



## Are emotional display rules formal job requirements? Examination of employee and supervisor perceptions

James M. Diefendorff<sup>1\*</sup>, Erin M. Richard<sup>2</sup> and Meredith H. Croyle<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Colorado, Denver, USA

<sup>2</sup>Louisiana State University, USA

This study explored whether emotional display rules are perceived by part-time employees and their supervisors as formal job requirements. Results showed that display-related behaviours were thought to be required activities (i.e. in-role) by the majority of the sample, and that employees and supervisors generally agreed in this perception. Job-based differences in interpersonal requirements predicted the extent to which employees and supervisors categorized display-related behaviours as required, with more interpersonal requirements being associated with greater in-role categorization. Job-based differences in interpersonal requirements also predicted the level of agreement between employees and supervisors in categorizing display-related behaviours as in-role or extra-role. Finally, job satisfaction and job involvement predicted the extent to which employees categorized emotional display behaviours as being required in their jobs, with more satisfied and more involved individuals rating emotional display behaviours as in-role at a higher rate than less satisfied and less involved individuals.

Emotional labour refers to the regulation of one's feelings and emotional displays for a wage (Hochschild, 1983). A central tenet of emotional labour theory is that employees must follow emotional display rules that specify which emotions are appropriate and how those emotions should be expressed to others (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Ekman, 1973). Given the central role of display rules in emotional display management (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Grandey, 2000), it is essential that employees be aware of and understand the display expectations of the job. However, as pointed out by various authors (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Cropanzano, Weiss, & Elias, 2004; Grandey & Brauburger, 2002), display rules are often not explicitly stated by organizations but exist as unwritten norms. If organizations are not clear in stating the emotional display expectations of the job, employees may differ in whether they consider associated behaviours (e.g. smiling or suppressing anger) to be

\*Correspondence should be addressed to James M. Diefendorff, University of Colorado at Denver, The Business School, Campus Box 165, PO Box 173364, Denver, CO 80217-3364, USA (e-mail: james.diefendorff@cudenver.edu). Erin Richard is now at the Florida Institute of Technology.

formal parts of the job. When employees perceive display rules as being required, they should be more likely to display the corresponding emotions (Grandey & Brauburger, 2002). In contrast, if display rules are not perceived as required, employees may believe that conforming to them is going above and beyond the call of duty and may feel less compelled to do so. Consistent with this idea, Morrison (1994) found that employees who believed that specific behaviours were in-role requirements were more likely to perform those behaviours than employees who considered the same behaviours to be extra-role.

At this point in time, the extent to which employees consider display-related behaviours to be formal job duties is unknown (Grandey & Brauburger, 2002). Thus, the first purpose of this investigation was to examine whether employees and their supervisors consider emotional display behaviours to be formal job requirements (in-role) versus behaviours that go above and beyond formal expectations (extra-role). In addition, we examined occupational and individual difference antecedents of how employees categorize emotional display behaviours. Specifically, job-based differences in interpersonal requirements and employee attitudes (job satisfaction and job involvement) were examined as predictors of the extent to which employees considered emotional display behaviours to be part of their jobs. Examining these predictors will provide some insight into why employees differ in the belief that emotional displays are required versus discretionary activities.

A second main purpose of this investigation was to examine the extent to which employees and their supervisors agree in categorizing emotional display behaviours as in-role or extra-role. Implicit in much of the emotional labour research is the notion that display rules reflect norms for interacting with others. Examining the level of agreement between employees and supervisors will provide some insight into the extent to which display-rule perceptions are shared by people at work. Further, job-based differences in interpersonal requirements were examined as predictors of this agreement in an attempt to understand the role that objective features of the work may have in influencing the convergence of employee and supervisor perceptions. The following sections review past research, develop hypotheses and present an investigation examining these research questions in a sample of part-time workers.

## Emotional display rules

Emotional display rules can be defined as the standards for the appropriate expression of emotions on the job (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). These standards identify how emotions should or should not be displayed in the workplace. Thus, display rules are intended to constrain employee emotional expressions to be a certain way so as to facilitate the attainment of desired performance objectives (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). Research has begun to confirm some of these linkages, showing that display rules predict employee emotional displays (e.g. Diefendorff & Richard, 2003) and employee emotional displays predict customer perceptions of service effectiveness (e.g. Pugh, 2001) and customer intentions to return (e.g. Tsai, 2001).

In most jobs, display rules are aimed at creating positive interpersonal interactions by having employees display *integrative emotions*, which are positive emotions intended to bring people together (Wharton & Erickson, 1993). Some jobs, such as judge or therapist, require the display of neutral emotions. Individuals in these jobs must hide both positive and negative emotions, which has been called *emotional masking* (Wharton & Erickson, 1993). Additionally, there are some unique jobs where expressing

negative, or *differentiating*, emotions is expected (e.g. bill collector, police interrogator). However, jobs requiring integrative emotional displays are probably the most common (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2004). Displaying integrative emotions can involve both expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions. Consistent with this idea, past research has identified two types of display rules that facilitate these emotional expressions: demands to express positive emotions and demands to suppress negative emotions (e.g. Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). Based on this past research, the present investigation will focus on display rules involved in expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions.

The term *emotional display rule* connotes the idea of a formal expectation handed down from management to employees in explicit terms. While examples of formally stated display rules can be found in the literature (e.g. Disney Corporation; VanMaanen & Kunda, 1989), these may be the exception rather than the rule (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2004). Most companies have no policies at all regarding emotional displays, refer to them only in their mission statements or rely on societal or professional expectations to communicate norms about appropriate displays (Zapf, 2002). The lack of a clear policy and the use of informal methods to communicate display expectations raise questions about the extent to which display rules are actually perceived by workers to be part of their jobs. The following sections discuss the distinction between in-role and extra-role behaviours, develop hypotheses about display-rule role perceptions and present a study testing those hypotheses.

### **In-role versus extra-role behaviours**

Katz (1964) was one of the first organizational researchers to distinguish between in-role and extra-role behaviours. In-role behaviours involve activities that are formally required, enforceable and evaluated, whereas extra-role behaviours are discretionary, not enforceable and not formally evaluated (Organ, 1997). Examples of in-role behaviours for a car salesperson might be greeting customers and getting them to test drive cars. Examples of extra-role behaviours for a car salesperson might be picking up lunch for one's co-workers or answering the phones for the service department while they are busy. However, caution should be taken in trying to label behaviours as in-role or extra-role in absolute terms because many behaviours may be placed in either category (Motowidlo, 2003), depending on a variety of circumstances (e.g. the person, job, organization or occupation). For instance, one manager may consider covering the phones for the service department to be required, whereas another manager may not.

The notion that the same behaviour might be in-role to some employees and extra-role to others was confirmed in a study by Morrison (1994) that examined the role categorizations of organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs). At the time of Morrison's study, OCBs were defined in the literature as strictly extra-role behaviours (Organ, 1988); that is, they were considered discretionary activities that were not formally rewarded. However, Morrison found that the majority of employees actually considered OCBs to be in-role behaviours. She also reported that employees and supervisors had a low level of agreement in categorizing OCBs as in-role or extra-role, although this conclusion may be suspect given that it was based on correlational analyses rather than indices of inter-rater agreement (we return to this point later in the paper). Nevertheless, Morrison's work contributed to the reconceptualization of OCBs as not necessarily being extra-role activities (see Organ, 1997). Indeed, Organ (1997)

suggested that OCBs should be redefined to be equivalent to contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Morrison's findings have since been replicated in different cultures (Lam, Hui, & Law, 1999) and in a sample of young workers (Vey & Campbell, 2004).

