

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

LEADER RECOVERY FROM TASK AND RELATIONSHIP ORIENTED MISTAKES

ANDREA LYNN HETRICK  
Spring 2013

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements  
for a baccalaureate degree  
in Psychology  
with honors in Psychology

Reviewed and approved\* by the following:

Samuel T. Hunter  
Assistant Professor of Psychology  
Thesis Supervisor

William J. Ray  
Professor of Psychology  
Honors Adviser

\* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College

## Abstract

This study explores how subordinates react to different leader recovery tactics and which recovery tactics leaders use after making mistakes. Our results from study 1 suggest that leaders should apologize rather than use blame for task mistakes, but the same was not found for relationship mistakes. Our study 2 results suggest that leaders will apologize for task mistakes and justify for relationship mistakes. These findings have implications for people in leadership positions.

*Keywords:* leadership, leader, mistake, error, recovery, apology, justification, blame

## Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| List of Figures .....  | iii |
| List of Tables .....   | iv  |
| Acknowledgements.....  | v   |
| Leader Recovery from Task and Relationship Oriented Mistakes .....             | 1   |
| Leader Recovery Methods .....  | 3   |
| Apology .....  | 4   |
| Excuses .....  | 4   |
| Justification .....  | 5   |
| Denial .....   | 5   |
| Leader Mistake Types .....   | 6   |
| Task-oriented mistakes.....  | 7   |
| Relationship-oriented mistakes .....   | 7   |
| Study 1 Introduction .....   | 9   |
| Subordinate Perceptions of Competence .....                                    | 9   |
| Leader Recovery .....  | 9   |
| Mistake Type.....  | 10  |
| <i>Hypothesis 1:</i> .....   | 11  |
| <i>Hypothesis 2:</i> .....   | 11  |
| Study 1 Method.....  | 11  |
| Participants.....  | 11  |
| Procedure.....   | 11  |
| Independent Variables.....   | 12  |
| Leader Mistake Recovery.....   | 12  |
| Mistake Type.....  | 12  |
| Recovery Tactic.....   | 12  |
| Dependent Variables .....  | 13  |
| Leader Competence.....   | 13  |
| Study 1 Results .....  | 13  |
| Manipulation Checks for Vignette Scenarios .....                               | 13  |
| Tests of Hypotheses .....  | 14  |
| Mistake Type, Recovery Tactic, and Subordinate Perceptions of Competence. .... | 15  |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Study 2 Introduction .....  | 15 |
| Mistake Type and Leader Recovery .....  | 16 |
| <i>Hypothesis 1:</i> .....  | 17 |
| <i>Hypothesis 2:</i> .....  | 18 |
| Study 2 Method .....  | 18 |
| Participants .....  | 18 |
| Procedure .....   | 18 |
| Independent Variables .....   | 19 |
| Mistake Type .....  | 19 |
| Dependent Variables .....   | 19 |
| Apology and Justification .....   | 19 |
| Study 2 Results .....   | 20 |
| Manipulation Checks for Vignette Scenarios .....                                    | 20 |
| Tests of Hypotheses .....   | 21 |
| Mistake Type and Leader Recovery .....  | 21 |
| General Discussion .....  | 22 |
| Theoretical Implications .....  | 22 |
| Practical Implications .....  | 24 |
| Limitations .....   | 24 |
| Conclusion .....  | 25 |
| Appendix A: Study 1 Vignettes .....   | 26 |
| Male Justification, Task Mistake .....  | 26 |
| Male Apology, Task Mistake .....  | 26 |
| Male Justification, Relationship Mistake .....                                      | 27 |
| Male Apology, Relationship Mistake .....  | 27 |
| Appendix B: Study 2 Vignettes .....   | 28 |
| Instructions .....  | 28 |
| Task Mistake .....  | 28 |
| Relationship Mistake .....  | 29 |
| Figure 1: Subordinate Ratings of Leader Competence After Task Mistake .....         | 30 |
| Figure 2: Subordinate Ratings of Leader Competence After Relationship Mistake ..... | 31 |
| Figure 3: Leader Apology Behaviors After Mistake Types .....                        | 32 |
| Figure 4: Leader Justification Behaviors After Mistake Types .....                  | 33 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Table 1, Study 1: Manipulation Check ANOVA Results .....  | 34 |
| Table 2, Study 1: Manipulation Check Recovery Tactic Mean Values .....                                | 35 |
| Table 3, Study 1: Manipulation Check Vignette Mistake-Orientation Means .....                         | 36 |
| Table 4, Study 1: Manipulation Check, Crosstab Results of Mistake Perception .....                    | 37 |
| Table 5, Study 1: Mean Values and ANOVA Results for Subordinate Ratings of Leader<br>Competence ..... | 38 |
| Table 6, Study 2, Manipulation Check Vignette ANOVA Results .....                                     | 39 |
| Table 7, Study 2: Manipulation Check Mean Values .....  | 40 |
| Table 8, Study 2: Manipulation Check, Crosstab Results of Mistake Perception .....                    | 41 |
| Table 9, Study 2: Apology Means and Repeated Measures ANOVA Results .....                             | 42 |
| Table 10, Study 2: Justification Means and Repeated Measures ANOVA Results.....                       | 43 |
| References .....  | 44 |
| Academic Vita .....   | 49 |

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge my honors thesis advisors, Dr. Sam Hunter, Dr. Lily Cushenbery, and Joshua Fairchild, for their advice and encouragement. I have been truly fortunate to work with such inspirational people. I would also like to thank the members of the Leadership and Innovation Lab for their dedicated assistance with the method design and data collection phases of my thesis. I also want to thank my roommates, Ali Thompson and Emily Schultz, for their constant support. Thank you so much for everything you have done for me.

## **Leader Recovery from Task and Relationship Oriented Mistakes**

*“Mistakes are a fact of life. It is the response to the error that counts.”*

-Nikki Giovanni, poet

Leaders are human and, by default, make mistakes. This reality is problematic, especially considering the drastic impacts leader mistakes can have on organizations. The mistakes of CEOs, presidents, and coaches have destroyed organizations and hurt large numbers of people. The negative results of leader mistakes are examined in the leader error literature and further emphasize how harmful these mistakes can be. Recent studies have looked at the detrimental effects that leader mistakes can have on followers and organizations (see Thoroughgood, Sawyer, Hunter, 2012; Hunter, Tate, Dzieweczynski & Bedell-Avers, 2011; Bedell-Avers, Hunter, Friedrich, Shipman, Byrne, & Mumford, 2008; Tucker, Turner, Barling, Reid, & Elving, 2006). In addition, studies show that leaders are more likely to violate norms than followers (Stouten & Tripp, 2009; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Mondillon et al., 2005; Tedeschi et al., 1969).

We can look at this problem and decide that, since humans are not perfect, not much can be done about leader mistakes. Since leader mistakes can be unforeseeable, preventing them can be tough. Additionally, many leader mistakes may not even be entirely the fault of the leader. The disconcerting reality is that leader mistakes will not go away.

However, one promising aspect of leader mistakes is that leaders have control over how they react to a mistake. They can make excuses, apologize, blame others, justify their actions, or even ignore the mistake entirely. Also promising is that studies show these reactions can cause people to view mistakes either more positively or more negatively. These studies support the idea

that leaders can improve the situations following their mistakes. They show that how a person acts *after* a mistake has the potential to make a significant impact.

For instance, Maxham & Netemeyer (2002) found that ratings by bank customers following a mistake were significantly influenced by how successful the bank's recovery was. Additionally, one study examined company responses to a product complaint. This study examined companies that either accepted or denied responsibility for a product complaint. The study found that companies that accepted responsibility for a product complaint received more favorable customer reactions than those who did not (Conlon & Murray, 1996). Also, findings from a study by Tata (2000) revealed that different recovery tactics had different effects on perceived judgments of an observed instance of coworker sexual harassment. Denials and excuses were more effective than justifications and apologies in mitigating the situation after sexual harassment (Tata, 2000). However, these studies did not look at people in leadership positions.

It is important to examine leaders not only because their behavior can impact many people, but also because their role can cause them to be perceived and act differently than non-leaders. The literature supports the idea that leaders are different than non-leaders when it comes to mistake recovery. For example, politeness theory suggests that the status of leaders makes them less likely to admit a mistake to followers (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Tata, 1998). Furthermore, the literature argues that leaders may be afraid to admit a mistake because it displays weakness and lack of authority (Jackall, 1988). However, it has also been found that admitting mistakes is important for leaders to restore relationships (Basford et al., in press; Blanchard & McBride, 2003; Lazare, 2004). The literature is inconclusive in determining what leaders should do after mistakes, but this confusion may exist because different recovery strategies may be more or less appropriate depending on the mistake type.

