

EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING: POSITIVE EFFECTS OF  
DEVIANT COWORKERS

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to recognize and explore the reactions of employees to a deviant coworker. Specifically, I focused on the potential positive effects for employees who are in the presence of a coworker perceived as deviant, dysfunctional, or negative. Consistent with a labeling perspective on deviance, I argued that an employee may become a deviant as a result of social construction, fostered either by observed norm violations or the perceived dissimilarity of this person. Drawing on diverse theories from social psychology and sociology, I hypothesized that in the presence of a deviant coworker, other employees may have enhanced self-evaluations, better role clarity, and improved cohesiveness in work units. First, observers can set a contrast with the deviant and draw positive conclusions about themselves. Second, the “bad apple” can inform employees about organizational norms and alert them about “don’t do” rules on the job, thereby improving their role clarity. Finally, by derogating the deviant, non-deviant members can unite against a “common enemy” and boost work unit cohesiveness.

Positive effects were also expected to be contingent on individual characteristics and situational factors. In particular, social comparison orientation, coworkers’ salience, and agreement about the deviant were hypothesized to strengthen observers’ reactions to the deviant. The character of the deviant label and job interdependence, however, were expected to have a more complicated moderating role on the deviant’s influence. Two samples generated from separate data collections were used to test the hypotheses. The positive relationship between the deviant’s presence and employees’ self-evaluations was

supported. For employees with more interdependent jobs, role clarity was also positively associated with the presence of a deviant coworker. Contrary to predictions, cohesiveness was found to be lower for work units with a deviant employee at both individual and aggregate levels. Conceptual and empirical pitfalls relevant to the non-significant or opposite-to-prediction relationships are addressed. Finally, theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

I dedicate this work to all women in my family and especially my mother. It has been an almost impossible dream for education, I just carried the torch.

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# **CHAPTER 1.**

## **THE PRESENCE OF A DEVIANT COWORKER**

“It is like it ain’t so much what fellow does, but it’s the way the majority of folks is looking at him when he does it,” William Faulkner

### Introduction

Every human society adopts normative standards of behavior that are enforced by formal and informal sanctions (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2004). Although some norms are persistently protected over time and cultures, no behavior is inherently violating. Rather it is designated as such by a set of social, political, and group procedures (Becker, 1963). Actual circumstances determine proper and improper, and hence, an act or a person is deviant when perceived as such by the majority (Becker, 1963; Erickson, 1962; Kaplan, 2003). Similarly, organizations can be viewed as restricted societies that create their own norms of appropriate conduct and enforce those norms by formal and informal mechanisms. Taking this perspective on deviance, I investigate some functional roles of employees who are considered deviant.

The characterization “deviant” can refer to an attitude, behavior, evaluation, or an individual. Deviant behaviors in organizations have attracted remarkable research attention in the recent years (Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Robinson & Greenberg, 1998). A whole area of organizational literature has unfolded dealing with antisociality (Robinson & O’Leary-Kelly, 1998), deviance (Aquino, Lewis, & Bradfield, 1999; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Robinson & O’Leary-Kelly, 1998), retaliation (Bies & Tripp, 1998; Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997; Skarlicki &



Folger, 1997), and aggression (Baron & Newman, 1996; Glomb & Liao, 2003; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin, & Glew, 1996). Whereas this literature extensively investigates various antecedents and consequences of deviant behaviors, less research is focused on deviant individuals or the “bad apples” in organizations (Dunlop & Lee, 2004; Trevino & Youngblood, 1990). Therefore, I draw attention to these “bad apples” and their interactions with other employees. Unlike previous research, I am interested in the reactions of observers to the *person* associated with the negative behavior rather than the reaction to the behavior itself.

Perceptions of right and wrong have evolved over time, and so has the study of deviance. Still, there is little agreement about what deviance is. The very basic definition of deviance is concerned with violations of established norms (Tittle & Paternoster, 2000), yet some authors accept more or less narrow definitions of the phenomenon. For example, in organizational research, Robinson and Bennett defined deviant behavior as a “voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both” (Robinson & Bennett, 1995, p. 556). Traditionally, organizational researchers study deviance by predetermining the behaviors or qualities as deviant (e.g., stealing, bullying). Other researchers (Becker, 1963; Dentler & Erikson, 1975; Erikson, 1966; Gove, 1975; Tannenbaum, 1938) disagree with this deterministic approach and claim that deviance is not a simple attribute but a product of the interaction between the violation and other people’s responses to this behavior. Thus, whether an act qualifies as a deviant depends not only on the nature of the behavior but also on the response of others to the act.

Similarly, individuals may become deviants or perpetrators depending on both their actions and the judgments of others. I argue that observers socially construct deviants by attaching an implicit label to certain individuals. This process is motivated by both the

perception of proper conduct (Becker, 1963) and the need to make sense of reality (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, 1997). Once a person is categorized as deviant, others have to interact with the labeled individual and may experience individual and group effects. This is a new way of defining workplace deviants: through their interactions with non-deviant employees.

Deviance is ordinarily deemed costly and dysfunctional for organizations, but deviant acts may also aim to restore justice (Skarlicki & Folger, 2004) or reinforce to higher order moral principles (Warren, 2003). Research on social deviance (Durkheim, 1938, 1895; Tittle & Paternoster, 2000) also acknowledged that deviance is inevitable and necessary for the natural functioning of the society. Because the existence of non-compliant individuals cannot be denied, it is imperative that management practice and research explore them more fully. Thus, I draw attention to potential functional roles that “dysfunctional” individuals can serve for other employees in the workplace.

In particular, I explore how employees may benefit from having a coworker categorized as *perpetrators*, *deviants*, *non-normative persons*, or “*bad apples*,”<sup>1</sup> by focusing on the mere presence of such people rather than on the consequences of their behavior. The three effects that may presumably have beneficial impact on other employees are: (a) personal self-enhancement in comparison with the deviant, (b) learning by observing violations, and (c) group unity against the deviant person.

Building on diverse literatures, this study attempts to challenge and advance current thinking on organizational deviance in several ways. First, I investigate deviant individuals and reactions to them, rather than particular deviant behaviors. Consistent with a labeling perspective (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Becker, 1963; Gove, 1975; Tannenbaum, 1938), the presence of a

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<sup>1</sup> Despite some idiosyncratic differences, all these words are used interchangeably throughout the paper. “Deviant” is used in the broadest sense of a violator.

deviant is introduced as a distinctive construct that is expected to have effects separate from the associated behaviors. Second, I suggest that employees can actually benefit from having a deviant coworker in the sense of gaining enhanced self-perceptions, improved group cohesiveness, and better clarity about their roles in the workplace. Finally, I identify the cognitive-emotional mechanisms responsible for these effects, respectively (a) social comparison, (b) shared derogation, and (c) vicarious learning. I also address implications for research and management by recognizing the inevitability of deviant employees and the functions they may serve.

In the following sections, I briefly describe the process of social construction of deviants, reactions of observers to the deviant label, and the potential positive effects of non-deviant as a result of having a deviant coworker.

### Social Construction of a Deviant

Infractions are certainly common in organizations (Bennett & Robinson, 2003), but unless others view an act as deviant it may remain unnoticed. In this sense, individuals negotiate, through interactions, what actions are to be considered normal (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Becker, 1963) and what actions are considered outside the norm. A deviant label, then, is created in the minds of others as a result of both observed behaviors and observers' beliefs. This interpretation of deviance is consistent with a labeling perspective from the sociology of deviance (Becker, 1963; Davis, 1972; Erikson, 1966; Gove, 1975) and recent thinking about social construction in organizations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, 1997).

### *Labeling Perspective on Deviance*

The labeling perspective on deviance started with Becker (1963) and Goffman (1974), who recast the traditional sociological view of normative deviance as a process of stigmatized labeling (Dotter, 2002). Becker claimed that no act or person is inherently deviant (Becker, 1963). Social beliefs and morality change over time, and social groups tend to create their own idiosyncratic norms of acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Examples of such manifestations are abundant in the literature (Dentler & Erikson, 1975; Gove, 1975; Smith & Pollack, 1976). Despite the decades of social deviance research, the process of someone's becoming a deviant is not well understood. Also unclear is the relative importance between a person's behavior and observer's interpretations of this behavior.

In the organizational literature, research has typically explored individual (Aquino Lewis, & Bradfield., 1999; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999) and situational characteristics (Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminke, 2002; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997) that may be favorable conditions for prompting deviant activities in the workplace. For example, Aquino, Lewis, and Bradfield (1999) found that individuals high on negative affectivity reported involvement in more deviant behaviors. Skarlicki and Folger (1999) demonstrated the moderating effect not only of negative affectivity but also of agreeableness on initiating retaliation. Other research (Ambrose et al., 2002; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997) acknowledged that injustice may instigate harmful behaviors. Although looking at the interaction between individual and situational factors, previous research has never studied deviants as socially constructed by observers.

### *Social Construction of a Deviant Label*

Drawing on findings in sociology and social psychology, I identified two potential mechanisms through which individuals may socially construct a deviant in the workplace: (a)

persistent violation and (b) perceived dissimilarity. The former is activated when a person is observed to consistently disrespect valued norms such as ethical standards, organizational policies, or idiosyncratic group routines. The latter is activated when an individual either behaves differently or appears to be distinctively dissimilar. Such persons may be a source of confusion and misunderstanding that can be resolved by re-categorizing them as deviant. The two mechanisms are likely to operate together to create or intensify the deviant label. For example, a person seen as a bad fit to the group or a “weirdo” may easily create a sense of wrongdoer and outcast. Moreover, individuals are likely to make attributions based on appearance (Deseran & Chung, 1979) or preconceptions (Blair, 2002).

These mechanisms may trigger different cognitions in observers but they are likely to operate together in the creation of the deviant label. When a violation of valued norms occurs, and especially if it is recurring, individuals may feel a threat to the existing order and escalated uncertainty (Ashforth & Mael, 1988; Lauderdale, 1976). The labeling of the perpetrator in this case may lower ambiguity because it identifies a wrongdoer and the wrongdoer’s actions. More observed violations may increase the likelihood of a negative label, but attachment of a deviant label may occur even without observed violation. When individuals have to deal with high complexity, they can simplify their reality by creating categories. One such category is “deviant,” along with other often used general labels such as “good” vs. “bad” or “compliant” vs. “non-compliant.” Using labels can be also a coping mechanism in a response to environmental uncertainty (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995), because shared cognitions facilitate understanding and communicating with others (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1997).

Categorization may also occur if an individual behaves in an unusual manner. Reactions to a deviant may not be only a reflection of his or her acts (Bernstein, Kelly, & Doyle, 1977), but

also a result of individual characteristics. Goffman (1963; 1974) noted that just dissimilar features may provoke a bystander to classify someone in a negative category. Non-prototypical coworkers are more likely to be categorized as out-group members or “bad apples” (Hobman, Bordia, & Gallois, 2003; Shaw, 1976). Even visual impressions of individuals affect the attributions of negative characteristics. Motivated by true reports of shoplifting, Deseran and Chung (1979) used an experimental design and demonstrated that physical appearance influences imputations of personal dispositional qualities and deviant behavior (e.g., shoplifting). Hence, social construction of a deviant might be based solely on observers’ evaluations and needs rather than on an objective transgression (Becker, 1963; Erikson, 1966).

The association of negative behaviors with a particular individual may produce distinctive effects for observers. I emphasize the difference between the presence of a deviant individual and a deviant behavior. For example, an inappropriate comment can make others feel uncomfortable, but the mere existence of a person making such comments provokes separate reactions, such as desire to disassociate or compare. However, distinct effects would occur only if employees can clearly identify a coworker as being non-normative or deviating.

#### *The Presence of a Deviant: Construct Definition*

In order to study the phenomenon of a deviant coworker and associated effects, I propose a formal construct, called “the presence of a deviant.” *The presence of a deviant* is defined as observers’ perceptions that a particular individual persistently violates established norms, resulting in an implicit label attached to this person. The presence of a deviant is the process of attaching a label and it resembles concepts such as stigmatization and stereotyping. Below, I briefly discuss the differences while recognizing the conceptual similarities.

### *The Presence of a Deviant and Stigmatization*

*Stigmatization* occurs when a stigma is attached to an individual due to a discrediting attribute of this individual (Goffman, 1974). Goffman identified three large groups of stigmatizing attributes: physical deformities, blemishes of individual character, and tribal stigma (e.g., race, nation, and religion). Although both a deviant's presence and stigmatization involve attachment of a label and possible negative attributions, each also has distinct features. First, stigmatization is usually motivated by a visible mark considered discrediting (e.g., color, deformity), whereas an individual is categorized as a deviant mainly based on dissimilar *conduct*. Stigmatization and attachment of a deviant label may certainly co-occur, however. For example, blemishes of individual character such as weak will, unnatural passions, dishonesty, and radical political behavior might stigmatize an individual (Goffman, 1963; 1974) and also create the perception of violated normative expectations. Second, stigmatization holds across situations, whereas deviant categorization is context specific, and any perceived violation is constrained by local norms. For example, a disabled person carries the stigma across settings, whereas a deviant label is embedded in social interactions within an organization (i.e., local norms).

### *The Presence of a Deviant and Stereotyping*

Another related concept is stereotyping. *Stereotyping* refers to the process of assuming a person or group to have one or more characteristics because most members of that group share similar characteristics (Blair, 2002). Both stereotyping and deviance labeling are ways to cope with the complexity and ambiguity of social situations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1997; Blair, 2002; Yzerbyt, Coull, & Rocher, 1999). However, unlike placing an individual in the deviants' category, stereotyping imputes characteristics that may not exist or are not necessarily negative. Stereotyping may devalue or boost an individual, dependent on the social perceptions about the

group to which this person belongs. A classic case would be a nerdy looking student who is considered smarter because nerds are generally hard workers and achievement-oriented. Stereotyping is motivated by visually identifiable features, whereas deviant categorization is instigated by observed misconduct or violating qualities. Further, stereotyping is based on group attributes (such as woman, lawyer, actor, etc.) and prior preconceptions about the group, thereby de-individualizing the person into a certain category with expected characteristics. In contrast, labeling as a deviant is primarily based on individual conduct or image, even when tangible characteristics might boost the negative expectations.

#### *Meaningful Boundaries of the Construct in Organizational Contexts*

In a workplace context, *the presence of a deviant* refers to attaching a deviant label to a coworker and the respective reactions of other employees. In general, deviants can be perpetrators with regard to a broad array of behaviors -- from awkward attire to extreme illegal infringements (such as violence, rape, murder). Serious offenders, however, are not likely to remain very long with a given work organization. Although categorization may be granted relatively quickly, continuous interactions can assure notable effects of the deviant on other employees. Thus, the presence of a deviant is meaningful for relatively frequent but milder workplace offences that allow the deviant label to be created and sustained. For instance, typical violations leading to a deviant label are improper comments about coworkers, neglect of work responsibilities, or displayed disrespect to common values. The nature of the violation is vital to the existence and intensity of the label, and may mitigate the reactions of other employees.

Regardless of the factors that led to attaching the deviant label, the interaction with a labeled individual triggers cognitive-emotional reactions in observers. Since these emotions or



cognitions are the basis of any consequent attitudinal or behavioral effects of the deviant's presence, they are further discussed in the following section.

### Reactions to the Presence of a Deviant Coworker

Once the deviant label is attached, a distinct target is created in the social space. The deviant label bears inherent features that provoke certain cognitive-emotional responses among observers. I will briefly discuss three such responses that are pertinent to the potential effects of a deviant's presence. First, an employee tagged as a deviant can become the focus of other employees' negative evaluations. Second, the negative evaluations are subjected to in-group extremity (Marques, Abrams, & Serodio, 2001), because employees belong to a common collective entity (e.g., work unit, organization, profession). Finally, employees' consensus is vital in creating and maintaining the deviant label.

#### *Negative Evaluation of a Deviant*

By its nature, the deviant label is associated with negative assessment. The deviant can be perceived as a threat to the collective entity's values (Coull, Louvain-la-Veuve, Yzerbyt, Castano, & Paladino, 2001; Marques et al., 2001) or as a disturbance to the established order (Coser, 1962; Heinemann, Pellander, Vogelbusch, & Wojtek, 1981). Derogation or even denunciation of the deviant might be a way for them to cope with his or her existence. Similarly, by rejecting a non-normative coworker, other employees can dissociate with the negative image (MacNamara, 1991) and can protect their own collective esteem (Castano, 2002).

Deviants are more prone to rejection by others, hence becoming outsiders (Becker, 1963). Although socially constructed, the deviant is blamed for what he or she is perceived to be. In a student population, Juvonen (1991) demonstrated that individuals who break the rules were

perceived as responsible for their behavior, and thus they attracted the most negative affect, leading to stronger rejection by their peers. The results were consistent across hypothetical experimental manipulation and actual classmates. The reaction to a deviant may vary from indifference to severe belittlement, but the salience of the person is likely to intensify the cognitive-emotional response.

### *Stronger Derogation of an In-group Deviant: The “Black Sheep” Effect*

Although any norm violator is likely to be subjected to a negative assessment, a non-normative in-group member will be a subject of stronger derogation (Marques, Robalo, & Rocha, 1992; Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). This phenomenon, known as the “black sheep effect,” was first discovered for social groups (e.g., ethnicity). In an experiment with Belgian and North African students (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988), participants evaluated the in-group peers (from the same nationality) more negatively than the respective out-group member in scenarios where non-normative behaviors were described. In another experiment, law and psychology students had to evaluate behaviors of non-normative in-group peers (i.e., a same-major student) and non-normative out-group peers (Marques et al., 2001; Marques et al., 1988). The judgments about the same-major students were more derogative than those about different-major students. Numerous experiments provide evidence for the “black sheep effect” across settings (Bown, 2003; Marques et al., 1992) and across different cultures (Matsuzaki & Homma, 2003; Oishi, 2002).

When the behavior of a group member is unambiguously classified as negative or violating, this individual potentially diminishes the psychological value of group membership (Khan & Lambert, 1998; Marques, Paez, & Abrams, 1998) and threatens the overall value of the social group (Hutchison & Abrams, 2003; Marques et al., 2001; Marques et al., 1988; Mathews

& Dietz-Uhler, 1998). The extremity of the derogation is motivated by the threat to the collective value when these deviants cannot be expelled to the out-group (Marques et al., 1998). Therefore, individuals try not only to preserve the prescriptive norms but also to protect and emphasize the group's values (Marques et al., 1998).

Given that organizational (work unit) identification is one of the multiple social identities that individuals value (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Ashforth & Mael, 1988; Haslam, Postmes, & Ellemers, 2003; Hogg & Terry, 2000), research on reactions to a deviant in social groups (e.g., a Belgium or a law student) informs about potential employees' reactions to a deviant coworker. Hence, employees are likely to judge their non-normative peers more strongly than perceived outsiders. Furthermore, a deviant coworker may be perceived as an actual disturbance to the functioning of the work unit, and coworkers may take steps to preserve the status quo by ostracizing or even trying to expel the deviant. These actions would be more justified if more coworkers shared the same opinion about the presence of a deviant.

### *Social Consensus and a Deviant*

Construction of deviance also assumes a certain level of agreement amongst observers -- the stronger the agreement, the more certain individuals feel about their negative judgment towards the deviant. Social consensus has been explored as a necessary part of ethical decision-making models (Jones, 1991) and is defined as "the degree of social agreement that a proposed act is evil or good" (Jones, 1991, p. 375). In the setting of sexual harassment, Bowes-Sperry and Powel (1999) alleged that when observers share social consensus they attribute responsibility for the behavior to the initiator and react more negatively.

Social consensus about the labeled individual allows the single observer to feel confident about his or her own judgments. Individuals also persistently seek feedback from the

environment. Similarly, employees' perceptions about a particular coworker might be influenced by the perceptions of other peers. If social cues indicate that a perceived deviant coworker or act is actually normal, then it is likely that individuals would adjust their perceptions. Furthermore, when the group reaches consensus quickly, in-group deviance appears very aversive for a normative member (Berkowitz & Howard, 1959; Festinger & Thibaut, 1951), and the beliefs about the deviant might be strengthened.

In sum, observers react to a deviant coworker with negative evaluations, which are intensified by the deviant's in-group position and the level of social agreement. On this basis, in the following section I discuss potential positive effects for employees in the presences of a deviant coworker.

## **CHAPTER 2.**

### **POSITIVE EFFECTS IN THE PRESENCE OF A DEVIANT COWORKER**

#### Introduction

The presence of a deviant is likely to have implications for others in the workplace. In past research, a deviant in the workplace has been associated with the breakdown of social norms (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998), the increase of counterproductive behavior (Dunlop & Lee, 2004), and reduced organizational commitment (Liao, Joshi, & Chuang, 2004). However, previous literature has not examined potential positive effects for other employees (i.e., beneficial to them) in the presence of a deviant. Among those could be the level of satisfaction that other employees feel, or more importantly, the manner in which other employees understand the work context. For example, a deviant may impact how other employees evaluate themselves or how they understand their roles in the organization. Therefore, I identify and describe three functions that a deviant coworker can serve to benefit other employees.

First, I suggest that the presence of a deviant may affect the self-perceptions of others as a result of downward social comparison. Second, I investigate learning effects for employees as they have the opportunity to observe a deviant's actions and associated consequences. Third, I take the discussion to a unit level to examine whether and when employees can unite against a "bad apple" in the work unit. Finally, I suggest individual and situational factors that may intensify or lessen the experiences of other employees in the presence of a deviant. Figure 1a and Figure 1b illustrate the hypothesized relationships.