In our effort to examine how people define the emotional display requirements of their jobs, we adopted Morrison's (1994) methodology. Specifically, employees and their supervisors were asked to categorize several emotional display behaviours as either (a) expected parts of the job or (b) behaviours that go above and beyond job expectations. Categorization rates were examined for specific display behaviours as well as for aggregate measures, termed display-rule breadth. The *display rule-breadth* measures were calculated as the proportion of behaviours within an emotional display category classified by employees as being an expected part of the job (see Morrison, 1994). Thus, individuals with high breadth scores defined more of the emotional display behaviours in a category as being required than employees with low breadth scores. Although we anticipated two display-rule categories corresponding to expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions, the dimensionality of the ratings was examined empirically.

### **Are emotional displays in-role or extra-role behaviours?**

Grandey and Brauburger (2002) first raised the issue of whether emotional display rules should be considered in-role or extra-role expectations. The category to which an emotional display rule belongs is important because employees may be more likely to conform to it if they believe it is in-role than if they believe it is extra-role (Grandey & Brauburger, 2002). Employees who do not think that an emotional display is required may express whatever emotions they consider to be appropriate, resulting in wide variability in the emotional displays of employees (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). This variability in emotional displays would presumably have a negative impact on bottom-line outcomes such as sales and customer satisfaction (e.g. Pugh, 2001; Tsai, 2001).

Many depictions of emotional display rules have a distinct 'in-role' flavour, emphasizing how emotional displays relate to employee job duties and the task requirements of their work (e.g. Cropanzano *et al.*, 2004; Grandey, 2000; Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini, & Holz, 2001). For instance, Diefendorff and Gosserand (2003) described display rules as subgoals that individuals strive to attain in order to meet higher-order performance goals. An example would be the expectation that a salesperson should display positive emotions when interacting with customers. These positive displays are intended to 'spread' positive emotions to customers through contagion processes (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; Pugh, 2002). These positive emotions felt by customers are expected to increase the likelihood that they will buy the organization's product. In such situations, employees' emotional displays directly contribute to the attainment of their primary work activities (e.g. selling products), suggesting that display rules ought to be in-role requirements. Based on these ideas, it was anticipated that expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions would be categorized by employees and their supervisors as in-role behaviours more often than as extra-role behaviours. This possibility was examined for both specific display behaviours and the display rule-breadth variables (i.e. the proportion of display-related behaviours within a category considered to be in-role).

*Hypothesis 1.* Emotional display behaviours are considered to be in-role activities at a higher rate than they are considered to be extra-role activities.

### **Antecedents of emotional display-rule breadth**

#### ***Job attitude antecedents***

Job satisfaction and job involvement were examined as predictors of employee display-rule breadth. Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which individuals find that their jobs fulfil some internal desire or need (Judge, Bono, Thoresen, & Patton, 2001; Locke, 1976). Job involvement refers to the extent to which individuals are deeply engaged in or preoccupied with their work (Brown, 1996; Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, & Lord, 2002). Morrison (1994) found that job attitudes predicted how broadly individuals defined their jobs. For example, satisfied employees were more likely to endorse OCBs as in-role behaviours than unsatisfied individuals.

Past research on display rules suggests that the effect of attitudes on display-rule role perceptions may depend on the nature of the display-related behaviours. Diefendorff and Richard (2003) and Schaubroeck and Jones (2000) asked employees to rate the extent to which display rules for expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions were present in their jobs. Diefendorff and Richard found that job satisfaction was positively correlated with display rules for expressing positive emotions and negatively correlated with display rules for suppressing negative emotions. Schaubroeck and Jones found the same pattern of relationships for job involvement and display-rule perceptions. It should be noted that neither study assessed employee perceptions of display rules as in-role or extra-role. However, findings from these studies suggest that individuals who were satisfied with their jobs or involved in their work believed that expressing positive emotions was a more central part of their job duties than did dissatisfied or uninvolved individuals. On the other hand, these same individuals considered suppressing negative emotions to be a smaller part of their job duties than dissatisfied or uninvolved individuals.

Although past research has not demonstrated why this pattern of relationships exists, a possible explanation may involve the level of congruence between the display rule and how individuals typically feel at work. Diefendorff and Richard (2003) suggested that individuals may endorse a display rule as being more expected in their jobs if they often experience the corresponding emotion. Thus, individuals who typically feel positive emotions at work may believe there is less of a demand to suppress negative emotions because they do not experience these emotions often and, as a result, be more likely to endorse positive emotional displays as being required. In contrast, individuals who frequently experience negative emotions may perceive that there is more of a demand to hide those negative emotions and less of a demand to display positive emotions (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003). Recent research has shown that more satisfied individuals report experiencing a more positive daily affect (e.g. Ilies & Judge, 2002; Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1999). Although a corresponding link has not been demonstrated between job involvement and affect, it stands to reason that involved individuals may have more positive experiences at work than uninvolved (i.e. alienated) individuals, leading to the experience of more positive emotions. Thus, based on the idea that individuals will endorse display rules that are consistent with their typical affective experiences (e.g. Diefendorff & Richard, 2003), the following hypotheses are presented.

*Hypothesis 2.* Job satisfaction is (a) positively related to the breadth of display rules for expressing positive emotions and (b) negatively related to the breadth of display rules for suppressing negative emotions.

*Hypothesis 3.* Job involvement is (a) positively related to the breadth of display rules for expressing positive emotions and (b) negatively related to the breadth of display rules for suppressing negative emotions.

### **Job characteristic antecedents**

Humphrey (2000) suggested that job characteristics and the nature of the work performed influence the emotional display rules that are present on the job. This suggestion is consistent with Hochschild's (1983) original ideas that the characteristics of the work influence the amount of emotional labour in employees' jobs. Specifically, she argued that jobs high in emotional labour are characterized by large amounts of customer contact (i.e. frequency, intensity and duration of interactions), strict control over employees' emotional displays and the creation of particular emotions in customers. Based on these ideas, we anticipated that the more central interpersonal interactions are to performing one's duties, the more likely it would be that emotional display behaviours aimed at expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions would be perceived as in-role. Examining a sample of employees from a wide variety of occupations, Diefendorff and Richard (2003) found that the amount of interpersonal interaction in jobs was positively correlated with employee and supervisor emotional display-rule perceptions (i.e. how important emotional display expectations were in the employees' jobs).

In the present investigation, two interpersonal interaction variables were examined as predictors of display-rule breadth: the amount of contact with others in general (including co-workers, customers, supervisors, trainees and phone callers) and the amount of interaction with external customers in particular. Much of the theory and research on emotional labour has focused on interactions with customers (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000; Grandey & Brauburger, 2002; Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). Such an emphasis makes sense given that customer interactions are clearly linked to employee performance and the economic objectives of the organization (Ryan & Ployhart, 2003). Thus, the extent to which emotional displays are perceived as in-role requirements should be associated with the amount of customer interaction required of employees. However, recent research has suggested that employees who work with anyone to a high degree may experience emotional labour (e.g. Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Cropanzano *et al.*, 2004; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Glomb, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Rotundo, 2004; Hartel, Hsu, & Boyle, 2002; Pugliesi, 1999; Strazdins, 2002). That is, interacting with customers as well as co-workers, supervisors and other individuals at work may impact employees' perceptions of emotional display requirements. Because no previous research has examined the relative influence of these two operationalizations of interpersonal requirements on display-rule perceptions, both were included in this study for exploratory purposes.

