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A Newcomer Socialization Perspective on the Proliferation of Unethical Conduct in  
Organizations: The Influences of Peer Coaching Practices and Newcomers' Goal Orientations

*Abstract*

Drawing on conservation of resources theory, we contribute to the behavioral ethics literature by examining how and why organizational socialization processes can affect newcomers' adoption of unethical behaviors. Specifically, we contend that quality peer coaching (i.e., providing newcomers with job-related guidance and social support) provides newcomers with enhanced self-resources that diminishes emotional exhaustion and thus indirectly reduces newcomer unethical conduct. Conversely, peer coach unethical conduct (i.e., violating ethical norms) increases newcomers' emotional exhaustion, and thus indirectly increases newcomers' own unethical acts. Our research also identifies newcomers' goal orientations as important individual differences that moderate the proposed mediation effects. Newcomers with high mastery orientations respond to high emotional exhaustion by harnessing more resources and identifying new work strategies, thereby engaging in less unethical conduct. Conversely, newcomers with high performance orientations give into emotional exhaustion and engage in unethical conduct as a way of outperforming others while conserving resources. We tested our theoretical model using a sample of peer coaches and newcomers from the Real Estate industry, using objective reporting of peer coaches' and newcomers' unethical conduct over a nine-month period.

## Introduction

Over 68 million U.S. workers experienced organizational transitions in 2018 (Essien & McCarthy, 2019). Organizational newcomers, typically defined as new employees who have been with their work organizations for 13 months or less (Bauer et al., 2007: 710), experience high levels of uncertainty and stress as they are inundated with new information and try to discern the organization's norms (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). As a result, some newcomers may be particularly susceptible to the proliferation of organizational unethical conduct (i.e., behaviors that go against the ethical expectations endorsed by society; Treviño & Nelson, 2017; Treviño et al., 2006). Because organizational unethical behavior can result in substantial costs such as reputational losses, financial penalties, and a reduced customer base (e.g., Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Treviño et al., 2006), it is surprising that very little research has investigated *why* and *when* newcomers adopt such practices.

To understand why and when newcomers adopt unethical practices, we examine the effect of peer coaching as a socialization process in which peers and newcomers interact to facilitate newcomer learning and the accomplishment of tasks and goals (Parker et al., 2008). The conceptual origin of peer coaching comes from a well-established belief among scholars and practitioners that peers play a pivotal role in creating a community of practice and promoting continuous learning in organizations (Jones, 1986; Lave & Wenger, 1991). In recent years, researchers have increasingly advocated taking this informal, relational approach to newcomer adjustment, because newcomer learning and social integration is largely unplanned, ongoing, and organization-specific (Wolfson et al., 2019). For example, leading companies such as Microsoft and Google have implemented peer-to-peer socialization programs to facilitate newcomer learning and adjustment, instead of assigning responsibilities for onboarding newcomers to

managers (Klinghoffer et al., 2019). Although previous research on peer coaching has focused on task performance (Liu & Batt, 2010), scholars have speculated that interactions with peer coaches can also result in a newcomer's acceptance of "bad" behaviors as "business as usual" (Zey-Ferrell et al., 1979). In this respect, we specifically examine peer coaches' quality coaching (i.e., job-related guidance and social support; D'Abate et al., 2003; Lankau & Scandura, 2002) and peer coaches' unethical conduct as socialization practices that indirectly influence newcomers' unethical behavior through the experience of emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion occurs when newcomers feel over-extended and depleted of their emotional resources (Maslach et al., 2001). Utilizing conservation of resources (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989) theory, we contend that peer coaches' quality coaching reduces newcomers' emotional exhaustion and thus indirectly reduces newcomers' unethical conduct. In contrast, peer coaches' unethical conduct increases newcomers' emotional exhaustion and thus indirectly increases newcomers' unethical conduct.

Also relying on COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), we identify individual differences that are likely to affect how newcomers manage their emotional exhaustion in response to peer coaching practices (viz., quality coaching, unethical conduct). In this respect, we integrate COR arguments with goal orientation theory (Dweck, 1986; 1999) to examine the moderating role of mastery and performance goal orientations because these individual differences affect the extent to which people respond to achievement-related challenges with functional versus dysfunctional reactions (Vandewalle, 1997). Goal orientation is defined as "dispositions toward developing or demonstrating ability in achievement situations" (Vandewalle, 1997: 996), and there are two primary forms of goal orientation.<sup>1</sup> Individuals with high mastery goal orientations believe their

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<sup>1</sup> Elliot and colleagues suggested a refinement of these constructs (Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Vandewalle, 1997): a mastery-approach goal focuses on developing knowledge and skills; a mastery-

skills and abilities are malleable; thus, when faced with obstacles, they “seek to increase their competence, to understand or master something new” (Dweck, 1986: 1040). In contrast, individuals with high performance goal orientations view their abilities as fixed and respond to difficult situations by gaining “favorable judgments of their competence” relative to others (Dweck, 1986: 1040).

While we propose that peer coaches’ quality coaching and unethical conduct can dissipate or prompt newcomers’ emotional exhaustion as an “obstacle” or difficult circumstance (e.g., Ellis et al., 2015; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012), newcomers’ mastery or performance goal orientations can affect the degree to which they respond to these experiences with unethical conduct. We predict that those high in mastery goal orientations are less likely to respond with unethical conduct because they are more likely to engage in functional strategies to manage lost resources (Bell & Kozlowski, 2012). Yet, emotionally exhausted newcomers with high performance goal orientations are more likely to engage in unethical conduct because such an approach conserves resources while granting the appearance of success relative to others (Greenbaum et al., 2018). See Figure 1 for our theoretical model.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

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avoidance goal focuses on preventing developmental stagnation or skill loss; a performance-approach goal focuses on attaining favorable judgments of competence; and a performance-avoidance goal focuses on preventing perceptions of failure and incompetence. Although it is useful to distinguish the approach and avoidance forms of goal orientations among learners in self-controlled educational settings, researchers found that employees’ avoidance tendencies in the work setting typically are confounded by managerial supervision and workplace rules (VandeWalle et al., 2001). This is further complicated by the criticism that existing measures seem to capture negative affectivity rather than the theoretical construct of avoidance goals (Elliot & Murayama, 2008). Indeed, Janssen and van Yperen (2004) suggested that unless there is a clear theory guiding the effects of mastery and performance avoidance orientations, researchers should focus on the approach facets. Following their recommendation, we focus only on approach goals and do not develop formal hypotheses regarding mastery or performance avoidance goals. We restrict the use of the terms “mastery goals” and “performance goals” to the approach components of these goal orientations in this study.

