effortfully managing expressions compared to a positive or non-expressive culture.

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<sup>2</sup> I tested every model without covariates included and the interpretation of the results did not change.

Table 3-3

*Results from Mediation Analyses of Emotional Culture on Attraction Via Surface Acting*

	Authentic Emotional Culture (X) → Surface Acting (M) → Attraction (Y)								
	Model 1 (X→Y)			Model 2 (X→M)			Model 3 (X→M→Y)		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Emotional Culture									
NonvsAuth(X1)	<b>-.45<sup>bc</sup></b>	.14	[-.73, -.17]	<b>.90<sup>b</sup></b>	.20	[.51, 1.30]	<b>-.26<sup>b</sup></b>	.07	[-.40, -.14]
PosvsAuth(X2)	.06 <sup>bc</sup>	.14	[-.22, .34]	<b>1.04<sup>b</sup></b>	.20	[.64, 1.44]	<b>-.30<sup>b</sup></b>	.07	[-.44, -.17]
Mediator									
SA <sup>a</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>-.29<sup>bd</sup></b>	.04	[-.36, -.22]
Culture x Gender									
X1 x Gender	.07	.29	[-.51, .64]	-.46	.41	[-1.26, .35]	-.46	.41	[-1.26, .35]
X2 x Gender	-.24	.30	[-.84, .35]	-.04	.42	[-.88, .79]	-.04	.42	[-.88, .79]
Culture x Neurot									
X1 x Neurot	-.01	.13	[-.26, .24]	-.23	.18	[-.58, .13]	-.23	.18	[-.58, .13]
X2 x Neurot	.08	.13	[-.19, .34]	-.04	.19	[-.41, .33]	-.04	.19	[-.41, .33]
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.07			.16			.23		

*Note.* All models were tested with gender and neuroticism as covariates; Gender and neuroticism interactions with the indicator codes were run in separate models. Bolded values are effects that have 95% confidence intervals that do not include zero.

<sup>a</sup> SA = Surface acting; <sup>b</sup> With only direct effects in the model; <sup>c</sup> Effect on Y without SA in the model; <sup>d</sup> Coefficient is the direct effect of SA on Y

X1 = NonvsAuth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Non-Expressive = 1; X2 = PosvsAuth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Positive = 1.

**Hypothesis 3.** According to hypothesis 3, the effect of emotional culture on attraction is mediated through anticipated interpersonal justice. To test this mediation, I used the same process described above for hypothesis 2. As shown in Table 3-4, for both sets of indicator codes, emotional culture significantly predicted interpersonal justice such that authentic culture resulted in lower interpersonal justice than the other two conditions: code 1 effect  $b = 0.30$ ,  $t(330) = 4.05$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI[0.15, 0.44]; code 2 effect  $b = 0.17$ ,  $t(330) = 2.39$ ,  $p = .03$ , 95% CI[0.03, 0.32]. Interpersonal justice was associated with more attraction,  $b = 0.60$ ,  $t(329) = 5.85$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.40, 0.80]. Lastly, as predicted in hypothesis 3, there was an indirect effect of emotional culture in both indicator codes on attraction through anticipated interpersonal justice, as evidenced by the 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect not including zero, such that code 1: effect = 1.63, 95% CI [0.75, 0.27]; code 2: effect = 0.09, 95% CI [0.01, 0.19]. Thus, the effect of emotional culture on attraction was mediated by anticipated interpersonal justice, such that an authentic culture was seen as eliciting less interpersonal justice than both positive and non-expressive. That is, an authentic culture was seen as *less* attractive because it signaled increased likelihood that one will be treated unfairly compared to a positive or non-expressive culture.

Table 3- 4

*Results from Mediation Analyses of Emotional Culture on Attraction Via Interpersonal Justice*