*Hypothesis 4.* The amount of contact with others is positively correlated with display-rule breadth.

*Hypothesis 5.* The amount of interaction with external customers is positively correlated with display-rule breadth.

### **Employee and supervisor agreement**

Although display rules have been described as being based on shared perceptions (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), the extent to which they are shared by individuals at work has not received much attention. Given that supervisors set performance expectations and administer rewards and punishments, one might expect that employees and supervisors would agree on whether emotional displays are in-role or extra-role activities. Consistent with these ideas, Diefendorff and Richard (2003) found significant, positive correlations between employee and supervisor display-rule perceptions. Although these findings are suggestive, Diefendorff and Richard did not directly measure employee and supervisor ratings of display rules as either in-role or extra-role. They also did not test the level of agreement between employees and supervisors; rather, they assessed the degree of linear relationship between employee and supervisor ratings (recall that Morrison's (1994) study of OCB role definitions also examined the relationship between employee and supervisor ratings rather than the level of agreement between these ratings). The present investigation addressed both of these issues by having employees and supervisors categorize emotional display behaviours as either in-role or extra-role and by using the Average Deviation (AD) Index (see Burke, Finkelstein, & Dusig, 1999) to assess inter-rater agreement. Based on the notion that display-rule information will be at least partially based on a shared understanding of organizational norms, we expected that supervisors and employees would agree in categorizing display-related behaviours as in-role or extra-role activities.

*Hypothesis 6.* Employees and supervisors agree in categorizing emotional display behaviours as in-role versus extra-role.

Finally, we expected that employee and supervisor agreement would be associated with the amount of interpersonal interaction present in employees' jobs (i.e. the amount of contact with others and the amount of interaction with external customers). As described above, emotional displays may take on a more central role in jobs with a large amount of interpersonal interaction, making display expectations more salient to both employees and supervisors. Supervisors of people working in such jobs may be more likely to clarify the role that emotions play in the work and incorporate emotional display expectations into job descriptions and performance appraisals. This greater communication and formalization of display expectations may lead to greater agreement between employees and supervisors about what is in-role and what is extra-role. When interpersonal interactions represent only a small part of the work, the emotions that employees display may not matter as much, leading to fewer discussions about emotional displays and less formalization of display rules. The result would be less agreement between employees and supervisors on whether particular emotional displays are part of the job. In sum, the amount of contact with others and the amount of interaction with customers should predict the level of agreement between employees and their supervisors in categorizing emotional display behaviours as in-role or extra-role. The relative influence of these two measures of interpersonal requirements will be explored.

*Hypothesis 7.* Agreement between employees and supervisors in categorizing display-related behaviours is positively correlated with (a) the amount of contact with others and (b) the extent of interaction with external customers.

## Method

### *Participants and procedure*

Participants in this study were 357 employed undergraduate students who completed surveys as part of a larger study in exchange for extra credit towards their course grades. Participants were recruited primarily from introductory psychology classes, which were comprised of students majoring in a variety of topics. The mean age of the sample was 21.3 years and 75.1% of the sample was female. Participants worked in a variety of industries and occupations (sales/service: 38.3%; clerical: 30.7%; health care: 7.8%; education: 7.5%; professional/technical: 5.1%; skilled labour: 5.1%; management: 3.0%; other: 2.4%) and 95% of the participants worked 20 hours or more per week. Sampling individuals from a variety of non-service occupations is consistent with recent theory and research on emotional labour (e.g. Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Strazdins, 2002).

Each employee was asked to provide the name and mailing address of his/her supervisor. Usable addresses for 326 supervisors were provided. These supervisors were mailed questionnaires assessing their display-rule perceptions. Supervisors returned questionnaires directly to the researchers in self-addressed, postage-paid envelopes. Of the 326 supervisor surveys mailed out, 162 were returned and usable, a response rate of 49.7%. The mean age of the supervisors was 38.6 years with an average tenure of 9 years. Sixty-four per cent of the supervisors were female.

## Measures

### *Emotional display behaviours*

Employees and their supervisors categorized 20 different emotional display behaviours as either in-role or extra-role. These emotional display behaviours were chosen based on a review of past research assessing display-rule perceptions (e.g. Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000), as well as a consideration of the types of positive emotions that might be desired at work and the negative emotions that might need to be suppressed at work. Some of these behaviours involved interpersonal emotional displays commonly examined in the emotional labour literature (e.g. acting friendly to others, suppressing annoyance with others) whereas others involved emotional displays that are not directed at others, yet reveal to others how one feels about the job (e.g. showing pride in one's work, suppressing boredom). This second category of display-related behaviours has not received much attention in the literature.

The format of the questionnaire was based on Morrison's (1994) work on OCB role definitions. Using Morrison's response options, employees were asked to classify each display-related behaviour as being either in-role ('You see this as an expected part of your job') or extra-role ('You see this as somewhat above and beyond what is expected for your job'). Supervisors responded to the same items, with the response options modified accordingly ('You see this as an expected part of your employee's job', 'You see this as somewhat above and beyond what is expected for your employee's job').

Because this was a new set of items, principal components analysis (PCA) was used to examine the factor structure of the employee categorizations. A PCA with oblimin rotation revealed five factors, with 10 items loading on the first factor, 4 items loading on the second factor, 3 items loading on the third factor and 1 item loading on each of the fourth and fifth factors. In addition, 1 item loaded at roughly the same level on the second and third factors. In an attempt to obtain a clean factor solution with multiple

items for each factor, the two items with their own factors and the one item with the high loadings on two factors were excluded and a second PCA was run. This analysis resulted in a three-factor solution with 10 items loading on the first factor (30.96% of the variance), 4 items loading on the second factor (15.67% of the variance) and 3 items loading on the third factor (7.31% of the variance). Additionally, no items had high cross-loadings. Items on the first dimension assessed perceived demands to suppress negative emotions, including those in interpersonal situations and those that reflect how one feels about the job. The second factor comprised items assessing the perceived demands to express positive emotions to others, which is consistent with typical conceptualizations of 'positive' display rules in the emotional labour literature (e.g. Diefendorff & Richard, 2003). The third factor comprised items that describe the perceived demands to express positive emotions about one's work. Such expressions may not be confined to social interactions but are intended to portray a positive attitude about work. This type of display rule has not been investigated in emotional labour research. The items and their factor loadings are presented in the Appendix.