Through our research, we intend to make several theoretical contributions to the literature. First, we contribute to the behavioral ethics literature by identifying COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) as an important and relevant theoretical lens for understanding why and when newcomers adopt unethical conduct. Past research has largely implied that socialization practices, such as peer coaching, are functional and helpful to newcomer assimilation (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007). Yet, COR theory allows us to explain when and why socialization practices can be dysfunctional by affecting newcomers' emotional exhaustion and subsequent unethical conduct. In this respect, our research is also important because a substantial number of workers enter the socialization process each year (Essien & McCarthy, 2019), and newcomers have limited knowledge that may make them more susceptible to unethical conduct (Treviño & Nelson, 2017). Studying organizational socialization with respect to ethics may yield insights that could help organizations effectively address early displays of unethical conduct.

Second, we contribute to the socialization literature by addressing the call for management research to understand newcomer adjustment through the lens of stress-related theories (Ellis et al., 2015), with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) being particularly relevant to this call. We investigate the possibility that common socialization tactics (e.g., coach-newcomer relationships) could enhance or deplete newcomers' resources and increase newcomers' unethical behavior under certain circumstances. Third, goal orientations are often examined in relation to task performance, not unethical conduct (e.g., Payne et al., 2007). Thus, we contribute to the literature by relying on COR theory and goal orientation theorizing to understand the role of goal orientations with respect to the relationship between newcomer emotional exhaustion and subsequent unethical conduct.

## **Theory and Hypotheses**

A key tenet of COR theory is that people strive to acquire, retain, and protect valuable resources (e.g., energy, time) that are necessary to regulate their work activities and social relationships (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989, 2002). Because these self-resources are important and depletable, the threat of resource loss, actual loss, or the failure to replenish lost resources increases psychological burnout, primarily in the form of emotional exhaustion (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Newcomers are particularly susceptible to high levels of emotional exhaustion, as they are in a transition period characterized by high levels of ambiguity, uncertainty, and anxiety in a new environment (Ellis et al., 2015). In this context, peer coaches as key socialization agents can provide valuable resources to newcomers, thereby reducing emotional exhaustion and facilitating a successful adjustment (Louis et al., 1983; Saks & Gruman, 2012). In this respect, we theorize that high-quality peer coaching helps newcomers mitigate emotional exhaustion by (a) expanding newcomers' own reservoirs of resources, (b) increasing newcomers' accessibility to others' resources, and (c) protecting newcomers against resource loss spirals.

First, because high-quality peer coaches provide newcomers with job-related information and developmental feedback (Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Liu & Batt, 2010), newcomers readily improve problem-solving skills and social competence, thereby accelerating their acquisition of new resources (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). High-quality peer coaches also provide trust and friendship, which makes newcomers more capable of planning, altering, and expending their resources to meet emotionally taxing demands (Ellis et al., 2015). For instance, when faced with a challenge, a newcomer can ask the high-quality peer coach questions that are trivial ("What's the appropriate dress for the client meeting?") or politically sensitive ("Whose opinions really matter?") without fearing social costs (Rollag et al., 2005).

Second, high-quality peer coaches share their social resources with newcomers, enabling newcomers to gain exposure to important constituents (i.e., other organizational units, top managers, and clients) (Parker et al., 2008). In this way, newcomers are exposed to a broader array of expertise and influence for completing their jobs, which enhances self-resources and thereby limits emotional exhaustion.

Third, high-quality peer coaches provide frequent, spontaneous, and timely instrumental and psychosocial support (D'Abate et al., 2003). For example, a high-quality peer coach may take on a newcomer's overdue tasks, enabling the newcomer to recover and proceed to a new task. Newcomers who receive such support are better able to maintain their resources and recover from losses, thereby preventing the spiraling effect of lost resources begetting additional lost resources that result in emotional exhaustion.

Thus, in accordance with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), high-quality peer coaches provide valuable resources that allow newcomers to adapt fluidly and effectively to their new organizations without experiencing emotional exhaustion.

*Hypothesis 1: Quality of peer coaching is negatively related to newcomer emotional exhaustion.*

When a peer coach engages in unethical behavior, such as misrepresenting products to close a sale, a newcomer perceives a discrepancy between these acts and the ethical standards that are generally endorsed by society (Treviño et al., 2006). The peer coach's unethical conduct may suggest that the organization tolerates conduct that is typically viewed as unacceptable by society at large (e.g., Greenbaum et al., 2019). Accordingly, newcomers exert a considerable amount of self-resources trying to discern the interplay between their peer coach's unethical behaviors and society's acceptance of such behaviors. As newcomers muddle through these



ethical discrepancies, they consume self-resources and thus experience an uncomfortable affective state in the form of emotional exhaustion (e.g., Gunia et al., 2012; Hinojosa et al., 2017). In this respect, a peer coach's unethical conduct contributes to a newcomer's feelings of emotional exhaustion.

In relation to our predictions, Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2012) found that ethical discrepancies can trigger newcomers' depletion of self-resources. Extant research also suggests that simply observing another person's unethical conduct can create a sense of discomfort that consumes self-resources as reflected by emotional exhaustion (Greenbaum et al., 2014). Taken together, peer coaches' unethical behaviors propel newcomers to spend time and energy discerning the acceptability of unethical conduct, which is an emotionally taxing experience as evidenced by emotional exhaustion.

*Hypothesis 2: Peer coach unethical behavior is positively related to newcomer emotional exhaustion.*

Another central argument of COR theory is that individuals who experience high emotional exhaustion exhibit a defensive posture to protect remaining resources, which impairs their capacity to override impulsive desires or refrain from negative behaviors (Hobfoll, 2002). For example, individuals who feel exhausted are more likely to evoke interpersonal conflict and interrupt work routines (Maslach et al., 2001). Likewise, as emotionally exhausted individuals try to replenish resources, they may not have the energy to fulfill the demands of upholding ethical standards (Mawritz et al., 2017).

Upholding ethical standards necessitates self-control and the availability of self-resources to properly regulate one's behaviors (e.g., Greenbaum et al., 2015; Mawritz et al., 2017). To attend to ethical standards, individuals need to continuously monitor their actions in relation to

ethical standards and have the capacity to self-correct their conduct when it deviates from ethical standards. An employee experiencing emotional exhaustion is unlikely to have the fortitude to pay attention to, monitor, and self-correct their behaviors to uphold ethical standards. Indeed, extant research demonstrates that emotional exhaustion and related constructs increase unethical behaviors in the form of dishonesty, cheating, and deviance (e.g., Kouchaki & Desai, 2015; Thau & Mitchell, 2010).