	Authentic Emotional Culture (X) → Interpersonal Justice (M) → Attraction (Y)								
	Model 1 (X→Y)			Model 2 (X→M)			Model 3 (X→M→Y)		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Emotional Culture									
NonvsAuth(X1)	<b>-.45<sup>bc</sup></b>	.14	[-.73, -.17]	<b>.17<sup>b</sup></b>	.07	[.03, .32]	<b>.10<sup>b</sup></b>	.05	[.02, .21]
PosvsAuth(X2)	.06 <sup>bc</sup>	.14	[-.22, .34]	<b>.30<sup>b</sup></b>	.07	[.15, .44]	<b>.18<sup>b</sup></b>	.06	[.08, .30]
Mediator									
IJ <sup>a</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>.60<sup>bd</sup></b>	.10	[.40, .80]
Culture x Gender									
X1 x Gender	.07	.29	[-.51, .64]	.03	.15	[-.26, .33]	.03	.15	[-.26, .33]
X2 x Gender	-.24	.30	[-.84, .35]	.02	.15	[-.28, .32]	.02	.15	[-.28, .32]
Culture x Neurot									
X1 x Neurot	-.01	.13	[-.26, .24]	.03	.07	[-.10, .16]	.03	.07	[-.10, .16]
X2 x Neurot	.08	.13	[-.19, .34]	.05	.07	[-.09, .19]	.05	.07	[-.07, .19]
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.07			.07			.16		

All models were tested with gender and neuroticism as covariates; Gender and neuroticism interactions with the indicator codes were run in separate models. Bolded values are effects that have 95% confidence intervals that do not include zero.<sup>a</sup> IJ = Interpersonal Justice; <sup>b</sup> With only direct effects in the model; <sup>c</sup> Effect on Y without IJ in the model; <sup>d</sup> Coefficient is the direct effect of IJ on Y

X1 = NonvsAuth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Non-Expressive = 1; X2 = PosvsAuth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Positive = 1.

**Hypothesis 4.** Hypotheses 4 and 5 suggested that the two indirect effects would be conditioned by gender and neuroticism. There was no support for any of these conditional effects. To test all instances of moderated mediation, I used Hayes's (2012) PROCESS macro in IBM SPSS version 25 (Model 7). Confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrapped samples. I retained one variable (gender or neuroticism) in the model as a covariate while the other was being tested as the moderator.

Hypothesis 4a stated that the indirect effect of authentic (versus positive and non-expressive) emotional cultures on attraction via surface acting will be more strongly positive for women than men. The results of this moderated mediation regression analysis are shown in Table 5. When comparing authenticity to positivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was  $-.31$  ( $SE = .10$ ) for men and  $-.29$  ( $SE = .09$ ) for women and the indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of difference for code 1  $[-0.24, 0.25]$ ). When comparing authenticity to non-expressivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was  $-.34$  ( $SE = .10$ ) for men and  $-.21$  ( $SE = .08$ ) for women, but the indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of difference for code 2  $[-0.10, 0.38]$ ). Hypothesis 4a was not supported. Thus, the indirect effect of culture on attraction via surface acting did not differ for men compared to women<sup>3</sup>.

Hypothesis 4b stated that the indirect effect of authentic (versus positive and non-expressive) emotional culture on attraction via surface acting will be more strongly positive for individuals higher in neuroticism than those lower in neuroticism. The results of this moderated mediation regression analysis are shown in Table 3-5. When comparing authenticity to positivity,

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<sup>3</sup> One concern with these results is that the moderation effect is happening at a different stage in the process. To address this concern, I also tested for moderation at the second stage as well as a direct moderation for both hypothesis 4 and 5. None of these additional tests were significant.

the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was  $-.30$  ( $SE = .08$ ) for high neuroticism and  $-.30$  ( $SE = .08$ ) for low neuroticism, and these indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of the difference for code 1  $[-0.10, 0.13]$ ). When comparing authenticity to non-expressivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was  $-.19$  ( $SE = .08$ ) for high neuroticism and  $-.35$  ( $SE = .10$ ) for low neuroticism, and these indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of the difference for code 2  $[-0.04, 0.18]$ ). Hypothesis 4b was not supported. Thus, the indirect effect of culture on attraction via surface acting did not differ for individuals higher in neuroticism compared to those lower in neuroticism.

Table 3-5

*Results of Moderated Mediation Regression Analysis for Surface Acting*

	First Stage (X→M)			Indirect Effects (X→M→Y)		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
NonvsAuth(X1)						
Male	<b>1.18</b>	.32	[.55, 1.81]	<b>-.34</b>	.10	[-.55, -.15]
Female	<b>0.73</b>	.25	[.22, 1.23]	<b>-.21</b>	.08	[-.38, -.06]
PosvsAuth(X2)						
Male	<b>1.06</b>	.34	[.39, 1.73]	<b>-.31</b>	.10	[-.52, -.11]
Female	<b>1.02</b>	.25	[.52, 1.51]	<b>-.29</b>	.09	[-.48, -.14]
NonvsAuth(X1)						
Low Neurot	<b>1.18</b>	.29	[.60, 1.75]	<b>-.35</b>	.10	[-.56, -.16]
High Neurot	<b>0.66</b>	.28	[.12, 1.20]	<b>-.19</b>	.08	[-.35, -.04]
PosvsAuth(X2)						
Low Neurot	<b>1.10</b>	.29	[.53, 1.67]	<b>-.32</b>	.11	[-.55, -.13]
High Neurot	<b>1.01</b>	.30	[.42, 1.60]	<b>-.30</b>	.08	[-.47, -.15]