Display-rule breadth was calculated for each factor as the proportion of display-related behaviours categorized as 'in-role.' The breadth measure of suppressing negative emotions exhibited high internal consistency reliability for both employees ( $\alpha = .89$ ) and supervisors ( $\alpha = .89$ ). However, the internal consistency reliabilities were somewhat low for the breadth measures of expressing positive emotions to others ( $\alpha = .68$  for employees and  $\alpha = .67$  for supervisors) and expressing positive emotions about work ( $\alpha = .62$  for employees and  $\alpha = .58$  for supervisors). Such low reliabilities are not surprising given the small number of items for each breadth calculation and the dichotomous response scale (Crocker & Algina, 1986). Indeed, Morrison (1994) found similarly low reliabilities for her OCB breadth measures. Spearman-Brown prophecy calculations showed that the reliabilities for these scales would be above .70 if each had at least five items (instead of three and four items, as is currently the case). Nonetheless, the results should be interpreted with caution as low reliability can attenuate the observed relationships between variables.

#### *Employee and supervisor agreement*

Agreement between employees and supervisors in categorizing emotional display behaviours as either in-role or extra-role was assessed with the AD index. AD is calculated as the sum of the absolute values of the deviations about the mean divided by the number of deviations (i.e. number of raters). The AD index technically assesses the level of disagreement between rating sources, with larger numbers indicating less agreement and 0 indicating perfect agreement (Burke & Dunlap, 2002). Burke and Dunlap (2002) stated that an advantage of the AD index is that it is easier to interpret than other measures of agreement because it retains the units of measurement of the original scale. AD indices were calculated for each display-rule item and the breadth measures.

#### *Job satisfaction*

Employees completed the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire, Job Satisfaction Subscale (Cammann, Fichman, Henkins, & Klesh, 1979), indicating the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = 'Disagree Very Much'; 7 = 'Agree Very Much'). A sample item is 'All in all, I am satisfied with my job.' This scale had a reliability of .91.

#### *Job involvement*

Kanungo's (1982) 10-item measure was used to assess employees' job involvement. All responses were made on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = 'Strongly Disagree'; 7 = 'Strongly Agree'). A sample item is 'I am very much involved personally in my job.' This scale had a reliability of .87.

#### *Interpersonal interaction requirements*

Job-based differences in interpersonal requirements were operationalized with the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) variables 'contact with others' and 'deals with external customers.' O\*NET was developed as a replacement to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) and contains multiple descriptors of jobs which have been assigned values based on thorough job analysis techniques and multiple raters (Peterson *et al.*, 2001). Participants in this study provided descriptions of their jobs (including their primary work duties, listed in order of importance), and this information was used to identify participants' job titles in the O\*NET database. These job titles were then used to identify each person's values on the O\*NET variables 'contact with others' and 'deals with external customers.' 'Contact with others' was defined by Strong, Jeanneret, McPhail, Blakley, and D'Egidio (1999) as 'the extent to which the worker is required to have interpersonal contact with others, including customers, trainees, supervisors, phone callers, etc.' (p. 131). Strong *et al.* reported that job incumbents and job analysts rated jobs on this dimension using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = very little contact; 7 = very extensive contact). Inter-rater agreement was .76 and .96 for incumbents and analysts, respectively (Strong *et al.*, 1999). The O\*NET website (<http://online.onetcenter.org/report>) defines 'deals with external customers' as the extent to which one must 'work with external customers or the public in this job.' Strong *et al.* reported that job incumbents and job analysts rated the importance of this dimension to the job using a 6-point Likert scale (0 = does not apply; 5 = extremely important). Inter-rater agreement was .83 and .94 for incumbents and analysts, respectively (Strong *et al.*, 1999).

## **Results**

Table 1 lists the emotional display behaviours and the percentage of employees and supervisors who categorized each behaviour as a formal job requirement (i.e. in-role). Table 1 also lists the AD indices of employee and supervisor agreement for the individual items. Note that employees have two separate values; the values in the brackets reflect the proportion of in-role ratings for the group of employees with supervisor ratings, and the values outside the brackets represent the ratings for the entire sample of employees. Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, correlations and scale reliabilities for the study variables.

#### **Preliminary analyses**

Prior to testing the hypotheses, we examined whether there were any differences between the group of employees with supervisor ratings and the group of employees without supervisor ratings. Results revealed a significant difference for one emotional display item ('Suppressing feelings of distress') with the group of employees without supervisor ratings reporting that this behaviour was more in-role than the group with

**Table 1.** Employee and supervisor emotional display behaviour categorizations

Display-related behaviours	% of employees defining behaviour as in-role	% of supervisors defining behaviour as in-role	Average deviation
Expressing positive emotions to others			
Acting friendly to others	96.3 (93.6 <sup>a</sup> )	87.7	.06
Acting sociable around others	88.2 (86.0 <sup>a</sup> )	74.5	.13
Expressing positive emotions	92.6 (89.9 <sup>a</sup> )	82.7	.10
Acting cheerful around others	82.5 (85.4)	77.2	.14
Expressing positive emotions about work			
Acting excited about work	65.2 (68.3)	65.6	.17
Acting enthusiastic about work	75.3 (79.6)	78.3	.15
Showing pride for the work I have done	66.9 (69.9)	78.4 <sup>a</sup>	.19
Suppressing negative emotions			
Suppressing feelings of anger towards others	74.5 (75.7)	68.8	.19
Suppressing negative emotions	71.9 (72.4)	64.2	.22 <sup>b</sup>
Suppressing feelings of frustration with others	72.5 (72.7)	64.6	.19
Suppressing how upset I may feel	65.8 (68.7)	59.9	.23 <sup>b</sup>
Suppressing how annoyed I am with others	76.9 (74.1 <sup>a</sup> )	66.0	.19
Suppressing annoyance that I feel at work	74.4 (74.0 <sup>a</sup> )	57.8	.20
Suppressing feelings of frustration about work	73.8 (74.4 <sup>a</sup> )	61.7	.22 <sup>b</sup>
Hiding feelings of anxiety	63.8 (66.8 <sup>a</sup> )	44.7 <sup>c</sup>	.21
Suppressing feelings of distress	67.1 (72.4)	63.4	.21
Suppressing my boredom	68.1 (70.1)	64.0	.20

Note. Values not in parentheses are for the entire sample ( $N = 357$ ); values in parentheses are for individuals who have both employee and supervisor responses ( $N = 162$ ).

<sup>a</sup> Indicates items with a significant difference between employee and supervisor categorizations rates.

<sup>b</sup> Indicates items with average deviation values that reflect low agreement between employees and supervisors.

<sup>c</sup> Indicates item where the endorsement rate for being an in-role behaviour was NOT significantly greater than 50%.

supervisor ratings. However, obtaining one significant difference out of 17 comparisons is very close to what would be expected based on chance alone ( $p = .059$ ). In terms of the other study variables, a significant difference was also detected for job satisfaction with the group of employees with supervisor ratings reporting higher satisfaction than the group without supervisor ratings. Additional analyses using moderated regression revealed that group membership (i.e. having supervisor ratings vs. not having supervisor ratings) did not moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and the display rule-breadth variables. Thus, although a difference in means existed between the groups, this difference did not impact the relationships between job satisfaction and other substantive variables. In sum, comparisons between the two groups did not reveal large or systematic differences, suggesting that it was reasonable to combine the groups in relevant analyses.