Studies have examined how different mistake types and recovery strategies can interact to shape outcomes. Kim and colleagues (2004) looked at the effectiveness of recovery after

different mistake types. Their study found that apology and denial were perceived more or less favorably depending on the mistake type. Furthermore, Tsai and colleagues (2010) found that interviewee apologies, justifications, and excuses had similar effects on interviewer ratings for competence concerns but apology was more effective for integrity-related concerns. These studies show that the reaction of those who have been violated is not solely influenced by the mistake type or recovery tactic, but rather by an interaction of the two. However, these studies do not examine leaders and subordinates, and the unique role of leaders may impact how their behaviors are perceived and how they act after mistakes. For example, it may not help leaders to admit a mistake they made on a task because it could make them seem less competent to followers, yet it may be more acceptable for non-leaders to acknowledge a task mistake.

Therefore, since the literature suggests that the mistake type and recovery tactic work together to impact leader-subordinate relationships, we aim to explore the interaction of the two with this paper. For our first study, we examine how mistake type and recovery tactic interact to influence subordinate perceptions of the leader. In our second study, we explore how leaders are likely to recover after different mistake types. To begin, we explore the specific ways that leaders can recover from mistakes.

### Leader Recovery Methods

Researchers have identified a variety of ways by which people can recover from mistakes. According to Tata (2000), there are four ways to recover from wrongdoing: through apology, excuses, denial, and justification.

## **Apology**

In the psychology literature, apology is defined as an attempted explanation to make a hurtful act acceptable (Allan, Allan, Kaminer, & Stein 2006). Many definitions of apology share the common characteristics of acceptance of responsibility, admission of wrongdoing, and expression of regret (Kim et al., 2004; Bavelas, 2004; Lazare, 2004). For example, if a manager who yells at an employee later states that the yelling was out of line, expresses remorse, and takes accountability, he is apologizing. Because society often asserts that people should apologize for their mistakes, it may be a common recovery tactic for leaders (Cushenbery & Hunter, under review). However, there is evidence that apology could backfire in certain circumstances. For example, Zechmeister and colleagues (2004) found that people who apologized were actually rated more negatively than when they did not apologize.

## **Excuses**

One can shed responsibility for an error by suggesting that other factors are responsible. Excuses are a type of blame. Leaders use excuses when they admit that a failure occurred, but then deny responsibility for the action (McLaughlin, Cody & O'Hair, 1983). An example of a leader using blame would be if an executive is late for work and explains that it was because his alarm did not go off. Since there are always situational factors that contribute to a leader's behavior, excuses could be a likely leader response (Ross & Nisbett, 1991). In fact, a study by Weiner and colleagues (1987) found that those using excuses were rated more considerate, friendly, interesting, optimistic, rational, sensitive and responsible than those who did not give an excuse.

### **Justification**

Justification involves claiming responsibility for an action and making the action seem reasonable under the circumstances (Riordan, Marlin, & Kellog, 1983). Unlike apologizing, justifying does not require a leader to label his or her behavior as wrong (Riordan, et al., 1983). By using justification, leaders establish that their mistake was actually an appropriate course of action (Tata, 2000). For example, if a manager who yells at a subordinate explains that the action is warranted because he worked hard that week, he would be using justification. Schonbach and Kleibaumhuter (1990) argue that justifications can make people feel better because they focus on the positive aspects of mistakes.

### **Denial**

Leaders can attempt to make themselves look better and save face by discounting that they committed an act. If a person claims that they are not to blame for a mistake, the literature describes this as denial (Allan, et al., 2006). For example, if a manager is late for work and she acts as though she was never late for work when asked, this would be a denial. Denial may be a likely leader response to error when responsibility is unknown to followers. However, a study by Kim and colleagues (2004) found that when someone is knowingly guilty, denial could make the situation worse after a mistake.

Apology, blame, justification and denial are all possible leader recovery methods, but few studies in the literature explore how subordinates react to different leader recovery tactics. It could be the case that recovery tactics are more or less effective depending on the type of mistake made. Accordingly, we will now discuss leader mistakes and different mistake types.

## Leader Mistake Types

One study that examined the impact of leader mistake recovery on subordinate perceptions found that the character of leaders was perceived more or less negatively depending on whether they gave excuses or justifications (Riordan, Marlin, & Kellogg, 1983). However, this study did not examine the role of error type. Whether a leader uses apology, excuses, justification or denial could depend on the leader's mistake. Furthermore, different recovery tactics may be deemed more appropriate than others following different mistake types.

Leader mistake research has been conducted for over seventy-five years, and as a result there has been a variety of definitions for mistake (Senders & Morray, 1991). This study focuses on leader mistakes, which occurs when an avoidable action (or inaction) is chosen by a leader that results in an initial outcome outside of the leader's original intent, goal, or prediction (Hunter, Tate, Dziewezynski, & Cushenbery, 2010). Leader mistakes are inevitable and can result in positive or negative consequences for organizations.

Leaders can make different types of mistakes because of the various types of behaviors required by leadership roles. One of the first series of studies examining behaviors of leaders was conducted at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan in the 1950's (Horner, 1997). The results produced a two-dimensional classification of leader behaviors that split them into two behavioral categories (Bedell-Avers, 2008). The two general leadership behaviors established by these studies, *initiating structure* and *consideration for followers*, have been used for over 50 years (Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004). Over time, initiating structure has become known as *task-oriented* leader behavior, while consideration for followers has become known as *relationship-oriented* leader behavior. Similarly, the mistakes that leaders can make can also be classified under these two categories.

### **Task-oriented mistakes**

Part of a leader's job in an organizational setting is to ensure the completion and increased efficiency of task-related objectives by subordinates. Task-oriented leader behavior involves a leader's management of work-completion in an organization, or "concern for output" (Blake, Shepard, & Mouton, 1964). Tsai and colleagues label task-related objectives as competence-related issues and define them as "a set of technical and interpersonal skills that are required for specific tasks" (2010, pp. 133). Specific examples of task-related objectives include ensuring task goals and job expectations are clear, enhancing efficiency by coordinating work activities, scheduling, planning, describing regulations, policies, and standard operating procedures, and dealing with issues that would interfere with tasks (Yukl, 2002; 2006).

### **Relationship-oriented mistakes**

Leaders are expected to exhibit behaviors that help maintain a supportive relationship with subordinates. Such relationship-oriented behaviors involve supporting, listening to, and helping to build positive relationships between members of an organization (Yukl, 2006). In other words, leaders should show a "concern for people" (Blake et al., 1964). Tsai and colleagues (2010) identify behaviors similar to relationship-oriented actions as "integrity-related issues" and describe them as "the work norms or ethical standards that should be followed by the members of an organization" (p. 133). Kim and colleagues (2006) also identify similar actions as matters of integrity, and define them as "the degree to which one adheres to a set of principles that is considered acceptable" (p. 51). Other relationship-oriented behaviors include interacting with people to establish relationships, acknowledging contributions and achievements, offering

coaching and advising when needed, asking for input from people on choices impacting them, building team identity and recruiting capable new members (Yukl, 2006).

Leaders recovering from task and relationship mistakes could be perceived differently by subordinates because these mistakes violate different things. For example, a follower may feel personally impacted by a relationship mistake because it could damage his or her rapport with a leader. On the other hand, a subordinate may be specifically worried about the organization's ability to successfully complete assignments if a leader makes a task error. Accordingly, the two studies in this paper lay the groundwork for understanding how subordinates perceive leader mistake recovery tactics and how leaders recover from mistakes. Therefore, Study 1 examines the impact of leader mistake recovery from different mistake types on subordinate perceptions. Additionally, the literature has yet to explore which recovery tactics leaders use in response to task and relationship mistakes. It could be the case that leaders react to different error types in ways that do not have positive influences on subordinate perceptions. We explore this concept in Study 2.

With two experimental studies, this paper proposes that mistake type impacts both subordinate perceptions and techniques of leaders recovering from mistakes. First, we explore how mistake type impacts follower perceptions of leaders when they apologize or blame others for task and relationship mistakes. Next, we examine how mistake type influences the recovery tactics leaders choose to use.

## **Study 1 Introduction**

### **Subordinate Perceptions of Competence**

The extant leader error literature examines how subordinates react to leaders after they make a mistake. However, since the way a leader recovers from an error can influence follower perceptions, it is important to also examine how followers react to a leader's recovery tactic (Basford, Offermann, & Behrend, in press). Consequently, it is important to look at how followers perceive a leader's competence as a result of the leader's recovery.

### **Leader Recovery**

A possible explanation for the belief that apologies are good for perceptions of leader competence could be that apologies decrease threat to a subordinate's self-esteem (Tata, 1998). However, the literature reveals mixed results for the effectiveness of apologies. In some cases, blame could actually be more effective in lessening the harm from a wrongdoing (Kim et al., 2006). These mixed results could be due to the fact that recovery tactics can have different impacts based on type of mistake committed. Consequently, there are studies that show that mistake type and recovery interact to influence perceptions of the person who made the mistake (Kim et al., 2004; Tsai et al., 2010). To start, we discuss why leaders may recover differently from different mistake types.