Applying these ideas to the newcomer experience, we expect a positive association between newcomers' emotional exhaustion and subsequent unethical behaviors. Furthermore, we propose that emotional exhaustion explains the indirect negative relationship between peer coaching quality and newcomer unethical conduct, and the indirect positive relationship between peer coach unethical conduct and newcomer unethical conduct. High-quality peer coaches infuse newcomers with enhanced self-resources (Saks & Gruman, 2012), which buffer against newcomers' emotional exhaustion and subsequent unethical conduct. Conversely, peer coaches' unethical conduct prompts newcomers to experience a depletion of self-resources as reflected by enhanced emotional exhaustion (e.g., Greenbaum et al., 2014), with these emotionally exhausted newcomers then responding to their lost resources by giving into unethical conduct (e.g., Mawritz et al., 2017; Thau & Mitchell, 2010).

*Hypothesis 3: Quality of peer coaching has a negative indirect effect on newcomer unethical behavior via decreased newcomer emotional exhaustion.*

*Hypothesis 4: Peer coach unethical behavior has a positive indirect effect on newcomer unethical behavior via increased newcomer emotional exhaustion.*

### **The Moderating Effects of Mastery and Performance Goal Orientations**

In accordance with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), we expect newcomers to respond to peer coaches' high-quality coaching or unethical conduct with emotional exhaustion that is handled differently depending on the newcomers' capacity to manage taxing situations. In particular, mastery and performance goal orientations affect the extent to which people respond to challenging circumstances with functional versus dysfunctional reactions (Vandewalle, 1997).

Individuals with high mastery orientations hold incremental views of the self, such that they feel as though they can functionally adapt to circumstances (Button et al., 1996). When faced with barriers to effectively completing their jobs, individuals with high mastery orientations remain intrinsically motivated, demonstrate persistent effort, and seek adaptive strategies to improve performance (Colquitt & Simmering, 1998). In this respect, past research has shown that people who remain highly motivated are able to overcome emotional exhaustion by continuing to perform well on subsequent self-control tasks (Muraven & Slessareva, 2003). Similarly, because of their motivation to learn from, and to adapt to, difficult circumstances (Bell & Kozlowski, 2012), we expect newcomers high in mastery orientation to handle their emotional exhaustion more functionally by avoiding unethical conduct.

Additionally, the implicit theory of willpower (Job, et al., 2010), which is related to COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), suggests that people differ in their implicit evaluations about the availability and depletability of core resources. For example, some people think that strenuous mental activity depletes energy that must be replenished through rest, and others think that strenuous mental activity prepares them to take on additional challenges (Job et al., 2015). Mastery goal orientation aligns with this latter view, such that those high in this trait believe that self-resources can be expanded by learning, adapting, and persisting in response to work challenges (Bell & Kozlowski, 2012). Thus, in comparison to those low in mastery goal

orientation, newcomers high in mastery goal orientation will be less likely to handle emotional exhaustion by conserving resources dysfunctionally through unethical conduct.

*Hypothesis 5: Newcomer mastery goal orientation moderates the positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and newcomer unethical behavior, such that the relationship is weaker for newcomers with higher (versus lower) mastery goal orientations.*

We also argue that performance goal orientation moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and unethical behavior. A performance goal orientation is characterized by a focus on outperforming others and receiving favorable performance feedback (Button et al., 1996). From the COR perspective, individuals who strive for performance goals tend to expend a substantial amount of self-resources monitoring performance standards and demonstrating competence relative to others (Crouzevialle & Butera, 2013). In situations characterized by high exhaustion, individuals with high performance orientations find ways to conserve resources while attending to performance, which can result in unethical behavior.

Indeed, past research suggests that people are more likely to engage in unethical conduct when they have a vested interest in performing well (e.g., Schweitzer et al., 2004). Additionally, past research suggests that certain personality characteristics propel people to respond to taxing conditions with dysfunctional behaviors (Kaiser et al., 2015). Thus, as a result of being emotionally exhausted, a newcomer high in performance goal orientation may conserve resources by ignoring ethics-related rules. By default, ignoring these rules may help them to “appear” more successful in terms of meeting performance standards and outperforming others (e.g., Greenbaum et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2018). For example, those high in performance goal orientation may handle their emotional exhaustion by misleading customers to close a sale,

which may help them to “prove” their performance to those around them. Thus, in comparison to those low in performance goal orientation, newcomers high in this trait are more likely to view their current drained state (i.e., emotional exhaustion) as a threat or unfavorable condition that diminishes their chances for success, thereby increasing the likelihood of unethical conduct as a way of preserving their success.

*Hypothesis 6: Newcomer performance goal orientation moderates the positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and newcomer unethical behavior, such that the relationship is stronger for newcomers with higher (versus lower) performance goal orientations.*

To complete our theoretical model, and according to our above theoretical arguments, we predict that the negative indirect relationship between quality peer coaching and newcomer unethical behavior (through diminished emotional exhaustion), and the positive indirect relationship between peer coach unethical behavior and newcomer unethical behavior (through enhanced emotional exhaustion), are moderated by the extent to which newcomers strive to achieve mastery versus performance goals. As suggested by Hypotheses 5 and 6, we specifically predict for these mediated relationships to be affected by second-stage moderation.

*Hypothesis 7: Newcomer mastery goal orientation serves as a second-stage moderator for the negative indirect relationship between quality of peer coaching and newcomer unethical behavior via decreased emotional exhaustion. This mediated relationship is weaker for newcomers with higher (versus lower) mastery goal orientations.*

*Hypothesis 8: Newcomer performance goal orientation serves as a second-stage moderator for the negative indirect relationship between quality of peer coaching and newcomer unethical behavior via decreased emotional exhaustion. This mediated*

*relationship is stronger for newcomers with higher (versus lower) performance goal orientations.*

*Hypothesis 9: Newcomer mastery goal orientation serves as a second-stage moderator of the positive indirect relationship between peer coach unethical behavior and newcomer unethical behavior via increased emotional exhaustion. This mediated relationship is weaker for newcomers with higher (versus lower) mastery goal orientations.*

*Hypothesis 10: Newcomer performance goal orientation serves as a second-stage moderator of the positive indirect relationship between peer coach unethical behavior and newcomer unethical behavior via increased emotional exhaustion. This mediated relationship is stronger for newcomers with higher (versus lower) performance goal orientations.*

## **Method**

### **Study Setting and Sample**

To test our hypotheses, we collected data from company records and two waves of employee-reported surveys over a 9-month period from RealtyCo (a pseudonym), a regional real estate company in China. We focused on full-time employees in sales positions (i.e., real estate sales associates). At the beginning of the data collection, we obtained a full list of all sales employees from RealtyCo and found that 234 individuals (28% of all sales employees) had joined the company within the previous 3 months. We selected these 234 newcomers as the initial sample for the surveys. Among these individuals, 224 employees responded to the first survey and 176 responded to the second survey. After matching valid responses from these two surveys, the final sample was reduced to 150 newcomers who worked with 109 coaches (final

response rate = 64%). The average age of newcomers in the final sample was 23 years; 53% of the sample had obtained an associate's degree and 47% had earned a bachelor's degree.