### Tests of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 stated that display-related behaviours would be categorized as in-role activities at a higher rate than they would be categorized as extra-role behaviours. To test this hypothesis, we compared the actual categorization rates to the categorization rate of chance (i.e. 50%, suggesting that assignment to the in-role or extra-role category was equally probable). At the item level, employees categorized all 17 display-related behaviours as in-role at a higher rate than extra-role; supervisors categorized 16 of 17 display-related behaviours as in-role at a higher rate than extra-role (see Table 1). The results for the breadth measures mirrored the results for the individual behaviours (see Table 2), with employees and supervisors believing that emotional displays such as expressing positive emotions to others (employee = 88.7%,  $t(356) = 32.52$ ,  $p < .001$ ; supervisor = 80.4%,  $t(161) = 13.70$ ,  $p < .001$ ), expressing positive emotions about work (employee = 72.6%,  $t(356) = 12.76$ ,  $p < .001$ ; supervisor = 74.2%,  $t(161) = 9.66$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and suppressing negative emotions (employee = 72.2%,  $t(356) = 13.18$ ,  $p < .001$ ; supervisor = 61.5%,  $t(161) = 4.28$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were more in-role than extra-role.

Two additional observations can be made at this point. First, comparisons among the display rule-breadth measures revealed that displaying positive emotions to others was considered in-role at a higher rate than was displaying positive emotions about work (employees:  $t(356) = 9.82$ ,  $p < .001$ ; supervisors:  $t(161) = 2.48$ ,  $p < .05$ ; see means in Table 2) and suppressing negative emotions (employees:  $t(356) = 8.53$ ,  $p < .001$ ; supervisors:  $t(161) = 5.72$ ,  $p < .001$ ; see means in Table 2). Thus, employees and supervisors believed that expressing positive emotions to others was more of a formal work expectation than displaying a good attitude about work or hiding one's negative feelings. Comparing the breadth values for displaying positive emotions about work and suppressing negative emotions revealed a non-significant difference for employees ( $t(356) = .16$ ,  $ns$ ) and a significant difference for supervisors ( $t(161) = 3.71$ ,  $p < .001$ ), with displaying positive emotions about work rated as more in-role than suppressing negative emotions.

A second observation comes from comparing employee and supervisor categorization rates. These comparisons revealed that employees considered expressing positive emotions to others to be in-role to a greater extent than did supervisors for three out of four individual behaviours (see Table 1) and for the breadth measure ( $t(161) = 3.88$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Employees and supervisors did not differ in their categorizations for expressing positive emotions about work at the item level (see Table 1) or the breadth level ( $t(161) = 1.47$ ,  $p = ns$ ). For suppressing negative emotions, employees considered 4 out of 10 items to be more in-role than did supervisors (see Table 1), and the difference in the breadth measure was significant as well ( $t(161) = 2.87$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Hypotheses 2 through 5, which proposed relationships of job attitudes and job characteristic variables with display rule-breadth measures, were tested with simultaneous regression analyses with job satisfaction, job involvement, *contact with others* and *deals with external customers* all entered at the same step (see Table 3). Such analyses provide a stringent test of the hypotheses by assessing the significance of the unique relationships of each variable with the display rule-breadth measures. Hypothesis 2a stated that job satisfaction would be positively correlated with display-rule breadth for expressing positive emotions. This hypothesis was not supported for either positive display-rule breadth variable (see Table 3). Hypothesis 2b, which stated that job satisfaction would be negatively correlated with display-rule breadth for

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, reliabilities and intercorrelations among study variables

	Mean	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Emp. D.R. Breadth																
- Express positive emotions to others	.89	.23	357	.68												
2. Emp. D.R. Breadth																
- Express positive emotions about work	.73	.33	357	.44***	.62											
3. Emp. D.R. Breadth																
- Suppress negative emotions	.72	.32	357	.13*	.11*	.89										
4. Sup. D.R. Breadth																
- Express positive emotions to others	.80	.28	162	.20**	.15	.06	.67									
5. Sup. D.R. Breadth																
- Express positive emotions about work	.74	.32	162	.18*	.20*	.03	.44***	.58								
6. Sup. D.R. Breadth																
- Suppress negative emotions	.61	.34	162	.13	.04	.16*	.10	.13	.89							
7. Average Deviation - D.R.																
to express positive emotions to others	.11	.13	162	-.45***	-.26**	-.15	-.77***	-.35***	-.09							

Table 2. (Continued)

	Mean	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8. Average Deviation – D.R. to express positive emotions about work	.17	.16	162	-.13	-.45***	-.17*	-.14	-.30***	.02	.28***	–	–	–	–	–	–
9. Average Deviation – D.R. to suppress negative emotions	.21	.15	162	-.09	-.06	-.30***	-.13	.01	-.57***	.13	-.03	–	–	–	–	–
10. Contact with others	71.36	19.23	325	.24***	.24***	.12*	.25**	.12	.31***	-.27**	-.04	-.28**	–	–	–	–
11. Deals with external customers	62.33	20.92	325	.18**	.14**	.10	.19*	.09	.26**	-.21*	.06	-.19*	.71***	–	–	–
12. Job involvement	3.51	1.2	357	.16**	.24***	-.08	.12	.07	.10	-.18*	-.04	-.02	.24***	.01	.86	–
13. Job satisfaction	5.66	1.5	357	.10	.13*	-.14**	-.11	-.04	.08	-.05	-.05	.02	.10	-.06	.39***	.91

Note. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Emp. = Employee; Sup. = Supervisor; D.R. = display rule.

suppressing negative emotions, was supported (see Table 3). Hypothesis 3a stated that job involvement would be positively correlated with display-rule breadth for expressing positive emotions. This hypothesis was supported for expressing positive emotions about work, but was not supported for expressing positive emotions to others (see Table 3). Hypothesis 3b, which proposed that job involvement would be negatively correlated with display-rule breadth for suppressing negative emotions, was not supported.

Hypotheses 4 and 5 stated that job-based differences in *contact with others* and *deals with external customers*, respectively, would predict the extent to which individuals considered emotional displays to be in-role behaviours. In the simultaneous regression analyses (see Table 3), Hypothesis 4 was supported for all three of the display rule-breadth variables and Hypothesis 5 was not supported for any of the display-rule breadth variables. This finding suggests that the broad measure of interpersonal interactions had unique effects on display-rule categorizations beyond the customer-specific measure. Interestingly, when *deals with external customers* was entered into the regression analysis before *contact with others* (and at the same time as job involvement and job satisfaction), it was at least marginally significant in each case ( $\beta = 0.19$ ,  $p < .05$  for express positive emotions to others;  $\beta = 0.15$ ,  $p < .05$  for express positive emotions about work;  $\beta = 0.10$ ,  $p = .08$  for suppress negative emotions). However, these coefficients became non-significant when *contact with others* was entered at the same step (see Table 3). Furthermore, *contact with others* had a significant increment in  $R^2$  beyond *deals with external customers*, job involvement and job satisfaction for each dependent variable: express positive emotions to others,  $\Delta R^2 = .013$ ,  $F(1, 320) = 4.30$ ,  $p < .05$ , express positive emotions about work,  $\Delta R^2 = .016$ ,  $F(1, 320) = 5.57$ ,  $p < .05$ , and suppress negative emotions,  $\Delta R^2 = .012$ ,  $F(1, 320) = 4.30$ ,  $p < .05$ . In contrast, regression equations with *contact with others*, job involvement and job satisfaction entered at the first step and *deals with external customers* entered at the second step did not yield any significant increment in  $R^2$  for any of the dependent variables: express positive emotions to others,  $\Delta R^2 = .002$ ,  $F(1, 320) = .73$ , *ns*, express positive emotions about work,  $\Delta R^2 = .000$ ,  $F(1, 320) = .03$ , *ns*, and suppress negative emotions,  $\Delta R^2 = .000$ ,  $F(1, 320) = .07$ , *ns*. These results show that *contact with others* added incremental prediction beyond *deals with external customers*, whereas *deals with external customers* did not add any incremental prediction beyond *contact with others*. Thus, while the extent to which employees worked with customers clearly predicted emotional display-rule breadth, the amount of interaction with people in general added incremental prediction beyond only working with customers.