## Individual Effects in the Presence of a Deviant

As described in the previous section summarized, the presence of a deviant has important implications for individuals in the workplace. Previous research has recognized that deviant behavior can lessen employee morale (Peterson, 2002), discourage citizenship behavior (Dunlop & Lee, 2004), or encourage more deviance (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998; Trevino & Youngblood, 1990). Beyond behavior, it is likely that the presence of a deviant has an impact on how employees evaluate aspects of the work environment, and how employees ultimately form judgments about their own self worth in the workplace. One potential framework to examine this is social comparison theory.

### *Social Comparison Theory*

Social comparison theory (SCT) suggests that individuals learn about their own abilities or opinions by comparing to others (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison involves processing information about other people in relation to the self (Wood, 1996). Because self-understanding is partially generated by the social situation, comparison with available and relevant targets generates valuable information. The theory has primarily focused on cognitive and emotional responses to comparison (Blanton, Buunk, Gibbons, & Kuyper, 1999; Stapel & Koomen, 2001; Suls, Martin, & Wheeler, 2002; Suls & Wills, 1991), but recently relational and status conclusions have also received attention (Heslin, 2005; Suls et al., 2002; Tyler & Blader, 2002).

Past experiments offer convincing evidence that individuals engage in countless, sometimes unnoticed comparisons (Goethals, 1986) in their daily interactions (Wood, 1996). Learning about the self via comparison is so natural that it may occur despite the intentions or goals of individuals (cf. Suls & Wills, 1991). Likewise, comparison may be taking place even if no effect is manifested (Wood, 1996), but notable changes in the comparer's attitude or behavior

are likely. Thus, social comparison has been successful in explaining individuals' reactions in a broad array of social situations (Suls et al., 2002). More importantly, social comparison theory has been applied to workplace fairness (Ambrose, Harland, & Kulik, 1991; Folger & Kass, 2000), career success (Heslin, 2005), pay satisfaction (Shapiro & Wahba, 1978; Sweeney & McFarlin, 2005), and occupational burnout (Michinov, 2005), just to name a few examples.

### *Social Comparison with Coworkers*

Social comparison theory elucidates the *nature* of comparison by examining the *target* of comparison. The salience of the target of comparison, being an individual or a category, impacts the cognitive-emotional response of the comparer. According to Gilbert and colleagues (Gilbert, Giesler, & Morris, 1995), people do not consciously choose targets and conditions, rather they perform comparisons and then undo the results of those seemingly irrelevant to them. In a series of experiments Gilbert and colleagues demonstrated that participants compared themselves with any available target, but only salient targets produced notable effects. Most researchers acknowledge that targets are chosen if they have relevant (Stapel & Koomen, 2001) or similar attributes (Festinger, 1954; Suls et al., 2002) or hold structurally comparable positions (Shah, 1998). In this sense, coworkers present a salient target of comparison as suggested by previous research (Ambrose et al., 1991; Ambrose & Kulik, 1988; Conner, 2003; Shapiro & Wahba, 1978; Sweeney & McFarlin, 2005).

Frequent interactions with coworkers' and their physical proximity convey relevant information not only to begin but also to sustain the comparison, producing ongoing and notable effects. For example, an accountant is likely to compare with a fellow accountant on any possible dimension of comparison (e.g., performance, liking, pay), rather than with a schoolteacher. A sales representative would rather compare with the nearby colleague in regards to sales or social

status (Tyler & Blader, 2002). Along with being salient and available, targets of comparison are also characterized as being better-off or worse-off than the self. The former case refers to an upward comparison, and the latter refers to a downward comparison.

### *Downward Social Comparison*

Downward comparison is one of the ways in which researchers have applied social comparison theory. Downward comparison refers to comparison with targets perceived as inferior or in a worse position on a particular attribute (Wills, 1981). Previous research suggests that downward comparison is motivated by self-enhancement as opposed to upward comparison, which is driven by self-improvement (Wood, 1989).

Research has also identified conditions that may trigger downward comparison. Threats to the personal well-being (Taylor & Lobel, 1989; Wills, 1981) and low self-esteem (Wills, 1981; Wood, Giordano-Beech, Taylor, Michela, & Gaus, 1994) have been largely emphasized by researchers. On the contrary, Wheeler and Miyake (1992) found that happy people use downward comparison to maintain a positive emotional state, and that high self-esteem individuals engaged in more self-enhancing comparisons. These findings were also supported by medical research. In an experiment on cardiovascular reactions, Mendes and colleagues (2001) demonstrated that, in downward comparison conditions, subjects engendered greater positive affect and perceptions of control. In addition, self-enhancement motivation can overwhelm the desire for accurate self-knowledge (Gardner, Gabriel, & Hochschild, 2002). Although previous research is inconclusive about the conditions prompting downward comparison (Suls et al., 2002), it is apparent that individuals take advantage of any opportunity to enhance their well-being. The presence of a deviant coworker presents such an opportunity.



### *Comparison with a Deviant Coworker*

A deviant coworker is perceived to behave out of the norm or to maintain particular undesired characteristics. Employees potentially compare with any other coworker, but a more distinct individual is more likely to evoke reaction and produce noticeable effects. In particular, social comparison theory asserts that individual evaluations depend on observed differences (Mussweiler, 2001; Wood, 1989). Even attitudinal dissimilarity may operate to distinguish a comparer from the target, usually resulting in a more contrasting effect (Mendes et al., 2001). In this way, a non-normative peer is a convenient source of comparison information.

Although research has not yet examined the comparison with a target labeled as a deviant, some research in relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976; Crosby, 1974; Shapiro & Wahba, 1978) and justice provide some insights (Ambrose & Kulik, 1988). Since the attached deviant label is associated with derogation and rejection (Coser, 1962; Dentler & Erikson, 1975; Marques et al., 1998; Marques et al., 1988), it can be speculated that the initial derogation of the deviant is likely to foster a downward comparison for non-deviant coworkers. Moreover, the deviant label is partially created in the minds of observers (Becker, 1963) which assures maintaining the lowered position of the deviant.

Upon encountering with a deviant, devalued peer, employees seek the contrast comparison to differentiate themselves. Since the deviant signifies violation, non-deviant employees can view themselves as more normative and well-standing members of the work unit. Such comparisons can be described by thoughts such as “he is bad, but I am different; therefore I am good,” “she is a wrongdoer, but I am not; and therefore, I am better,” or “I feel good about myself because there is someone worse than me.” In addition, a comparison referent might be chosen to serve specific goals (i.e., self-enhancement, self-improvement). Goethals and colleagues (Goethals, Messick, & Allison, 1991) demonstrated that people tend to construct

reality to serve their comparison purposes. Self-evaluated consequences depend on the type of self-knowledge activated during the comparison process (Mussweiler, 2001). Similarly, observers arrange reality to carry out comparisons that can boost their perceptions of being positive and accepted individuals.

Consistent with social comparison theory, downward comparisons tend to be contextual in nature (Wood, 1996). That is, when an employee compares him or herself to another employee, he or she does so in the context of the particular workplace. Therefore, I consider two context-specific outcomes as an employee's cognitive-emotional reaction to the presence of a deviant – self-evaluation and workplace social well-being.

#### *Employees' Self-Evaluation in the Presence of a Deviant*

Individuals are generally eager to understand themselves (Festinger, 1954; Showers, 1992) within their multiple social roles. In the workplace, employees generally receive feedback through formal channels, but they also seek to understand themselves within the informal organizational structure. As established above, employees may use a deviant individual as a convenient cornerstone for comparison. In this way, deliberately or unknowingly, employees use the deviant as a target of comparison considered to be in a worse-off position.

Previous research presents compelling evidence that comparing with a worse-off individual enhances self-evaluation (Wills, 1991; Wood et al., 1994; Wood & Lockwood, 1999). The boosted cognitive assessment corresponds to a belief about being a better employee and a better citizen of the organization. Thus, in the presence of a deviant, employees are likely to draw more positive conclusions about themselves.

### *Employees' Social Well-Being in the Presence of a Deviant*

Individuals also engage downward comparisons when forming judgments about their overall well-being (Wheeler & Miyake, 1992), including the social aspects of it. The social aspect of well-being is captured by the concept of social well-being (Keyes, 1998), which I extend to the workplace setting. Workplace social well-being (WSWB) refers to the appraisal of an employee's functioning in the workplace. In particular, social health in organizations refers to individuals' feelings of social integration, acceptance, and actualization in the workplace.

*Social integration* refers to the quality of workplace relationships, and reflects the extent to which employees feel an integral part of the organization's social life. Socially integrated employees feel connected with others in the workplace, they see themselves as having a common fate with coworkers, and express their fondness for social interactions in the workplace. In contrast, employees with low social integration feel isolated from coworkers, estranged from organizational activities, and possibly disconnected from the shared values in work groups.

*Social acceptance* is defined as the acknowledgement of coworkers' good qualities and reflects the belief that coworkers are trustworthy and caring. Socially-accepting employees have a favorable view of other organizational members and feel comfortable with their interactions at work. *Social actualization* is defined as employees' belief that the workplace is improving and that it facilitates employees' growth and development. Employees with high social actualization believe that they have opportunities for self-realization and personal growth in their organization.

Perceptions of workplace social well-being are formed as a result of interactions with coworkers, but also by observing the quality of coworkers' relationships. A deviant coworker, therefore, is a distinct target for such observation. Because of the negative evaluation of the deviant, the deviant label is oftentimes associated with negative social consequences such as avoidance, rejection, or ostracism. In this way, non-deviant individuals can perceive the deviant

as excluded from the ongoing social life of the group and as someone with troubled social relationships. Such a person can be a convenient target for evaluating someone's own relationships and social standing in the workplace.

Being viewed as inferior, a deviant coworker fosters downward comparison. The perceived difference can trigger a positive contrast for comparers and allow them to assess more positively their own social worth, subjective well-being, and social relationships. They also may feel more trusted and respected by others, making them an accepted and integral part of the workplace. This is a way for non-deviant employees to fulfill basic social needs by comparing to a deviant coworker. Therefore, a "bad apple" can provide opportunities for others to gain higher appreciation for their own participation in the organizational life, or at least feel this way.

Given the above discussions about employees' self-evaluation and workplace social well-being, I hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 1.* The presence of a deviant in the workplace will be positively related to the self-evaluation and social well-being of other employees.

#### *Moderating Effect of Social Comparison Orientation*

Most people learn about themselves by comparing with others, but individuals may vary in the degree to which they engage in social comparison. The intensity of the social comparison is associated with uncertainty (Festinger, 1954) that originates either from the environment or from individual dispositions. Although comparison is triggered by external stimuli, individuals differ on how much they seek comparison. The previous literature has recognized the role of self-esteem on the intensity of social comparison (Lockwood, 2002; Schwalbe, Gecas, & Baxter, 1986; Wills, 1991; Wood & Lockwood, 1999). However, Gibbons and Buunk (1999) suggested

a social comparison orientation as a more specific concept to address individual differences relevant to social comparison.

*Social comparison orientation* refers to an individual tendency to engage in social comparison (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Individuals with high social comparison orientation scores seek more external information in forming their self-perceptions. Similar to low self-esteem individuals (Wood et al., 1994), they are more insecure and influenced by the environment. Furthermore, they experience more pronounced effects from the social comparison (Michinov & Michinov, 2001). In contrast, individuals with low social comparison orientation scores would be less uncertain about themselves, seek less external information, employ less external stimuli, and thus be less subject to influence from changes in the social surrounding.

A deviant coworker, perceived as negative and devalued, is a more prominent target for individuals with high social comparison orientation. They are more likely to notice this person, use the comparative information for self-assessment, and manifest stronger responses to the comparison. Furthermore, a coworker with perceived inferior status can be a non-threatening basis for comparison, a favorable condition for less secure individuals. Therefore, high social comparers may experience greater impact on their self-evaluation and social well-being as a result of the presence of a deviant coworker, because they would seek and utilize more external stimuli to make social comparisons. Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 1a.* The presence of a deviant in the workplace will be more strongly positively related to self-evaluation and social well-being for employees with higher social comparison orientation.

### *Moderating Effect of Coworkers' Salience*

Whereas individual differences may determine the extent to which employees seek information from the environment, obtained information impacts employees to the extent that the information source is considered relevant. When employees view their workplace and coworkers as important and relevant to their self-definition, they are more likely to notice and consider coworkers' qualities. Hence, they can base their self-perceptions on that information. Individuals may vary on how they evaluate the centrality of work life in relation to their multiple social roles (Edwards & Rothbard, 1999). Those individuals who identify highly either with the organization or with the profession are likely to look to their coworkers for self-determination.

Therefore, it can be expected that the presence of a deviant would affect differently those employees who are more concerned about their workplace. A deviant coworker presents a threat to the collective identity (e.g., organization, work unit; cf. Marques et al., 1992) and to the normative order in the workplace. Stronger identifiers are more concerned with protection of normative conduct and would notice a non-modal member more often. Employees who place more importance on their workplace would feel that a deviant peer is a threat to their values (Marques et al., 1998) and would be more motivated to protect the collective identity by derogation of the deviant. This stronger reaction can assure a more intense effect from social comparison with a deviant.

The stronger reaction, then, is likely to intensify the enhancing effects of downward social comparison. Thus, employees considering their workplace more important would have more improved self-perceptions around a deviant coworker compared to those employees who are less attentive to their workplace. Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 1b.* The presence of a deviant in the workplace will be more strongly positively related to self-evaluation and social well-being for employees who perceive their coworkers as more salient.

On the other hand, perceptions of shared destiny might prevent severe derogation of a straying workplace member (Lockwood, 2002) when observers have too much interest vested in the collective entity (i.e., profession, organization). This protective mechanism is described by thoughts such as “he is one of us” and even provokes apprehension such as “she is not that bad, we are in this together.” Therefore, when individuals are highly socially related, the derogation and potential positive effects of the deviant’s presence might be reduced. It is worth noting that strong identifiers may even experience opposite effects: Because they define themselves excessively through the collective entity, any threat to the collective value might create discomfort, inhibiting comparative processes and their benefits.

Another identity challenge originates from cross-categorization (Blanz, Piontkowski, Florack, & Rohmann, 2003). Individuals usually function in a web of complex social relationships, which sometimes makes it difficult to discern who comprises the in-group and out-group. If the perceived violator belongs to the informal circle, rather than just to the formal work unit, different cognitive processes may take place. The labeling is less likely for a coworker considered a friend unless the observer re-categorizes this peer to the “not-a-friend” group, but if this occurs, the label would be probably associated with milder derogation. Therefore, personal relations within work units may confine the deviant labeling and its effects.

#### Learning Effects in the Presence of a Deviant

“If you can’t be a good example, then you’ll just have to be a horrible warning,” Catherine Aird

Another role of a workplace deviant refers to potential learning benefits for other employees. Below, I briefly review the vicarious learning perspective and its application in a workplace setting, particularly in relation to deviance. I also identify potential effects of vicarious learning when the deviance is associated with a particular coworker and further highlight the difference of this situation from the findings in previous research.

### *Vicarious Learning*

Vicarious or social learning refers to acquisition of information by observing other people's behaviors and utilization of that information in determining one's own conduct (Bandura, 1977, 1986a). People particularly learn social behaviors and expressions by encountering actual instances that can be both positive (i.e., exemplifying a norm) and negative (i.e., violating the norm). The social learning perspective asserts that an individual will behave in a manner consistent with the observed behavior. Learning by observing is particularly relevant to complex situations governed by multiple norms. One such situation is the workplace.

### *Vicarious Learning in the Workplace*

Previous research has already recognized the role of social learning in the workplace. The importance of learning by observing has been found in the context of newcomers' socialization (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994), improving training effectiveness (Manz & Sims Jr., 1981), ethical decision making (Trevino & Youngblood, 1990), and even for inter-organizational behaviors (Baum, Xiao Li, & Usher, 2000; Denrell, 2003; Nathan & Kovoormisra, 2002).



Through social exchange in the workplace, employees receive positive and negative clues about the roles and expectations in the organizations (Chao et al., 1994). Information originating from coworkers is not only relevant for the particular setting but also delivered when needed. The most relevant informants are those who hold similar structural positions in the organization (Burt, 1987; Shah, 1998). In an empirical study, Shah (1998) reported that employees obtain information about social relationships from more cohesive others and learn about the job from structurally similar peers.

When structural or cohesive peers encounter a deviant peer, they may have a different learning experience. The negative label is more noticeable and memorable in comparison with a narrative introduction to rules and roles. Thus, the vicarious learning from a deviant coworker might be more effective, given that previous experiments have shown that negative events leave more vivid impressions in people (Reynolds, Turner, & Haslam, 2000). Previous research has also acknowledged the role of social learning for understanding deviance.

#### *Vicarious Learning and Deviance in the Workplace*

In an organizational context, employees report being more unethical (Brass, Butterfield, & Skaggs, 1998; Trevino & Ball, 1992; Trevino & Victor, 1992; Trevino & Youngblood, 1990), antisocial (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998), or aggressive (Glomb & Liao, 2003) when these behaviors occur more frequently in their workplaces. In a survey study, Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly (1998), explicitly employing social learning theory, found that individuals in groups with a higher overall level of antisocial behavior reported more antisocial behavior of their own. The authors suggested that peers influence the extent to which individuals would engage in antisocial behaviors. In another study, Glomb and Liao (2003) supported the same relationship with interpersonal aggression in work groups – group members were more aggressive against their

peers as the overall level of interpersonal aggression increases. These results are consistent with the argument of social learning theory (Bandura, 1986b) that individuals learn from social cues and observations. Beyond that, this pattern of findings implies that employees interpret the observed negative behavior as acceptable in the particular setting and overlook its inappropriateness. In this way, the overall level of deviant activities can grow as a contagious disease.

Despite the solid empirical support, including findings in organizational research, social learning theory may not have been fully applied. In some situations, such as learning from a deviant individual, the vicarious learning may occur differently. Individuals may not necessarily behave consistent with encountered violations depending on social clues associated with the violating behavior. First, early social learning theory was developed and tested with children and adolescents (Bandura, 1986b), who are more apt simply to follow others' examples. Adults, unlike children, supposedly have the ability to assess the nature of actions before engaging in them, and hence, they may or may not decide to follow the behavior after observing it. In the case of dysfunctional behaviors, grown-ups might realize the inappropriateness of the behavior and decide to abstain from it. Likewise, coworkers may choose not to follow the deviant's actions but rather avoid the deviant's position, particularly given that the majority of the workforce is socialized and has vested interest in remaining employed.

Second, organizational studies have also found that adults (rather than children and adolescents) engage in antisocial behaviors when other group members do (Glomb & Liao, 2003; Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998). Nonetheless, these studies involved clearly defined work groups, which is only a special case of a work structure characterized by greater interdependence and generally fewer members. These studies also looked only at average levels of antisocial

activities and did not consider who the perpetrator was and how this person was positioned in the group.

### *Vicarious Learning in the Presence of a Deviant Coworker*

In an attempt to extend the application of the vicarious learning perspective, I suggest that employees may learn differently in the presence of a labeled deviant. In particular, when behaviors can be linked to a known coworker who has a deviant label attached, this person serves an educational role for other employees. Good or bad, the deviant is one of the staff, making him or her relevant to other employees and in a position to (a) alert them to existing norms and expectations (Lockwood and Kunda, 1997), (b) identify the boundaries of the normative conduct, and (c) warn about the social reproof associated with violations.

*Alerting employees to existing norms.* As workplaces become increasingly dynamic, employees may not be fully aware of the complex roles and multiple responsibilities of citizens of organizations. Evident violations, however, can illustrate the existence of norms, rules, and expectations that are not easily comprehensible otherwise. Violations are more evident to others when they originate from one person considered to be the “bad apple.” The negative evaluation of the perpetrator, which stems from the deviant label, further emphasizes the violation. This is one way for a deviant employee to alert others about important norms that may remain unnoticed otherwise. A deviant employee, hence, reminds coworkers about their moral responsibility in the workplace and illuminates idiosyncratic rules of the organization. Accordingly, employees can appreciate organizational norms after these norms have been highlighted to them.

*Defining the boundaries of acceptable conduct.* Along with providing evidence for some norms, a deviant can provide information about those aspects of the workplace roles that are beyond desired behaviors. As the “bad apple” exemplifies unacceptable conduct, observers can

view him or her as a negative role model, a “scarecrow,” and an illustration of what not to do. Similar to a negative role model, a deviant individual displays behaviors and attitudes that are disrespected in the group. Thus, a coworker with a deviant label can clarify the negotiated “right” and “wrong” in the particular workplace and can designate the boundaries of normative conduct in the workplace. Having a deviant coworker, therefore, may help define role boundaries and clarify expectations.

*Warning others about potential negative consequences.* Deviant incidents and their outcomes carry rich information about what is improper or unacceptable. Deviance connected to a particular coworker, though, can be especially informative as it is associated with social consequences for this person. The deviant, thus, exemplifies not only undesired behavior but also undesired place in the social group. For example, a newly hired assistant professor can learn some of the “don’ts” on the job by observing how another junior faculty (i.e., structurally similar coworker) has been socially punished and possibly became an outcast. Thus, a deviant can carry out the role of a scarecrow to inform the rest of the employees about the “don’ts” aspects of their jobs and roles in the organization.

In this way, observers not only have a reminder of certain types of misconduct but they also see how the deviant is regarded by others. Along with the negative behavior or manifestation, observers also see the negative consequences associated with being a non-normative member (derogation, isolation, possible ostracism). Unlike the case when a behavior is not recognized as inappropriate and others may also pursue it (Robinson & O’Leary-Kelly, 1998; Tittle, 2004), when a deviant label is attached, it bears the social warning about being a deviant. This may prevent other employees from engaging in similar behavior to avoid the

undesired consequences. Thus, conformity is further enhanced by denigrating the deviant acts and those who engage in them (Tittle & Paternoster, 2000).