To comply with legal requirements, protect its interests and reputation, and create a strong company culture, RealtyCo developed a written Code of Ethics that not only established a framework for professional conduct and responsibilities, but also provided a uniform set of instructions on how to adhere to societal norms of ethical standards in routine situations. RealtyCo required managers to regularly review and discuss the Code of Ethics with sales employees to ensure that they were familiar with the ethical requirements and were aware of possible disciplinary procedures if codes were breached.

Our specific research setting and sample provided a couple of methodological strengths. RealtyCo implemented an onboarding buddy program in which each newcomer was assigned to an experienced coworker who served as the peer coach during the first few months of employment. Specifically, the company required all job candidates to submit their applications to, and take the assessments designed by, the corporate HR department, instead of applying for openings at specific local offices. After receiving and accepting job offers, newcomers participated in a 4-day compliance orientation program that included intensive ethics-oriented training and behavioral assessments. Then, the corporate HR office assigned newcomers to peer coaches working in local offices. Because newcomers, peer coaches, supervisors, and other experienced coworkers had little control over this matching process, our data likely have minimal confounding effects based on pre-existing ethical preferences and selection bias (e.g., a peer with high ethical standards choosing to coach newcomers with similarly high standards).

Moreover, as part of the onboarding program, newcomers were expected to shadow their peer coaches to learn about their job responsibilities and the organizational culture. Newcomers

were not authorized to show houses to buyers or sign legal documents with buyers unless their coaches were present. In addition, similar to those in other sales and professional services jobs, RealtyCo agents spent a substantial amount of work time at off-site locations engaged in activities such as visiting newly-listed houses, showing houses to buyers, and handling paperwork in lawyers' offices, thereby limiting newcomers' exposure to influences from other socialization agents such as supervisors and coworkers. This therefore provides a study setting in which newcomers had sufficient interactions with peer coaches who played a potentially pivotal role in shaping newcomers' behavior.

### **Measures**

We used company records to gather objective data on peer coaches' unethical behavior at Time 1 (months 1–3) and newcomer unethical behavior at Time 4 (months 7–9). We collected newcomer-reported survey data on coaching quality, mastery and performance goal orientations at Time 2 (month 4), and emotional exhaustion at Time 3 (month 6). When administering surveys, we assured participants of confidentiality; we also emphasized that the surveys were designed to probe newcomer experiences and that coaches and managers would not have access to individual-level responses. All survey items were originally developed in English and translated into Chinese using a back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970). Participants responded to items using a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

*Peer coach unethical behavior.* We operationalized peer coach unethical behavior as the monthly average of the number of times that a peer coach violated RealtyCo's Code of Ethics as documented in organizational records during the first 3 months of a newcomer's employment. Because RealtyCo collected and recorded unethical violations to inform managerial decisions related to promotions, salary raises, and terminations, and then provided the data to the research



team without personal identifiers, we used these data as “the secondary analysis of existing data.”<sup>2</sup> We followed the guidelines of institutional review boards with respect to ensuring anonymity.

Compared to self-reported measures, objective measures of unethical behavior based on organizational records helps reduce recall bias and measurement error caused by subjective interpretations of unethical incidents (Podsakoff et al., 2003). During our field interviews, managers reported that the company had taken at least three additional steps to ensure accurate reporting and transparency with regard to unethical conduct. First, the company provided continuous training to ensure supervisors and sales employees were aware of Code of Ethics, and that they understood their individual responsibility to report unethical conduct by their coworkers. Second, the company employed an internal auditing team to monitor compliance and maintained a reporting system to receive complaints from employees, customers, and other stakeholders (including a confidential ethics hotline that protected callers’ anonymity). Third, the company made records of reported unethical incidents accessible to the alleged perpetrators to ensure that such incidents were substantiated.

After we obtained the data, two trained graduate students (who had no knowledge of the purpose of this research) reviewed all records to ensure that the recorded behaviors were consistent with our definition of unethical behavior. Some examples of unethical behaviors included: failing to protect business records from unauthorized access, using company resources for personal matters, improperly disclosing client information to a third party, and using

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<sup>2</sup> For more information, see University of California Berkeley Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. (2016). Research involving the secondary use of existing data. Retrieved from <https://cphs.berkeley.edu/secondarydata.pdf>.

threatening or abusive language with a client. In our review of company records involving all unethical behaviors by experienced and new employees over a 9-month period, only three incidents were associated with reporting errors (less than 0.1%).

*Coaching quality.* We asked newcomers to evaluate the extent to which their peer coaches provided work-related guidance and psychosocial support using 15 items adapted from Lankau and Scandura (2002). Example items include: “My coach gives me individualized guidance on the job;” and “My coach helps me coordinate work goals” ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

*Goal orientations.* We measured newcomer goal orientations using established scales developed by Ames and Archer (1988). We measured mastery goal orientation with six items. Example items include: “It is important to learn from each experience I have;” and “I put in a great deal of effort in order to learn something new” ( $\alpha = .88$ ). We measured performance goal orientation with five items. Sample items include: “I spend a lot of time thinking about how my performance compares with others;” and “I feel very good when I know I have outperformed others in my company” ( $\alpha = .80$ ). CFA results for mastery and performance goal orientations show that the two-factor model fits the data significantly better than a one-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 203.15, p < .01$ ).

*Emotional exhaustion.* We measured newcomer emotional exhaustion using four items from the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Demerouti et al., 2001). Example items include: “After my work I usually feel worn out and weary;” and “When I work, I usually feel energized” (reverse coded) ( $\alpha = .74$ ).