*Note.* Gender and neuroticism were run as 2 separate models. Bolded values are effects with 95% confidence intervals not including zero.

X2: AuthvsNon was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Non-Expressive = 1

X1: AuthvsPos was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Positive = 1

**Hypothesis 5.** Hypothesis 5a stated that the indirect effect of authentic (versus positive and non-expressive) emotional cultures on attraction via interpersonal justice will be more strongly negative for women than men. The results of this moderated mediation regression analysis are shown in Table 6. When comparing authenticity to positivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was .17 (SE = .08) for men and .18 (SE = .07) for women and the indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of difference for code 1 [-0.17, 0.20]). When comparing authenticity to non-expressivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was .09 (SE = .07) for men and .11 (SE = .06) for women, but the indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of difference for code 2 [-0.16, 0.21]). Hypothesis 5a was not supported. Thus, the indirect effect of culture on attraction via interpersonal justice did not differ for men compared to women.

Hypothesis 5b stated that the indirect effect of authentic (versus positive and non-expressive) emotional cultures on attraction via interpersonal justice will be more strongly negative for individuals higher in neuroticism than those lower in neuroticism. The results of this moderated mediation regression analysis are shown in Table 6. When comparing authenticity to positivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was .23 (SE = .08) for high neuroticism and .16 (SE = .07) for low neuroticism, and these indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of the difference for code 1 [-0.06, 0.12]). When comparing authenticity to non-expressivity, the coefficients showed that the conditional indirect effect was .13 (SE = .07) for high neuroticism and .09 (SE = .07) for low neuroticism, and these indirect effects were not significantly different from each other (95% CI of the difference for code 2 [-.07, .10]). Hypothesis 5b was not supported. Thus, the indirect effect of culture on

attraction via interpersonal justice did not differ for individuals higher in neuroticism compared to those lower in neuroticism.

Table 3-6

*Results of Moderated Mediation Regression Analysis for Interpersonal Justice*

	First Stage (X→M)			Indirect Effects (X→M→Y)		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
<hr/>						
NonvsAuth(X1)						
Male	.15	.12	[-.08, .38]	.09	.07	[-.05, .24]
Female	<b>.19</b>	.09	[.004, .37]	.11	.06	[-.003, .24]
<hr/>						
PosvsAuth(X2)						
Male	<b>.29</b>	.12	[.04, .53]	<b>.17</b>	.08	[.03, .35]
Female	<b>.31</b>	.09	[.12, .49]	<b>.18</b>	.07	[.06, .32]
<hr/>						
NonvsAuth(X1)						
Low Neurot	.14	.11	[-.07, .35]	.09	.07	[-.04, .23]
High Neurot	<b>.20</b>	.10	[.003, .40]	.13	.07	[-.02, .28]
<hr/>						
PosvsAuth(X2)						
Low Neurot	<b>.24</b>	.11	[.04, .45]	<b>.16</b>	.07	[.03, .31]
High Neurot	<b>.36</b>	.11	[.14, .57]	<b>.23</b>	.08	[.08, .40]

*Note.* Gender and neuroticism were run as 2 separate models. Bolded values are effects with 95%

confidence intervals not including zero.

Non vs Auth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Non-Expressive = 1.

Pos vs Auth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Positive = 1.

## Exploratory Analyses

### Other Receiver Attributes

I also explored whether two other personality traits, agreeableness and extraversion, changed how the emotional culture was perceived. I focused specifically on agreeableness and extraversion because they are personality traits relevant to emotions and interactions with others. I tested these cases of moderated mediation the same way as I tested hypotheses 4 and 5. I used Hayes's (2012) PROCESS macro in IBM SPSS version 25 (Model 7). Confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrapped samples. As I tested one variable as the moderator (either agreeableness or extraversion), I retained the other variable and neuroticism in the model as a covariate. All of the condition indirect effects were non-significant. Thus, the effects of an authentic emotional culture on attraction were through the two proposed mechanisms (surface acting or interpersonal justice) consistently across traits of the respondent.