Hence, the presence of a deviant coworker may be important for other employees' role clarity. Role clarity refers to the understanding of prescribed and proscribed behaviors in the workplace. When employees encounter inadmissible behavior and associated unfavorable consequences, they may realize the inappropriateness of the conduct. This boosts their knowledge about the idiosyncratic norms and routines of the particular workplace. Being aware of the boundaries of what is normative and acceptable allows employees to better understand their roles and responsibilities in the organization. A deviant, thus, can play a vital role in increasing the attentiveness of other employees to norms and expectations of roles in organization. Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 2.* The presence of a deviant in the workplace will be positively related to other employees' role clarity.

#### *Moderating Effect of Job Interdependence*

The way in which work is organized across jobs and across organization may vary significantly, ranging from completely independent tasks for each employee to completely interchangeable roles in work teams (McGrath, 1984; Stewart & Barrick, 2000). These variations affect interactions and expectations of coworkers with each other. In more interdependent work groups, for instance, employees have to rely on one another to complete their jobs, and this entails active interactions among them. Frequent interactions among peers is a favorable condition for them to observe each other, see more about others' jobs, and exchange more information. In this way, group members have access to information not only about job requirements but also about the desired and undesired behaviors in the organization.

In contrast, when jobs are more independent, employees may not perceive their coworkers as relevant when learning about their own jobs. They also may have fewer interactions with coworkers, which diminishes the opportunities for direct observations. Job interdependence may also increase the structural similarity and coherence among work unit members, making them the most relevant source of information (Shah, 1998). Regardless of the type of interdependence (Saavedra, Earley, & Van Dyne, 1993), employees would seek more information when they perceive that coworkers have an impact on their job. Thus, the closeness and relevance of more interdependent employees fosters more active learning based on observing peers.

By the same token, job interdependence has been recognized as an important condition for social learning. Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly (1998) found that group members are more likely to mimic antisocial behaviors of peers when their jobs were more interdependent. Therefore, vicarious learning from the presence of a deviant is also expected to intensify for employees with interdependent jobs.

As coworkers seek more information about roles and expectations, they might be more attentive to the deviant's presence and conduct. Structural similarity across employees further increases coworkers' significance as a source of workplace information (Gilbert et al., 1995; Shah, 1998). If the deviant coworker is perceived to perform either a similar or related job, the information obtained by observing him or her would be more relevant and directly applicable to the current organizational role. Furthermore, the attached deviant label will be more influential for interdependent coworkers, because the label would assume a violation of relevant norms. In this way, the vicarious learning occurring in the presence of a deviant might be more intense and beneficial for individuals with more interrelated jobs. Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 2a.* The presence of a deviant in the workplace will be more strongly positively related to the role clarity of other employees when jobs are more interdependent.

#### *Moderating Effect of the Type of a Deviant*

Although a deviant label is constructed as a result of complex interactions, oftentimes it is related to particular kinds of violations. Depending on the norms believed to be violated, deviants can be generally classified as organizational, interpersonal, or simply dissimilar. Organizational and interpersonal deviants are consistent with current classifications in the organizational deviance literature (Bennett, Aquino, II, & Thau, 2005; Robinson & Greenberg, 1998; Robinson & Bennett, 1995) based on the possible target of the deviant behavior (viz., the organization or individual). The idea of labeling a dissimilar individual as a deviant is posited by the labeling perspective of social deviance (Becker, 1963; Erikson, 1966) and by social construction thinking in organizations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, 1997).

Because multiple norms govern relationships in the workplace, employees need to learn various aspects of the workplace role. Along with general interpersonal relations, individuals have to learn the local requirements of the workplace. Organizations may or may not develop distinctive local regulations that require employees to comply. However, when such rules and expectations are in place, compliance is expected because these norms might be critical for organizational competitiveness or survival. For example, creative teams (e.g., designers' teams, software development units) are known for establishing and protecting their own idiosyncratic normative systems (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Nitsun, 1996).

Interpersonal relationships are governed by general social norms that are broadly known and accepted. Most individuals have also been exposed to some interpersonal violations in or out

of the workplace. Even if a deviant alerts or reminds other employees about some general social expectations, the informative function may be lessened. Moreover, violations of social norms might cause discomfort and distress to other employees, which can lower the beneficial effect. Although an interpersonal deviant is prone to even stronger rejection, his or her peers may not be able to learn much about their roles.

Whereas social standards of interpersonal relations are relatively similar across situations, local organizational norms might be less obvious and understandable for some organizational members. Each workplace creates its own idiosyncratic expectations and norms that become an important part of organizational values. Violation of these norms can be more pertinent to attaching a deviant label than violations of general norms. A deviant can play a crucial role in defining the boundaries in such situations. Creating a vivid impression, the deviant alerts and warns others about expectations in contexts with specific interactions or regulations. As these norms are context specific, the deviant's presence can add special value. Usually organizations initiate socialization and introductory sessions for newcomers, which are focused on the expectations and desired performance standards. A deviant, on the other hand, can be an informative and convincing demonstration of the undesired behavior. Thus, the presence of an organizational deviant may be more likely to contribute to the role clarity of other employees in comparison with an interpersonal deviant. Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 2b.* Organizational deviants rather than interpersonal deviants will be stronger positively related to employees' role clarity.

Furthermore, observers would react to a deviant despite the nature of the violation's being a mere unconventional opinion or more serious ethical transgression. The label and the



perceived violation are highly interrelated. Whereas perceived violations trigger the attachment of a deviant label, the attached label is conducive for attributions of other non-normative or violating behaviors. In this sense, even a simply dissimilar individual may be perceived as a violator in a more homogenous or normative workplace. However, I do not have a specific prediction about the presence of a dissimilar deviant in comparison with the presence of either an organizational or interpersonal deviant.

### Group Effects in the Presence of a Deviant

#### *Deviants in Groups*

Dissimilar, deviant, or non-normative individuals in groups have always attracted great attention (French, 1941; Shachter, 1951). Whether it is a social formation, a small team, or a casual gathering of strangers, any group creates and enacts norms (Goodman, Ravlin, & Schminke, 1987) to recognize and even punish a dissenting member (Berkowitz & Howard, 1959; Kelley & Thibaut, 1954; Levine, 1989). As much as it is natural for group members to seek convergence and communality, groups also experience the emergence of some group members who either choose to deviate from modal norms or end up in the deviant's position.

Although deviants can be very common, groups generally respond vigorously to non-normative members. Isolation, ostracism, and derogation, then, are likely responses (Berkowitz & Howard, 1959; Erikson, 1966; Marques, 1988). Groups may deal with deviating group members by trying to bring them "back into the herd" (Kelley & Thibaut, 1954; Levine, 1989; Shachter, 1951). Yet, the mere fact that this individual has already been labeled reveals that group forces failed to extend the power of conformity over the deviant. Similarly, non-compliant or destructive individuals are not an exception in the workplace. Whereas formal mechanisms in

organizations usually may take care of the more extreme violators, coworkers may still exert pressure over deviants who threaten the normal functioning of work groups<sup>2</sup>.

### *Reactions to a Deviant in Work Units*

In the workplace, individual interactions are determined by two kinds of influence - identification with a common entity and immediate interactions with coworkers. First, employees belong to a common entity, being the organization, the particular work unit, the profession, or the social group. To some extent, every employee develops identification with this common entity, which becomes one of the possible multiple collective identities (Blanz et al., 2003; Foreman & Whetten, 2002; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999) that plays a role in defining one's self.

Second, employees in work units also share the same physical environment<sup>3</sup>, and members can have frequent interactions. Repeated interactions lead to the formation of group norms, beliefs, and routines (Hackman, 1992; McGrath, 1984) that, along with social and ethical standards, govern the group's functioning (Ashforth & Vaidyanath, 2002). Those norms and beliefs create shared values among employees and contribute to the development of employees' identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Scott & Lane, 2000). Although group members are brought together to complete certain jobs (Cohen & Bailey, 1996), along with task execution they can develop interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships are also a mechanism of influence that may impact group reactions in work units. Hence, group reactions to any event or person, including a deviant peer, would be motivated by both protecting the common social identity and the work group relations.

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<sup>2</sup>Work group is used in a broad sense including teams, departments, or any other kind of work units. Thus, work group and work unit are used interchangeably.

<sup>3</sup>Physical environment may refer to a more abstract space for direct interactions, including the virtual space.

Organizational or occupational identity is protected in the same rigorous way as any other social identity. An internal threatening element that endangers the group is likely to trigger strong defensive initiatives (Abrams, Marques, Brown, & Dougill, 2002; Marques et al., 2001; Marques et al., 1992), similar to those against an external threats to organizational identity (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996). Internal threat is also brought into play, because peers are more interested in the evaluation of one of their own whom they have a chance to observe on a daily basis. Similar to the findings of the “black sheep effect” (Marques, 1988), coworkers are expected to react more strongly to a peer than to an external element.

Furthermore, when a group recognizes a member as a norm-violator, group value and worth are put on trial (Coser, 1962; McAuliffe, Jetten, Hornsey, & Hogg, 2003). Members who value their group belonging experience the pressure to restore order (Kelley & Thibaut, 1954; Shachter, 1951) and protect the group (Abrams et al., 2002; Marques et al., 2001). A violator of the group normative expectations also imposes a threat on the meaningfulness of the group, (Marques et al., 1988), which encourages other group members to exert more effort to compensate for the deviant’s misbehavior and boost the group’s worth.

In sum, the deviant’s behaviors and features provoke reactions that aim to protect and preserve collective values (Marques et al., 1998; Marques et al., 1992). Such reactions can involve derogating or distancing the “black sheep,” making him or her a common target of the group’s disliking, and thus allowing everyone else to act together against this “common enemy” (Durkheim, 1938, 1895). Therefore, a deviant’s presence in a work unit may impact group dynamics.

### *Cohesiveness in Work Units*

Various concepts describe dynamics in work groups (e.g., conflict, productivity), but one consistently entertained in many areas is cohesiveness (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). Cohesiveness might slightly differ in meaning across contexts but generally refers to the overall attraction towards the group (Festinger, 1950). Members of cohesive work groups usually are more positive about the group and express a willingness to stay with it; they are also more likely to build personal relationships with other members at work (Hogg & Hains, 1996; Kidwell, Mossholder, & Bennett, 1997).

Nonetheless, researchers have argued that cohesiveness differs conceptually at the individual and group level (Carron, 2000; Widmeyer, Brawley, & Carron, 1985). For individuals, cohesiveness is the notion of attraction to the group, whereas aggregate cohesiveness represents the shared perception of closeness and unity in the group as a whole (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003). Individual perceptions of group cohesiveness may predict individual outcomes (Beal et al., 2003; Evans & Dion, 1991); however, assessing shared perceptions in work units could be critical for understanding their functioning. Cohesiveness has been linked to many factors in organizations (Beal et al., 2003; Prapavessis, 1997). Research also found that similarity is a predictor of work-unit cohesiveness. However, a diverse workforce, dynamic markets, and conflicting norms in work organizations would favor the labeling of deviants in work units.

### *Functions of Deviants in Groups*

The undeniable existence of deviants is generally considered destructive and threatening to group functioning (Coser, 1962; Erikson, 1966). However, some research has recognized that dissent can be beneficial for the group in terms of making positive change (Coser, 1962;

Hornsey, Oppes, & Svensson, 2002) or optimizing decision-making (Nemeth & Owens, 1996; Postmes, Spears, & Cihangir, 2001).

In a different line of research, deviants in large social groups (e.g., French, women, professors) have been viewed as a “necessary evil” (Dentler & Erikson, 1975; Durkheim, 1938, 1895) to maintain the vitality of social formations. Title and Paternoster (2000) further depicted deviants’ roles in society as defining the boundaries of morality in society, activating forces of social control, providing benchmarks for acceptable conduct, and enhancing conformity among members. Furthermore, French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1938, 1895) claimed that people unite in opposition to a threatening element. The usefulness of a “common enemy” has been demonstrated in relation to an external threat, but sociologists have not yet addressed the effects to group solidarity when the threat comes from a formal group member.

Deviants in work groups have also attracted attention as “bad apples” spoiling the barrel. Dunlop and Lee (2004) looked at business units’ performance and organizational citizenship behavior in relation to workplace deviance. Employees in business units with higher average deviant behavior received lower supervisor ratings, had better service time (an objective measure of performance), and lower organizational citizenship behaviors. Interestingly, unit aggregates of deviant behavior were negatively related to supervisor ratings but positively related to service time. Findings in this study, then, imply that deviant behavior is not necessarily negative for the effectiveness of business units.

Thus, on the basis of previous research on social formations and small groups, I further discuss potential functions of a deviant’s presence for a work unit’s cohesiveness.

### *Work Unit Cohesiveness in the Presence of a Deviant*

Employees, similar to members of any other group, recognize and respond to the presence of a deviant member in the work unit. Perceived as a threat to the collective value, a deviant coworker is likely to be subjected to derogation and ostracism (Dentler & Erikson, 1975; Kelley & Thibaut, 1954) from others as they struggle to protect the common collective formation. Employees have a chance to discuss and criticize the deviant's attitudes, behaviors, and performance. A shared response against the common threat may unite the group and increase the bonding among group members.

Furthermore, a derogated peer can become the scapegoat because he or she is blamed for those behaviors associated with the deviant label. In this way, the "bad apple" can become a "common enemy" for other workplace members. It can be speculated that the "common enemy inside" can serve in a similar fashion as would an outsider - to unite people together against a common target (Durkheim, 1938, 1895). Moreover, attraction among coworkers might be motivated by repulsion from a common source (Rosenbaum, 1986b). Having common dislike or common rejection may become a reason for finding communality (Aronson & Cope, 1968). Thus, group members become more attracted to the group and its members.

A deviant coworker can also preserve the vividness and functionality of the work group by reminding others about the common collective entity. In this way, employees can reevaluate the role of this identity, being organizational or occupational, for their own self-determination. As the importance of the workplace identification surfaces in comparison to other collective identities, individuals are more likely to adjust their evaluations to preserve a positive group image. Beyond that, employees may exert more effort to sustain the value of the group and to compensate for the presence of a dysfunctional member, which would further strengthen positive perceptions and interpersonal ties among non-deviant employees.

Both the desire to preserve the group value and the willingness to unite against the common enemy are activated when a deviant is constructed in the group. As a result, the presence of a deviant in work units can promote perceptions of in-group solidarity and prompt more effort towards the group objectives. In this way, employees' perceptions of collective belongingness are enhanced along with perceptions of improved cohesiveness. As the deviant brings group members together, cohesiveness expands from (a) individual attraction to the group to (b) a shared belief about the group character. Thus, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3.* The presence of a deviant in the workplace will be positively related to cohesiveness in work units.

*“Possible Rather than a Necessary Condition”*

Certainly, group dynamics have proven to be more complex than a simple positive or negative relationship can depict them (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Weber, 2001). For instance, group forces might cause non-harmonious changes in the variables of interest. In other words, changes in one variable may not lead to similar consistent unit changes in another variable at any level. This complexity probably stems from the multiple levels of interactions in groups (viz., individual, dyadic, and group levels) and multiplicity of norms therein (viz., organizational, departmental, or informal group routines). As such, the phenomenon discussed here may not generate such simple effects as have been hypothesized above.

For example, for a group in which all members are compliant, friendly, and like each other, cohesiveness would be certainly very high. Such a group has already established conformity among all group members. In reality, most work units are prone to have non-conforming members, and group relations often encounter troubles. In these cases, categorization and derogation occur naturally and may facilitate preserving the collective functioning, because

the group can blame the dysfunctional activities on a particular group member. Other members can not only experience the benefits of having a “common enemy” but also feel that the group’s “bad apple” is not really representative of the group. Hence, a deviant is not a necessary condition for work unit cohesiveness, but it is one such potentially sufficient factor.

### *Moderating Effect of Job Interdependence*

Group interactions take place in the context of specific goals and compositions of the work unit - ranging from completely independent responsibilities for each employee to completely interchangeable roles in the work team (Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993; McGrath, 1984). Not only do organizations structure their workflow differently from one another (Carron, 2000), but also employees in the same unit may vary in their perceptions of job dependence (Goodman et al., 1987). Perceived and actual job interdependence impact interactions and expectations among coworkers.

Highly interdependent work groups, for instance, call for employees to rely on one another. For more interdependent tasks (i.e., requiring reciprocal interaction), group members interact more actively and can develop closer relationships. Even though the interdependence can be complex (Saavedra et al., 1993), it usually involves a joint outcome. The need for everyone’s joint contribution and the resulting closeness of interpersonal relationships are likely to prompt stronger group forces to keep everyone in the group. Job interdependence is also likely to increase the group identification of employees. Thereby, group members would be concerned about how each group member behaves and represents the group. Given these considerations, the presence of a deviant may be less favorable for highly interdependent work units.

In such groups, a non-normative member would be subjected to stronger pressures to comply with group expectations (Hogg & Hains, 1996), but he or she may also be considered a



disturbance to the normal functioning of the group (Coser, 1962; French, 1941; Goodman et al., 1987). Even when conformity is not achieved, interdependent groups may still protect rather than belittle the dissenting member. As noted earlier, then, the perception of a shared destiny might prevent severe derogation of a straying member. This protective mechanism can be described by thoughts such as “he is one of us” and even provoke an apprehension such as “she is not that bad, we really need her.”

Because of the joint group outcome and potential group identification, interdependent coworkers may adjust their perceptions of group members to increase the perceived value of the group. In this way, job interdependence may inhibit the attachment of a label or lessen respective negative evaluation, which can lead to less intense group effects in the presence of a deviant. Therefore, when jobs are more interdependent, the labeling and derogation are reduced and the presence of a deviant is less likely to be associated with improved cohesiveness. Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3a.* The presence of a deviant will be less positively related to cohesiveness in the work unit with more interdependent jobs.

#### *Moderating Effect of Agreement about the Deviant*

Group dynamics might be also contingent on agreement about the deviant coworker. Individuals may agree about the presence of a deviant in three ways. First, an employee may perceive that other coworkers agree with his or her opinion about the deviant (i.e., perceived agreement). Second, coworkers’ opinions about having a deviant in the work unit may coincide, and this is referred to as objective agreement about having a deviant. Finally, members of the work unit may agree about a particular person being the deviant, which is referred to as objective

agreement about a particular deviant. Any kind of agreement is likely to intensify the group effects of a deviant, but the mechanisms for perceived and actual agreement may be different.

Although an individual cognition, the deviant label is maintained through social cues (Gove, 1975; Newman, 1975). Perceived agreement, though, allows individuals to feel comfortable with their negative evaluations of the deviant, and repulsion becomes a factor in their workplace relationships (Rosenbaum, 1986b). In this way, their repulsion towards the deviant is supported, and attraction to the more similar group members and the group itself is initiated (Coser, 1962; Dentler & Erikson, 1975; McGrath, 1984). Thus, supported perceptions of dissimilarity from the deviant can intensify perceived similarity with and attraction to non-deviant peers (Rosenbaum, 1986b). Beyond that, employees who are convinced that their peers share the same opinion about the deviant would be more confident in their reactions towards the deviant. They also may feel being supported and understood by their coworkers, and thus perceive the work unit as more supportive. The feelings of support from coworkers and attraction to the work unit determine stronger perceptions of a cohesive work unit.

The overall group response to a deviant might be to cast out, ostracize, or expel the deviant, but scorn or neglect are also possible responses. In any case, the more people agree about the deviant label, the more they can collectively derogate the perpetrator and his or her actions. Although the group reactions to dissenting members are generally complex and dependent on multiple factors (Kelley & Thibaut, 1954), deviance within the group undeniably activates group forces to respond to the threat (Durkheim, 1938, 1895). In this way, dealing with the “bad apple” as a group is an opportunity to accomplish something together and increase the involvement of group members. Another line of reasoning suggests that when all coworkers agree about the “bad apple,” they can use this target to unite against it (Durkheim, 1938, 1895).

Similarly, the common target of repulsion (i.e., the deviant) can become a motivation for attraction to other coworkers (Aronson & Cope, 1968; Rosenbaum, 1986b). In this way, objective agreement intensifies the group forces to protect normative order and allows employees to have a common uniting threat.

In sum, agreement about the presence of a deviant creates support and justification for the attitude against the target, and thus may strengthen the cohesiveness of other coworkers.

Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3b.* In groups with a high level of agreement, the presence of a deviant will be stronger positively related to cohesiveness in work units.

## **CHAPTER 3.**

### **METHODS AND RESULTS**

This chapter describes two data collection procedures, the characteristics of the samples, the measures of all variables included in the study, and the results from testing the hypotheses.

#### Methods

##### *Data Collection Procedure*

Data were collected by means of questionnaires using two separate data collection procedures, which produced two samples. Surveys, invitational materials, procedures, and any ongoing changes were approved by the UCF Institutional Review Board prior to any data collection efforts (see Appendix B). For some work units, additional permission from the unit manager was necessary and was obtained before distributing the surveys. Because of the sensitive nature of the study, specific precautions were adopted to protect participants. Potential participants were offered anonymity and an option to take the survey home and mail it back to the researcher. More details about each data collection procedure are described below.