*Newcomer unethical behavior.* We measured newcomer unethical behavior as the number of times a newcomer violated the Code of Ethics based on company records, following the same procedure to measure unethical behavior by peer coaches. We measured newcomer unethical

behavior occurring 7 to 9 months after joining the organization for two reasons. First, after the first 6 months of employment, RealtyCo considered newcomers to be experienced enough to independently help clients buy, sell, and rent properties. This measure thus reflects the number of unethical acts committed by newcomers when they were not directly supervised by peer coaches. Second, this lagged design helps to address reverse causality concerns (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

*Control variable.* In the analyses, we included three control variables that are theoretically relevant to this study (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016). Previous research suggests that newcomers going through the school-to-work transition encounter more adjustment challenges (Ashforth et al., 2007) and are more susceptible to copying coworkers' unethical behaviors than those who experience the work-to-work transition (Treviño & Nelson, 2017). Thus, we controlled for the type of newcomer entry by indicating whether the newcomer transitioned from school-to-work (coded as 0) or from work-to-work (coded as 1). Moreover, researchers argue that individuals with high conscientiousness are more dependable, careful, and organized and have lower immoral behavior (Lu et al., 2016). Therefore, we controlled for a newcomer's conscientiousness as measured in Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann (2003). Third, to control for the influence of coworkers' unethical conduct, we measured the average number of unethical incidents at the team level (excluding the focal newcomer's unethical behavior) based on organizational records and included this variable in the analyses.

## **Analysis**

*Missing data issues.* The sample was reduced from 234 individuals to 150 individuals due to survey nonresponse and newcomer turnover during the study period. We followed procedures recommended by Rogelberg and Stanton (2007) to assess the extent of sample bias. First, we compared differences between the initial sample and the final sample. Results from a series of *t*-

tests revealed no significant differences between the two samples in terms of peer coaches' unethical conduct and newcomers' demographics. Second, we ran a logistic regression model to estimate the probability that each respondent who completed Survey 1 would complete Survey 2. The results indicate that peer coach unethical behavior (*odds ratio* = .35,  $z = 1.25$ ), coaching quality (*odds ratio* = .26,  $z = .95$ ), newcomer mastery orientation (*odds ratio* = .00,  $z = .01$ ), and performance orientation (*odds ratio* = .06,  $z = .03$ ) are not significant predictors of participation in Survey 2. Third, we examined zero-order correlations among study variables. Fisher's  $z$  statistical tests indicate that the correlation coefficients are not significantly different at Time 1 and Time 4 ( $z$  ranges between .69 and .75). These results suggest the difference between the initial and final samples does not pose a serious threat to the validity of our analyses.

*Level of analysis.* Because our final sample included 150 newcomers who were paired with 109 peer coaches, we assessed the degree of dependence within coaches by testing the fit of a null model at the peer coach level without any predictors. The ICC values for study variables ranged from .17 to .40, suggesting that peer coach membership did not account for significant variance in these variables. Furthermore, we ran design effect models to calculate the ratio of the variance obtained based on the sampling design to the variance obtained for a simple random sample from the population. The design effect scores range between 1.06 and 1.15, all below the cutoff value of 2 (Muthen & Satorra, 1995). Because a small design effect indicates that the sample size is insufficient for multilevel modeling (Maas & Hox, 2004), we performed individual-level analyses using maximum likelihood estimation.

*Data analysis.* When testing the indirect effects of peer coaching on newcomer unethical behavior via emotional exhaustion (Hypotheses 3 and 4), we used two methods recommended by Preacher and Selig (2012) and Schoemann, Boulton, and Short (2017): the biased-corrected

bootstrap and the Monte Carlo confidence intervals (CIs). According to Hayes and Scharkow (2013), the bias-corrected bootstrap CIs demonstrate sufficient statistical power and this method is highly trustworthy “when an indirect effect exists and the focus is on detecting a nonzero effect rather than on interval estimation,” while the Monte Carlo CIs “offer good Type I error protection” (p. 1924). Examining whether these alternative methods yield similar results strengthens the robustness of our results.

When testing the moderating effects of goal orientations (Hypotheses 5 -10), we drew upon Preacher et al.’s (2007) analytic framework for conditional indirect effects. We mean-centered the predictor variables in the models before computing the interaction terms to reduce multicollinearity. Based on these results, we used bias-corrected bootstrapping procedures to calculate the 95% CIs for the indirect effects at varying levels of the moderators.

Moreover, in response to calls for researchers to exercise greater caution regarding the inclusion of control variables in the analysis (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016; Miller & Chapman, 2001; Sleep et al., 2017; Spector & Brannick, 2011), we ran additional analyses without control variables. Our findings with and without the control variables are highly consistent, with one exception (detailed below; full results available upon request).

## **Results**

We present means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables in Table 1, and results of hypothesis testing in Table 2. Model 1 reports the effect of peer coaching (i.e., coaching quality and peer coach unethical behavior) on newcomer emotional exhaustion (Hypotheses 1 and 2). Model 2 shows whether coaching quality and peer coach unethical behavior have indirect effects on newcomer unethical behavior via newcomer emotional exhaustion (Hypotheses 3 and 4). Model 3 reveals whether the strengths of the effects of peer

coaching practices and emotional exhaustion on newcomer unethical behavior vary based on the newcomers' levels of mastery and performance goal orientations (Hypotheses 5–10).

[Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here]

We predicted that coaching quality is negatively associated with emotional exhaustion (Hypothesis 1) and that peer coach unethical behavior is positively associated with emotional exhaustion (Hypothesis 2). Results for Model 1 in Table 2 indicate a negative relationship between coaching quality and emotional exhaustion ( $b = -.17, p < .01$ ) and a positive relationship between peer coach unethical behavior and emotional exhaustion ( $b = .24, p < .01$ ). Therefore, Hypotheses 1 and 2 are supported.

In Hypotheses 3 and 4, we predicted that coaching quality and peer coach unethical behavior have indirect effects on newcomer unethical behavior via emotional exhaustion. Results for Model 2 in Table 2 indicate that emotional exhaustion is positively related to newcomer unethical behavior ( $b = .23, p < .05$ ). Results from the bias-corrected bootstrap test further indicate a negative indirect effect of coaching quality on newcomer unethical behavior via decreased emotional exhaustion (indirect effect =  $-.039$ , 95% CI  $[-.133, -.003]$ ). The Monte Carlo method yields similar results (indirect effect =  $-.039$ , 95% CI  $[-.098, -.001]$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported. Moreover, the estimated indirect effect of peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior via increased emotional exhaustion is  $.054$  (bias-corrected bootstrap 95% CI  $[.003, .157]$ , Monte Carlo 95% CI  $[.002, .122]$ )<sup>3</sup>, supporting Hypothesis 4. For exploratory purposes, we examined the relative strength of the indirect effects of (a) coach quality and (b) peer coach unethical behavior onto newcomer unethical conduct by estimating standardized regression coefficients. Results indicate that 1 standard deviation (SD) increase in

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<sup>3</sup> Additional analysis suggests that if no control variables are included, Hypothesis 4 is supported at a 90% CI but not at a 95% CI (indirect effect =  $.049$ , bias-corrected bootstrap 95% CI  $[-.006, 0.173]$ , 90% CI  $[.001, .150]$ ).

peer coach unethical behavior is associated with .053 SD increase in newcomer unethical conduct via increased emotional exhaustion, while 1 SD decrease in coaching quality is associated with .035 SD decrease in newcomer unethical conduct indirectly. This suggests that peer coach unethical behavior has a stronger influence in predicting newcomer unethical behavior, through emotional exhaustion, than quality peer coaching.

