

Limitations and Future Directions Although this study extended research on the emotional effort of work beyond hospitality services and wait staff (Eaton, 1996), the sample used in this study was homogeneous in gender and job type. The return rate for the surveys was lower than preferred, but comparison analyses found that the included sample did not differ significantly from the broader surveyed sample. The mean coworker ratings of service performance are high, which may be a function of leniency due to friendship. Future researchers may want to measure these relationships with a different source of delivery ratings. Another possibility is ceiling effects – 18 19 employees still in the job have to perform at a high level. Skewed service performance measurement is common and actually leads to an underestimation of the relationships (Peterson & Wilson, 1992). Range restriction and shared method variance in the self-reported variables require caution in interpreting these relationships. Affective disposition, such as work mood, dispositional affectivity, or expressivity, was not tested here. It would be of interest to understand what type of person is more likely to deep act, rather than surface act; no known relationships have tested these ideas. A “fit” interaction effect could also be pursued in a study with a wider range of display rules and dispositional variables, as suggested by Grandey (2000) and others (e.g., Arvey et al., 1998). The current cross-sectional data cannot test causality, but longitudinal research could test the possibility of a spiraling relationship, where deep acting contributes to emotional exhaustion, and then surface acting is used as a lower-investment approach for meeting display rules. Experimental research would also help tease out the relationships between affective displays and observer reactions. The variables included in this study are not exhaustive: Research is needed which controls for other known predictors of emotional exhaustion and service delivery, such as role stress. Also, acting may also occur with coworkers and supervisors, for service personnel, this acting may be considered more “extra-role” than “in-role” and may have different outcomes (see Grandey & Brauburger, 2002). Positive displays seem to be vital for quality service. While good person–job fit and high job satisfaction will help decrease the need for acting, it is doubtful that service personnel will always feel positively toward customers. Thus, it is important to communicate that all acting is not created equal. This study provides evidence for encouraging and training service personnel in deep acting when “the show must go on.”