*Data collection procedure for Sample 1.* In order to access multiple independent work units across many organizations, I recruited individuals to solicit and facilitate participation in the study (referred to as facilitators). Each facilitator approached employees in his or her work unit to invite their participation in the study. Some facilitators were students and received extra points for their cooperation. They were also offered an alternative assignment, relevant to the class material. Facilitators distributed surveys among those employees who agreed to participate and collected back the surveys in sealed envelopes. Furthermore, each facilitator had to interview

the manager/supervisor of the respective work unit in order to fill in a structured description of the unit. Another version of the survey with fewer questions was given to the supervisor of each work unit. Each supervisor was offered the survey along with a self-addressed, prepaid envelope, and thus had the option of returning the survey directly to the researcher. The nature of this data collection approach allowed a clear separation of work units from one another. Furthermore, using insiders provided some certainty that respondents work together and interact with each other within the boundaries of the work unit.

*Data collection procedure for Sample 2.* The purpose of the second, follow-up data collection was to test the predictions within one organization and across the same set of jobs, thereby generating a more homogeneous sample. The target population was administrative staff within a single organization, namely, a large state university in the Southeastern US. Work units were identified on the basis of the organization chart. Potential participants were identified and invited to participate at their workplaces. Depending on the type of access allowed by each unit manager, some employees were solicited personally and others were encouraged to participate by the means of invitational letter left in their mailboxes. Each participant received an individual package consisting of a large envelope with instructions on the top, a smaller self-addressed, prepaid envelope, an informed consent form, and a copy of the survey (see Appendix B). Participants had the option to return the survey by using interoffice mail or by using the prepaid envelop via regular mail. Each survey was marked with a unique number that allowed keeping track of the surveys left in each work unit. Participants were not asked for their names and were assured full confidentiality regarding the collected information. They were also told that they could choose not to answer some questions.

## *Samples*

*Sample 1.* The first data collection effort resulted in the returned of 643 individual surveys from 107 work units across different organizations. The average age of the participants was 31.25 years old (SD=12.22); the average work experience was 12.76 years (SD=11.34); the average length of company tenure was 4.23 years (SD=5.38); and tenure with the same supervisor was 4.49 years (SD = 5.54). Approximately 34.3% had supervisory responsibilities; 64 % were females; 61.6 % Caucasian; 17.4 % Hispanic; 10.8 % African-American. All surveys were anonymous, and participants were informed that they could choose not to answer some questions.

*Sample 2.* The second data collection effort resulted in the return of 194 individual surveys from 45 work units within the same organization. The individual response rate was approximately<sup>4</sup> 23%, and the unit response rate was 54%. Two surveys were excluded because the respondents explicitly wrote their refusal to participate and 16 respondents (8.3%) left the presence of a deviant scale empty. Thus, the number of usable questionnaires was reduced to 176. Because the size and response rate of each unit varied, only 33 out of the 45 units had more than three respondents and were used for aggregate level analysis.

The average age of the participants was 39.4 years old (SD=14.05); the average work experience was 16.67 years (SD=12.26) and the average company tenure was 5.89 years (SD=6.53). Approximately 51% had some supervisory responsibilities; 72 % were female; 60.12 % Caucasian; 17.68 % Hispanic; 9.52 % African-American. The majority of the respondents had some college training, including 36% with a bachelor degree, 23% with master's degree, and 6% with a doctoral degree.

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<sup>4</sup> The response rate is an approximation because in some units more surveys than the actual number of employees were left for distribution.

Using two data collection procedures allowed not only more confidence in the findings but also an opportunity to detect how data collection approaches may lead to differences when sensitive data are involved. I further compare the two samples and discuss possible implications of the differences in the discussion section.

### *Measure*

For both data collections, most variables were measured with 7-point Likert-type scales with “strongly agree” (=7) to “strongly disagree” (=1) as anchors. Additional clarifications are provided about those variables assessed with either a different type of measure or a variation on the Likert-scale format. All measures are presented in Appendix C.

*Self-evaluation.* Four items were developed for the study to measure self-evaluation in the workplace (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.67$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.86$ ). Sample items are “I am among the good employees in my workplace” and “There are worse employees than me.”

*Social well-being.* Social well-being in the workplace was captured in terms of three dimensions, namely, social integration, social acceptance, and social actualization. Each dimension was assessed with items suggested by Keyes (1998) and modified for the organizational context. Additional items from Vinokur-Kaplan (1995) were added to the social actualization scale. The resulting scales were pretested with MBA students in two phases (see Appendix D).

In the final scale, *social integration* was measured with 6 items (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.91$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.87$ ), *social acceptance* was measured with 7 items (Sample 1 & 2:  $\alpha=.87$ ), and *social actualization* was measured with 7 items (Sample 1 & 2:  $\alpha=.90$ ). Sample items for each dimension respectively are “I feel the respect of my coworkers,” “I think my coworkers are unreliable” (reverse coded), and “I think that this organization is a productive place to work in.”

*Role clarity.* Role clarity was assessed with seven items (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.84$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.80$ ) modified from previous research on role clarity and role ambiguity (House, Schuler, & Levanoni, 1983; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). Sample items are “I am not certain what might be considered improper” and “I know exactly what is expected from me.”

*Cohesiveness.* Perceptions of cohesiveness were measured with five items (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.82$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.82$ ) suggested by Staw (1984), such as “My coworkers get along well with each other” and “I would like to remain working with the same people in the future.” The original scale was developed for small groups research and consisted of questions with responses on an 11-points format from “not at all (=1)” to “very much (=11).” For the first data collection (Sample 1), I reworded the original questions as statements related to coworkers and kept the original 11-point response format. For the second data collection (Sample 2), I still used the reworded statements, but changed the response format to 7-points from “strongly agree (=7)” to “strongly disagree (=1).” Pretesting results demonstrated that the change in the scale did not reduce the variability of the measure. Pretesting results are presented in Appendix C.

An aggregate score of work unit cohesiveness was obtained by averaging individual responses for each work unit. Aggregation is meaningful to the extent that there is an agreement about the common concept (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1993). Level of agreement was captured by means of  $r_{wg}$  (Brandt & Lindell, 1999; James et al., 1993). For both samples,  $r_{wg}$  ranged from negative values to .99 with an average of .78 for Sample 1 and .70 for the Sample 2; negative values were not rounded to 0 as recommended by Le Breton, James, and Lindell (2005). Simple  $r_{wg}$  was used because it is sufficient when the purpose is to find an agreement about a common target (Brandt & Lindell, 1999)



*Presence of a deviant.* The presence of a deviant coworker was assessed with a measure developed for this study, following the model of Junoven (1991). The measure consists of three parts. In the first part, respondents were provided with a short description including words such as “negative person, dysfunctional, bad apple, jerk, and disliked” and then they were asked to indicate whether a coworker in their current workplace fit the description in any way. They were asked to circle either “Yes” or “No.” About half of the participants indicated having a deviant coworker at their current workplace (viz., 55% in Sample 1 and 52% in Sample 2). For the purpose of the analysis “Yes” was coded as “1” and “No” was coded as “0.”

In the second part of the measure, respondents who confirmed having a deviant coworker were asked to provide the deviant’s name or initials. In Sample 1, 75% of these respondents provided initials of the deviant including 7.3% who provided the first or full name of the deviant. However, only 13.6 % of the respondents from the second sample provided initials and no respondent provided any name of the perceived deviant. The third part of the measure consisted of 11 behavioral statements intended to capture four deviant labels, namely norm violator, counterproductive deviant, interpersonal deviant, and dissimilar deviant. Thus, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent each behavior characterizes the deviant on a 5-point scale, from “Not at all (=1)” to “A great deal (=5).”

In their reports, the respondents in both samples did not differentiate between the norm violator and the counterproductive type and favored a 3-factor typology of the perceived deviant, namely organizational deviant (including the characteristics of norm violator and counterproductive), interpersonal deviant, and dissimilar deviant. This fact is not surprising given the samples’ diversity across jobs, organizational settings, and demographics along with previous findings that individuals require a certain level of cognitive complexity to distinguish

multiple dimensions of complex concepts (Carragher & Buckley, 1996). In the second sample, however, respondents almost recognized the four types of deviants, but it was statistically evident that the norm violator and counterproductive deviant labels overlapped largely. Therefore, I calculated a score for the three types of deviants for the respondents from both samples.

Rather than being categorized exclusively as one type, any identified deviant was concurrently characterized on all three deviant's types. In this way, any identified deviant received an organizational, interpersonal, and dissimilar score but these scores might be different. For example, a coworker might be perceived as more organizational than interpersonal deviant. This approach is consistent with the labeling perspective arguing that the attached label is likely to drive negative evaluations and negative attributions for that person.

Organizational deviant was measured with six items (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.84$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.79$ ), such as "Behaves improperly for this workplace" and "Contributes little to the work unit performance." Interpersonal deviant was measured with three items (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.86$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.81$ ), such as "Seems to be disrespectful to others" and "Displays negative attitude toward others." Dissimilar deviant was measured with two items (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.85$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.72$ ), namely "Is somehow different than the rest of us" and "Behaves unlike the rest of us."

In the second data collection, respondents who did not perceive having a deviant coworker were asked to indicate to what extent the listed behaviors took place in their work unit rather than evaluating to what extent these behaviors characterized the deviant coworker (see Appendix B). This slight change in the measure for the second sample would allow comparing the effects of deviant labels with effects of the similar deviant behavior.

The format and validity of the measure were extensively pre-tested with two separate samples of MBA students. Details about the procedure and results of the pretesting are presented in Appendix C.

An aggregated score of the presence of a deviant was calculated for each work unit on the basis of individual responses about a deviant's presence. In particular, the aggregated presence of a deviant was equal to the percentage of respondents who confirmed the presence of a deviant. The aggregate measure ranged from 0 to 1. An aggregate score closer to 1 corresponds to more reports from the work unit confirming having a deviant; and a score approaching 0 corresponds to fewer reports about a deviant's presence.

*Social comparison orientation.* Social comparison orientation was assessed with the Gibbons and Buunk (1999) scale, which consists of 11 statements (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.83$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.87$ ). Examples are "I often compare how I am doing socially (e.g. social skill, popularity) with other people" and "I am not the type of person who compares often with others" (reverse coded).

*Job interdependence.* In the first sample, both employees and supervisors assessed job interdependence on seven questions suggested by Dean and Snell (1991). Employees self-reported about their own jobs ( $\alpha=.65$ ) and supervisors reported about the interdependence of the jobs in the supervised unit ( $\alpha=.75$ ). Two response formats accompanied the questions, ranging from "1=rarely" to "7=frequently" and from "1=very little" to "7=a great deal." Sample questions for employees were "How often do you start work that is finished by others?" and "How often do you work by yourself?" Sample items for the supervisors were "How often do employees start work that is finished by others?" and "How often do employees in this unit work by themselves?" In the second survey, I added an additional question and modified the response

format. Job interdependence was assessed with eight questions ( $\alpha=.76$ ) on a 7-points scale from “Strongly agree (=7)” to “Strongly disagree (=1).” The new question was “To what extent are you independently responsible for your duties?” (reverse coded).

An aggregate score of job interdependence was calculated by averaging individual responses within each unit. Although calculated, agreement about job interdependence was not taken into account, because respondents were not asked to evaluate a common target but instead, everyone’s own job interdependence.

*Coworkers’ salience.* Coworkers’ salience was captured by two concepts. In the first data collection, organizational identification was used to represent to what extent the workplace was important for the respondents. Organizational identification was measured with eight items ( $\alpha=.93$ ) such as “What this organization stands for is important for me” and “I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization.” In the second data collection, coworkers’ salience was assessed with a seven item measure ( $\alpha=.92$ ) developed for the purpose of this study. Sample items are “For my actions, I consider what my current coworkers will say” and “I feel a sense of belonging to my current coworkers.”

*Agreement about the deviant.* Agreement about the deviant was conceptualized in two ways – perceived and objective. Perceived agreement reflects the extent to which individuals perceived that their opinion was supported by their peers. It was measured with the question “Would your coworkers agree with your opinion about this person?” and responses were given on a 5-point format, ranging from “1=Not at all” to “5=A great deal.”

Initially, I intended to compose two variables for objective agreement, one based on the responses about having or not having a deviant coworker (Yes/No) and one based on the information about the name/initials of the deviant. However, calculation of the latter was

hindered by missing data, making the analysis almost impossible. The former, on the other hand, was calculated from already aggregated individual responses about the deviant's presence in each unit, using the formula:  $2 \times \text{Absolute Value} (\text{Aggregated Deviant's Presence} - .5)$ . The values of the objective agreement varied from 0 to 1, with 1 corresponding to higher agreement about either having or not having a deviant.

*Control Variables.* Because some individuals tend to think highly of themselves or evaluate a given situation more positively in general (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998), core self-evaluation as a dispositional trait was included in the analyses. Core self-evaluation was measured with a 12-item scale (Sample 1:  $\alpha=.78$ ; Sample 2:  $\alpha=.81$ ) developed by Judge and colleagues (Judge et al., 2003). Gender (coded 1 for women), work experience (in years), and tenure with the organization (in years) were self-reported and also included in the analyses.

### *Analysis*

All hypotheses were tested with moderated multiple regression analyses<sup>5</sup> with multiple dependent variables at the individual level. The moderating effect of job interdependence in the first sample was assessed by reports from both employees (i.e., self-report) and supervisors. Unit level analyses were performed on aggregate scores of cohesiveness, deviant's presence, and job interdependence with units that had more than three respondents. Additionally, hypotheses related to aggregated cohesiveness were tested on both high agreement and all units, to detect whether agreement would change the findings. Furthermore, hypotheses concerned with the type of deviant were tested with a reduced sample size because they were limited to respondents who affirmed the presence of a deviant. Additional analyses and findings are reported in Appendix D.

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<sup>5</sup> In order to account for the possible inflation of  $\alpha$  in the case of multiple separate tests, MANCOVA with all dependent variables was performed and revealed consistent results. Only the regression results are reported.

## Results

Variable means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations are reported in Table 1a and Table 1b (all tables and figures are in Appendix A) for samples one and two respectively. Reliabilities are placed on the diagonals.

### *Individual Effects*

The regression results from testing hypotheses 1, 1a, and 1b are presented in Table 2a and Table 2b. The overall regression models predicting self-evaluation ( $R^2=.13$ ,  $F=6.02$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.13$ ,  $F=2.16$ ,  $p<.01$ ), social integration ( $R^2=.26$ ,  $F=13.63$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.37$ ,  $F=8.40$ ,  $p<.001$ ), social acceptance ( $R^2=.20$ ,  $F=9.96$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.29$ ,  $F=5.94$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and social actualization ( $R^2=.55$ ,  $F=47.46$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.33$ ,  $F=7.32$ ,  $p<.001$ ) were significant for both samples.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that in the presence of a deviant coworker, employees will have a more positive self-evaluation of themselves and of their social well-being. The data analyses from both samples showed that the presence of a deviant coworker is positively and significantly related to other employees' self-evaluation ( $b=.33$ ,  $\beta=.17$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $b=.33$ ,  $\beta=.22$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Social well-being, however, was not related to the presence of a deviant coworker as expected. In the first sample, the relationships with social integration and social actualization were not significant ( $b=.00$ ,  $\beta=.00$ ,  $p>.05$  and  $b=-.08$ ,  $\beta=-.03$ ,  $p>.05$  respectively) and the relationship for social acceptance was negative ( $b=-.49$ ,  $\beta=-.22$ ,  $p<.001$ ). In the second sample, the relationship with social integration was not significant ( $b=-.01$ ,  $\beta=-.01$ ,  $p>.05$ ) and social acceptance and social actualization were negatively related to the perception of having a deviant coworker ( $b=-.41$ ,  $\beta=-.18$ ,  $p<.001$  and  $b=-.46$ ,  $\beta=-.17$ ,  $p>.05$  respectively). The presence of a deviant, then, is associated with enhanced self-evaluation, but not with the improved social well-being of other

employees. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported in relation to self-evaluation, but not in relation to social well-being.

Hypothesis 1a suggested that employees with a higher social comparison orientation would report more positive self-evaluation and social well-being in the presence of a deviant coworker. The moderating effect of social comparison orientation was not supported by the data in the first sample ( $b$  ranged from  $-.07$  to  $.08$ ,  $p > .05$ ). In the second sample, social comparison positively moderated only the effect of the presence of a deviant coworker on social actualization ( $b = .35$ ,  $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Specifically, individuals with a high social comparison orientation reported better social actualization in the presence of a deviant than individuals with a low social comparison orientation. The data did not support the expected moderating effect of social comparison orientation in the analyses of self-evaluation ( $b = -.02$ ,  $\beta = -.02$ ,  $p > .05$ ), social integration ( $b = .11$ ,  $\beta = .09$ ,  $p > .05$ ), and social acceptance ( $b = .30$ ,  $\beta = .19$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Thus, hypothesis 1a was generally not supported except for social actualization in the second sample.

Hypothesis 1b suggested that employees who perceived their coworkers as more salient would experience stronger positive self-evaluation and social well-being from the presence of a deviant. For the first sample, coworker salience was captured with organizational identification. The data did not support the expected moderating effect of organizational identification for any of the dependent variables ( $b$  ranged from  $.00$  to  $.08$ ,  $p > .05$ ). For the second sample, although captured with a specific measure, coworker salience was not found to impact the effect of the deviant's presence on self-perceptions of other employees ( $b$  ranged from  $-.04$  to  $.19$ ,  $p > .05$ ). In this way, neither organizational identification nor coworker salience was a significant moderator. Thus, hypothesis 1b was not supported.

### *Learning Effects*

The regression models testing hypotheses 2 and 2a were significant (see Table 3) for the first sample ( $R^2=.16$ ,  $F=10.02$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.12$ ,  $F=5.25$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and for the second sample ( $R^2=.17$ ,  $F=3.79$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that in the presence of a deviant coworker, employees would report better role clarity. The data, however, did not support this prediction, and the presence of a deviant coworker was not found significantly related to the role clarity of other employees -- neither in the first sample ( $b=.08$ ,  $\beta=.04$ ,  $p>.05$  and  $b=-.09$ ,  $\beta=-.05$ ,  $p>.05$ ) nor in the second sample ( $b=-.03$ ,  $\beta=-.02$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Thus, hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that job interdependence would moderate the relationship between the presence of a deviant and the role clarity of other employees. The two regression analyses on the first sample produced slightly different results. The moderating effect was supported when job interdependence was self-reported ( $b=.24$ ,  $\beta=.18$ ,  $p<.01$ ) but was not supported when job interdependence was reported by the supervisors ( $b=.11$ ,  $\beta=.09$ ,  $p>.05$ ). After plotting the interaction (see Figure 2), the data revealed that when the job was perceived as more interdependent, employees reported better role clarity in the presence of a deviant ( $t=2.37$ ,  $p<.05$ ), but there was no detectable effect when jobs were perceived as less interdependent ( $t=-1.29$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Figure 2 illustrates the relationship. In the second sample job interdependence was self-reported, and the moderating effect was not detected ( $b=.01$ ,  $\beta=.01$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Thus, hypothesis 2a was supported for self-reported job interdependence in the first sample. Potential explanations of different findings across measures and across samples are offered in the discussion section.

Hypothesis 2b predicts that when the presence of a deviant is associated with norm violation, other employees will report better role clarity than when the deviant is perceived as an interpersonal violator. The overall regression testing this prediction with the first sample was



significant ( $R^2=.20$ ,  $F=5.02$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.14$ ,  $F=5.71$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and was limited only to the respondents who reported having a deviant coworker. Contrary to expectations, role clarity was not significantly associated with having a deviant who violates organizational or performance norms ( $b=.08$ ,  $\beta=.07$ ,  $p>.05$ ;  $b=-.09$ ,  $\beta=-.09$ ,  $p>.05$ ). A more interpersonal deviant, on the other hand, contributed negatively to other employees' role understanding ( $b=-.12$ ,  $\beta=-.15$ ,  $p<.05$ ;  $b=-.15$ ,  $\beta=-.18$ ,  $p<.05$ ) which is consistent with the expectation that the more interpersonal deviant label is less positively related to one's role learning. Although not formally hypothesized, a positive relationship was found between the presence of a perceived dissimilar deviant and the role clarity of other employees ( $b=.16$ ,  $\beta=.18$ ,  $p<.05$ ). In the second sample, the overall regression analysis was significant ( $R^2=.34$ ,  $F=4.15$ ,  $p<.001$ ), but none of the relationships linking a deviant type to role clarity was significant. The power to detect a relationship in this case was probably restricted by the small sample size, but some more explanations are offered in the discussion section. Thus, hypothesis 2b was partially supported.

### *Group Effects*

The results from testing hypotheses 3 and 3a at the individual level are presented in Table 5, and these models were significant for perceived cohesiveness (Sample 1:  $R^2=.07$ ,  $F=5.16$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $R^2=.05$ ,  $F=4.65$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Sample 2:  $R^2=.13$ ,  $F=3.42$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and for aggregated cohesiveness (Sample 1:  $R^2=.06$ ,  $F=3.41$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Sample 2:  $R^2=.12$ ,  $F=2.39$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The results from testing hypotheses 3 and 3a at the unit level are presented in Table 6 and the models are significant for both samples (Sample 1:  $R^2=.16$ ,  $F=6.91$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Sample 2:  $R^2=.44$ ,  $F=6.91$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

Hypothesis 3 predicted that the presence of a deviant coworker would be positively related to other employees' perceptions of cohesiveness. As described earlier, group effects were

conceptualized and tested at the individual level (see Table 5) and the group level (see Table 6). Contrary to predictions, individuals in both samples who perceived having a deviant coworker regarded their work unit as less cohesive (Sample 1:  $b=-.06$ ,  $\beta=-.19$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Sample 2:  $b=-.47$ ,  $\beta=-.21$ ,  $p<.001$ ). When cohesiveness was conceptualized as the shared belief about coworkers' unity or the overall attraction to the collective formation, the results were consistent with those at the individual level. In particular, individual beliefs about a deviant were negatively related to the aggregated cohesiveness for the first sample ( $b=-.03$ ,  $\beta=-.13$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $b=-.04$ ,  $\beta=-.21$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and for the second sample ( $b=-.26$ ,  $\beta=-.20$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Two separate analyses with the first sample data demonstrated the relationship for both work units with high agreement about cohesiveness ( $r_{wg}$  higher than .70) and for all work units (see Table 5).