Hypotheses 4 and 5 also were tested for supervisor ratings of display-rule breadth in simultaneous regression analyses (excluding employee job attitudes as predictors, see Table 3). *Contact with others* was a significant predictor of supervisor display-rule breadth for expressing positive emotions to others and suppressing negative emotions, but not for expressing positive emotions about work (see Table 3). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported. Hypothesis 5 was not supported for any of the supervisor ratings, although the bivariate correlations were significant in two out of three cases (see Table 2). These results mirror those for employee ratings of display-rule breadth, indicating that *deals with external customers* was not a unique predictor of display-rule beliefs beyond the effects of *contact with others*. Supplemental analyses indicated that *contact with others* added incremental prediction beyond *deals with external customers* for two out of three dependent variables: express positive emotions to others,  $\Delta R^2 = .025$ ,  $F(1, 144) = 3.89$ ,  $p < .05$ , express positive emotions about work,

**Table 3.** Simultaneous regression analysis of employee display-rule breadth on interpersonal requirements of the job and job attitudes

Dependent variable	Contact with others		Deals with external customers		Job involvement		Job satisfaction		R <sup>2</sup>
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t	
Emp. D.R. Breadth - Express positive emotions to others	.17	2.07*	.07	.85	.06	1.03	.07	1.12	.067
Emp. D.R. Breadth - Express positive emotions about work	.19	2.36*	.02	.18	.17	2.76**	.06	1.11	.096
Emp. D.R. Breadth - Suppress negative emotions	.17	2.01*	-.02	-.26	-.09	-1.49	-.13	-2.18*	.045
Sup. D.R. Breadth - Express positive emotions to others	.24	1.97*	.01	.12	-	-	-	-	.062
Sup. D.R. Breadth - Express positive emotions about work	.11	.92	.01	.07	-	-	-	-	.014
Sup. D.R. Breadth - Suppress negative emotions	.27	2.26*	.06	.54	-	-	-	-	.101
AD - D.R. to Express positive emotions to others	-.25	-2.10*	-.02	-.17	-	-	-	-	.072
AD - D.R. to Express positive emotions about work	-.20	-1.58	.20	1.65	-	-	-	-	.020
AD - D.R. to Suppress negative emotions	-.32	-2.68**	.05	.44	-	-	-	-	.080

Note. \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001. Emp. = Employee; Sup. = Supervisor; D.R. = display rule.

$\Delta R^2 = .006$ ,  $F(1, 144) = .84$ , *ns*, and suppress negative emotions,  $\Delta R^2 = .032$ ,  $F(1, 144) = 5.10$ ,  $p < .05$ . In comparison, *deals with external customers* did not add incremental prediction beyond *contact with others* for any of the dependent variables: express positive emotions to others,  $\Delta R^2 = .000$ ,  $F(1, 144) = .01$ , *ns*, express positive emotions about work,  $\Delta R^2 = .000$ ,  $F(1, 144) = .01$ , *ns*, and suppress negative emotions,  $\Delta R^2 = .002$ ,  $F(1, 144) = .29$ , *ns*.

Hypothesis 6 proposed that employees and supervisors would agree in categorizing emotional display behaviours. Recall that the AD index was used to assess agreement and that lower AD values indicate better agreement. Additionally, Burke and Dunlap (2002) demonstrated that, when analysing agreement for dichotomous items, AD values less than or equal to .21 indicate acceptable agreement. The AD values for all but three of the items involving the suppression of negative emotions were equal to or less than .21, indicating acceptable agreement (see Table 1). Further, the AD values for the display rule-breadth measures were all less than or equal to .21 (see Table 2). These results generally supported Hypothesis 6.

Finally, Hypotheses 7a and b stated that job-based differences in *contact with others* and *deals with external customers*, respectively, would be positively correlated with the level of agreement between employees and supervisors (i.e. the AD indices). These hypotheses were tested in regression analyses with both predictors entered at the same time (see Table 3). Hypothesis 7a was supported for expressing positive emotions to others and suppressing negative emotions, but not for expressing positive emotions about work. Hypothesis 7b was not supported for any of the agreement indices (though two bivariate correlations were significant; see Table 2), suggesting that *deals with external customers* was not a unique predictor of agreement beyond the effects of *contact with others*. Mirroring these results, supplemental analyses indicated that *contact with others* added incremental prediction beyond *deals with external customers* for two out of three measures of agreement: express positive emotions to others  $\Delta R^2 = .028$ ,  $F(1, 144) = 4.40$ ,  $p < .05$ , express positive emotions about work,  $\Delta R^2 = .017$ ,  $F(1, 144) = 2.49$ , *ns*, and suppress negative emotions,  $\Delta R^2 = .046$ ,  $F(1, 144) = 7.19$ ,  $p < .05$ . In comparison, *deals with external customers* did not add incremental prediction beyond *contact with others* for any of the dependent variables: express positive emotions to others,  $\Delta R^2 = .000$ ,  $F(1, 144) = .03$ , *ns*, express positive emotions about work,  $\Delta R^2 = .018$ ,  $F(1, 144) = 2.72$ , *ns*, and suppress negative emotions,  $\Delta R^2 = .001$ ,  $F(1, 144) = .19$ , *ns*.

## Discussion

### *Display rules as formal requirements*

The primary purpose of this investigation was to examine whether employees and their supervisors considered emotional display-related behaviours to be in-role or extra-role activities. Results of this study revealed that the majority of employees and supervisors considered behaviours related to expressing positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions to be in-role activities. Results also showed that some of the variability in these perceptions was attributable to objective job characteristics and employee job attitudes. Before discussing these findings in detail, we first consider the types of display rules examined in this study and differences in the extent to which they were perceived as in-role versus extra-role.

Recall that the emotional display items were written to tap the expression of positive emotions and the suppression of negative emotions, both of which contribute to the display of integrative emotions at work (Wharton & Erickson, 1993). Although we expected that the items would separate into these two general categories, factor analytic work revealed three dimensions, two pertaining to the expression of positive emotions and one pertaining to the suppression of negative emotions. Items referring to the display of positive emotions divided into expressions directed at others and expressions about the work itself. Displaying positive emotions to others is consistent with typical depictions of positive display rules that focus on acting friendly and cheerful in social interactions (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Grandey, 2000). Such displays are intended to create positive felt emotions in target individuals through contagion processes (Hatfield *et al.*, 1994; Pugh, 2002). The second category of positive display rules is novel in that it emphasizes displaying positive emotions about the work itself, which may or may not impact the emotions of another person. Rather, such emotional displays project the image that employees like what they do and have good attitudes about the work. Displaying a positive attitude at work may benefit the social and psychological environment of the organization, making it a more pleasant and desirable place to work. Further, as suggested by Schein (1992), organizational culture is communicated through emotional displays. Thus, display rules involved in expressing positive emotions about the job may help to create and perpetuate a desired organizational culture (Ostroff, Kinicki, & Tamkins, 2003; Schein, 1992). Future research is needed to better understand the relationship of emotional display rules with organizational culture.