### **Mistake Type**

Different mistake types can have different influences on how subordinates react to leader recovery (Kim et al., 2004). The literature suggests that there are fundamental differences in how people evaluate positive and negative news about competence and integrity based issues (Reeder & Brewer, 1979). Several lab and field studies have shown that people tend to weigh positive news more heavily than negative news when it comes to competence mistakes, yet tend to weigh negative news more heavily than positive news when it comes to integrity mistakes (Kim et al., 2006; Kim, Diekmann, & Tenbrunsel, 2003; Madon, Jussim, & Eccles, 1997; Martijn, Spears, Van der Plicht, & Jakobs, 1992; Reeder, Hesson-McInnis, Krohse & Scialabba, 2001, Snyder & Stukas, 1999). Kim and colleagues (2006) argue that this finding shows that a single failure on a task is not enough for one to be perceived as not competent, while a single dishonest act for a matter of integrity is often seen as a reliable indicator of low integrity. Consequently, the results of the study found that subordinates responded more favorably when one used an internal attribution for a competence-based violation and an external attribution for an integrity-based violation (Kim et al., 2006). A study by Tsai and colleagues (2010) replicated this finding, as they found that blame was more effective for integrity-based concerns, while apology was better for matters of competence.

Because issues of competence are similar to task-oriented mistakes and issues of integrity are comparable to relationship-oriented mistakes, predictions could be made as to how followers would perceive these recovery tactics. Consequently, we predict that apology will lead to higher subordinate competence ratings than blame for task-mistakes, while blame would be better for follower competence ratings than apology for relationship-oriented mistakes. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

***Hypothesis 1:***

Leaders who apologize for a task mistake will receive higher competence ratings from subordinates than leaders who use blame for a task mistake.

***Hypothesis 2:***

Leaders who use blame for a relationship mistake will receive higher competence ratings from subordinates than leaders who apologize for a relationship mistake.

**Study 1 Method****Participants**

Ninety-five undergraduate students enrolled in psychology courses at a large northeastern university participated in this study for course credit. Forty-four percent of the participants were male and 56% were female, with an average age of 18.60 years ( $SD = .78$ ).

**Procedure**

The study was a 2x2 between subjects design, and participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. Participants engaged in an online study where they read a vignette about a fictional leader and then evaluated the leader as if they were a subordinate of the leader. We first asked participants to complete a survey that included demographic information. Then,

participants were asked to complete a survey about the manager's task and relationship competence.

## **Independent Variables**

### **Leader Mistake Recovery**

Four versions of the vignette were developed, each approximately 200 words long. All versions of the vignette contained a fictitious description of a leader's mistake at a major pharmaceutical company. To control for potential gender differences in leader perceptions, the vignettes included either the name Dr. Kristin Jones or Dr. Tom Jones with the appropriate masculine or feminine pronouns (Tsai et al., 2010). The vignettes differed in the type of mistake and the recovery tactic used.

### **Mistake Type**

Depending on the experimental condition, the leader made either a task or relationship-oriented mistake. In the task mistake condition, the leader disregarded warning labels on new medications that were just released to the public. In the relationship-oriented mistake condition, the leader interrupted the follower and called the question that the follower asks "stupid".

### **Recovery Tactic**

Depending on the experimental condition, the leader either apologized or used blame for the mistake. In the apology vignette, the leader took responsibility for the mistake, expressed

regret, and made an offer to repair the situation. For the blame vignette, the manager did not take responsibility for the mistake but instead accused other factors.

## **Dependent Variables**

### **Leader Competence**

To examine participant reactions to the leader's mistake recovery, the dependent variable of leader competence was measured. These included both a scale of leader relationship competence and task competence developed by Hunter and colleagues (2011). Questions included, "I believe this leader would do well at planning short term operations" and "I believe this leader would do well at helping resolve conflicts in a constructive way." Participants were asked to answer these questions about their manager's competence on a 1-5 scale.

## **Study 1 Results**

### **Manipulation Checks for Vignette Scenarios**

To examine the internal validity of the vignette scenarios, an additional sample of 89 student participants read a passage and rated to what extent the manager's mistake was task-oriented and relationship-oriented. To what extent the manager had apologized in the apology and blame conditions was also examined. Additionally, the participants indicated whether they perceived the manager's behavior in the scenario as a mistake and how severe they believed the mistake was.

The manipulation checks regarding mistake type confirmed that there was a significant difference in whether the mistake was perceived as a task mistake and relationship mistake in the two passages. For task orientation ( $F(1, 89) = 7.37, p \leq .01$ ), the mean for the task-oriented passage was significantly higher ( $M = 3.80, SD = .99$ ) than the mean for the relationship-oriented passage ( $M = 3.25, SD = .92$ ). For relationship orientation ( $F(1, 89) = 4.83, p \leq .03$ ), the mean for the relationship-oriented passage was significantly higher ( $M = 3.30, SD = .98$ ) than the mean for the task-oriented passage ( $M = 2.83, SD = 1.05$ ).

The vignettes were significantly different in terms of whether or not the manager was perceived to have apologized ( $F(1, 89) = 79.09, p \leq .00$ ). For the apology condition, the apology mean ( $M = 4.62, SD = .76$ ) was significantly higher than the mean for the blame condition ( $M = 2.43, SD = 1.43$ ).

The vignettes were not rated significantly different for severity ( $F(1, 89) = .58, p \leq .45$ ), as the severity mean for the task passage ( $M = 3.73, SD = 1.12$ ) was similar to the severity mean of the relationship passage ( $M = 3.50, SD = .76$ ). Additionally, a crosstab analysis of the data revealed that 82% of the participants rated the task passage as a mistake and 80% of the participants rated the relationship passage as a mistake. Consequently, it appears that the mistake was perceived as such in both vignettes and that the mistake was rated as equally severe in both passages.

### **Tests of Hypotheses**

To test the relationships between mistake type and subordinate perceptions, we conducted an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

### **Mistake Type, Recovery Tactic, and Subordinate Perceptions of Competence.**

We found a significant finding for hypothesis 1, which stated that leaders who apologize would receive higher competence ratings than leaders who use blame for a task-oriented mistake ( $F(1, 196) = 6.53, p \leq .01$ ). The mean rating of competence for apology after the task-oriented mistake ( $M = 3.01, SE = .12$ ) was significantly higher than the mean rating of competence for blame ( $M = 2.46, SE = .11$ ). With regards to hypothesis 2, which stated that leaders who use blame for a relationship mistake would receive higher competence ratings than leaders who apologize for a relationship mistake, a significant result was not found ( $F(1, 93) = .02, p \leq .88$ ). The mean rating of competence for blame after the relationship-oriented mistake ( $M = 3.14, SE = .11$ ) was not significantly higher than the mean rating of competence for apology ( $M = 3.12, SE = .12$ ).

Study 1 had two key findings. First, leaders who apologized for task mistakes received higher competence ratings than leaders who used blame. In addition, contrary to our prediction, leaders who used blame for relationship mistakes did not receive significantly different competence ratings than leaders who used apology.

## **Study 2 Introduction**

Study 1 explored subordinate perceptions of leader recovery tactics and mistake type. We found that leaders received higher competence ratings when they apologized for task mistakes when compared to when they used blame. However, it is important to also examine how leaders react after they make a mistake. It could be the case that leaders recover from mistakes in ways that do not positively impact subordinate perceptions. For example, leaders

may not be inclined to apologize for task mistakes. To explore how leaders chose to recover, we ran Study 2 to investigate how leaders actually behave after they make task and relationship mistakes.

### **Mistake Type and Leader Recovery**

The nature of task and relationship oriented mistakes could cause leaders to react to them differently. Although task mistakes are easily defined, relationship mistakes are more ambiguous (Legnini, 1994). Therefore, it may be easier to identify a task mistake than a relationship-oriented one. If this were true, we would expect leaders to be less likely to try to convince others that a task mistake is not a wrongdoing. Justifying an action that subordinates clearly see as a mistake can be even more damaging to a leader's perceived competence than it would be if he or she apologized for the mistake (Tata, 1998). Since subordinates will view an easily identifiable and clear mistake as an obvious wrongdoing, they may view a leader who argues that the wrongdoing is permissible as being incompetent.

However, in a relationship-oriented scenario, how one should act is not always as clearly defined as it is in a task-oriented scenario (Legnini, 1994). Therefore, the ambiguity of a relationship mistake provides an opportunity for a leader to explain why an action was correct and repair follower perceptions of his or her image. Accordingly, we would expect leaders to be more likely to justify for a relationship mistake and apologize for a task mistake.

Furthermore, there is evidence that people respond more negatively to relationship mistakes than they do to task mistakes (Cushenbery, 2010; Bedell-Avers, 2008). This could cause leaders who make a relationship mistake to be more upset than leaders who make a task mistake. Since mistakes can cause people to have lower self-esteem, leaders who made relationship mistakes could have experienced lower feelings of self-esteem than those who made

task mistakes (Dijksterhuis, 2004). A study by Holland and colleagues found that low self-esteem levels made people more likely to justify themselves after a self-theat. Therefore, we would expect leaders who make a relationship oriented mistake to be more likely to justify themselves than if they were to make a task mistake.