When both cohesiveness and a deviant's presence were conceptualized as a unit level phenomenon, the results (see Table 6) also confirmed the findings at individual level. The data demonstrated that the shared level of unit cohesiveness is lower when more individuals perceive a coworker as a deviant in the first sample ( $b=-.15$ ,  $\beta=-.39$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and in the second sample ( $b=-.88$ ,  $\beta=-.37$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Thus, hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Hypothesis 3a suggested that the relationship between the presence of a deviant and cohesiveness would be less positive when jobs were more interdependent. This prediction was not supported for perceived cohesiveness (Sample 1:  $b=-.01$ ,  $\beta=-.03$ ,  $p>.05$  &  $b=.01$ ,  $\beta=.03$ ,  $p>.05$ ; Sample 2:  $b=.17$ ,  $\beta=.11$ ,  $p>.05$ ) or for aggregated cohesiveness (Sample 1:  $b=.00$ ,  $\beta=.02$ ,  $p>.05$  &  $b=.00$ ,  $\beta=.01$ ,  $p>.05$ ; Sample 2:  $b=.17$ ,  $\beta=.18$ ,  $p>.05$ ) for individual belief about a deviant coworker. The predicted moderation, however, was partially supported for aggregated scores of cohesiveness, deviant's presence, and job dependence. In the first sample, the effect of the presence of a deviant member on the work unit cohesiveness was stronger for more

interdependent work units ( $b=-.04, \beta=-.30, p<.05$ ). In particular, the data revealed (see Figure 3) that for more interdependent jobs cohesiveness was negatively related to having a deviant in the work unit ( $t=1.89, p<.05$ ), but for less interdependent jobs cohesiveness seemed unrelated to having a deviant coworker ( $t=-.31, p>.05$ ). In the second sample, no significant effect of work unit job interdependence was found ( $b=.07, \beta=.10, p>.05$ ). This discrepancy raises further questions for the interpretations of the findings that are addressed in the discussion section. Thus, hypothesis 3a was supported only at the aggregate level for the first sample.

Hypothesis 3b predicted that agreement about the deviant would intensify the positive relationship between the presence of a deviant and cohesiveness in the work unit. Agreement was captured as both perceived agreement and objective agreement about having a deviant. The moderating effect of perceived agreement was tested only for those respondents who reported having a deviant coworker in the workplace. The overall regression models were significant for both samples (Sample 1:  $R^2=.06, F=2.68, p<.01$ ; Sample 2:  $R^2=.14, F=2.11, p<.05$ ). However, the effect of perceived agreement was significant in the second sample ( $b=.34, \beta=.32, p<.01$ ), but not in the first sample ( $b=-.01, \beta=-.05, p>.05$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 3b at the individual level was partially supported.

At an aggregate level, objective agreement was hypothesized to intensify the relationship between having a deviant in the work unit and the work unit's cohesiveness. The regression models were significant (Sample 1:  $R^2=.25, F=7.47, p<.001$ ; Sample 2:  $R^2=.49, F=12.94, p<.001$ ) and showed that objective agreement impacts the relationship, but in a different way for each sample (see Table 8). The agreement about having or not having a deviant coworker was a positive predictor of cohesiveness in the first sample ( $b=.03, \beta=.26, p<.001$ ) and negative in the second sample ( $b=-.73, \beta=-.32, p<.001$ ). After plotting the results (see Figure 4), a much more

complicated relationship was revealed. In the first sample cohesiveness was improved if more employees reported a deviant's presence, but in the second sample it was higher if fewer employees recognized the presence of a deviant. Results in the first sample were consistent with the predictions and provided some support for the "common enemy" argument. The results in the second sample, however, presented a puzzling challenge that is addressed further in the discussion section. Thus Hypothesis 3b at the aggregate level was partially supported.

In sum, agreement about the presence of a deviant coworker had inconsistent effects across the samples and the levels of analyses. First, the results revealed that objective agreement about a deviant impacts the effect that this person may have on the work unit cohesiveness, but the nature of this impact was contradictory. Second, perceived agreement about a deviant coworker was a factor in shaping employees' perceptions about workplace cohesiveness only for respondents in the second sample, but not for respondents in the first sample. Thus, hypothesis 3b was partially supported and more discussion of the contradictory findings is offered in the following section.

Summary of the hypotheses tests are presented in Table 8. Other findings that were not formally predicted are reported in Appendix D along with their interpretations.

## **CHAPTER 4.**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to recognize and explore the reactions of employees to a deviant coworker. Specifically, I introduced and tested potential beneficial effects for employees who have a coworker perceived as deviant, dysfunctional, or negative. Consistent with diverse theories from social psychology and sociology, I predicted that in the presence of a deviant coworker, employees would have higher self-evaluations, better role learning, and improved cohesiveness of the work unit. Two separate data collections tested these relationships along with the moderating role of social comparison orientation, coworkers' salience, job interdependence, and norms perceived as violated.

#### Findings

##### *Understanding Coworkers: Labeling and Reacting to Deviant Coworkers*

Along with hypotheses testing, the study presented evidence that employees actually categorize some of their coworkers as “bad apples” or violators, and that there are variety of effects associated with the attached label. These data along with data from a previous critical-incidents study also indicate that individuals not only have to deal with the consequences of deviant behaviors but also have to interact with a deviant coworker. Although this finding is not surprising, it illustrates the need for further exploration of the phenomenon.

In the process of scale development and multiple data collections, it also became evident that some respondents may not be aware of their own feelings and experiences around the

deviant. When asked to compare with the deviant, up to about half of the respondents (32% to 51% across the samples) did not directly admit that they feel better-off or more liked by others. At the same time, a less explicit measure of self-evaluation revealed a relationship.

*The Silver Lining of a Deviant Coworker: Self-evaluation and Role Clarity for Other Employees*

As suggested by social comparison theory, the results confirmed that employees have enhanced self evaluations in the presence of a deviant coworker. The consistency of the results across separate samples and different data collection procedures provided strong support for this hypothesized relationship.

Whereas employees apparently have a chance to build a more positive self-image around a deviant coworker, only some of them had the benefit of greater clarity about their organizational roles. In particular, the role learning associated with a deviant coworker was limited only to employees with more interdependent jobs. Comparing the reports of job interdependence from two sources (i.e., self-report and supervisor) revealed that perceived interdependence (rather than actual task dependence) might be a more important factor for employees who seek information about their roles and responsibilities in organizations. The stronger effect of self-reported job interdependence could be partially due to common source bias, but it is also likely that perceptions about the job characteristics (i.e., interdependence) drive employees to seek and learn more from their coworkers. Moreover, supervisors' assessment of job interdependence may not equally apply to everyone's job in the unit. The pattern of results was not found in the second, much smaller, sample which was also comprised of respondents with more similar jobs (i.e., administrative) within the same organization.

*Does Every Cloud Have a Silver Lining? Predictions Not Supported by the Data*

Whereas the effect of downward social comparison was well supported in the case of self-evaluation, the same pattern of self-enhancement was not found for the social understanding of the self. In particular, social integration, the first dimension of workplace social well-being, (that reflects employees' evaluation of their social importance in the workplace) was consistently unrelated to the presence of a deviant coworker for both samples. Even though downward social comparison suggests a positive relationship, the influence of a complex combination of individual and situational factors may have prevented the occurrence and detection of a direct relationship for social integration. The findings for social acceptance and social actualization were also inconsistent with the predictions, but in a different way (as discussed below).

Despite the solid conceptual basis of social comparison theory, the data did not reveal an effect of social comparison orientation on employees' reactions to a deviant coworker. Even though I used a previously validated scale (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999), social comparison orientation reports are prone to social desirability, which may restrict not only variability but also the validity of the measure. This poses statistical limitations for detecting a relationship, especially in the case of a dichotomous independent variable. Other plausible explanations are that social comparison with coworkers is natural and unavoidable (Wheeler & Miyake, 1992) for any employee regardless of social comparisons orientation, or that the workplace offers favorable conditions (Lane, Gibbons, Gerrard, Blanton, & Buunk, 2003; Taylor & Lobel, 1989) to trigger active comparisons. This question deserves to be further explored, as it implies that social comparison may not be the only mechanism explaining reactions to a deviant coworker.

Contrary to expectations, neither coworkers' salience nor organizational identification affected employees' reactions to a perceived deviant. Whereas organizational identification was a relatively distant proxy for coworkers' relevance in the first sample, for the second sample a

specifically developed measure was used to tap coworkers' salience. Coworkers' salience or workplace centrality may have influenced employees' interpretations of the environment in a more complex manner than expected. For example, employees with the least interest in their workplace may not view their coworkers as relevant (as hypothesized), but employees with the most interest in work interactions and organizational outcomes may adjust their reactions to defend or justify a deviant coworker. Thus, employees with the least and most vested interest may react in the same manner.

*A Bad Apple Spoils the Barrel: A Deviant Employee and Work Unit Cohesiveness*

Contrary to the predictions, the presence of a deviant employee was consistently associated with lower work unit cohesiveness for both samples and across both levels of analyses, individual and group. Despite the suggestions of sociology that a deviant can serve as a common enemy to unite others (Durkheim, 1938, 1895; Tittle & Paternoster, 2000), the findings here are more consistent with research on small groups (Coser, 1962; Kelley & Thibaut, 1954). Small groups involve both immediate interactions and some degree of dependence among members, which evokes different cognitions than shared identification with a social formation or a collective entity (i.e., workplace, organization, profession). In the latter case, the deviant is easily rejected and degraded to protect the collective identity, but in the former such rejection may be a source of discomfort or threaten the positive view of the group. Along these lines, the findings imply that immediate interactions with the deviant, rather than belonging to a common collective entity (i.e., organization, profession), are what matters in interactions with a perceived deviant.

Whereas the attachment of the deviant label can be an individual cognitive process, a confirmation from coworkers would make the label more salient. Perceived agreement about



having a deviant was found to intensify the effect of the label only in the second sample. This is not surprising, given that most respondents (across samples) were convinced that their convictions about the deviant were shared by coworkers (see Figure 5). Detection of the moderating effect was further restricted because perceived agreement was assessed only by a one item scale. The effect of objective agreement, on the other hand, was radically different in the two samples. In the first sample, high levels of agreement about both having and not having a deviant were associated with improved cohesiveness. As Figure 4 illustrates, there is some evidence that a deviant may become a uniting factor in units when most members agree and jobs are more independent. However, the study design cannot rule out that strong, cohesive units are more likely to agree about everything, including a deviant member (i.e., reverse causality). Moreover, the findings in the second sample did not confirm this finding and were actually significant in the opposite direction. These latter results pose a puzzling question that has to be addressed by future research.

Furthermore, social well-being, depicted by social acceptance and social actualization, was also found to be negatively associated with the presence of a deviant. Questions about the qualities of coworkers and the organization were designed to reflect the self-assessment of individual social health in the organization. I suspect, however, that the measure is actually tapping environmental characteristics rather than individual self-perceptions. In this way, coworkers and the workplace are evaluated more negatively after employees are sensitized to the deviant coworker. These findings are further evidence that the presence of a deviant is associated with negative perceptions about coworkers (i.e., social acceptance) and the organization (i.e., social actualization).

In sum, a deviant coworker is associated with a more negative view of the workplace. This effect is even further intensified for employees with more interdependent jobs, which require more active interactions among coworkers.

### Limitations

Some other limitations, beside the ones already mentioned, deserve attention. The study design and the data characteristics (i.e., statistical aspects) also can restrict the ability to detect relationships.

#### *Study Design and Data Collection Procedure*

Although the measures and procedures were carefully devised and pretested, the survey design used for the study inherently limits the ability to draw causal conclusions. This is particularly relevant to the case of unit cohesiveness, given that a cohesive group may act differently toward a deviant, including limiting the construction of such labels, covering-up for having a deviant, or promptly expelling the deviant (Coser, 1962). Although the extensive pretesting of all measures did not detect questions that are particularly susceptible to social desirability, the main threat for the results still remains the sensitive nature of the research questions. Respondents may willingly or unwillingly distort their responses in more socially desirable ways. This also increased the number of people who chose not to respond to the survey or not to respond to “the presence of a deviant” scale. In the second data collection, some participants (4 respondents; 2 %) even cut off the identification number and did not answer any questions that might even remotely identify them (i.e., gender, tenure).

Whereas self-report was the best way to capture self-evaluation or perceptions about a deviant coworker, some variables could be better measured from sources other than self-report.

The limited access to employees posed another group of challenges, such as generating only cross-sectional data and not being able to approach participants personally. Personal access of a facilitator for the first data collection proved to gather more complete data related to the deviant.

This data collection procedure did not allow a true comparison between respondents and non-respondents, but I still initiated some steps in this direction. For the first sample, I collected personality variables (such as agreeableness, neuroticism) and their statistical characteristics (i.e., distribution) were approximately normal, which signifies that the sample is not much different than the general population. For the second sample, the sample demographics were not different than the average employee demographics in the organization. Additionally, I compared early to late respondents and no apparent differences were observed<sup>6</sup>.

Further comparison between the responses of the two samples revealed several inconsistencies in the data raising concerns about the generalizability of the current findings. On the other hand, having two data collection procedures provides additional confidence in the consistent results (i.e., those findings parallel across the samples) and generates questions for future research.

#### *Statistical Limitations and Data Restrictions*

Although related to the research design, the nature of the data presents its own set of challenges for both finding significant relationships and data interpretation. Several issues deserve to be addressed. First, some variables had range restrictions, along with skewed distributions, leading to smaller variance and a lower probability of detecting significant results. Such was the case with job interdependence and cohesiveness. Despite extra care to include

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<sup>6</sup> This analysis was done based on the day the surveys were returned with a lag of one day. For the surveys returned by regular mail, the stamped date was considered with a lag of one day. This analysis has to be interpreted with caution because I had no exact date when respondents received the surveys.

diverse jobs in the first sample, the majority of respondents felt that their jobs were highly dependent on their coworkers, which coincided with the respective supervisor's report.

A unique challenge for detecting moderated effects is presented by the main independent variable (i.e., the presence of a deviant). In particular, regression has low power in detecting moderating effects for a dichotomous variable (Aguinis, Beaty, Boik, & Pierce, 2005). Although the presence of a deviant is not the conceptual moderator, estimating the moderating effect with dichotomous independent variables is statistically equivalent. This is another probable reason for not finding the significant moderation of job interdependence and social comparison.

Furthermore, the second sample was relatively smaller, which probably explains the fewer significant relationships in this sample. As this study is a first step towards learning about reactions to labeled deviant coworkers, the presented models are relatively limited and do not control for all possible explanations. More individual and situational factors should be tested in future studies to rule out a larger number of rival explanations.

## Implications

### *Theoretical Implications*

The current inquiry offers several contributions to the study of deviance in work organizations. First, it initiates an interesting debate about how employees interpret and react to deviant instances such as individuals and behaviors. Conventionally regarded as negative, deviance may have the potential to offer some benefits for employees. This is particularly important, given that deviance occurs naturally and inevitably in organizations (Durkheim, 1938, 1895; Tittle, 2000). The study also confirmed some findings from sociology and social psychology, and further provided evidence that interactions in organizational context likely

resemble those suggested by social psychology (Coser, 1962; Postmes et al., 2001) – rather than as suggested in sociology (Becker, 1963; Durkheim, 1938, 1895; Erikson, 1966). Furthermore, organizational identity or abstract identification with coworkers may not play as vivid a role as other social identities. Third, I emphasized the distinction between “deviant individual” and “deviant behavior” by bringing the labeling perspective of deviance to work organizations (Becker, 1963; Dentler & Erikson, 1975). Labeling is used as a possible way observers deal with challenges created by wrongdoers and outcasts. Thus, thinking about organizational deviance is broadened by a new perspective borrowed from sociology.

Fourth, whereas the study did not find support for the “common enemy” idea as intended, the findings were consistent with the similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971; Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). This is further evidence that similarity and liking is more vital for workplace interactions than dissimilarity and repulsion (Rosenbaum, 1986b, 1986a). However, some inconsistencies in the results across the samples lead to suggestions for future research. Finally, I recognized the cognitive and emotional mechanisms that may underlie individual reactions to a deviant, such as labeling, peer derogation, social comparison, and vicarious learning. Although future research has to untangle how these mechanisms work, this study was a step towards learning about the complex reactions of individuals who encounter perceived violators.

### *Methodological Implications*

Although not specifically hypothesized, the study revealed some important methodological aspects of the study of deviant coworkers. Apparently, employees are even more sensitive about reporting about their coworkers, than about reporting their own deviant behaviors. In the second data collection, 16 (8.3%) respondents returned completed surveys and

intentionally omitted any report of a deviant coworker. Whereas the findings provide abundant evidence that the presence of a deviant is not an isolated occurrence, several surveys contained comments such as “I would be a bad person if I answer these questions” or “You must be kidding me,” referring to the questions about a deviant coworker.

Comparing the reports from the two data collections also provided some interesting insights. Using trustworthy facilitators (in sample one) appeared to be less threatening for respondents and put them at ease for sharing more information about their non-normative coworkers. Furthermore, giving respondents the option to send the survey via regular mail directly to the researcher (in sample two) was also helpful. More individuals who reported the presence of a deviant chose to use the regular mail. This simple comparison revealed that the procedure for collecting data about deviant individuals is critical not only to protect participants but also to generate valid data. Anonymous surveys, creating trust in participants, or taking the data collection away from the workplace might be some of the steps to obtain accurate data about sensitive issues such as coworkers’ deviance.

### *Managerial Implications*

Similarly to the study of sociology (Durkheim, 1938, 1895; Tittle & Paternoster, 2000) that depicts deviance as inevitable and necessary, management practices have yet to acknowledge any potential benefits of rule-breakers and violators. I refrain from suggesting that antisocial and harmful behaviors can have positive consequences, instead insisting on attention to the natural dynamics of the workplace and the functional role of negative individuals. Traditional beliefs -- that only compliant employees populate organizations -- are rather naïve. A more realistic and balanced perspective on work dynamics might produce better managerial practices.

Because employees often see coworkers as deviant and experience associated effects, administrative practices should consider and adequately respond to interactions between deviant and non-deviant individuals in the workplace. Making decisions based on social cues can be a dangerous practice. Perceived dissimilarity may lead to the attachment of a deviant label and evoke attributions of norm violation, which may extend to group routines and performance standards.

Furthermore, the presence of a norm breaker challenges the routines or established “ways to do things around here.” Similar to the pain in the human body that serves to inform and regulate normal physiology (Durkheim, 1938, 1895), a deviant may expose emerging routinization or inflexibility in the organization. In this way, a rule-breaker or seemingly dissimilar employee can function as a regulator of natural workplace dynamics. Furthermore, identifying the deviating member effectively denotes the moral boundaries of the work group (Erickson, 1966) by illustrating the inappropriate conduct in the setting, especially in a socially complex work context.

### Future Research

This study began an intriguing debate about the potential benefits of having deviants in the workplace. Along with the findings and contributions, several questions were opened for future research. First, the mechanisms that create the deviant label need to be thoroughly investigated. Second, future research needs to establish whether the presence of a deviant is a dichotomous phenomenon or whether there is a degree of a deviant’s presence. If the presence of a deviant can be conceptualized as a continuous variable, then research should identify the factors that determine a higher degree as opposed to a lower degree of the deviant’s presence.

One such factor can be the type of violation that determines the deviant – antisocial, counterproductive, or simply dissimilar.

Another such factor can be the number of deviants with whom observers interact and to whom they react. This can determine how the overall norms are created and interpreted in organization. There might be a “breaking point” that alters observers’ perceptions of wrongfulness and beyond which employees perceive that a violating behavior or person becomes normative and ceases to seem deviant for coworkers. Such a boundary can be determined by the number of individuals engaging in the violating behavior or by the severity of the perceived violation.

Third, the complexity of social interactions calls for investigating multiple moderating factors for employee reactions to the deviant. Dispositional traits of observers are likely to determine the construction of deviants and reactions to them. Individuals tend to interpret social interactions differently. Some individuals may see the world very positively and others very negatively, and some individuals may see or create an enemy everywhere. Fourth, the reaction to a deviant coworker is probably influenced by how management handles the deviant and his or her behaviors, including disciplinary or shielding actions. Another factor that may influence individual and group reactions is the relative or absolute hierarchical status of the deviant.

Fifth, the overall organizational climate and the nature of organizational politics can also intensify or dampen the social construction processes and associated reactions. Finally, future research should consider testing the hypotheses with experimental or longitudinal designs that allow drawing causal conclusions and an assessment of the role of time on the effects of a present deviant coworker. Overall, conceptual and methodological challenges are promising for fruitful future research.



## Conclusion

Research in recent decades has taken a more humane view of organizational members. Employees are regarded in the full array of possible human behaviors, including destructive acts, irrational emotions, and volatile attitudes. This mode of managerial science acknowledges the complexity of human beings -- not only their skills and knowledge, but also their normative beliefs and affective expressions. It became necessary to recognize and manage inevitable processes in work groups to avoid tension, distrust, and alienation in the workplace. The subject has gained additional importance given increasing ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural diversity in organizations.