In contrast to the positive display items, items tapping the suppression of negative emotions did not separate into two categories, though these items referenced both interpersonal situations and reactions to the work (see Appendix). This finding suggests that employees did not distinguish between demands to suppress negative emotions towards others and demands to suppress negative emotions about the work. Rather, they considered behaviours such as hiding boredom with the work and suppressing frustration with customers as being similarly extra-role or in-role.

Although all three display-rule categories were considered by employees and supervisors to be in-role activities more often than extra-role activities, displaying positive emotions to others was perceived by employees and supervisors to be the most in-role of the three. This finding is consistent with past research that has reported higher mean levels of employee perceptions of positive display rules than of negative display rules (see Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). Perhaps the link between displaying positive emotions to others and effectiveness on the job is clearer to employees than are the links between the other display-rule dimensions and effectiveness. That is, employees may not as readily perceive an association between displaying a positive attitude about work or suppressing negative emotions and the attainment of performance objectives. It may also be the case that employees view expectations to display positive emotions as less intrusive or controlling than expectations to feign enthusiasm for the job or hide one's genuine, negative emotions. As a result, employees may perceive that expressions of positive emotions to others are required more than the other emotional display behaviours.

Comparing employee and supervisor ratings of emotional display behaviours revealed some noteworthy findings. For instance, employees considered expressing positive emotions to others and suppressing negative emotions to be in-role at a higher rate than did supervisors. Thus, employees felt that these display-related behaviours

were required more often than did supervisors. Although it is difficult to know why this finding occurred, it may be the case that employees and supervisors attended to different information when rating these behaviours. Specifically, supervisors may have based their categorizations of emotional display behaviours on formal statements or policies of the organization (e.g. job descriptions, performance appraisal instruments or training content). Employees may have based their categorizations on similar information as well as on the specific behaviours (and emotional displays) that they must perform to do the job well. That is, employees may have considered their assigned tasks (e.g. sell cars) as well as the means by which they perform those tasks (e.g. display positive emotions when greeting a customer) when categorizing emotional display behaviours. This additional information might not have been attended to by some supervisors when they categorized emotional display behaviours. It is also worth noting that employees and supervisors did not differ in how in-role they considered expressions of positive emotions about the work. It may be the case that displaying a good attitude at work is an end in and of itself, rather than a means to achieve some other performance objective. As a result, employees and supervisors may have attended to the same information in making in-role or extra-role judgments for these behaviours.

***The influence of job attitudes and job characteristics on display-rule perceptions***

Employee attitudes and job-based differences in interpersonal requirements were examined as predictors of the extent to which display behaviours were considered in-role or extra-role in simultaneous regression analyses. Results revealed that job satisfaction was negatively related to display-rule breadth for suppressing negative emotions and unrelated to both measures of positive display-rule breadth. Thus, individuals who liked their work were less likely to believe that hiding negative emotions was required than individuals who did not like their work. Perhaps the fewer negative emotions experienced by satisfied individuals (Ilies & Judge, 2002) made them less likely to believe that hiding such emotions was required. The lack of significant relationships between job satisfaction and positive display rule-breadth measures was counter to expectations (e.g. Diefendorff & Richard, 2003). It may be the case that both satisfied and dissatisfied individuals are equally able to recognize the importance of displaying positive emotions for doing well on the job. Job involvement was a significant predictor of display-rule breadth for expressing positive emotions about work, but not for expressing positive emotions to others or hiding negative emotions. Thus, individuals who were immersed in their work considered displaying a good attitude about work to be more required than did individuals who were not immersed in their work. It appears that different job attitudes may impact perceptions of different emotional display behaviours.

Job-based differences in interpersonal requirements predicted employee and supervisor perceptions of display-rule breadth. Specifically, the amount of contact with others in general (including customers, co-workers, supervisors etc.) was positively related to all three employee display rule-breadth measures and to two supervisor display rule-breadth measures (supervisor ratings of expressing positive emotions about one's work were not predicted by contact with others). Although job-based differences in the amount of customer interaction was correlated with two out of three employee display rule-breadth measures and two out of three supervisor display rule-breadth measures (see Table 2), it did not *uniquely* predict any of the breadth measures in simultaneous regression analyses. This finding does not mean that working with customers does not impact display-rule perceptions. However, what is unique about

these findings is that interacting with people *in general* was a significant predictor of display-rule breadth after controlling for the impact of interacting with customers. Thus, having to work with others at work, beyond customer interaction requirements, impacted the extent to which employees perceived display-related behaviours as being required. What cannot be discerned from these findings is exactly which types of interpersonal interactions (beyond customers) influenced display-rule perceptions. Future research should separately measure the amount of interaction with particular types of people (e.g. customers, supervisors and co-workers) to determine the relative influence of each source of interpersonal contact on display-rule perceptions.

#### **Employee and supervisor agreement**

Another purpose of this study was to examine the agreement between supervisors and employees in their display-rule role definitions. Results demonstrated that supervisors and employees agreed on all three display rule-breadth measures and on 14 out of 17 individual display behaviours; only three behaviours involving the suppression of negative emotions did not exhibit high agreement. These findings build on past research showing that employee and supervisor display-rule perceptions are correlated (e.g. Diefendorff & Richard, 2003) by formally assessing inter-rater agreement (Burke & Dunlap, 2002). We also found that agreement for expressing positive emotions to others and suppressing negative emotions was predicted by job-based differences in contact with others and working with external customers (although only contact with others was significant in simultaneous regression analyses). These findings suggest that when interpersonal demands were central in employees' jobs, employees and supervisors were likely to have similar perceptions of emotional display behaviours. What is not clear from these results is why interpersonal requirements impact agreement. It could be that the objective characteristics of the job impact employee and supervisor perceptions separately, resulting in similar perceptions and statistical agreement. Alternatively, it could be that when interpersonal interactions are central in jobs, employees and their supervisors are more likely to discuss emotional display behaviours and arrive at a shared understanding of what is expected. The first explanation suggests that agreement is high because employees and supervisors are observing the same phenomenon. The second explanation suggests that job characteristics lead employees and supervisors to arrive at a socially constructed understanding of emotional display rules. Neither explanation can be ruled out in the present investigation, suggesting that future research is needed on this issue.

#### **Limitations and future research**

Three limitations of this study should be noted. First, causation cannot be inferred because of the cross-sectional nature of the data. For example, job attitudes were examined as antecedents of display-rule perceptions; however, we cannot rule out the possibility that such perceptions might have an effect on job attitudes. However, the causal interpretation is less of a problem for the other research questions which were either descriptive in nature (e.g. whether employees consider display rules to be in-role behaviours and whether employees and supervisors agree) or examined variables where reverse causality is very unlikely (e.g. display rule-breadth perceptions and employee-supervisor agreement impacting objective job characteristics). Therefore, the cross-sectional design was well-suited for testing the majority of the questions in the paper. Nonetheless, future research might employ a longitudinal research design or

experimental methods to better understand the direction of the relationship between display-rule breadth and job attitudes. Attempts to explain a causal relationship between these variables might include potential mediating factors, such as measures of daily felt affect. Recall that our hypotheses were based on ideas put forth by Diefendorff and Richard (2003) that individuals would endorse display rules that are consistent with their typical affective experiences. A longitudinal design that employs experience sampling techniques to measure daily mood (e.g. Ilies & Judge, 2002) could determine whether affect mediates the linkage between attitudes and display-rule perceptions.