### Full Model

Because both proposed pathways were significant independently, I decided to test a model that includes both anticipated surface acting and interpersonal justice. To test this mediation, I used Hayes's (2012) PROCESS macro in IBM SPSS version 25 (Model 6). Confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrapped samples. The predictor variable was coded using indicator codes with authenticity as the comparison group, such that in code 1, authenticity = 0, positive = 1, and in code 2, authenticity = 0, non-expressive = 1.

Including both mechanisms in the model did not change the interpretation compared to when I ran the mechanisms as two separate models. Results of this analysis show that surface acting significantly predicts attraction,  $b = -.26$ ,  $t(330) = -7.89$ ,  $p < .001$ , and interpersonal justice significantly predicts attraction,  $b = .50$ ,  $t(330) = 5.39$ ,  $p < .001$ . Of note here is that while both

mechanisms significantly predict attraction, it is in opposite directions. As shown in table 3-7, there was an indirect effect of emotional culture on attraction through anticipated surface acting for both indicator codes: code 1 effect = -0.25, 95% CI [-0.39, -0.13]; code 2 effect = -0.24, 95% CI [-0.37, -0.12]. Thus, the effect of emotional culture on attraction was mediated by anticipated surface acting such that an authentic culture was seen as requiring less surface acting than both positive and non-expressive cultures. That is, an authentic culture was seen as *more* attractive because it signaled reduced likelihood for effortfully managing expressions compared to a positive or non-expressive culture. At the same time, there was an indirect effect of emotional culture on attraction through anticipated interpersonal justice for both indicator codes: code 1 effect = .18, 95% CI [.09, .30]; code 2 effect = .11, 95% CI [.04, .21]. Thus, the effect of emotional culture on attraction was mediated by anticipated interpersonal justice such that an authentic culture was seen as eliciting less interpersonal than both positive and non-expressive cultures. That is, an authentic culture was seen as *less* attractive because it signaled increased likelihood for rude treatment at work.

Table 3-7

*Results of Mediation Regression Analysis for Full Model with Two Mediators*

	Indirect Effects (X→M→Y)		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
Surface Acting			
NonvsAuth(X1)	-.24	.07	[-.38, -.12]
PosvsAuth(X2)	-.25	.07	[-.39, -.13]
Interpersonal Just			
NonvsAuth(X1)	.11	.04	[.03, .21]
PosvsAuth(X2)	.18	.05	[.09, .30]

*Note.* This model was tested with both surface acting and interpersonal justice included. Bolded values are effects that have 95% confidence intervals that do not include zero.

X1 = NonvsAuth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Non-Expressive = 1; X2 = PosvsAuth was coded such that Authenticity = 0 and Positive = 1.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Discussion**

The current study draws on signaling theory as a theoretical lens to argue that emotional culture information informs people about the emotional nature of the company and to understand how that information influences attraction to an organization. In general, a non-expressive emotional culture was seen as less attractive than a positive or authentic emotional culture. However, there was no difference between how attractive positive and authentic cultures were perceived. This suggests that people may view the lack of autonomy and amount of control associated with a non-expressive culture as unappealing.

The lack of differentiation between positive and authentic emotional cultures may be due to the competing mechanisms I proposed. By measuring the amount of anticipated surface acting and anticipated justice, I am able to provide explanations of *why* certain cultures are more or less attractive than others as well as understand what signals individuals receive from organizational descriptions of emotional culture. I demonstrate that descriptions of emotional culture influence attraction to organizations through two mechanisms: anticipated surface acting and anticipated interpersonal justice. Specifically, an authentic culture – a current hot topic in popular media – can be perceived in two ways: 1) positively, such that one does not have to exert effort to control their emotions and 2) negatively, such that others can do the same, meaning there is a greater chance of being treated negatively by others.