Additionally, Kim and colleagues (2004) found that people often attribute task mistakes to external factors but attribute relationship mistakes to internal factors. This implies that followers who witness a leader making a task mistake will blame it on the situation and not the leader, while they will blame the leader for making a relationship mistake. This is consistent with previous research that shows that aggravating tactics such as denial and justification are more acceptable in interpersonal relationships, while mitigating responses such as apology and excuses are less effective (Tata 1998; Szwajkowski, 1992; Dunn & Cody, 1997; Tsai et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2006). Therefore, leaders who want to best repair their image after a relationship mistake will want to justify their actions, yet apologize for a task mistake.

Furthermore, since task and relationship mistakes that involve subordinates are visible and attributable to the leader, we would expect leaders to use apology and justification instead of denial and excuses. Therefore, we would expect a leader to use apology for task-oriented mistakes and denial justification for relationship-oriented mistakes.

***Hypothesis 1:***

Leaders will most likely apologize for a task-oriented mistake than for a relationship-oriented mistake.

***Hypothesis 2:***

Leaders will most likely use justification for a relationship-oriented mistake than for a task-oriented mistake.

**Study 2 Method****Participants**

Ninety-three undergraduate college students enrolled in psychology courses at a large northeastern university participated in this study for course credit. All participants had at least two years of work experience. Approximately 31% of participants were female and 30% were male, with an average age of 18.5 ( $SD = .72$ ).

**Procedure**

Participants first completed an online survey that included demographic information prior to the laboratory experiment. Over the course of the experiment, participants read two vignettes. The vignettes instructed participants to role play a manager at ShopMart, a fictional department store. Each vignette described a mistake that the manager had made. After reading the first vignette, participants were given five minutes to prepare to address an employee concerning the issue they read about in the passage. A confederate, acting as a concerned employee, entered the room to begin the meeting. During the interaction, the manager was expected to deliver a response to the employee, who followed a strict script. After the first interaction, each participant

read a second vignette and then responded to the subordinate again. The presentation order of the vignettes was counterbalanced between participants. All interactions were videotaped and coded.

## **Independent Variables**

### **Mistake Type**

The independent variable of mistake type (task or relationship-oriented) was manipulated using two vignettes in a within subjects design. In the relationship mistake condition, the manager upset employees by leaving a meeting without addressing their concerns. For the task-oriented mistake condition, the manager's failure to check previous scheduling records before setting a shift schedule caused a shortage of employees during a busy shift.

## **Dependent Variables**

### **Apology and Justification**

To analyze participants' mistake recovery tactics, a team of trained research assistants coded the video recordings and rated the magnitude of apology or justification on a scale of 1-5. Coders rated apologies as admissions of wrongdoing with expressions of regret. If the participant explained why his or her actions were correct under the circumstances, the recovery attempt was rated as a justification. Inter-rater reliability for these variables was adequate ( $ICC(1,k) > .85$ ), justifying aggregation of the ratings.

## Study 2 Results

### Manipulation Checks for Vignette Scenarios

To examine the internal validity of the vignette scenarios, an additional sample of 86 student participants read the passages and rated to what extent the manager's mistake was task-oriented and relationship-oriented. In addition, the participants rated whether they perceived the manager's behavior in the scenario as a mistake and how severe they believed the mistake was. In order to reduce order effects, the presentation order of the task and relationship vignettes was counterbalanced between participants.

The manipulation checks regarding mistake type confirmed that there was a significant difference in whether the mistake was perceived as a task mistake and a relationship mistake in the two passages. For task orientation ( $F(1, 86) = 11.92, p \leq .00$ ), the mean for the task-oriented passage was significantly higher ( $M = 3.15, SD = .13$ ) than the mean for the relationship-oriented passage ( $M = 3.78, SD = .13$ ). For relationship orientation ( $F(1, 86) = 23.66, p \leq .00$ ), the mean for the relationship-oriented passage was significantly higher ( $M = 3.22, SD = .13$ ) than the mean for the task-oriented passage ( $M = 2.33, SD = .13$ ).

The vignettes were not rated significantly different for severity ( $F(1, 86) = 1.52, p \leq .22$ ), as the severity mean for the task passage ( $M = 3.04, SD = .11$ ) was not significantly different than the severity mean of the relationship passage ( $M = 3.23, SD = .11$ ). Additionally, a crosstab analysis of the data revealed that 97% of the participants rated the task passage as a mistake and 91% of the participants rated the relationship passage as a mistake.

In conclusion, the results reveal that the severity of the manager's behavior between the task and relationship vignettes was not perceived as significantly different from one another.

Thus, the vignette scenario passages used to manipulate the task and relationship-oriented mistake conditions appear to be operating as intended.

### **Tests of Hypotheses**

To test the relationships between mistake type and recovery type, a repeated measures ANOVA was used due to the fact that all participants received both vignette conditions.

#### **Mistake Type and Leader Recovery.**

We found a significant finding for hypothesis 1, which stated leaders would most likely use apology for a task-oriented mistake ( $F(1,93) = 47.69, p \leq .00$ ). The mean value for apology for the task-oriented mistake ( $M = 2.17, SE = .67$ ) was significantly higher than the mean for the relationship-oriented condition ( $M = 1.44, SE = .45$ ). With regards to hypothesis 2, which stated that leaders would most likely use justification for a relationship-oriented mistake, a significant result was also found ( $F(1,93) = 22.64, p \leq .00$ ). The mean value for justification for the relationship-oriented condition ( $M = 1.88, SE = 1.48$ ) was higher than the mean for the task-oriented mistake ( $M = 1.07, SE = .41$ ).

The results of study 2 had two key findings. First, leaders would more likely apologize for a task mistake than for a relationship mistake. Second, leaders would more likely justify for a relationship mistake than for a task mistake. The limitations and implications of these findings are discussed below.

## **General Discussion**

### **Theoretical Implications**

Study 1 and Study 2 investigated leader recovery from task and relationship oriented mistakes. Study 1 is the first of its kind to examine how subordinates perceive the competence of leaders using apology and blame after task and relationship-oriented mistakes. Study 2 is novel in that it examines how leaders actually react to the same task and the same relationship-oriented mistake. Overall, our studies show that different mistake types interact with different leader recovery tactics to influence subordinate perceptions of a leader's competence and leader behaviors. Accordingly, these findings imply that leaders may not want to react similarly to different types of mistakes.

Study 1 had two key findings. First, leaders who apologized for task mistakes received higher competence ratings than leaders who used blame. In addition, contrary to our prediction, leaders who used blame for relationship mistakes did not receive significantly different competence ratings than leaders who used apology. This is particularly interesting because, although the literature suggests that aggravating techniques can be better for relationship mistakes, blame was no more or less effective than apology. From these findings, it appears that leaders should apologize for task mistakes.

The results of study 2 also had two key findings. The first finding was that leaders would more likely apologize for a task mistake than for a relationship mistake. Next, our findings support that leaders would more likely justify for a relationship mistake than for a task mistake. We have three possible explanations for why this could be the case. First, relationship mistakes may be more ambiguous than task mistakes, which allows leaders to more easily justify their

actions. Since the leaders in the relationship mistake condition could more easily avoid admitting that their actions were a mistake, they justified more and apologized less.

Next, it makes sense that leaders did not make excuses or deny the mistake since both the task and relationship mistakes were visible to subordinates. If the leaders made excuses for or denied the mistakes, it could have made them seem incompetent. Finally, there is evidence that relationship-oriented mistakes make people more upset than task-oriented mistakes (Cushenbery, 2010; Bedell-Avers, 2008). A study by Holland and colleagues (2002) found that those with lower levels of self-esteem were more likely to justify themselves in response to a self-threat. Therefore, relationship mistakes could have made leaders more upset and caused them to have lower levels of self-esteem than task mistakes. In turn, the lower self-esteem levels of leaders could have caused them to be more inclined to justify their actions.

The fact that leaders are apologizing for task mistakes is positive news since our findings from Study 1 indicate that apology was more beneficial than blame for task mistakes. However, it may not be a positive finding that leaders are justifying for relationship mistakes. Since there were no unique benefits discovered for blame, leaders might want to apologize since blame could imply that a follower's concerns are not valid. In other words, relationship-oriented errors may more likely cause leaders to justify their actions, and, as a result, continuously behave in undesirable ways to subordinates. Since repeated justification could threaten subordinates' social reputation, relationship-oriented mistakes could cause significant problems for leaders and followers (Tracy, 1990). This is especially problematic because, again, it has been found that relationship mistakes impact followers more negatively than task mistakes (Cushenbery, 2010; Bedell-Avers, 2008).

### **Practical Implications**

These studies have a number of practical implications for leaders. Once more is known about leader mistake recovery, we can give better advice to leaders for how to best manage conflict with subordinates. In addition, this research could add to leader training in order to better prepare leaders to respond to mistakes. Also, these findings can advise organizations about what to say at public relations events after a leader mistake has been made. Finally, this research can help better develop leaders so they maintain strong and healthy relationships with their followers.