Furthermore, we predicted that the relationship between emotional exhaustion and unethical behavior is moderated by mastery orientation (Hypothesis 5) and performance orientation (Hypothesis 6). As results for Model 3 in Table 2 suggest, the emotional exhaustion  $\times$  mastery orientation interaction term is significant for newcomer unethical behavior ( $b = -.74, p < .01$ ). Figure 2 shows that the effect of emotional exhaustion on unethical behavior is insignificant at a higher level of mastery orientation ( $b = -.14, n.s.$ ), and this effect becomes significant and positive when mastery orientation is lower ( $b = .52, p < .01$ ). The difference in strength between these two effects is significant ( $\Delta = .66, p < .01$ ). Moreover, the results indicate that the emotional exhaustion  $\times$  performance orientation interaction term is significant for newcomer unethical behavior ( $b = .38, p < .05$ ). Figure 3 shows that the positive effect of emotional exhaustion on unethical behavior is stronger when performance orientation is higher ( $b = .42, p < .01$ ) than when it is lower ( $b = -.04, n.s.$ ). The difference in strength between these two effects is significant ( $\Delta b = .46, p < .01$ ). Therefore, Hypotheses 5 and 6 are supported.

In Hypotheses 7–10, we predicted the conditional indirect effects of peer coaching on newcomer unethical behavior. We report the results in Table 3. Hypothesis 7 predicted that the negative effect of coaching quality on newcomer unethical behavior through decreased emotional exhaustion is weaker for individuals with high mastery orientations than for those with low mastery orientations. The results suggest that the negative effect of coaching quality on

newcomer unethical behavior via emotional exhaustion is significant when mastery orientation is lower (estimate =  $-.089$ , 95% CI [ $-.246, -.021$ ]), whereas the indirect effect is insignificant when mastery orientation is higher (estimate =  $.025$ , 95% CI [ $-.014, .116$ ]). The difference in the strength of these effects is significant ( $\Delta = .114, p < .01$ ). The evidence supports Hypothesis 7.

[Insert Table 3 and Figures 1 and 2 about here]

Hypothesis 8 predicted that the negative indirect effect of coaching quality on newcomer unethical behavior via decreased emotional exhaustion is stronger for individuals with high performance orientations than for those with low performance orientations. The results show that the indirect effect of coaching quality on newcomer unethical behavior through emotional exhaustion is stronger when performance orientation is higher (estimate =  $-.072$ , 95% CI [ $-.218, -.011$ ]) than when it is lower (estimate =  $.007$ , 95% CI [ $-.033, .065$ ]). The difference in the strength of these effects is significant ( $\Delta = .079, p < .05$ ). The evidence supports Hypothesis 8.

In Hypothesis 9, we predicted that the positive indirect effect of peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior via increased emotional exhaustion is weaker for individuals with high mastery orientations than for those with low mastery orientations. The results suggest that the indirect effect of peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior through emotional exhaustion is significant when mastery orientation is low (estimate =  $.123$ , 95% CI [ $.007, .334$ ]), and it becomes insignificant when mastery orientation is high (estimate =  $-.034$ , 95% CI [ $-.202, .018$ ]). The difference in the strength of these effects is significant ( $\Delta = .157, p < .01$ ). The evidence supports Hypothesis 9.

In Hypothesis 10, we predicted that the positive indirect effect of peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior via increased emotional exhaustion is stronger for individuals with high performance orientations than for those with low performance orientations.



The results suggest that the indirect effect of peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior through emotional exhaustion is stronger when performance orientation is higher (estimate = .097, 95% CI [.001, .287]) than when it is lower (estimate = -.006, 95% CI [-.094, .048]). The difference in the strength of these effects is significant ( $\Delta = .103, p < .05$ ). The evidence supports Hypothesis 10.

## **Discussion**

In this study, we developed and tested a model of the dual influences that a peer coach may have on newcomer unethical behavior. When the peer coach provides high-quality support, a newcomer experiences low emotional exhaustion, which in turn reduces unethical behavior. Conversely, when the peer coach engages in unethical acts, the newcomer experiences high emotional exhaustion and, as a result, behaves unethically. Furthermore, these effects of peer coaching on newcomer unethical behavior are moderated by the newcomer's mastery and performance goal orientations. Specifically, the indirect effects of coaching quality and peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior via emotional exhaustion are weaker when a newcomer's mastery orientation is high (versus low), whereas such indirect effects are stronger when a newcomer's performance orientation is high (versus low).

## **Theoretical Implications**

We believe our efforts to incorporate ideas from the literatures on behavioral ethics, newcomer socialization, and goal orientations have important implications for management research. First, although some scholars have noted that organizational newcomers are more susceptible to the adoption of unethical practices (Treviño & Nelson, 2017), little research has examined the interplay between workplace socialization and the proliferation of unethical conduct in organization. This oversight seems problematic because unethical conduct needs to be

caught and corrected early, before it becomes normalized, to avoid a slippery slope that contributes to even worse unethical behaviors (Gino & Bazerman, 2009; Welsh et al., 2015). To this end, our research provides an important contribution to the behavioral ethics literature by identifying two types of socialization emanating from peer coaches that have diverging effects on newcomers' unethical conduct. Quality peer coaches provide newcomers with sufficient self-resources to reduce feelings of emotional exhaustion, whereas peer coach unethical conduct requires a substantial amount of self-resources to understand the acceptability of these behaviors, which increases emotional exhaustion. Due to influences on emotional exhaustion, quality peer coaches can reduce newcomers' unethical conduct, whereas peer coach unethical behavior can increase newcomers' unethical conduct. Thus, our research helps clarify the important role of peer coaching practices with respect to newcomers' stress-related states and unethical behaviors.

Second, in much of the previous research on newcomer socialization, scholars have focused on how organization-level socialization tactics facilitate newcomer integration and learning (e.g., Allen, 2006). Yet, relatively little is known about whether and how newcomer adjustment is facilitated or hindered by interpersonal relationships within the immediate "localized" context. To this end, we demonstrated the influential role of peer coaching practices on newcomers' behaviors by utilizing a COR perspective. Our findings provide support for the emerging view of "localized socialization," which suggests organizational insiders such as peer coaches serve as organizational conduits by increasing or decreasing a newcomer's resource state and behaviors (Ashforth et al., 2007; Ellis et al., 2015; Zey-Ferrell et al., 1979).

