

Emotions on the Job: Support and Threat of Face in Work Organizations

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We examine the production of emotions in work situations, focusing on two aspects of individual's face important in the management literature: moral character and job competency. Study 1 acquired respondents' emotional responses to 54 vignettes in which one or the other aspect of respondent's face was supported or threatened by an interaction partner of higher, lower, or equal rank, in the context of either a consultancy firm or a hospital. Study 2 acquired emotional responses from respondents participating in simulated activities of a book selling firm, wherein a considerate, average, or quarrelsome manager supported or threatened one or the other aspect of respondent's face. Having face supported induced pleasant emotions and unpleasant emotions resulted from having face threatened, but the specific kind of emotion depended on whether moral character or job competency was involved, on the identity of the interaction partner, on organizational context, and on interactions of all these, as well as on the respondent's sex.