### **Limitations**

Study 1, like any online vignette study, is not without limitations. First, we used an undergraduate sample, which limits generalizability to other populations. However, it is reasonable to argue that undergraduates can accurately imagine themselves as a subordinate in a vignette scenario. It is also important to note that this study was conducted online and over a short timeframe, which leaves us uncertain of the study conditions. Therefore, care should be taken when applying these findings in actual organizations. However, our study did include a check to ensure that all participants were paying attention. Additionally, vignette studies examining subordinate perceptions of leaders using undergraduate samples are reasonably prevalent and can be useful to organizations (Rogers, Saler, & Proell, 2013). Furthermore, only one type of task mistake and one type of relationship mistake were used, which could limit our findings. However, the manipulation check of our vignettes indicated that the vignettes were describing the appropriate mistake types.

Study 2, as with any lab study, is not without limitations. Just as in Study 1, Study 2's sample involved undergraduates, which may limit generalizability to other populations. Similar

to study 1, only one mistake was used from each mistake-type category, which limits generalizability to task and relationship mistakes as a whole. However, our Study 2 manipulation checks also showed that our study successfully represented task and relationship-oriented mistakes. Additionally, it can be argued that lab studies lack the natural validity of field studies. However, high correlations have been found between the effect sizes of lab studies and field studies (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; 2002). Also, role-play exercises are widely used in assessment centers to observe leader behavior (Lievens, Chasteen, Day, & Christiansen, 2006)

## **Conclusion**

Although it may be difficult for leaders to think positively after they make a mistake, the way they react in response to their mistake has the potential to change subordinate reactions. Future research studies could give us an idea of how exactly leaders should respond to task and relationship mistakes. If it turns out that leaders consistently react to task mistakes by apologizing and relationship mistakes by justifying and if these reactions are not effectively repairing subordinate perceptions, it is important for future research to advise leaders to act differently.

## **Appendix A: Study 1 Vignettes**

### **Male Justification, Task Mistake**

You have been working for a major pharmaceutical company for the past 10 years. You and your co workers have just read the headlines in the newspaper and realized that your company might be getting sued. Wanting to find out what really happened, you go up to your manager, Dr. Jones, and ask why this is happening to the company. Dr. Jones explains to you that (s)he disregarded the warning labels on the new medications they just released to the public, and as a result customers were experiencing severe side effects from the medications. Later that day, Dr. Jones makes an announcement to the company explaining how the other pharmacist working on the new medication should have double checked that the warning labels were printed correctly before the medication was released.

### **Male Apology, Task Mistake**

You have been working for a major pharmaceutical company for the past 10 years. You and your co workers have just read the headlines in the newspaper and realized that your company might be getting sued. Wanting to find out what really happened, you go up to your manager, Dr. Jones, and ask him why this is happening to the company. Dr. Jones explains to you that (s)he disregarded the warning labels on the new medications they just released to the public, and as a result customers were experiencing severe side effects from the medications. Later that day, Dr. Jones makes an announcement to the company apologizing for the mistake, explaining how (s)he should have looked over all of the information before releasing it to the public, and (s)he will do everything he can to sort it out immediately.

**Male Justification, Relationship Mistake**

You have been working for a major pharmaceutical company for the past 10 years. One day your manager, Dr. Jones, storms into the office without acknowledging you or any other employee. You have some concerns about the side effects with some new medications that your pharmacy is selling, so you go to your manager's office and decide it would be best to ask personally what they think about the situation. As you're asking your question, Dr. Jones quickly cuts you off, explaining that there's no time for stupid questions and you should do some more research if you want to find answers. Later in the day, your manager comes up to you and says "about what happened earlier today, I just wanted to let you know that I had just gotten off the phone with one of our major clients who cancelled their order, costing us thousands of dollars, which caused my later outburst when you walked in."

**Male Apology, Relationship Mistake**

You have been working for a major pharmaceutical company for the past 10 years. One day your manager, Dr. Jones, storms into the office without acknowledging you or any other employee. You have some concerns about the side effects with some new medications that your pharmacy is selling, so you go to your manager's office and decide it would be best to ask personally what they think about the situation. As you're asking your question, Dr. Jones quickly cuts you off, explaining that there's no time for stupid questions and you should do some more research if you want to find answers. Later in the day, your manager comes up to you and says "I'm so sorry for losing my temper on your earlier today. It was inappropriate and unprofessional for me to treat you like that. If you still want to voice your concerns feel free to stop by and we can discuss everything together."

## **Appendix B: Study 2 Vignettes**

### **Instructions**

For this study, you need to put yourself in the position of a leader. Read the scenario on this sheet and visualize what you are reading as if it were really happening. Then decide how you would talk to an employee about the matter. Try to get into the mind-set, because we are going to bring in an employee for you to talk to, and your response to the situation will be video-recorded. You will have 5 minutes to figure out what to say. When time is up, I will come back in. Now please take the time to look over the passage and think about how you would react in the scenario.

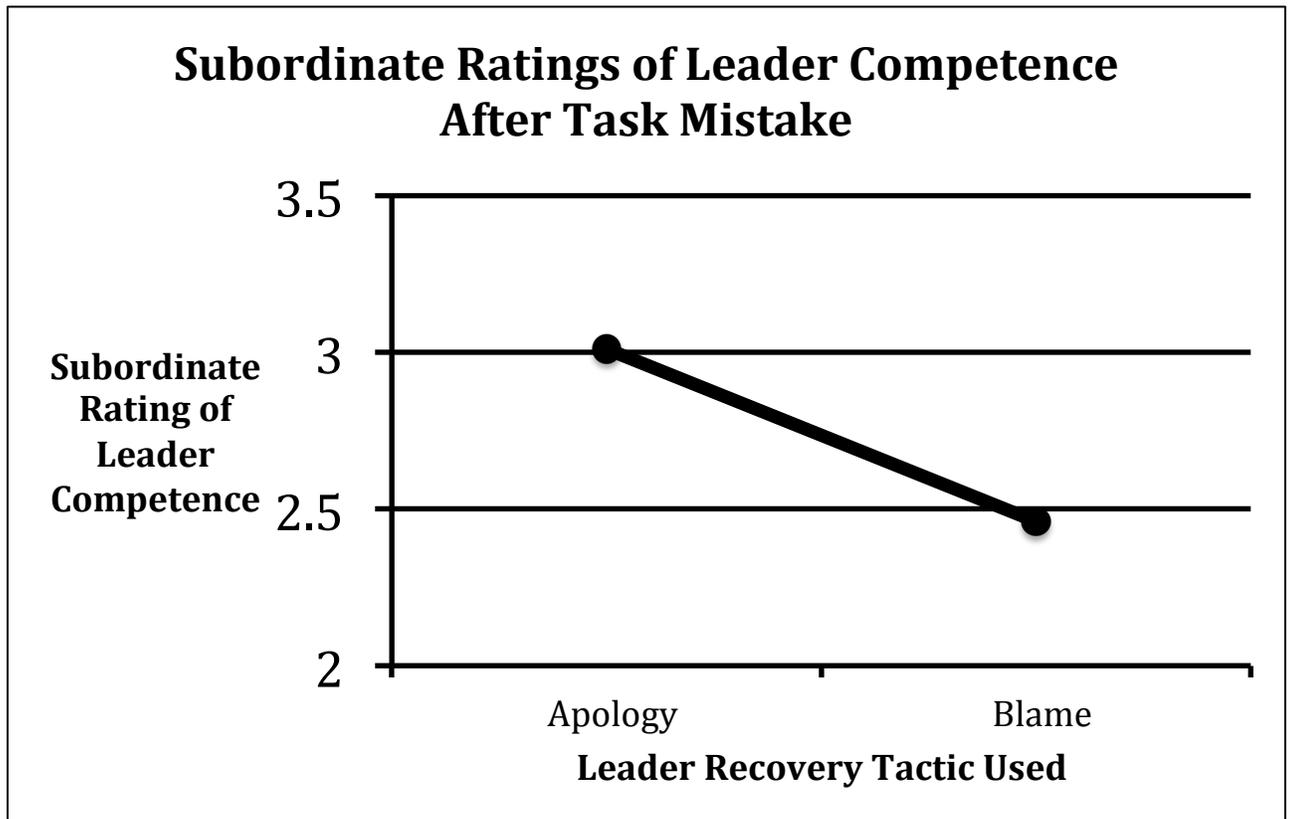
### **Task Mistake**

You are the manager of ShopMart, a department store. Your job includes scheduling 20 employees for shifts. In order to make sure you schedule an appropriate number of employees on any given day, you are supposed to check the sales records from the previous years, as there are some annual busy days and slow days. This week, however, in order to save time during this task, instead of checking the records, you just guessed how many employees should work each day. Today happens to be one of the busiest days of the year, and, having not referenced last year's numbers, you did not schedule nearly enough employees. As a result, the cashiers are stressed with long lines and grumpy customers. One upset employee will arrive at your office shortly to talk to you. Think about what you should say in order to improve the situation, and when the employee enters, respond.