Moreover, many researchers have applied social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) to explain newcomer adjustment, which suggests that individuals observe the behavior of role models who possess visibility, power and credibility, and then enact these behaviors themselves

(e.g., Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Interestingly, we ran supplemental analyses that examined the direct relationships between peer coaching practices and newcomers' unethical conduct. Our results did not support statistically significant direct effects of (a) quality peer coaching and (b) peer coach unethical behavior on newcomer unethical behavior. These supplemental analyses suggest that newcomers do not necessarily mimic their peer coaches' behaviors when it comes to their own unethical behaviors. Instead, our findings indicate that a newcomer's emotional exhaustion serves as the key mechanism that explains the relationship between peer coaching practices and newcomer unethical behavior. This finding is important because it highlights the merit of investigating newcomers' personal resources and related stress states, which has remained underexplored in the socialization literature (Ellis et al., 2015)

Lastly, while researchers have linked goal orientations to learning and task performance (e.g., Payne et al., 2007; Vandewalle, 1997), whether and how goal orientations shape individuals' moral decisions or ethical behaviors remains largely ignored. Our findings suggest that although quality coaching and a peer coach's unethical behavior significantly affect newcomer unethical behavior via emotional exhaustion for individuals with low mastery orientations, emotional exhaustion does not affect unethical behavior for newcomers with high mastery orientations. This is important because it suggests mastery orientations can compensate for a lack of self-regulatory strength. In contrast, we find that the indirect effect of peer coaching practices on newcomer unethical behavior via emotional exhaustion is stronger for individuals with high (versus low) performance orientation. This suggests that the motivation to outperform others can lead newcomers to expend more of their depleted psychological resources, thereby depleting their capacity to adhere to ethical standards. Taken together, our study suggests that people's beliefs about their capacity to expend resources and their motivation to do so may

buffer the effect of resource depletion on unethical behavior, thereby opening up a new avenue for integrating COR theory with the goal orientation literature.

### **Practical Implications**

From a practical perspective, results of this study suggest that peer coaches are critical to newcomers' work adjustment and (un)ethical behaviors. When peer coaches violate ethical standards, newcomers experience a high level of emotional exhaustion. This incurs costly organizational expenses, as companies have reported costs of lost productivity resulting from newcomer adjustment as ranging between 1% and 2.5% of total revenues (Rollag et al., 2005). Furthermore, we found that low-quality peer coaching and peer coach unethical behavior increases newcomer unethical behavior, with these effects being even stronger among newcomers with low mastery orientations and high performance orientations. In light of these findings, we recommend that organizations should carefully identify “appropriate” incumbent employees to serve as peer coaches—preferably high performing individuals who are motivated to serve as positive role models, but at a minimum, individuals who behave in ways consistent with organizational norms, values, and ethical codes.

In addition to peer coaching, organizations should provide multiple means of establishing newcomers' normative expectations and reducing their emotional strain. It is helpful to seek ways to direct newcomers' attention toward competence development and social integration by designing and implementing proper training, communication, and performance evaluation programs. Organizations may also provide additional resources to help newcomers cope with the inherent uncertainties of handling ethical dilemmas or finding their “place” in a new organization. Many organizations treat newcomers with careful attention for a few weeks, but often this support rapidly diminishes thereafter (Maurer, 2015). Extending support by

implementing policies such as time for reflection, systematic check-ins with leaders, and continued celebration of milestones over a longer time period may promote the development of additional cognitive and emotional resources, thereby decreasing the likelihood of exhaustion and unethical conduct.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study has several limitations that may suggest promising directions for future research. With regard to generalizability, we focused on sales employees working in the same organization, which limits variation in contextual factors, such as organizational values and culture, the role of senior leadership, reward and punishment practices, occupational ethical standards, and task characteristics. As such, we encourage researchers to explore more diverse organizational and occupational settings with sufficient variation to observe how peer influences interact with other types of interpersonal and social influences to affect newcomers' unethical conduct. Similarly, we conducted this study in China with its business ethical values characterized by Confucian heritage, government involvement in economic activities, and a greater focus on market ethics (Yin & Quazi, 2018). Although prior research has shown that unethical behavior is generalizable to a large range of cultural contexts (e.g., Babalola et al., 2020; Treviño & Nelson, 2011), future research could consider whether specific aspects of culture, such as individualism versus collectivism or masculinity versus femininity (Hofstede, 2001), affect interpretations of “ethical” versus “unethical” conduct.

Our reliance on a non-experimental research design brings associated limitations. Although we incorporated several elements of individual differences and prior experience into our theoretical model and analyses, other factors could plausibly influence reactions to peer coaching practices and the downstream effect of unethical conduct. For example, research

suggests individual differences related to regulatory focus, honesty, and humility could affect the degree to which a person engages in unethical behavior (e.g., Gino & Margolis, 2011; Louw, Dunlop, Yeo, & Griffin, 2016). Related to this point, future research should consider those who may not abide by society's ethical standards to begin with, such as those low in self-control (see Marcus & Schuler, 2004) and high in Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy (O'Boyle, Forsyth, Banks, & McDaniel, 2012), and how these individual differences affect when and why newcomers adopt unethical practices. A related limitation of our non-experimental research design was our inability to randomly assign peer coaches to newcomers. Although the organization took steps to remove potential biases associated with peer and newcomer matching, future research would benefit from experimental designs that allow for the random assignment of peers to newcomers.

Another limitation is that we rely on a modest sample size to test a relatively complex model and set of hypotheses. We believe the complexity of our theoretical model is warranted given the phenomena being considered. In terms of our data collection, we attempted to collect the highest-quality data possible by securing multi-wave, multi-source data to limit common method variance concerns (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Collecting data across multiple waves and multiple sources inherently limits the sample size due to attrition and the difficulty of securing such data. Additionally, our research question was limited to "newcomers," which constrained the extent to which we could secure a large number of participants. Thus, although our sample size is modest, we hope this concern is offset by the high-quality and specific nature of our data. In addition, we should note that although our sample size is modest at an *N* of 150, this sample size is still relatively consistent with meta-analytic findings on newcomer adjustment, which shows an average sample size of 175 (Bauer et al., 2007). To further strengthen confidence in

our findings, we conducted a post-hoc power analysis using the software program G\*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The results suggest that the achieved statistical power was 0.98, well above the acceptable threshold of 0.80 (Cohen, 1992). Nevertheless, we acknowledge that testing multiple hypotheses based on the same sample increases the likelihood that one or more of our significant findings could be a function of alpha error inflation. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with some caution. Future research with larger samples would provide more power and additional confidence in the validity of our results.