Further building on signaling theory, by measuring individual differences such as gender and neuroticism, I provide a test of whether the mediation paths outlined above differ for certain individuals. There were no direct or conditional indirect effects of gender on attraction. This suggests that men and women are not differentially attracted to emotional cultures and that the indirect effect of culture on attraction via surface acting and justice does not differ between men and women. One explanation for these non-effects may be the sample of younger individuals ( $M = 19.68$  years,  $SD = 2.23$ ). This study may provide evidence for the growing idea that gender differences in personality, preferences, and emotionality are less pronounced currently than we once thought (Hyde, 2005; Shields, 2013). Because the emotional signals did not seem to be interpreted differently based on individual differences, I call into question whether emotional culture information is truly weighted differently. This suggests that perhaps information about emotional culture is not truly a “signal” but, instead, a more robust and commonly reacted to description.

While there were no apparent gender differences, there was a direct effect of neuroticism, such that individuals higher in neuroticism reported less attraction, in general, regardless of type of emotional culture. People who are more neurotic are less likely to see any company that involves interpersonal contact as attractive, probably due to their tendency to feel negatively and to see others as negative. Surprisingly, there was no evidence that a certain emotional culture was more or less attractive though, to this type of person.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Several limitations of the current study need to be addressed. First, it is important to take into account that the findings of this study are based on an experimental design employing an undergraduate sample with limited age and educational variability. This type of study is often

criticized for lacking realism and for not being reflective of the working population. Thus, both the fidelity and generalizability of the current study may be lacking. The advantage of the current approach, however, is the ability to draw causal conclusions among the variables of interest. Furthermore, this sample of college students represents an important category of job seeker – those who are entering the job market for the first time. Nevertheless, future studies should address this by examining this phenomenon with a different sample, allowing for more age and educational variability to test whether these results are true among all age groups or if it is specific to the younger generation.

Because the mediators and dependent variable were collected at the same point in time, a second potential limitation is that common method bias might explain why surface acting, justice and attraction are related to each other. Following contemporary guidelines regarding ways to reduce the effects of common method bias (Podsakoff, McKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), scales were separated physically and temporally (e.g., through the use of transitions and unique directions) in the online survey. The use of a survey in which data were all collected at the same time also opens up the possibility that the temporal ordering of the variables is reversed. However, the directionality of the current model is informed by prior studies examining similar concepts. For example, person-organization fit has been shown to directly impact attraction (Judge & Cable, 1997) as well as mediates the relationship between signals of organization values and attraction (Gully et al., 2013). So while reciprocal effects are possible, the proposed model is consistent with existing evidence. A future direction would be to replicate the proposed model with actual behavior, such that we show that perceptions of the emotional signal predict actual application to the job or effort put into the job process compared to other jobs with different emotional cultures.



The current study addresses only the influence of signals of emotional culture on recruitment strategies. That is, it only addresses how emotional cultures are perceived during recruitment without addressing what emotional cultures actually exist in organizations. Future studies should examine how emotional culture influences behavioral outcomes such as turnover. Further, future research may address what happens if people self-select into an organization that says they espouse a particular emotional culture only to find that is not the truth. That is, when expectations for a specific emotional culture are not met are employees more likely to leave?

Finally, results of this study do not show support for the idea that individual differences, specifically gender and personality dimensions, impact the relationship between emotional culture and attraction. It may be that this idea of “fit” within an organization still works but that I did not choose emotionally relevant traits that operated in such a way. Future research could examine other possible traits, such as emotional expressivity, self-monitoring, and impulse control, that may show the fit effect.

### **Empirical and Practical Implications**

Empirically, this study is the first to examine the impact of emotional culture on attraction. Specifically, it provides the first test of causal effect of emotional culture on attraction and whether people are more attracted to places where everyone is positive and gets along, or where people are authentic and show how they really feel with each other. Second, this study develops tools used to manipulate emotional culture (Appendix A). These organizational descriptions of non-expressive, positive, and authentic emotional cultures can be used to experimentally examine the influence of emotional culture on other workplace outcomes as well.

The present research yields important practical implications for organizations, specifically in regards to their recruitment strategies. The results demonstrate that portraying the

type of emotional culture that exists within an organization influences the way individuals perceive that organization as well as their level of attraction to the organization. It is important to note that this study did not examine what emotional culture was actually in existence in an organization but, rather, how the description of a specific culture influences attraction. In this sample, portraying a non-expressive culture in which employees are expected to not show their emotions was perceived as less attractive than the portrayal of positive or authentic emotional cultures. The influence of authentic emotional cultures is more complex, however, as it appears that authenticity can lead to both increased attraction via decreased surface acting or decreased attraction via increased interpersonal justice. That is, individuals may see authenticity as an opportunity to show their true selves, resulting in the possibility of little regulatory effort or as an opportunity for others to show their true selves, resulting in the possibility for rudeness or incivility. Future research that identifies antecedent to the perception of authenticity will be important for workplace decisions regarding how authenticity should be portrayed.