This study is an illustration that any organizational phenomenon may be associated with both positive and negative effects. Employees may experience enhanced self-evaluation but lower cohesiveness with coworkers in the presence of a deviant. Whether any advantage is gained may depend on specific conditions. For example, it appears that employees can have a better role understanding in the presence of a deviant coworker only if jobs are perceived as more interdependent. Thus the debate about whether the “rotten apple” is a “plague” for organizations does not have a simple answer and might be a matter of interpretation.

**APPENDIX A.**  
**TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 1a. Descriptive Statistics and Zero- Order Correlations of the Variables (Sample 1).

<i>Variables</i> <sup>a</sup>	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Self-Evaluation	5.67	.94	(.67)												
2. Social Integration	5.56	1.06	.32	(.91)											
3. Social Acceptance	5.56	1.06	-.04	.45	(.87)										
4. Social Actualization	4.93	1.29	-.03	.44	.39	(.90)									
5. Role Clarity	5.80	.96	.26	.45	.35	.37	(.84)								
6. Cohesiveness	6.21	1.98	.24	.41	.32	.20	.22	(.82)							
7. Deviant Presence	.56	.50	.16	-.02	-.22	-.15	-.03	-.03	n/a						
8. Organizational Deviant <sup>b</sup>	3.00	.92	.05	.03	-.14	-.06	.01	-.02	- <sup>c</sup>	(.84)					
9. Interpersonal Deviant <sup>b</sup>	3.16	1.18	.00	-.04	-.16	-.11	-.10	-.07	-	.43	(.86)				
10. Dissimilar Deviant <sup>b</sup>	3.46	1.12	.05	.15	.02	.00	.08	.07	-	.38	.39	(.85)			
11. Social Comparison Orientation	4.13	.98	.19	.03	-.07	-.01	-.07	.14	.07	-.08	-.08	.04	(.83)		
12. Job Interdependence	4.65	1.02	.27	.27	.04	.20	.10	.16	.08	.05	.04	.02	.15	(.65)	
13. Job Interdependence (supervisor)	4.82	.77	.19	.15	-.01	.14	.10	.34	.10	-.01	-.01	-.04	.13	.66	(.75)
14. Gender	.64	.48	-.05	.02	.11	.03	.03	.04	.01	-.04	.10	.05	-.02	.00	.01
15. Experience	12.76	11.34	-.02	.11	.11	.20	.05	-.13	.00	-.05	.02	.02	-.15	-.03	-.10
16. Tenure	4.49	5.54	.06	.10	.13	.11	.06	-.08	.02	-.11	.00	.01	-.09	.00	-.08
17. Perceived Agreement	4.07	.84	.12	.33	.18	.17	.13	.06	.05	.24	.28	.31	.03	.15	.10
18. Organizational Identification	3.30	.87	-.02	.40	.24	.67	.19	.35	-.08	.05	-.07	.10	.06	.18	.23
19. Dispositional Self-Evaluation	3.88	.54	.16	.22	.16	.20	.29	.16	-.01	.01	.05	.01	-.20	.04	.02
20. Aggregated Deviant Presence	.56	.27	.18	-.04	-.19	-.14	.02	.06	.55	-.06	.01	-.03	.10	.11	.19
21. Aggregated Cohesiveness	.74	.10	.03	.31	.37	.24	.19	.43	-.15	.07	-.08	.04	.02	.14	.17
22. Objective Agreement	.46	.32	.10	.07	.00	-.01	.04	.11	.13	-.07	-.02	-.01	.04	.04	.16
23. Respondents per Unit	6.50	2.28	.12	.11	.03	.06	.05	.40	-.01	-.06	.04	.01	.06	.17	.33

<sup>a</sup> N=643, values above .08 are significant at .05 and values above .11 are significant at .01, two tail test; reliabilities placed on the diagonal in brackets.

<sup>b</sup> N=359, values above .09 are at .05 and values above .14 are significant at .01, two tail test.

<sup>c</sup> Organizational, interpersonal, and dissimilar deviant scores are calculated only for affirmative responses about a deviant's presence.

Table 1a cont. Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations of the Variables (Sample 1).

<i>Variables</i>	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
14. Gender	-								
15. Experience	.05	-							
16. Tenure	.00	-.57	-						
17. Perceived Agreement	.13	-.02	.08	-					
18. Organizational Identification	.05	.27	.12	.03	(.93)				
19. Dispositional Self-Evaluation	-.11	-.09	-.13	.12	.06	(.78)			
20. Aggregated Deviant Presence	.02	-.01	.01	.14	-.17	-.06	-		
21. Aggregated Cohesiveness	-.01	-.09	-.06	.00	.29	.11	-.26	-	
22. Objective Agreement	-.08	-.02	-.01	.09	.04	.08	.23	.13	-
23. Respondents per Unit	.04	-.08	-.11	-.12	.04	.04	-.03	.05	-.14

Table 1b. Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations of the Variables (Sample 2).

<i>Variables</i> <sup>a</sup>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
1. Self-Evaluation	5.97	0.77	(0.86)													
2. Social Integration	5.76	0.97	.33	(0.87)												
3. Social Acceptance	5.88	1.13	-.16	.24	(0.87)											
4. Social Actualization	5.05	1.34	.14	.56	.50	(0.90)										
5. Role Clarity	5.84	0.90	.18	.35	.31	.45	(0.80)									
6. Cohesiveness	5.06	1.13	.04	.45	.60	.60	.41	(0.80)								
7. Deviant Presence	0.52	0.50	.17	-.07	-.25	-.33	-.10	-.28	-							
8. Organizational Deviant <sup>b</sup>	2.89	0.92	.15	.19	.11	.15	.12	.19	-. <sup>c</sup>	(0.79)						
9. Interpersonal Deviant	2.86	1.07	-.01	.07	.05	.09	.16	-.02	-	.34	(0.81)					
10. Dissimilar Deviant	2.93	1.04	.04	.27	.01	-.01	.10	.09	-	.19	.27	(0.72)				
11. Social Comparison Orientation	3.46	1.31	.10	.08	-.10	.08	.01	.04	.11	-.07	-.11	.03	(0.87)			
12. Job Interdependence	4.03	1.06	.01	.18	.08	.19	-.02	.24	-.08	.12	-.06	-.04	.13	(0.76)		
13. Coworker Salience	4.86	1.32	.05	.51	.37	.46	.19	.49	-.21	.17	.00	.06	.21	.30	(0.92)	
14. Gender	0.72	0.45	.20	.04	-.02	.02	.18	-.05	.05	-.04	.11	-.01	-.11	-.25	-.02	
15. Experience	16.67	12.26	-.03	.11	.21	.12	.10	.12	-.21	.18	.07	.20	-.19	.02	.27	
16. Tenure	5.89	6.53	-.06	.09	.06	.08	.09	.07	-.11	.06	.13	.28	-.16	.06	.14	
17. Core Self-Evaluation	5.45	0.82	.14	.29	.25	.32	.36	.18	.01	.10	.17	-.01	-.16	-.10	.02	
18. Aggregated Cohesiveness	5.02	0.65	.05	.34	.32	.42	.21	.58	-.19	.10	-.21	-.03	-.02	.20	.31	
19. Aggregated Deviant Presence	0.51	0.29	.09	-.09	-.22	-.19	-.03	-.18	.57	-.12	-.09	-.04	.12	.01	-.15	
20. Aggregated Job Interdependence	3.98	0.53	.05	.15	.09	.23	.08	.24	.01	.11	.05	.08	.14	.49	.15	
21. Respondents per Unit	6.65	3.99	.01	.20	.08	.14	.15	.20	-.08	.08	.12	.03	.09	.12	.19	

<sup>a</sup> N=176, values above .10 are significant at .05 and values above .14 are significant at .01, two tail test; reliabilities placed on the diagonal in brackets.

<sup>b</sup> N=85, values above .11 are at .05 and values above .14 are significant at .01, two tail test.

<sup>c</sup> Organizational, interpersonal, and dissimilar deviant scores are calculated only for affirmative responses about a deviant's presence.

Table 1b cont. Descriptive Statistics and Zero- Order Correlations of the Variables (Sample 2).

	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
14. Gender	-						
15. Experience	-.09	-					
16. Tenure	.05	.47	-				
17. Core Self-Evaluation	.02	.11	.03	(.81)			
18. Aggregated Cohesiveness	-.08	.04	-.06	.18	-		
19. Aggregated Deviant Presence	.00	-.21	-.07	.04	-.32	-	
20. Aggregated Job Interdependence	-.10	.03	.08	.02	.41	.02	-
21. Respondents per Unit	-.12	.17	.08	.14	.35	-.15	0.25

Table 2a. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Self-Evaluation and Workplace Social Well-Being (Sample 1).

<i>Variables</i> <sup>a</sup>	Sample 1							
	Self-Evaluation		Workplace Social Well-Being					
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	Integration		Acceptance		Actualization	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	3.68 (.39)**		2.17*** (.42)		3.56*** (.44)		2.17*** (.36)	
Gender	-.03 (.10)	-.02	-.01 (.10)	-.01	.40*** (.11)	.18	.05 (.09)	.02
Experience	.00 (.01)	-.03	.00 (.01)	.02	.00 (.01)	.04	.01 (.01)	.08
Tenure	.04*** (.01)	.19	.02* (.01)	.11	.01 (.01)	.05	-.01 (.01)	-.04
Dispositional Self-Evaluation	.41*** (.09)	.22	.76*** (.10)	.36	.47*** (.11)	.22	.66*** (.09)	.28
Social Comparison Orientation	.20** (.07)	.20	.10 (.08)	.09	-.01 (.08)	-.01	.00 (.07)	.00
Organizational Identity	-.04 (.07)	-.04	.37** (.08)	.33	.27*** (.08)	.24	.72*** (.07)	.58
Deviant Presence	.33*** (.10)	.17	.00 (.10)	.00	-.49*** (.11)	-.22	-.08 (.09)	-.03
Deviant x Social Comparison Orientation	.02 (.10)	.02	.03 (.11)	.02	-.07 (.11)	-.04	.13 (.09)	.08
Deviant x Org. Identity	.00 (.10)	.00	-.04 (.11)	-.02	-.06 (.11)	-.04	.08 (.09)	.04
F	6.02***		13.63***		9.96***		47.46***	
R	.37		.51		.45		.74	
R <sup>2</sup>	.13		.26		.20		.55	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.11		.24		.18		.54	
F Change Deviant Presence	11.75**		.00		21.09		.73	
F Change Interactions	.03		.09		.36		1.42	

<sup>a</sup> N=538; supervisors were excluded from this analysis.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Table 2b. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Self-Evaluation and Workplace Social Well-Being (Sample 2).

<i>Variables</i>	Sample 2							
	Self-Evaluation		Workplace Social Well-Being					
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	Integration		Acceptance		Actualization	
		<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	
(Constant)	4.90*** (.46)		3.67*** (.49)		4.58*** (.61)		2.28*** (.70)	
Gender	.13 (.14)	.08	.21 (.16)	.10	.06 (.19)	.02	.14 (.22)	.05
Experience	.01 (.01)	.11	.00 (.01)	-.04	.00 (.01)	.01	.00 (.01)	-.01
Tenure	.00 (.01)	-.02	.01 (.01)	.06	-.01 (.01)	-.07	.00 (.02)	.00
Dispositional Self-Evaluation	.13* (.08)	.15	.36*** (.08)	.30	.28** (.11)	.20	.53*** (.12)	.33
Coworkers' Saliency	.04 (.12)	.05	.47*** (.13)	.48	.55*** (.16)	.48	.64*** (.18)	.48
Social Comparison Orientation	-.04 (.11)	-.06	-.07 (.12)	-.07	-.28* (.14)	-.24	-.12 (.16)	-.09
Deviant Presence	.33** (.13)	.22	-.01 (.14)	-.01	-.41** (.17)	-.18	-.46** (.20)	-.17
Deviant X Coworkers' Saliency	-.15 (.14)	-.15	.04 (.15)	.03	-.11 (.19)	-.08	-.19 (.21)	-.11
Deviant X Social Comparison Orientation	-.02 (.14)	-.02	.11 (.15)	.09	.30 (.18)	.19	.35* (.21)	.20
F	2.16**		8.40***		5.94***		7.32***	
R	.36		.60		.54		.58	
R <sup>2</sup>	.13		.37		.29		.33	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.07		.32		.24		.29	
F Change Deviant Presence	5.68**		.01		6.03**		5.95**	
F Change Interactions	.93		.41		1.34		1.56	

<sup>a</sup> N=176

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test



Table 3. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Role Clarity.

	Sample 1		Sample 1		Sample 2	
	Role Clarity <sup>a</sup>		Role Clarity <sup>b</sup>		Role Clarity <sup>c</sup>	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	3.11*** (.36)		5.79*** (.10)		3.31*** (.51)	
Gender	.10* (.09)	.05	.08 (.09)	.04	.30* (.17)	.15
Experience	.01* (.01)	.09	.00 (.00)	.00	.00 (.01)	.06
Tenure	.02* (.01)	.09	.01 (.01)	.04	.00 (.01)	.00
Dispositional Self-Evaluation	.59*** (.09)	.32	.54*** (.10)	.32	.41*** (.09)	.38
Job Interdependence	-.04 (.07)	-.04	-.06 (.07)	-.06	.06 (.10)	.07
Deviant Presence	.08 (.09)	.04	-.09 (.09)	-.05	-.03 (.14)	-.02
Deviant x Job Interdependence	.24** (.09)	.18	.11 (.09)	.09	.01 (.15)	.01
F	10.02***		5.25***		3.79***	
R	.40		.35		.41	
R <sup>2</sup>	.16		.12		.17	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.14		.10		.12	
F Change Deviant Presence	.47		.17		.05	
F Change Interactions	6.66**		.12		.01	

<sup>a</sup> N=403, job interdependence self-reported.

<sup>b</sup> N=536, job interdependence reported by the supervisor.

<sup>c</sup> N=176, job interdependence self-reported.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Table 4. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Role Clarity When Predicted by Different Types of Deviants.

<i>Variables</i>	Role Clarity					
	Sample 1 <sup>a</sup>		Sample 1 <sup>b</sup>		Sample 2 <sup>c</sup>	
			<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	2.73***		3.24***		1.51***	
	(.66)		(.51)		(.93)	
Gender	.16*	.10	.16	.08	.29	.14
	(.14)		(.12)		(.23)	
Experience	.00	.00	.00	.02	-.02	-.18
	(.01)		(.01)		(.01)	
Tenure	-.01	-.06	-.01	-.04	.03	.18
	(.01)		(.01)		(.02)	
Dispositional Self-Evaluation	2.37***	.29	2.49***	.32	.58**	.49
	(.59)		(.44)		(.16)	
Job Interdependence	.25***	.26	.06	.07	.06	.07
	(.07)		(.06)		(.10)	
Organizational Deviant	-.09	-.09	.08	.07	.17	.16
	(.09)		(.07)		(.12)	
Interpersonal Deviant	-.12*	-.15	-.17**	-.18	.06	.07
	(.07)		(.05)		(.10)	
Dissimilar Deviant	.16*	.19	.09*	.11	.04	.03
	(.07)		(.06)		(.09)	
F	5.06**		5.70**		4.15***	
R	.45		.34		.56	
R <sup>2</sup>	.20		.14		.34	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.17		.12		.26	

<sup>a</sup> N=168, job interdependence self-reported.

<sup>b</sup> N=279, job interdependence reported by the supervisor.

<sup>c</sup> N=72, job interdependence self-reported.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Table 5. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Cohesiveness and Aggregated Cohesiveness Predicted by Individual Perceptions about the Presence of a Deviant.

<i>Variables</i> <sup>a</sup>	Sample 1						Sample 2			
	Cohesiveness <sup>a</sup>		Aggregated Cohesiveness <sup>b</sup>		Aggregated Cohesiveness <sup>c</sup>		Cohesiveness		Aggregated Cohesiveness <sup>d</sup>	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	.75*** (.02)		.77*** (.01)		.77*** (.01)		5.13*** (.25)		5.26*** (.17)	
Gender	.02 (.01)	.06	.00 (.01)	-.02	.00 (.01)	.00	.11 (.21)	.05	.05 (.14)	.04
Experience	.00 (.00)	.04	.00* (.00)	-.09	.00 (.00)	-.03	.01 (.01)	.07	.01 (.01)	.11
Tenure	.00 (.00)	-.05	.00 (.00)	-.04	.00 (.00)	-.01	.00 (.02)	-.01	-.01 (.01)	-.13
Job Interdependence	.03*** (.01)	.20	.01* (.01)	.11	.01** (.01)	.14	.22* (.13)	.19	.06 (.09)	.10
Deviant Presence	-.06*** (.01)	-.19	-.03*** (.01)	-.13	-.04*** (.01)	-.21	-.47** (.18)	-.21	-.26* (.12)	-.20
Deviant x Job Interdependence	-.01 (.01)	-.03	.00 (.01)	.02	.00 (.01)	.01	.17 (.18)	.11	.17 (.12)	.18
F	5.16***		4.65***		3.41***		3.42***		2.39*	
R	.26		.21		.25		.36		.35	
R <sup>2</sup>	.07		.05		.06		.13		.12	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.05		.04		.04		.09		.07	
F Change Deviant Presence	16.02***		1.62***		14.58***		6.29**		4.30*	
F Change Interaction	.19		.06		.01		.81		1.87	

<sup>a</sup> N=403, job interdependence self-reported.

<sup>b</sup> N=538, job interdependence reported by the supervisor, respondents from all work units included.

<sup>c</sup> N=515, only respondents from high agreement ( $r_{wg} > .70$ ) groups included, job interdependence reported by the supervisor.

<sup>d</sup> N=115, only respondents from high agreement ( $r_{wg} > .70$ ) groups included, job interdependence is self-reported.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Note: Non-standardized regression coefficients differ because z-score of cohesiveness was used in the tests for the first sample.

Table 6. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Aggregated Cohesiveness When Predicted by Aggregated Perceptions of the Presence of a Deviant.

<i>Variables</i> <sup>a</sup>	Aggregated Cohesiveness			
	Sample 1 <sup>a</sup>		Sample 2 <sup>b</sup>	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	.79*** (.08)		2.72*** (.46)	
Gender	.00 (.01)	.02	-.01 (.10)	-.01
Experience	.00 (.00)	.04	.00 (.00)	.03
Tenure	.00 (.00)	.04	-.01 (.01)	-.13
Job Interdependence	.04** (.01)	.39	.71*** (.01)	.49
Respondent per work unit	-.02* (.01)	-.12	.01 (.01)	.07
Deviant Presence aggregated	-.04*** (.01)	-.39	-.88*** (.18)	-.37
Deviant Presence x Job Interdependence	-.04* (.02)	-.30	.07 (.05)	.10
F	6.91***		6.91***	
R	.40		.67	
R <sup>2</sup>	.16		.44	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.14		.41	
F Change Deviant Presence	39.00***		31.43***	
F Change Interactions	3.87*		1.67*	

<sup>a</sup> N=515, only respondents from high agreement groups ( $r_{wg} > .70$ ) included, job interdependence reported by the supervisor.

<sup>b</sup> N=115, high agreement units ( $r_{wg} > .70$ ) included, job interdependence averaged for the work unit.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Table 7. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Cohesiveness When Predicted by Different Types of Deviants.

<i>Variables</i>	Cohesiveness			
	Sample 1 <sup>a</sup>		Sample 2 <sup>b</sup>	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	.71*** (.02)		3.54*** (.87)	
Gender	.04* (.02)	.12	-.11 (.33)	-.04
Experience	.00 (.00)	-.05	.01 (.01)	.13
Tenure	.00 (.00)	-.10	-.05 (.03)	-.19
Job Interdependence	.03** (.01)	.16	.01 (.13)	.01
Perceived Agreement about the Deviant	-.01 (.01)	-.05	.34** (.14)	.32
F	2.68**		2.11*	
R	.24		.38	
R <sup>2</sup>	.06		.14	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.04		.07	

<sup>a</sup> N=225, job interdependence self-reported.

<sup>b</sup> N=72, job interdependence self-reported.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Table 8. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Aggregated Cohesiveness When Predicted by Aggregated Perceptions of the Presence of a Deviant.

<i>Variables</i>	Aggregated Cohesiveness			
	Sample 1 <sup>a</sup>		Sample 2 <sup>b</sup>	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	$\beta$
(Constant)	.73*** (.08)		3.69*** (.42)	
Gender	.01 (.01)	.03	.00 (.10)	.00
Experience	.00 (.00)	.05	.00 (.00)	.02
Tenure	.00 (.00)	.03	-.01 (.01)	-.10
Job interdependence	.05*** (.01)	.51	.56*** (.12)	.32
Respondent per work unit	-.02 (.01)	-.09	-.01 (.01)	-.05
Deviant presence aggregated	-.04*** (.01)	-.40	-.66*** (.19)	-.29
Deviant presence x Job interdependence	-.05** (.02)	-.36	.12* (.05)	.18
Objective agreement about deviant	.03*** (.01)	.26	-.73*** (.23)	-.32
F	7.47***		12.94***	
R	.50		.70	
R <sup>2</sup>	.25		.49	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.21		.45	

<sup>a</sup> N=515, high agreement units ( $r_{wg} > .70$ ) included, cohesiveness scores standardized, job interdependence reported by the supervisor.

<sup>b</sup> N=115, high agreement units ( $r_{wg} > .70$ ) are included, job interdependence averaged for the work unit.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one tail-test

Table 8. Summary of the Hypotheses Testing.