A second limitation is that our sample consisted of young, part-time workers, suggesting that inferences drawn from our study may be limited to this population. Although part-time employees are an important segment of the workforce (representing up to 20% of the U.S. workforce; Nardone, 1995; Tilly, 1991) and worth studying in their own right (e.g. Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002), their perceptions of the in-role status of display rules may differ from full-time workers. One concern is that part-time workers, because of their relatively low status and power, may be more likely than full-time workers to endorse display-related behaviours as being required<sup>1</sup>. Research in social psychology (e.g. Hecht & LaFrance, 1998; Tidens, 2000) has demonstrated that individuals with low power are more likely to display positive emotions that are not felt than are individuals with high power. The interpretation of this effect is that low-power individuals believe that their emotional displays are more controlled than do high-power individuals. The result is that, compared with high-power individuals, low-power individuals feel more obliged to smile even if they do not feel happy. In the present investigation, our sample of part-time workers may have had less power than a sample of full-time workers. As a result, our sample may have felt more compelled to rate emotional display behaviours as being required than would a sample of full-time workers. Future work on this topic using a sample of full-time employees is needed before broader generalizations can be made.

A third limitation of our study is our choice of only focusing on integrative emotional display rules (i.e. rules to display emotions that bring people together). Our focus on integrative emotional display rules was based on the notion that most jobs have some expectation that individuals will express positive emotions and hide negative emotions (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2004). However, a more complete picture of emotional display-rule perceptions would require consideration of emotional display behaviours involved in emotional masking (i.e. suppressing negative and positive emotions) and differentiating emotions (i.e. suppressing positive emotions and expressing negative emotions). Such a research effort may require the addition of another response option (e.g. 'would be inappropriate') because some display behaviours (e.g. expressing anger) might not be considered in-role or extra-role by many employees.

Although the present investigation found that job-based interpersonal requirements predicted the extent to which employees and supervisors considered emotional display behaviours to be in-role, it did not explore other ways in which employees acquire display-rule beliefs. For instance, it may be that some employees get their knowledge about display requirements from training materials and job descriptions. Other employees may receive little guidance on display rules from the organization, instead acquiring this information from their educational training. Still other employees may primarily receive information on display rules from the norms, culture and leadership of

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

the organization. Research by Zapf *et al.* (2001) has begun to examine this issue but more work is needed to understand the various factors that influence how employees come to acquire display-rule perceptions.

Another useful avenue for future research would be to examine how emotional displays fit into existing models of performance, such as those described by Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, and Sager (1993) and Motowidlo (2003). For instance, it may be the case that some emotional displays belong to Campbell's (1990) *facilitating team and peer performance* factor. In customer service jobs, some emotional displays may reside in Campbell's factor labelled *job-specific task proficiency*. Alternatively, some emotional displays may be part of Borman and Motowidlo's (1993) contextual performance construct. Related to this point, it may be useful to determine where emotional displays exist relative to behaviours such as task performance and contextual performance on the in-role versus extra-role continuum.<sup>1</sup> To do this, one could use the methodology employed in this study and include task, contextual and emotional display behaviours. Finally, it may be useful for future research to consider the target of the emotional displays when assessing whether the displays are perceived as in-role versus extra-role. Displays directed at external customers may be considered more in-role than displays directed at co-workers or supervisors.

An important practical issue for future research is whether people with in-role display-rule perceptions are more likely to display the corresponding emotion than people with extra-role display-rule perceptions. Morrison's (1994) work suggests that individuals who perceive behaviours as in-role are more likely to actually perform the corresponding behaviours than individuals who perceive the same behaviours as extra-role. We anticipate that such an effect would occur for emotional display behaviours. However, this idea raises questions about whether there might be a difference between emotional displays that are performed because they are required versus emotional displays that are performed for altruistic reasons. It may be the case that individuals who display positive emotions because of formal expectations will be more likely to go through the motions and fake the displays. In contrast, individuals who display positive emotions without any external mandate may do so because they genuinely feel positive, resulting in more authentic emotional displays. The distinction between authentic and faked displays is important because, as Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, and Sideman (2005) demonstrated, customers can discern between the two, with authentic emotional displays having a more positive effect on customer satisfaction.

This discussion leads to another interesting question for future research; that of whether *authentic* emotional displays are considered by employees to be in-role or extra-role behaviours. Although the present investigation found that emotional displays are considered by most employees to be in-role activities, we did not distinguish between authentic and faked displays. Grandey *et al.* (2005) argued that authentic emotional displays may be extra-role activities that go above and beyond expectations. Thus, when an employee displays an authentic positive emotion, customers may perceive such behaviour as going above and beyond the call of duty. Future research might adopt the methodology used in this investigation to determine the extent to which authentic positive emotional displays are perceived as formally required or outside the realm of formal expectations.

Finally, in terms of practice, the present study suggests that emotional displays should receive more formal attention from organizations because employees and their supervisors perceived these behaviours as being formally required. That is, efforts should be directed towards incorporating emotional display behaviours into

performance management functions, such as training, goal-setting and performance appraisal. Training could be aimed at teaching employees the most effective techniques for managing their emotional displays (Totterdell & Parkinson, 1999). Incorporating emotional display behaviours into performance appraisals would help to give employees feedback on these behaviours, which is the first step towards making changes and improving employees' emotional displays at work.

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## Appendix

Exploratory factor analysis of employee emotional display-related behaviours.

	Factor loadings <sup>a</sup>		
	1	2	3
Demands to suppress negative emotions			
Suppressing feelings of anger toward others	<b>.82</b>	.08	-.11
Suppressing negative emotions	<b>.81</b>	.06	-.07
Suppressing feelings of frustration with others	<b>.79</b>	.13	-.14
Suppressing how upset I may feel	<b>.75</b>	-.04	-.03
Suppressing how annoyed I am with others	<b>.74</b>	.02	-.04
Suppressing annoyance that I feel about work	<b>.71</b>	.01	.02
Suppressing feelings of frustration about work	<b>.66</b>	-.01	-.03
Hiding feelings of anxiety	<b>.64</b>	-.10	.12
Suppressing feelings of distress	<b>.64</b>	-.03	.06
Suppressing my boredom	<b>.58</b>	-.07	.18
Demands to express positive emotions to others			
Acting friendly toward others	.01	<b>.87</b>	-.18
Acting sociable around others	-.03	<b>.71</b>	.02
Expressing positive emotions	<-.01	<b>.69</b>	.19
Acting cheerful around others	.07	<b>.54</b>	.28
Demands to express positive emotions about work			
Acting excited about work	.06	-.07	<b>.81</b>
Acting enthusiastic about work	.07	.20	<b>.70</b>
Showing pride for the work I have done	-.10	.05	<b>.63</b>
Eigenvalue	5.26	2.66	1.24
Percentage of variance explained	30.96	15.67	7.31

<sup>a</sup> Boldface indicates factor loadings greater than .53.