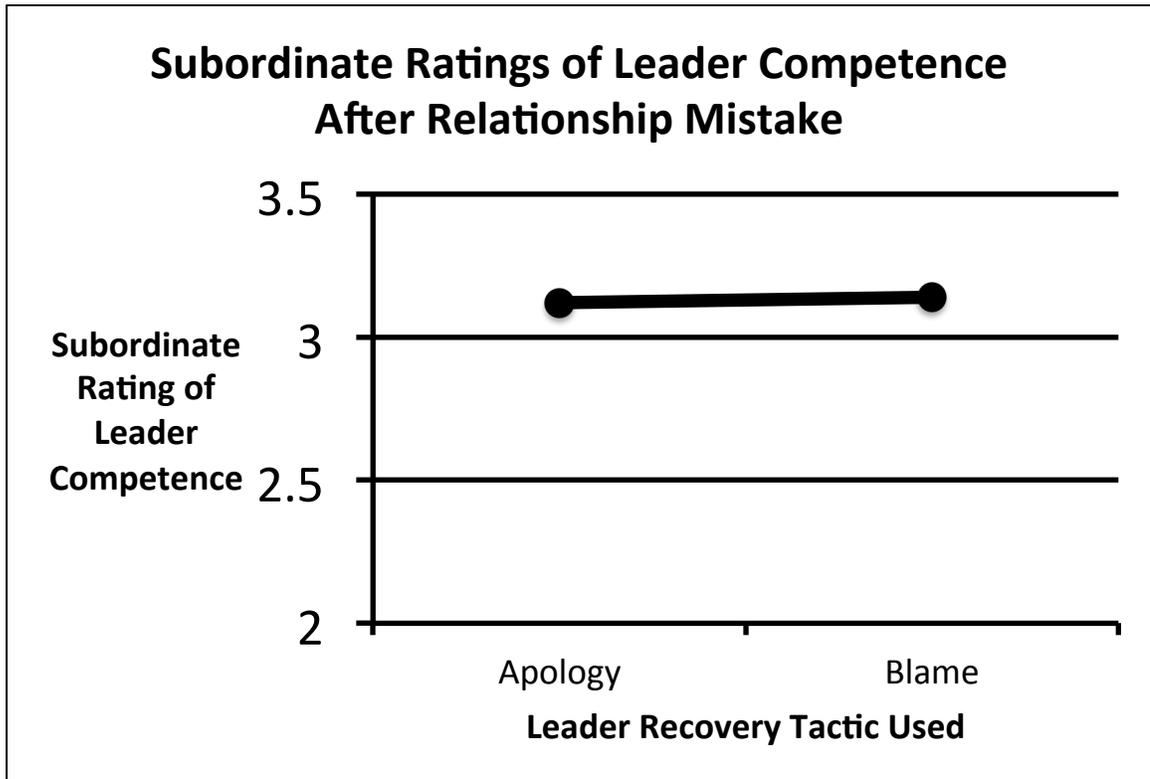
**Relationship Mistake**

You are the manager of ShopMart, a department store. You oversee 20 employees. However, you believe that your employees could be more productive, so you decide to have an hour long meeting with all of them. During this meeting, you make an issue out of the negative behaviors of employees and stress the importance of increasing productivity. Several employees are upset and want to stay after the meeting to discuss the issue further. Instead, in order to save time, you leave the meeting without displaying interest in their concerns. Later in the day, you notice that the relationship between you and your employees is especially distressed as a result of you leaving the meeting. One upset employee will arrive at your office shortly to talk to you. Think about what you should say in order to improve the situation, and when the employee enters, respond.

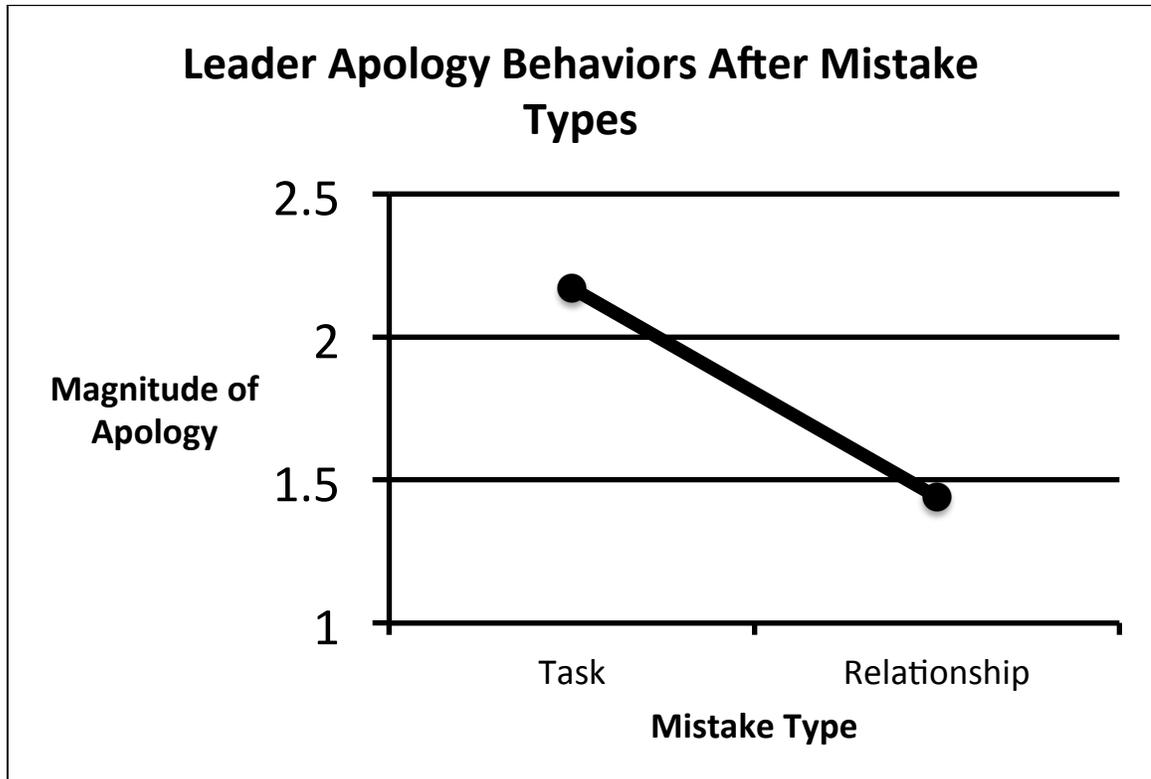
**Figure 1: Subordinate Ratings of Leader Competence After Task Mistake**

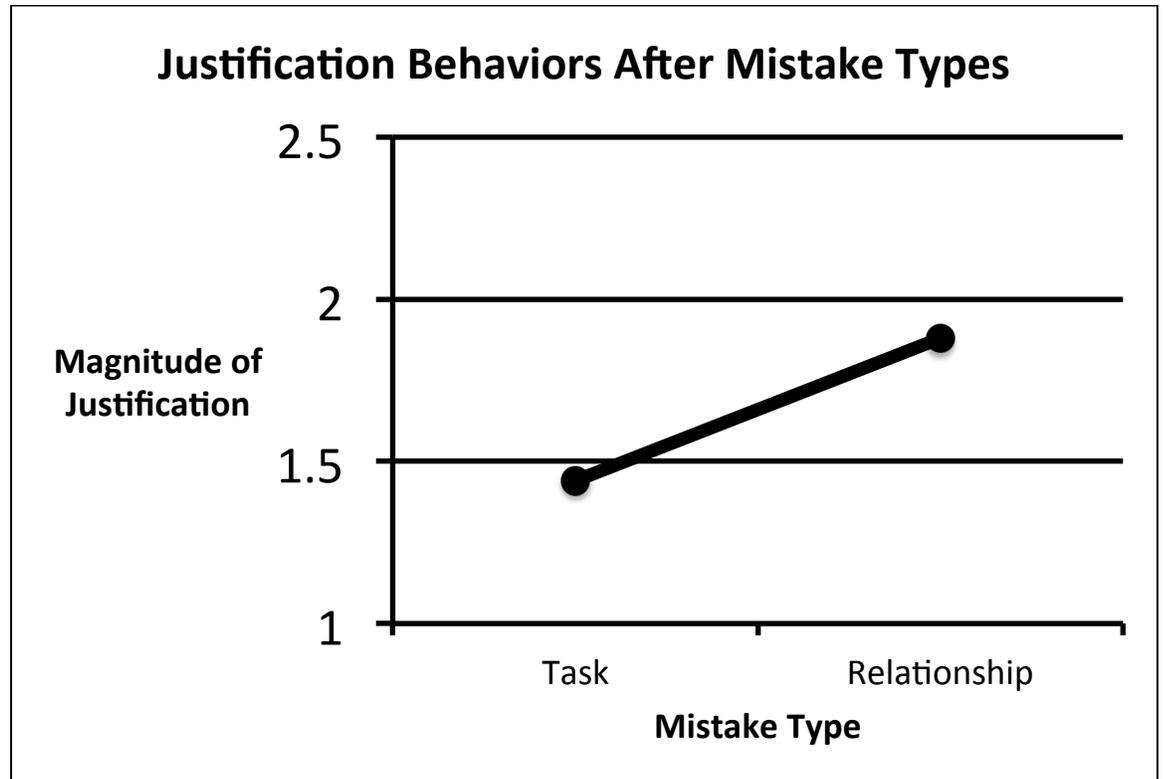


**Figure 2: Subordinate Ratings of Leader Competence After Relationship Mistake**



**\*Results were not significant**

**Figure 3: Leader Apology Behaviors After Mistake Types**

**Figure 4: Leader Justification Behaviors After Mistake Types**

**Table 1, Study 1: Manipulation Check ANOVA Results**

---

| Measures     |                   |           |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Mistake Type | $F(1,89) = 4.83$  | $p = .03$ |
| Apology      | $F(1,89) = 79.09$ | $p = .00$ |
| Severity     | $F(1,89) = .58$   | $p = .45$ |