<i>Independent Variables</i> (source)		Sample 1				Sample 2		
		Self-report	Self-report	Self-report Supervisor-reported job dependence	Cohesion aggregated Supervisor-reported job dependence Unit agreement averaged	Self-report	Self-report	Cohesion aggregated Job dependence & unit agreement averaged
<i>Dependent Variable</i>								
H1	Self-evaluation	<b>supported</b>				<b>supported</b>		
	Social well-being	partially opposite				partially opposite		
H1a	Self-evaluation	n.s.				n.s.		
	Social well-being	n.s.				<b>partially supported</b>		
H1b	Self-evaluation	n.s.				n.s.		
	Social well-being	n.s.						
H2	Role clarity		n.s.	n.s.			n.s.	
H2a	Role clarity		<b>supported</b>	n.s.			n.s.	
H2b	Role clarity		<b>partially supported</b>				n.s.	
H3	Cohesiveness perceived		opposite				opposite	
	Cohesiveness aggregated		opposite	opposite	Opposite		opposite	
H3a	Cohesiveness perceived		<b>supported</b>				n.s.	
	Cohesiveness aggregated		n.s.	n.s.	<b>Supported</b>		n.s.	
H3b	Cohesiveness perceived		n.s.				<b>supported</b>	
	Cohesiveness aggregated				<b>Supported</b>		opposite	

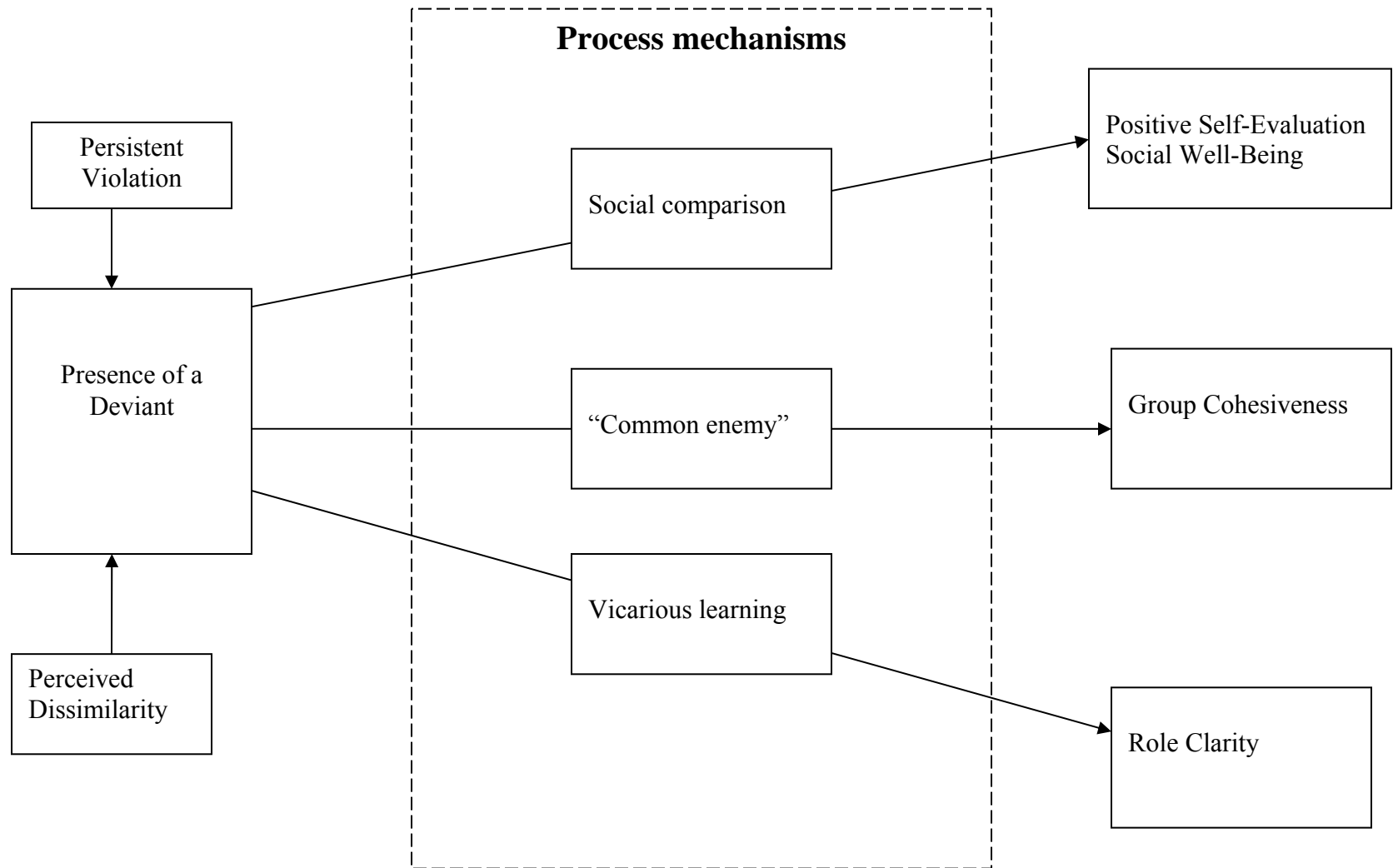


Figure 1a. A Model Illustrating the Process Mechanisms and Respective Effects for Other Employees in the Presence of a Deviant.



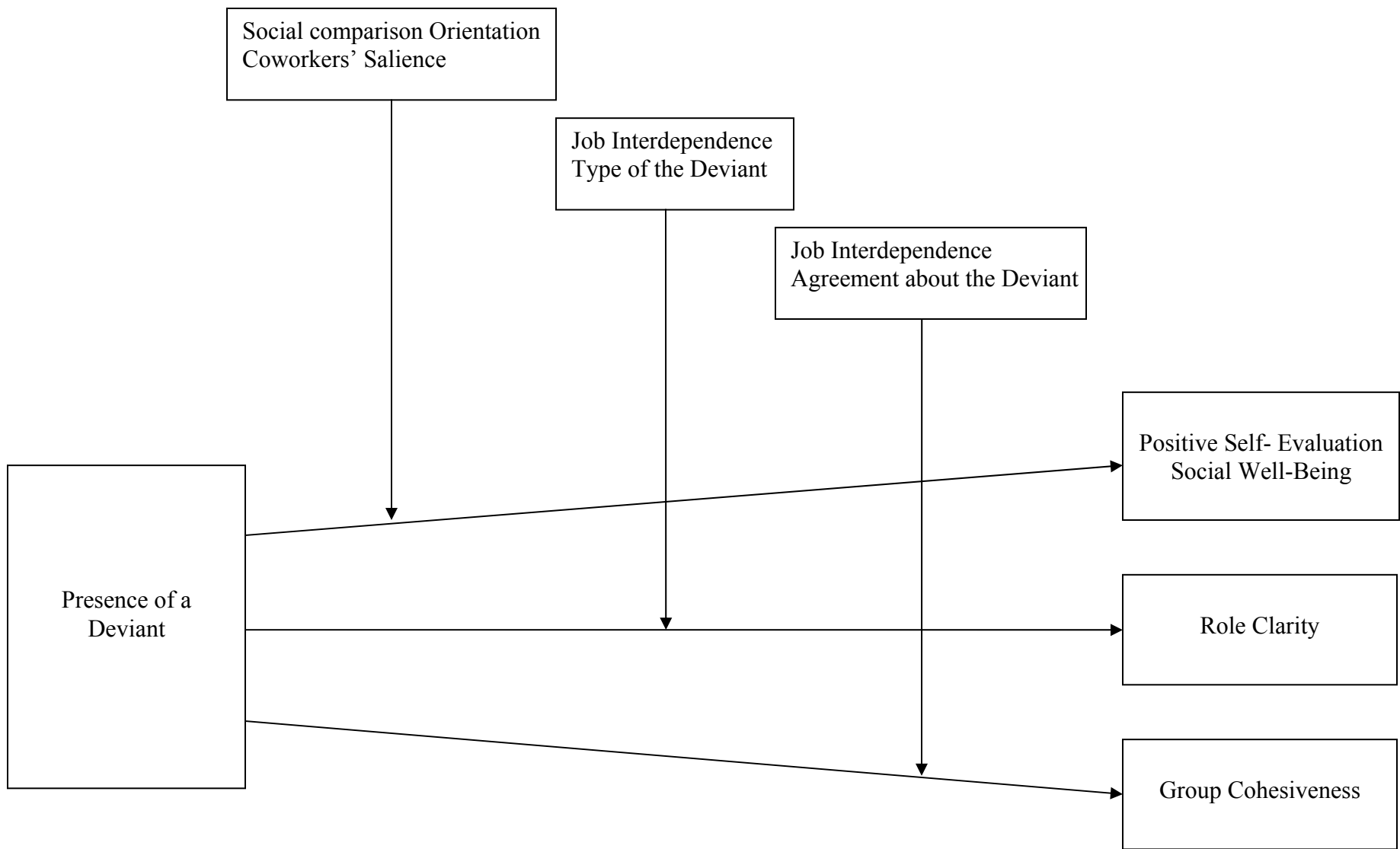


Figure 1b. A Model Illustrating the Hypothesized Main and Moderated Effects in the Study.

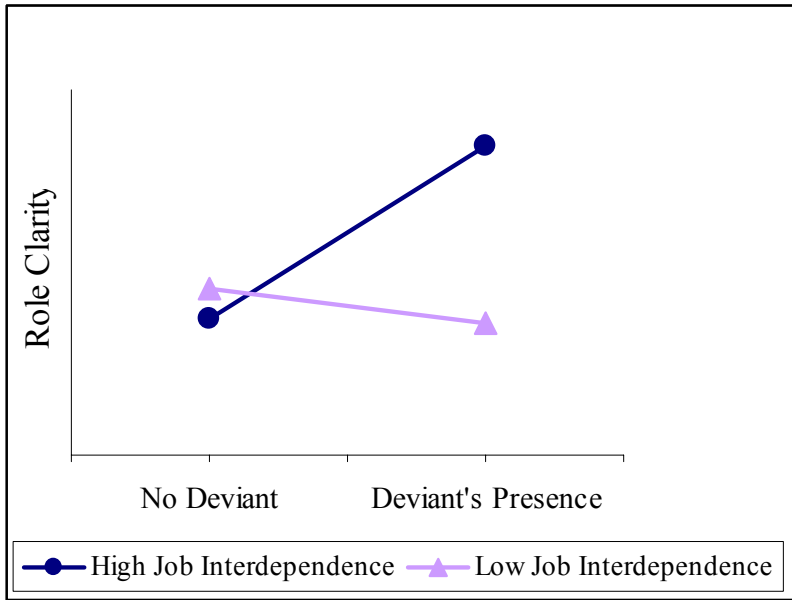


Figure 2. Illustration of the Moderating Effect of Job Interdependence (Sample 1).

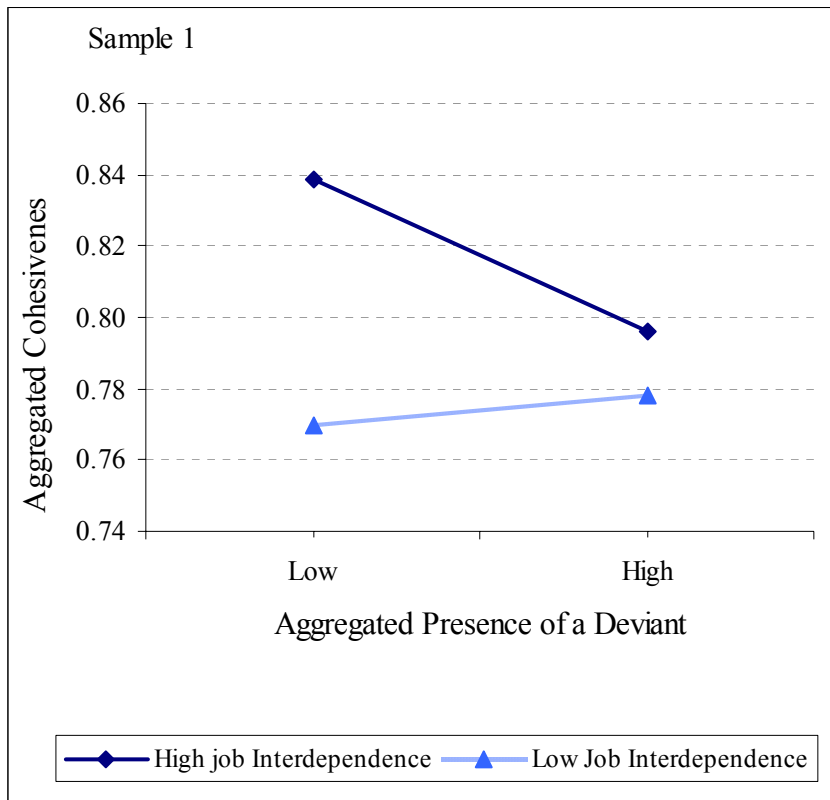


Figure 3. Illustration of the Moderating Effect of Job Interdependence on the Relationship between the Presence of a Deviant and Aggregated Cohesiveness.

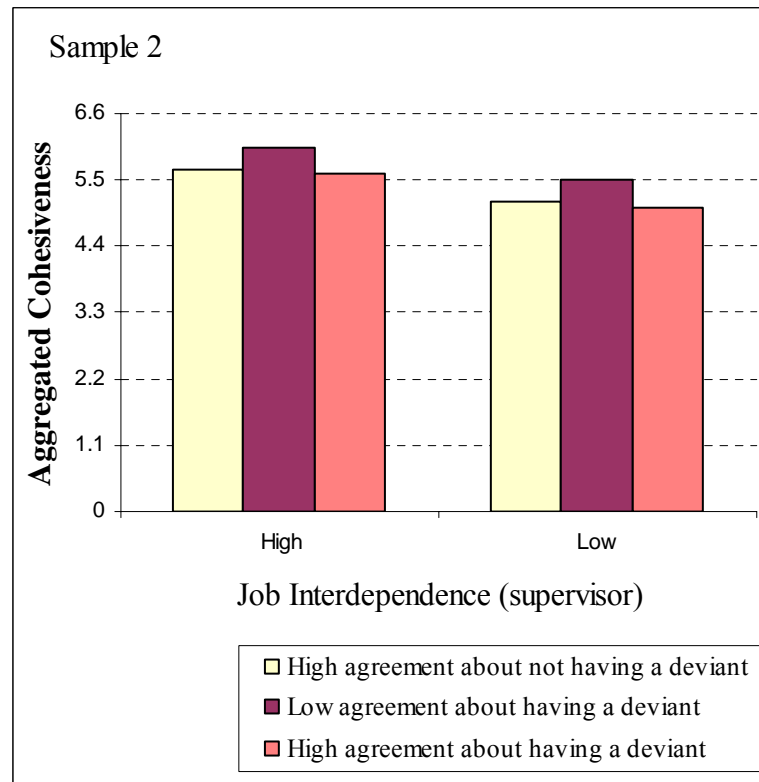
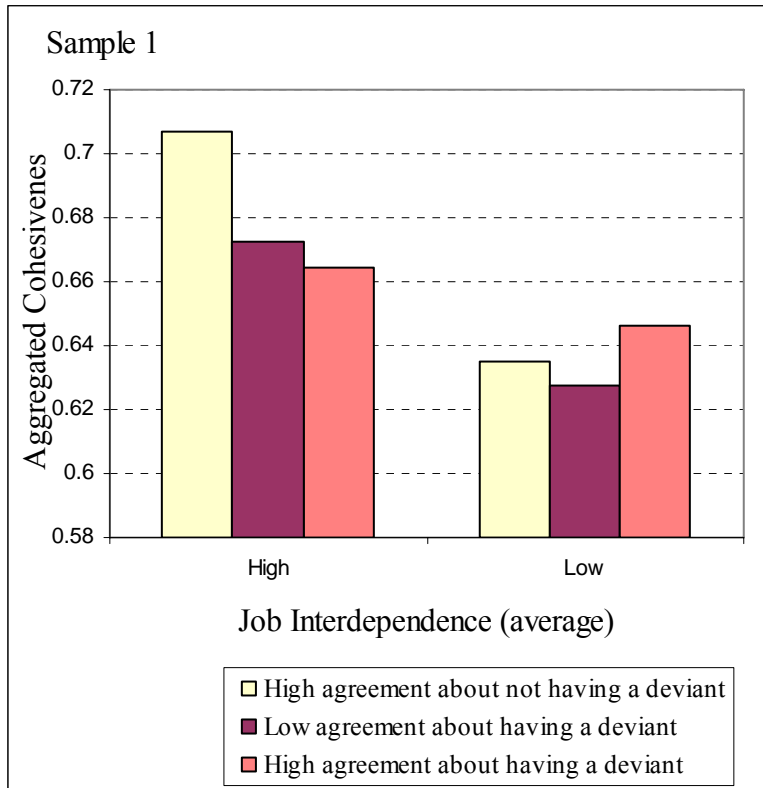


Figure 4. Illustration of the Moderating Effects of Job Interdependence and Objective Agreement on the Relationship between the Presence of a Deviant and Aggregated Cohesiveness.

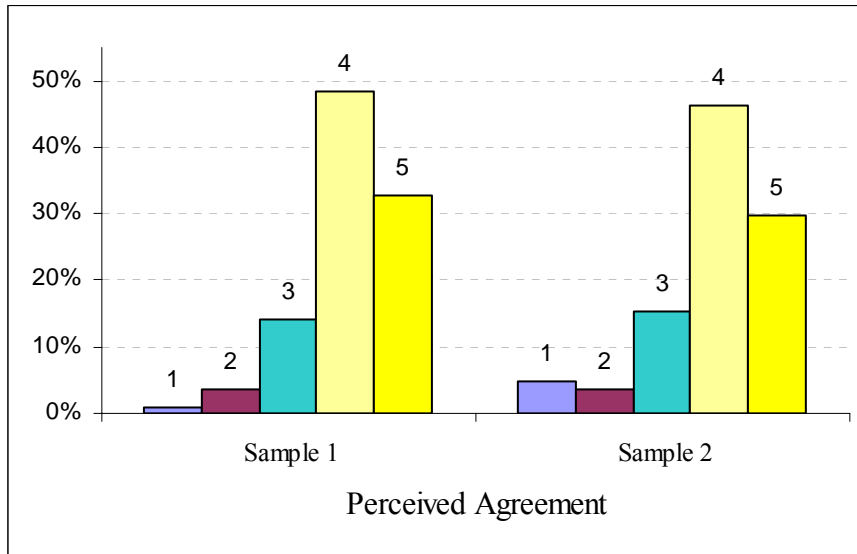


Figure 5. Illustration of the Distribution of Perceived Agreement.

**APPENDIX B.**

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL**



Office of Research & Commercialization

February 16, 2005

Gergana Markova  
College of Business  
PO Box 161400  
Orlando, FL 32816-1400

Ms. Gergana:

With reference to your protocol entitled, "Effects of Presence of a Deviant in Work Units" I am enclosing for your records the approved, expedited document of the UCFIRB Form you had submitted to our office.

Please be advised that this approval is given for one year. Should there be any addendums or administrative changes to the already approved protocol, they must also be submitted to the Board. Changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received. Adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur. Further, should there be a need to extend this protocol, a renewal form must be submitted for approval at least one month prior to the anniversary date of the most recent approval and is the responsibility of the investigator (UCF).

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 407-823-2901.

Please accept our best wishes for the success of your endeavors.

Cordially,

*Barbara Ward*

Barbara Ward, CIM  
IRB Coordinator

12443 Research Parkway • Suite 302 • Orlando, FL 32826-3252 • 407-823-3778 • Fax 407-823-3299

An Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Institution



This is a research study conducted by Gery Markova and Dr. Robert Folger from the Management Department of College of Business Administration at the University of Central Florida.

This process is called informed consent. Please read carefully the information below.

Participation in this study is **VOLUNTARY**. You may choose to participate or not to participate. You may also choose not to answer some questions. Completion of this questionnaire constitutes your informed consent.

If you are **under the age of 18**, you are not eligible to complete this questionnaire.

Your responses will be kept **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**. You are not asked to report your name or contact information. No manager or coworker will ever have access to your responses. Individual responses will never be reported. Responses of hundreds of employees will be combined before reported.

If you agree to participate, it will take about 15 minutes to respond to all questions. After you answer the questions, you can place the questionnaire in the self-addressed, prepaid envelope, and send it back to the researchers.

There are no risks or cost involved with the participation. You should know that management science relies on the good will of people like you who agree to share honestly workplace attitudes and experiences. We **TRULY** value your opinion.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, your participation, or results of the study, please contact Gery Markova at 407 823 1714 or [gmarkova@bus.ucf.edu](mailto:gmarkova@bus.ucf.edu).

Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF IRB office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research, 12443 Research Parkway, Suite 302, Orlando, FL 32828.

Thank you for participating in our study.

Sincerely,  
Gery Markova







THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

IRB Committee Approval Form

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Gergana Markova  
Robert Folger, Ph.D.