### **Conclusion**

The shift toward authenticity both in practice and in research (Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2018; Seo & Parke, 2017) has commonly been viewed as a positive thing, yet, the way authenticity is actually perceived has not been examined. This leaves many questions regarding if and how people are attracted to such cultures. In response to the question about whether authentic cultures are more well-received than positive, this study demonstrates that the difference between attraction to organizations that are “really positive” as opposed to those that are “positively real” may depend on how individuals interpret signals of emotional culture.

## **Appendix A: Emotional Culture Manipulations**

### **Non-Expressive Culture**

Our company, Eastlake Enterprises, was founded in 1994. We are looking for a new member to join our team. We offer competitive salaries and great benefits.

#### *Our company culture*

Teamwork is a big part of our company. At our company, team members maintain a calm, pragmatic work environment - strong feelings and interpersonal issues are left at the door. We value polite, logical communication while interacting with team members, in a way conducive to working relationships. Join us at Eastlake Enterprises, where you can expect a rational work culture.

Employee testimonial: “I have really appreciated my time at Eastlake Enterprises. There are no drama queens, and everyone is so professional and objective that we avoid conflicts and just get stuff done.”

### **Positive Culture**

Our company, Westlake Enterprises, was founded in 1994. We are looking for a new member to join our team. We offer competitive salaries and great benefits.

#### *Our company culture*

Teamwork is a big part of our company. At our company, team members maintain an enthusiastic, fun work environment - negative feelings and interpersonal conflicts are left at the door. We value cheerful, friendly communication while interacting with team members, in a way conducive to agreeable relationships. Join us at Westlake Enterprises, where you can expect a positive work culture!

Employee testimonial: “I have really appreciated my time at Westlake Enterprises. There are no ‘Debbie Downers’; everyone is so friendly and upbeat that we get along well with no conflicts while getting stuff done.”

### **Authentic Culture**

Our company, Southlake Enterprises, was founded in 1994. We are looking for a new member to join our team. We offer competitive salaries and great benefits.

#### *Our company culture*

Teamwork is a big part of our company. At our company, team members maintain an authentic, sincere work environment - strong feelings and interpersonal issues are shared. We value genuine, self-expressive communication while interacting with team members, in a way conducive to real and meaningful relationships. Join us at Southlake Enterprises, where you can expect an authentic work culture!

Employee testimonial: “I have really appreciated my time at Southlake Enterprises. There are no “fake people”; everyone shows what they’re feeling so that we solve any conflicts and really get to know each other while we get stuff done.

## Appendix B: Survey Items

### Organizational Attraction (Highhouse et al., 2003)

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements

1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*)

1. For me, this company would be a good place to work.
2. I would not be interested in this company except as a last resort
3. This company is attractive to me as a place of employment
4. I am interested in learning more about this company
5. A job at this company is very appealing to me

### Surface Acting (Grandey, 2003)

To what extent to you agree or disagree that you would need to do the following behaviors in order to do this job effectively?

1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*)

1. Put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way
2. Fake a good mood
3. Put on a “show” or “performance”
4. Just pretend to have the emotions I need to display for my job
5. Put on a “mask” in order to display the emotions I need for the job

### Interpersonal Justice (Colquitt, 2001)

The following items refer to the organization you just read about. To what extent:

1 (*Not at all*) to 4 (*To a great extent*)

1. Do you expect you would be treated in a polite manner?
2. Do you expect you would be treated with dignity?
3. Do you expect you would be treated with respect?
4. Do you expect others would refrain from improper remarks or comments?

### Neuroticism (Goldberg, 1992, $\alpha = 0.91$ )

For the following statements please describe yourself as honestly as you can. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1 (*very inaccurate*) to 5 (*very accurate*)

1. I am relaxed most of the time
2. I seldom feel blue
3. I get stressed out easily
4. I worry about things
5. I am easily disturbed
6. I get upset easily
7. I change my mood a lot
8. I have frequent mood swings
9. I get irritated easily

10. I often feel blue
11. I get angry easily
12. I feel threatened easy
13. I take offense easily

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