---

**Table 2, Study 1: Manipulation Check Recovery Tactic Mean Values**

|            | Apology Vignette     | Blame Vignette       |
|------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Measure of | $M = 4.62, SE = .76$ | $M = 2.43, SE = .43$ |
| Apology    |                      |                      |

**Table 3, Study 1: Manipulation Check Vignette Mistake-Orientation Means**

|                          | Relationship Vignette | Task Vignette        |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Task-Orientation         | $M = 2.83, SE = 1.05$ | $M = 3.25, SE = .92$ |
| Relationship-Orientation | $M = 3.30, SE = .98$  | $M = 3.80, SE = .99$ |

**Table 4, Study 1: Manipulation Check, Crosstab Results of Mistake Perception**

|              | Yes | No  |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| Task         | 82% | 18% |
| Relationship | 80% | 20% |

*Table illustrates the percentage of participants who classified that a particular task-oriented / relationship oriented scenario was a mistake.*

**Table 5, Study 1: Mean Values and ANOVA Results for Subordinate Ratings of Leader Competence**

|                         | Apology              | Blame                | <i>F</i> value   | <i>p</i> value |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Task Mistake            | $M = 3.01, SE = .12$ | $M = 2.46, SE = .11$ | $F(1,93) = 6.53$ | $p = .01$      |
| Relationship<br>Mistake | $M = 3.12, SE = .12$ | $M = 3.41, SE = .11$ | $F(1,93) = .02$  | $p = .88$      |

**Table 6, Study 2, Manipulation Check Vignette ANOVA Results**

|              | <i>F</i> (1,86) | <i>p</i> |
|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| Mistake Type | 34.47           | .00      |

**Table 7, Study 2: Manipulation Check Mean Values**

|                       | Task-Orientation           | Relationship-Orientation   |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Task Vignette         | $M = 3.78,$<br>$SE = 1.33$ | $M = 2.33,$<br>$SE = .82$  |
| Relationship Vignette | $M = 3.15,$<br>$SE = 1.04$ | $M = 3.22,$<br>$SE = 1.50$ |

**Table 8, Study 2: Manipulation Check, Crosstab Results of Mistake Perception**

|              | Yes | No |
|--------------|-----|----|
| Task         | 97% | 3% |
| Relationship | 91% | 9% |

**Table 9, Study 2: Apology Means and Repeated Measures ANOVA Results**

|                         | <i>M</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>F</i> (1,93) = 47.69 | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------------|----------|
| Task Mistake            | 2.17     | .67       | 47.69                   | .00      |
| Relationship<br>Mistake | 1.44     | .45       | 47.69                   | .00      |

**Table 10, Study 2: Justification Means and Repeated Measures ANOVA Results**

|              | <i>M</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>F</i> (1,93) = 47.69 | <i>p</i> |
|--------------|----------|-----------|-------------------------|----------|
| Task Mistake | 1.44     | .45       | 22.64                   | .00      |
| Relationship | 1.88     | 1.48      | 22.64                   | .00      |
| Mistake      |          |           |                         |          |

## References

- Allan, A., Allan, M. M., Kaminer, D., & Stein, D. J. (2006). Exploration of the association between apology and forgiveness amongst victims of human rights violations. *Behavioral sciences & the law*, *24*(1), 87–102. doi:10.1002/bsl.689
- Basford, T.E., Offermann, L. R., Behrend, T.S. (in press). Please accept my sincerest apologies: Examining follower reactions to leader apology. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *112*(2).
- Bavelas, J. (2004). An analysis of formal apologies by Canadian churches to First Nations. *Occasional Paper*, *1*, 317-338.
- Bedell-Avers, K. E., Hunter, S. T., & Mumford, M. D. (2008). Conditions of problem-solving and the performance of charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic leaders: A comparative experimental study. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *19*, 89–106.
- Bedell-Avers, K. (2008). *Leader errors: An examination of the implications*.
- Blake, R. R., Mouton, J. S., Barnes, L. B., & Greiner, L. E. (1964). Breakthrough in organization development. *Harvard Business Review*, *42*, 37–59.
- Blanchard, K., & McBride, M. (2003). *The one minute apology: A powerful way to make things better*. William Morrow.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). Politeness: Some universals in language use. *Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press*.
- Cohen-Charash, Y., & Spector, P. E. (2002). Erratum to "The role of justice in organizations: A meta-analysis"[*Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 86 (2001) 278-321]. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *89*(2), 1215-1213.
- Cohen-Charash, Y., & Spector, P. E. (2001). The role of justice in organizations: A meta-analysis. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, *86*(2), 278-321.

- Conlon, D. E., & Murray, N. M. (2012). Customer perceptions of corporate responses to product complaints : The role of explanations, *39*(4), 1040–1056.
- Cushenbery, L. D. (2010). Apology as a risky strategy for follower perceptions of leader competence and willingness to follow.
- Dunn, D., & Cody, M. (2000). Account credibility and public image: Excuses, justifications, denials, and sexual harassment. *Communication Monographs*, *67*(4), 372–391.
- Dijksterhuis, A. (2004). I like myself but I don't know why: Enhancing implicit self-esteem by subliminal evaluative conditioning. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *86*(2), 345-355.
- Holland, R. W., Meertens, R. M., & Van Vugt, M. (2002). Dissonance on the road: Self-esteem as a moderator of internal and external self-justification strategies. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *28*(12), 1713–1724. doi:10.1177/014616702237652
- Horner, M. (1997). Leadership theory: past, present and future. *Team Performance Management*, *3*(4), 270–291.
- Hunter, S. T., Tate, B. W., Dzieweczynski, J. L., & Bedell-Avers, K. E. (2011). Leaders make mistakes: A multilevel consideration of why. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(2), 239–258. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.02.001
- Hunter, S. T., Tate, B. W., Dzieweczynski, J. L., & Cushenbery, L. (2010). Understanding the antecedents of unintentional leader errors. *When Leadership Goes Wrong: Destructive Leadership, Mistakes, and Ethical Failures*, 405.
- Jackall, R. (1988). Moral mazes: The world of corporate managers. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, *1*(4), 598-614.
- Judge, T. a, Piccolo, R. F., & Ilies, R. (2004). The forgotten ones? The validity of consideration and initiating structure in leadership research. *The Journal of applied psychology*, *89*(1), 36–51. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.89.1.36

- Kim, P., Ferrin, D., Cooper, C., & Dirks, K. (2004). Removing the shadow of suspicion: The effects of apology versus denial for repairing competence- versus integrity-based trust violations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*(1), 104–118.
- Kim, P. H., Dirks, K. T., Cooper, C. D., & Ferrin, D. L. (2006). When more blame is better than less: The implications of internal vs. external attributions for the repair of trust after a competence-vs. integrity-based trust violation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 99*(1), 49–65.
- Lazare, A. (2004). Making peace through apology. *Greater Good, Fall*, 16-19.
- Legnini, M. W. (1994). Commentary developing leaders vs training administrators in the health services. *American Journal of Public Health, 84*(10), 1569–1572.
- Lievens, F., Chasteen, C. S., Day, E. A., & Christiansen, N. D. (2006). Large-scale investigation of the role of trait activation theory for understanding assessment center convergent and discriminant validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*(2), 247-258.
- Madon, S., Jussim, L., & Eccles, J. (1997). Record. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 72*(4), 791-809.
- Martijn, C., Spears, R., Van der Pligt, J., & Jakobs, E. (1992). Negativity and positivity effects in person perception and inference: Ability versus morality. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 22*(5), 453-463.
- Maxham III, J. G., & Netemeyer, R. G. (2002). A longitudinal study of complaining customers' evaluations of multiple service failures and recovery efforts. *The Journal of Marketing, 57*-71.
- McLaughlin, M. L., Cody, M. J., & Rosenstein, N. E. (1983). Account sequences in conversations between strangers. *Communications Monographs, 50*(2), 102-125.
- Mondillon, L., Niedenthal, P. M., Brauer, M., Rohmann, A., Dalle, N., & Uchida, Y. (2005). Beliefs about power and its relation to emotional experience: A comparison of

- Japan, France, Germany, and the United States. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 31(8), 1112-1122.
- Reeder, G. D., & Brewer, M. B. (1979). A schematic model of dispositional attribution in interpersonal perception. *Psychological Review*, 86(1), 61-79.
- Riordan, C., Marlin, N., & Kellog, R. (1983). The effectiveness of accounts following transgression. *Social Psychology*, 46(3), 213–219.
- Rodgers, M.S., Sauer, S.J., Proell, C.A. (2013). The lion's share: The impact of credit expectations and credit allocations on commitment to leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(1), 80-93.
- Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. E. (1991). *The person and the situation*. Pinter & Martin Limited.
- Schonbach, P., & Kleibaumhuter, P. (1990). 10 Severity of reproach and defensiveness of accounts. *The psychology of tactical communication*, 2, 229.
- Senders, J. W., & Moray, N. P. (1991). Human error: Cause, prediction, and reduction. In *The chapters in this volume are drawn chiefly from papers presented at the Second Conference on the Nature and Source of Human Error, 1983, held in Bellagio, Italy.*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Snyder, C. R., & Higgins, R. L. (1988). Excuses: their effective role in the negotiation of reality. *Psychological bulletin*, 104(1), 23–35. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/3043526>
- Stouten, J., & Tripp, T. M. (2009). Claiming more than equality: Should leaders ask for forgiveness? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(3), 287–298. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.03.002
- Szwajkowski, E. (2012). Accounting for organizational misconduct. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 11(5-6), 401–411.