IRB #: 05-2361

PROJECT TITLE: Effects of Presence of a Deviant in Work Units

- New project submission
- Continuing review of lapsed project # \_\_\_\_\_
- Study expired \_\_\_\_\_
- Initial submission was approved by full board review but continuing review can be expedited
- Suspension of enrollment email sent to PI, entered on spreadsheet, administration notified \_\_\_\_\_
- Resubmission of lapsed project # \_\_\_\_\_
- Continuing review of # \_\_\_\_\_
- Initial submission was approved by expedited review

Chair

Expedited Approval  
 Dated: 28 Jan 2005  
 Cite how qualifies for expedited review: minimal risk and # 7

IRB Co-Chairs:

Signed:   
 Dr. Sophia Dziegielewski

Exempt  
 Dated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cite how qualifies for exempt status: minimal risk and \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dr. Jacqueline Byers

Expiration  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Waiver of documentation of consent approved
- Waiver of consent approved

APPROVED AS WRITTEN -  
 NOTES FROM IRB CHAIR (IF APPLICABLE): For the on-line survey how will the researcher know what organization will be represented. It does not appear that the researcher is collecting any demographic information, age, race, gender, etc. Not having this information may prove to be problematic in the analysis or in describing the sample. If this information is to be gathered an addendum will be needed. S.D. Dziegielewski



- Second, dependent on the type of access that the management allows, employees will be asked to participate in the study. The surveys will be distributed to employees in one of the following ways: during staff meetings, dropped off in their mailboxes, or individually asked to participate by the principal investigator.
- Third, the survey package will be accompanied with a letter that invites participation, explains the procedure and participants rights, and outlines the purpose of the study. It also emphasizes the importance of employee input for our research and the progress of management science.
- Finally, employees will be offered three routes to return the questionnaires to the principal investigator. First, they can mail it back using the enclosed prepaid envelope. Second, they can use the interoffice mail system of the university. Because the envelopes are not marked, this route will not jeopardize their privacy in any way. Third and finally, they can give it personally to the principal investigator.
- We will take the necessary steps to protect participants described below.
  - We will not ask about names or mark the surveys in any personally identifiable way. The only marking of the survey will be a unique number that indicates the workplace (i.e., department, unit) of the participant. This is necessary because this study requires a group level of analysis. Participants are asked a question about their profession and department but they have a choice not to respond to these questions.
  - The data are confidential and only researchers will ever have access to the individual responses. The results will be reported after all individual responses are aggregated.
  - Participants will also have an option to return the questionnaires directly to the investigators (a prepaid, self-addressed envelope will be provided).
  - All participants will be provided with the contact information of the principal investigator and the IRB coordinator should they have any concerns or questions. They can also request results of the study when it is completed.

---

SECTION BELOW - FOR UCF IRB USE ONLY

---

Approved     Disapproved

Full Board     Chair Expedited  
Designated Reviewer

IRB Chair Signature  
*Tracy R. Diehl*  
IRB Member/Designated Reviewer

Date  
*10/11/05*  
Date

**APPENDIX C.**

**DATA COLLECTION MATERIALS PRESENTED TO THE**

**PARTICIPANTS**

These materials were used to in the second data collection:



This is a research study conducted by Gery Markova and Dr. Robert Folger from the Management Department of College of Business Administration at the University of Central Florida.

This process is called informed consent. Please read carefully the information below.

Participation in this study is **VOLUNTARY**. You may choose to participate or not to participate. You may also choose not to answer some questions. Completion of this questionnaire constitutes your informed consent.

If you are **under the age of 18**, you are not eligible to complete this questionnaire.

Your responses will be kept **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**. You are not asked to report your name or contact information. No manager or coworker will ever have access to your responses. Individual responses will never be reported. Responses of hundreds of employees will be combined before reported.

If you agree to participate, it will take about 15 minutes to respond to all questions. After you answer the questions, you can place the questionnaire in the self-addressed, prepaid envelope, and send it back to the researchers.

There are no risks or cost involved with the participation. You should know that management science relies on the good will of people like you who agree to share honestly workplace attitudes and experiences. We **TRULY** value your opinion.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, your participation, or results of the study, please contact Gery Markova at 407 823 1714 or [gmarkova@bus.ucf.edu](mailto:gmarkova@bus.ucf.edu).

Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF IRB office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research, 12443 Research Parkway, Suite 202, Orlando, FL 32828.

Thank you for participating in our study.

Sincerely,  
Gery Markova

<b>Thinking about how work is done at YOUR WORKPLACE, please circle your response to the following questions:</b>	<b>1</b> <b>Very little</b>		<b>4</b> <b>Moderately</b>		<b>7</b> <b>A great deal</b>		
1. How much do you have to coordinate your work with others?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. How much of your job can you do by yourself?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. How much does your performance depend on cooperation with coworkers?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. How much do you rely on people from other units?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. How typical is it for you to finish a task started by a coworker?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. How typical is it for a coworker to finish a task started by you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. How much do you need your coworkers to successfully perform your job?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. To what extent are you independently responsible for your duties?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b>Thinking about YOUR COWORKERS, please circle how much you agree or disagree with the statements below:</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>			<b>Strongly agree</b>			
1. I care what my current coworkers think about me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. For my actions, I consider what my current coworkers will say.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I consider the group of my current coworkers to be one of the important groups to which I belong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I identify with my current coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I feel that I share similar values with my current coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I feel attached to my current coworkers because we share similar values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I feel a sense of belonging to my current coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b>Thinking about YOU, please circle how much you agree or disagree with the statements below:</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>			<b>Strongly agree</b>			
1. I often compare how my loved ones are doing with how others are doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I always pay a lot of attention to how I do things compared to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. If I want to find out how well I have done something, I compare with what others have done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I often compare my social skills and popularity with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am <i>not</i> the type of person who compares often with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I often compare myself with others with respect to what I have accomplished in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I often try to find out what others think who face similar problems as I face.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I always like to know what others in a similar situation would do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. If I want to learn more about something, I try to find out what others think about it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I <i>never</i> consider my situation in life relative to that of other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**It is quite common for any workplace to have an employee who is perceived as a negative person, jerk, a bad apple, dysfunctional, or simply disliked by other employees.**

Thinking about your workplace, can you point out a **coworker** who fits this description? **Yes / No**  
 (**Not** a manager, supervisor, or subordinate)

If so, please provide his/ her name or initials .....  
 What about **this person** fits the above description .....

Is this person a male or female? \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female

How long have you worked with this person? .....

If you said “**Yes**” above, please mark how much the following behaviors are **typical** for **this coworker**.  
 If you said “**No**” above, please mark how much the following behaviors **happen** in your workplace, referring to some coworkers but not to a particular one:

1            2            3            4            5  
 Not at all    A little    Somewhat    A lot      A great deal

Place the number that best corresponds to your response:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Behaves improperly for this workplace
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Persistently goes against what is considered to be right
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Visibly does not comply with company regulations
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Contributes little to the work unit performance
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Appears to be indifferent to the success of the work unit
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Withholds effort needed to achieve performance goals
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Behaves unethically to others
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Seems to be disrespectful to others
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Displays negative attitude toward others
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Is somehow different than the rest of us
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Behaves unlike the rest of us

Please respond to the following questions thinking about the <u>SAME</u> <u>COWORKER</u> as above. If you said “No” above, answer the questions with respect to <u>ANYONE</u> that may behave as listed above.	1	2	3	4	5
	Not at all	A little	Some what	A lot	A great deal
1. Would your coworkers agree with your opinion about this person?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Do you believe that this person is harmful for this workplace?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Would you rather <i>not</i> have this person around?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Do you feel you are a better person compared to this person?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Do you feel that you are more liked by others than this person?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Do you feel that you a better organizational citizen than this person?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Do you sometimes have fun because of this person?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Is it entertaining to have such a person around?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Does this person change the norms and expectations around here?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Has this person shown you some of the limits in this workplace?	1	2	3	4	5
11. Do you feel that you would never want to behave like this person?	1	2	3	4	5
12. Have you ever felt to be a victim of this person?	1	2	3	4	5

Are there other coworkers that fit this description? **Yes / No**; If yes, please provide their initials .....

<b>Thinking about your CURRENT WORKPLACE, please mark how much you agree with the statements below:</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
1. Compared to my coworkers, I am good in my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
2. I am one of the worst workers in the workplace.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
3. There are worse workers than me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
4. I am among the good employees in my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
5. I am a valuable employee for my employer.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
6. I feel like I am an important part of my workplace.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
7. I believe my coworkers value me as a person.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
8. I feel the respect of my coworkers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
9. I feel close to other people in my workplace.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
10. I have great relationships in the workplace.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
11. My coworkers are <i>not</i> trustworthy.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
12. My coworkers are unreliable.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
13. My coworkers live only for themselves.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
14. My coworkers are kind.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
15. My coworkers are self-centered.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
16. This organization is not improving for people like me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
17. This job contributes to my personal sense of well-being.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
18. This organization is continually evolving.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
19. This job position helps me to learn new things and ideas.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
20. This organization is a productive place to work in.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
21. This job enhances my identity as a professional.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
22. This organization is becoming a better place for everyone.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
23. My behavior facilitates other peoples' work in the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
24. I have something valuable to give to the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
25. My daily work does not produce anything valuable for my employer.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
26. I don't have time and energy to give much to this organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
27. My work provides an important product for this organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
28. I feel I have nothing important to contribute to the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
29. This organization is too complex for me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
30. Only managers can understand how this place works.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
31. I cannot make sense of what's going on in this workplace.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
32. I think it's worthwhile to understand the organization I work in.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
33. I find it hard to predict what will happen next in my organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
34. My coworkers get along well with each other.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
35. My coworkers stick together (e.g., remain close to each other).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
36. My coworkers socialize outside of work.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
37. My coworkers help each other.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
38. I would like to remain working with the same people in the future.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	



<b>Thinking about your current COWORKERS, please circle how much you agree with the statements below.</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>							<b>Strongly agree</b>						
1. I have personal relationship with my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Most of my coworkers spend personal time together (e.g., lunch, parties).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I actively interact with most of my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I talk with my coworkers quite a lot.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I spend a lot of time with my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. There are a lot of differences of opinion among my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. There is a lot of tension among in my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. People in my workplace never interfere with each other's work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Most people in my workplace get along with one another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Given the way my coworkers perform their roles I often feel frustrated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I find myself unhappy and in conflict with members of my group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. The coworkers I depend on to get my job done often let me down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I find myself in conflict with my coworkers because of their actions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. There is emotional conflict among my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I know exactly what is expected from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I know what my responsibilities are in the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Explanations are clear of what has to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I know what is inappropriate around here.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I don't know when my behavior will violate rules here.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I am not certain what might be considered improper.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I know what behavior will lead to the positive opinions of my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Please answer the following questions about YOU. This information is collected ONLY for descriptive purposes and it will NEVER be used to identify you.**

1. Gender:     \_\_\_ Male   \_\_\_ Female
2. Age:       \_\_\_ years
3. Race/Ethnicity: \_\_\_ African American; \_\_\_ Asian; \_\_\_ Caucasian; \_\_\_ Hispanic; Other \_\_\_\_\_
4. Education: \_\_\_ None; \_\_\_ High School; \_\_\_ Some College; \_\_\_ AA Degree; \_\_\_ Bachelor;
5. Work experience: \_\_\_ years   \_\_\_ months
6. Do you supervise other employees?       \_\_\_ No   \_\_\_ Yes
7. Is your current job important for your professional development?   \_\_\_ No   \_\_\_ Yes
8. Is your current job only a way to make some money or it is a career choice?  
                                   \_\_\_ Temporary way to make some money   \_\_\_ Career choice
9. Are you a part of a **work group** at your job?   \_\_\_ No   \_\_\_ Yes
10. Approximately how many coworkers are in your work unit?   \_\_\_
11. How long have you been in your current workplace?       \_\_\_ years   \_\_\_ months
12. How long have you worked with your current coworkers?   \_\_\_ years   \_\_\_ months
13. Job title: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Department: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Thinking about YOURSELF, please mark how much you agree with the statements below:</b>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree a little	Neutral	Agree a little	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. ___	I am confident I get the success I deserve in life.					
2. ___	Sometimes I feel depressed.					
3. ___	When I try, I generally succeed.					
4. ___	Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless.					
5. ___	I complete tasks successfully.					
6. ___	Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work.					
7. ___	Overall, I am satisfied with myself.					
8. ___	I am filled with doubts about my ability.					
9. ___	I decide what will happen in my life.					
10. ___	I do not feel in control of my success in my career.					
11. ___	I am capable of coping with most of my problems.					
12. ___	There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me.					

**APPENDIX D.**  
**PRE-TESTING PROCEDURES**

### Pre-testing Phase One

Eighty MBA students were asked to report whether a deviant is present in their workplaces. The sample consisted of 65% Caucasian (12.5 % Hispanics, 10,0% African-Americans, and 5.0% Asians), 57.5% females, and average age was 27 years. Only 26.3% reported supervisory responsibilities on the current job. The full time work experience ranged from five to twenty five years with average of 5.51 years. All participants were instructed to respond the questions in relation to their current job or the last job they occupied, in case they are not currently employed. The measure of a deviant's presence was developed in two formats. The first one started with a question whether (yes/no) there is a person considered as "negative, dysfunctional, bad apple, jerk" in the workplace, followed by a space to indicate the name or initials of this person, and a list of 18 descriptions to evaluate (from 1- "not at all" to 5- "a great deal") the extent to which these negative behaviors characterize the deviant.

The second version instructed participants simply to think about someone who is "negative, dysfunctional, bad apple, jerk" followed by the same 18 statements. This version, however, did not ask respondents either to indicate the presence of such a person or about his/her name. After the negative descriptions, the participants were asked whether they considered one and the same person while responding. As expected, the methodological differences produced different results. In the first case, participants were correctly primed to think about a particular person and characterize him or her. In the second case, they were primed to evaluate behaviors. Only 17.5% of the second-version respondents actually considered one and the same person. The results revealed that 79.5 % of the first-version participants indicated that there is a person who fits the description and majority of them provided initials (only 4 missing). A potential problem in studying negative behaviors in organizations is unwillingness of respondents to report or

distort responses in a socially desirable manner. Thus, during the debriefing I inquired how everyone felt about providing such information as name and initials of a colleague in a survey implemented in the workplace. Some respondents shared that they would feel very uncomfortable and probably leave this question blank, but others disagreed. The results of factor analyzing the descriptions of the deviant produced three clear types of a deviant which I named interpersonal, norm violator, and counterproductive (Table C.1). The three factors are moderately correlated, which means that respondents distinguish empirically among types of deviants.

Along with the independent variable measure, I pretested some of the dependent variables that were created for the study. Three items were developed to capture job self-evaluation in comparison with coworkers. The items loaded well together but produced a relatively low reliability ( $\alpha=.48$ ). Four items were suggested to capture how an individual feels as a result of communication with coworkers and five items were expected to capture self-evaluation of social standing in the workplace. All of these nine items cross-loaded on several factors creating a very unclear factor structure. After item analysis, some items were removed and thereby produced the structure shown in Table C.1. All the loadings were evaluated running additional EFA with all items that tap on self-evaluation, including the previously validated 3-item scale of well-being (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1995). Thus, three related factors were produced: self-evaluation, social well-being, and well-being. Scrutinizing the items' descriptives, however, revealed that items had a mean, mode, and median between 6 and 7, indicating a ceiling effect. Thus, a sample of MBA students apparently exhibits high self-evaluation and perception of well-being. Although this might be an explanation for this pretesting procedure results, similar behavior of the dependent variable in the real sample could preclude finding significant

relationships. This suggests the need for additional measures of how employees feel about themselves when encounter a deviant in the workplace. The measure of social well-being will be adapted to organizational context and further inspected in the second pretesting phase.

Table C.1. Results from EFA of the deviant's descriptions (N=39)

<i>Items</i>	Interpersonal Deviant	Counter- productive Deviant	Norm Violator
Deviates from the expectations of proper behavior			<b>.88</b>
Persistently goes against what is considered to be right			<b>.81</b>
Visibly does not comply with company regulations			<b>.85</b>
Contributes little to the work unit performance		<b>.90</b>	
Appears to be indifferent to the success of the work unit*		<b>.91</b>	
Behaves unethically to coworkers	<b>.86</b>		
Seems to be disrespectful to peers	<b>.98</b>		
Displays negative attitude toward others	<b>.86</b>		
Is somehow different than other coworkers**	.39	.60	
Behaves unlike others**	.43	.31	.42

Values suppressed at .2; Extraction method Principal Component Analysis, Oblimin Rotation with Kaiser Normalization

\* - one more item will be added to describe counterproductive deviant; \*\* - kept for conceptual reasons;

Table C.2. Reliability and correlation coefficients among the types of deviants

Factors	1	2	3
1. Norm Violator	<b>(.82)*</b>		
2. Counterproductive deviant	.29	<b>(.84)</b>	
3. Interpersonal deviant	.46	.31	<b>(.90)</b>

\* - reliabilities are placed on the diagonal

Table C.3. Remaining items after EFA for individual dependent variables (N= 80)

Factors	1	2	3
	$\alpha=.48$	$\alpha=.840$	$\alpha=.882$
<b>1. Self-evaluation</b>			
Compared to my coworkers, I am good in my job	<b>.760</b>		
I am one of the worst workers around	<b>.622</b>		
In my work unit, there are better workers than me	<b>.709</b>		
<b>2. Social well-being</b>			
I feel good about myself at work		<b>.62</b>	.34
My relationships with others are wonderful		<b>.76</b>	
I am a respected member of my work unit		<b>.92</b>	
I believe my coworkers like me		<b>.92</b>	
I feel the respect of my coworkers and supervisors		<b>.63</b>	
<b>3. Well-being</b>			
My current job position contributes to my personal sense of well-being			<b>.79</b>
My current job helps me to learn new things and ideas			<b>.96</b>
My current work unit enhances my identity as a professional			<b>.92</b>

Values suppressed at .2; Extraction method Principal Component Analysis, Oblimin Rotation with Kaiser Normalization



### Pretesting Phase Two

In a separate data collection, a group of ninety nine MBA students reported on the modified measure of the presence of a deviant. This group consisted of 46.5% females, average age 26.6 years (about 20% older than 30), 67.7% Caucasian (5.1% African Americans, 8.1 Hispanic, and 9.1 Asian), 76.8% are currently employed with average work experience of 5.3 years (ranges from months to 22 years) and average tenure 2.7 years. Based on the 87 responses who confirmed the presence of a deviant in their immediate workplace, factor analysis revealed four clear types of deviants, namely norm violator, interpersonal, counterproductive, and dissimilar. The factor loadings and reliability coefficients are reported in Table C.4. This pretesting provided enough evidence to allow the use of the measure for testing the hypothesis.

During the same data collection effort, measures of social well-being, social evaluation, self-evaluation, role understanding, proper conduct, bonding, and cohesion were included. The results of factor analyses, reliabilities, and descriptives are reported in Table C.6 and Table C.7. The EFA of the social well-being dimensions revealed that items appropriately load on four dimensions, namely, integration, acceptance, and actualization. Most of the dependent variables demonstrated acceptable levels of reliabilities and consistent loadings on expected dimension. The low reliability of self-evaluation scale (.51) motivates changes in the items to produce a more reliable measure for hypotheses testing. Role understanding and proper conduct clearly formed two factors with acceptable reliabilities (viz., .85 and .89). Similar to the first pretesting phase, composite variables demonstrated very high mean values (e.g., ceiling effects). This is understandable given that the pretesting sample consisted of MBA students. They are expected to be more ambitious and socially adequate in the workplace.

Table C.4. Deviants' types after EFA with imposed 4-factor constrain (N=87)

	Norm Violator Alpha .75	Counter- productive Alpha .74	Dissimilar Peer Alpha .66	Inter- personal Alpha .75
Deviates from the expectations of proper behavior	.55			
Persistently goes against what is considered to be right	.71			
Visibly does not comply with company regulations	.90			
Contributes little to the work unit performance		.71		
Appears to be indifferent to the success of the work unit		.89		
Withholds effort in achieving performance goals		.80		
Behaves unethically to coworkers	.48			.51
Seems to be disrespectful to peers				.91
Displays negative attitude toward others				.70
Is somehow different than other coworkers			.82	
Behaves unlike others			.89	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Table C.5. Correlations between deviants' factors (N=87)

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Norm Violator	(.75)*			
Counter-productive	-.23	(.74)		
Dissimilar Peer	.11	.02	(.66)	
Inter-personal	.32	-.07	.20	(.75)

\* - reliability coefficient alpha is place on the diagonal

Table C.6. Descriptives and reliabilities of the individual and group dependent variables

	Sample		Std.			
	Size	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Deviation	Reliability
Cohesion	40	1.60*	5.00	3.43	.97	.846
Bonding	40	1.75	6.25	4.33	1.19	.710
Social Self-Evaluation	35**	5.50	10.50	8.48	1.29	.758
Self-Evaluation	38	3.33	7.00	5.72	1.03	.507
Actualization	56	1.43	7.00	4.75	1.43	.913
Acceptance	59	2.17	7.00	5.49	1.17	.904
Integration	58	2.67	6.83	5.28	1.03	.902
Role Understating	39	1.33	7.00	5.17	1.47	.848
Proper Conduct	39	1.00	7.00	5.88	1.28	.886

\* - All values are averaged for comparative purposes

\*\* - the sample size varies because the measures were distributed across all 99 participants in this phase

Table C.7. EFA Loadings of the three factors of Social Well-Being

<i>Factors</i>	1	2	3
<b>1. Integration</b>			
I feel like I am an important part of my workplace			.73
I believe my coworkers value me as a person		.42	.70
If I have something to say, my coworkers would listen to me			.68
I feel the respect of my coworkers		.37	.76
I feel close to other people in my workplace			.71
My workplace relationships are wonderful			.78
<b>2. Acceptance</b>			
If I had something to say, my coworkers would <b>not</b> take it seriously		.58	.42
I feel that my coworkers are not trustworthy		.82	
I think my coworkers are unreliable		.76	
I think that my coworkers live only for themselves		.74	
I believe that my coworkers are kind		.65	.39
I believe that my coworkers are more and more dishonest these days		.83	
I believe that my coworkers are self-centered		.699	
<b>3. Actualization</b>			
This organization is not improving for people like me	.77		
This job position contributes to my personal sense of well-being			.76
I believe this organization is continually evolving			.78
This job position helps me to learn new things and ideas			.76
I think that this organization is a productive place to work in	.81		
This job enhances my identity as a professional			.69
I think that this organization is becoming a better place for everyone			.78

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

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