- Tata, J. (2000). She Said, He Said. The Influence of Remedial Accounts on Third-Party Judgments of Coworker Sexual Harassment. *Journal of Management*, 26(6), 1133–1156. doi:10.1177/014920630002600604
- Tedeschi, J. T., Bonoma, T., & Lindskold, S. (1970). Threateners' reactions to prior announcement of behavioral compliance or defiance. *Behavioral Science*, 15(2), 171-179.
- Thoroughgood, Christian, Sawyer, Katina, Hunter, S. (2012). Real men don't make mistakes: Investigating the effects of leader gender, error type, and the occupational context on leader error perceptions. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 23(1).
- Tracy, Karen, 1990. The many faces of facework. In: Giles, H., Robinson, W.P. (Eds.), *Handbook of Language and Social Psychology*. (pp. 209-226). Chichester: John Wiley.
- Tsai, W., Huang, T., Wu, C., & Lo, I.-H. (2010). Disentangling the effects of applicant defensive impression management tactics in job interviews. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 18(2), 131–140.
- Tucker, S., Turner, N., Barling, J., Reid, E. M., & Elving, C. (2006). Apologies and transformational leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 63(2), 195–207. doi:10.1007/s10551-005-3571-0
- Weiner, B., Amirkhan, J., Folkes, V. S., & Verette, J. A. (1987). An attributional analysis of excuse giving: Studies of a naive theory of emotion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(2), 316.
- Yukl, G., Gordon, A., & Taber, T. (2002). A hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behavior: Integrating a half century of behavior research. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 9(1), 15–32. doi:10.1177/107179190200900102
- Zechmeister, J., Garcia, S., Romero, C., & Vas, S. (2004). Don't apologize unless you mean it: A laboratory investigation of forgiveness and retaliation. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23(4), 532–564.

## Academic Vita

Andrea Hetrick

AndreaHetrick19@gmail.com

---

### Education

May 2013, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA  
Psychology, B.A.  
Honors Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Sam Hunter

### Journal Publications

Hetrick, A., Cushenbery, L., Fairchild, J., Shah, M., Shapiro, J., & Hunter, S. (2013). *Leader Recovery from Task and Relationship-Oriented Mistakes*. (under review; target: Leadership Quarterly).

### Conference Presentations

Hetrick, A., Cushenbery, L., Fairchild, J., & Hunter, S. *Gender and Leader Recovery from Task and Relationship-Oriented Mistakes*. (2012, April). Poster presented at the 28th Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Houston.

Lovelace, J., Medeiros, K., Hetrick, A., & Hunter, S. (2012, April). *Leaders influencing creative performance throughout the creative process*. Poster presented at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Diego.

Hetrick, A. (2012, April). *Gender and Leader Recovery from Task and Relationship Errors*. Poster presented at the 2012 Pennsylvania State University Psi Chi Annual Research Conference, University Park.

### Honors and Awards

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 2012-2013 | <b>Hayes Trustee Scholarship</b>       |
| 2012      | <b>George Deike Honors Scholarship</b> |

### **Honors and Awards (Continued)**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 2012      | <b>First Place for Empirical Poster Presentation</b><br>Psi Chi Undergraduate Research Conference 2012 |
| 2011      | <b>Harold L. Hinman Memorial Scholarship</b>   |
| 2011-2012 | <b>Catherine Shultz Rein Trustee Scholarship</b>   |
| 2010      | <b>Clayton H. Schug Forensic Award</b>   |
| 2009-2013 | <b>Roland J. Wotring Scholarship</b>   |

### **Association Memberships**

- The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Student Affiliate
- Psi Chi, Student Affiliate

### **Professional Experience**

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 2012 | <b>Executive Management of Business Administration Student Assessment Center Project, Department of Management and Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Worked with Dr. Stephen Humphrey</li><li>•Contacted 46 EMBA schools to collect data</li><li>•Gathered feedback materials for participants</li></ul>                  |
| 2012 | <b>DDI Project, The I/O Psychology Practicum Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Developed and reviewed non-verbal cognitive ability test items for employee selection to be used by Development Dimensions International (DDI)</li><li>•Attended weekly project review meetings with graduate students and professors</li></ul> |
| 2012 | <b>PSEA Project, The I/O Psychology Practicum Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Worked with data gathered via surveys from the Pennsylvania State Education Association</li><li>•Attended weekly meetings with graduate students and professors to review projects and write summaries of data analysis results</li></ul>      |

## **Research Interests**

I have broad interests within the realm of Industrial and Organizational psychology. Specifically, I am interested in leadership and the antecedents and consequences of negative leader behaviors.

## **Research Positions**

### **2010- Undergraduate Lab Coordinator, Leadership and Innovation Lab**

- Department of Psychology, under the direction of Dr. Sam Hunter
- Completed IRB ethics training for Human Subjects Research
- Maintain the lab website and oversee research projects
- Plan lab events and weekly meeting icebreaker activities
- Conducted interviews of applicants and select new members
- Mentored new undergraduate lab students

### **2012 Undergraduate Intern Supervisor, International Center for the Study of Terrorism (ICST)**

- Checked the qualitative and quantitative codesheets of 30 undergraduates
- Combine and format documents to upload to qualitative database
- Coded terrorist autobiographies for qualitative and quantitative variables
- As part of the “Pathways, Processes, Roles and Factors for Terrorist Disengagement Re-Engagement and Recidivism” Project
- Findings will be used to better understand the terrorist disengagement and re-engagement process, the pathways into and out of terrorist groups, and the factors that lead terrorist to disengage and re-engage

### **2012 Research Assistant, PNC Leadership Assessment Center**

- Completed the assessment center as a participant
- Helped design scenarios for and work for the center under Dr. Rick Jacobs

## **Research Projects**

### **2012 Co-leader, “Leader Response to Error”**

- Acted as a confederate for lab studies
- Helped edit the Qualtrics survey and lab materials for the study
- Coordinated schedules, mentored new lab students
- Led coding team and coded video data for variables

## **Research Projects (Continued)**

- 2012 **Co-leader, “Leadership and Terrorism”**
- Collaborated with team members to develop a literature review about leadership error
  - Identified errors in leader biographies to be used for a historiometric analysis
- 2011 **Co-leader, “Creativity: Interactive Web-based Training”**
- Ran participants
  - Coded divergent thinking data for quality, originality, & other variables
  - Results used to determine the effectiveness of web-based training on creativity
- 2011 **Coder, “My Worst Leader Project”**
- Developed benchmarks for variables such as error type and closeness to leader
  - Coded participant responses for variables
  - Results to be used to examine the impacts of different types of leader errors on subordinates
- 2010 **Coder, “The Oklahoma Project”**
- Worked for Dr. Stephen Humphrey of the Department of Management and Organization
  - Collaborated and coordinated with four other project members
  - Entered survey data on an Excel Spreadsheet
  - Combined and cleaned all data in the spreadsheet
  - Coded divergent thinking data for quality, originality, & other variables
- 2010 **Confederate, “Leadership and Lion Pride”**
- Presented a poster for the project at SIOP in San Diego
  - Results used to examine the impact of charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic leadership styles and stress on creative performance
  - Collaborated with another co-leader to coordinate lab study schedules

## **Relevant Skills and Experience**

- SPSS and syntax in SPSS
- Qualtrics and Survey Monkey Survey software
- Microsoft Office Suite
- PC and Apple Operating Systems
- Basic Spanish

**Community Service**

2010-2012 THON Organization Member, Women's Club Soccer

2012 Move-in Volunteer

**Campus Involvement**

2011-2012 Founding President, The Industrial/Organizational Psychology Society

2010-2012 Writing Tutor

2010-2011 Women's Club Soccer

2009-2011 Founding Treasurer, Debate Society

**Work Experience**

2012 Server, Levels Nightclub

2011 Server, The Garfield Hotel and Grille

2007-2011 Server, Woodstone Country Club

2008-2009 Northampton High School Reporter, The Northampton Press