Future research that incorporates a broader range of relevant individual differences would be useful improvements to our research. For example, based on theoretical grounds and the focus on sales employees, we chose not to incorporate avoidance goal orientation. However, it is possible that the motivation to avoid low performance could influence newcomer unethical behavior (especially in non-sales jobs such as administrative support and customer services). It is also interesting to examine the effects of other individual differences relevant to newcomer adjustment and socialization, the most prominent example being proactivity (e.g., Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). Proactive newcomers are more likely to seek out information from multiple sources, perhaps mitigating the influence of a peer coach. Future research would also benefit from examining our theoretical model with respect to multiple types of unethical conduct. For example, it would be interesting to study when and why socialization processes are more or less likely to result in pro-organizational versus pro-self unethical behaviors (Umphress, Bingham, & Mitchell, 2010).

Lastly, our theoretical model is supported by COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which is closely associated with self-regulation theory and the notion of ego depletion (i.e., the loss of self-control resources) (Baumeister, Muraven, & Tice, 2000). In this respect, our research could

be limited in that ego depletion has been recently criticized, with some scholars questioning whether self-control can exist as a limited resource (Inzlicht & Friese, 2019). Yet, our research overcomes some of these limitations by following the advice of Inzlicht and Friese by using validated research procedures, clear definitions of constructs, and field studies to test predictions. Future research would benefit from following Inzlicht's and Friese's advice to ensure the quality of research on self-regulation depletion.

### **Conclusion**

Given the high costs associated with unethical conduct and the fact that organizational newcomers may be highly susceptible to such practices (Treviño & Nelson, 2011), it is important to understand why and when organizational socialization results in newcomers' unethical conduct. Our research illustrates the important role of peer coaching practices in relation to newcomers' adoption of unethical conduct. Our research reveals that in response to high quality peer coaching and peer coach unethical behavior, newcomers develop varying levels of emotional exhaustion that may or may not result in unethical conduct depending on their mastery or performance goal orientations. We hope our research will spark further interest in unveiling the complexities of socialization processes in terms of propagating unethical conduct in organizations.



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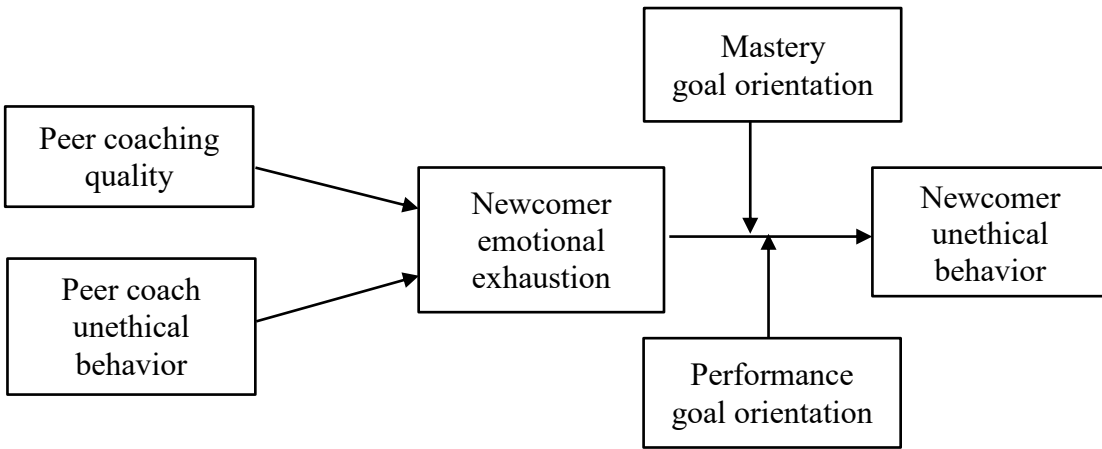


Figure 1. Hypothesized model.

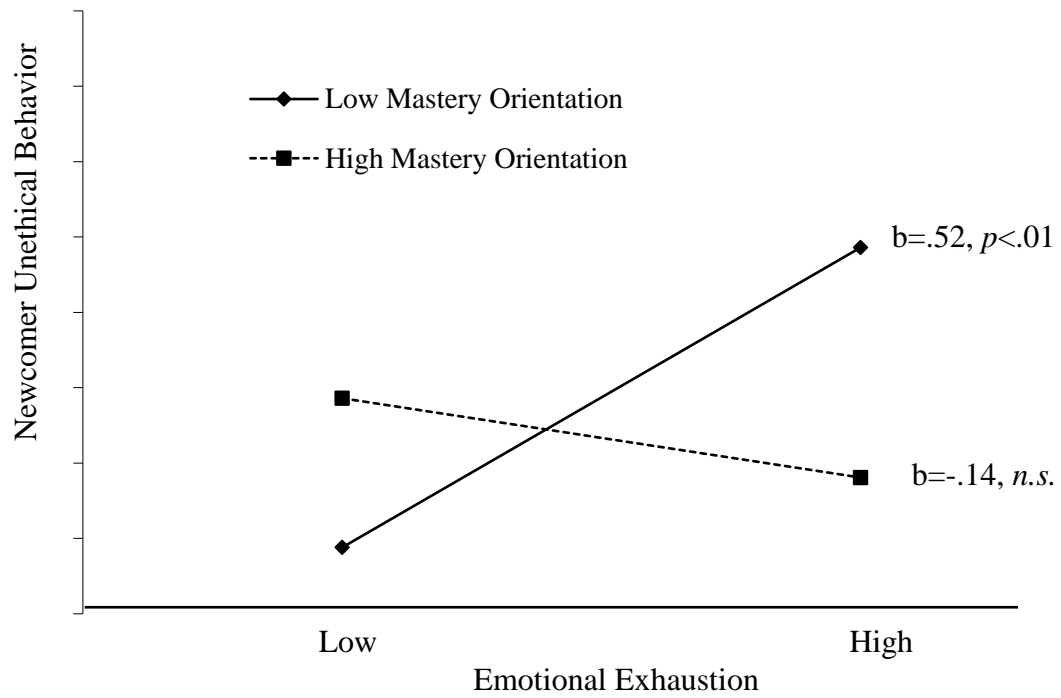


Figure 2. Newcomer unethical behavior as a function of the interaction between emotional exhaustion and mastery orientation. The values used to determine the lines are one standard deviation above and below the mean.

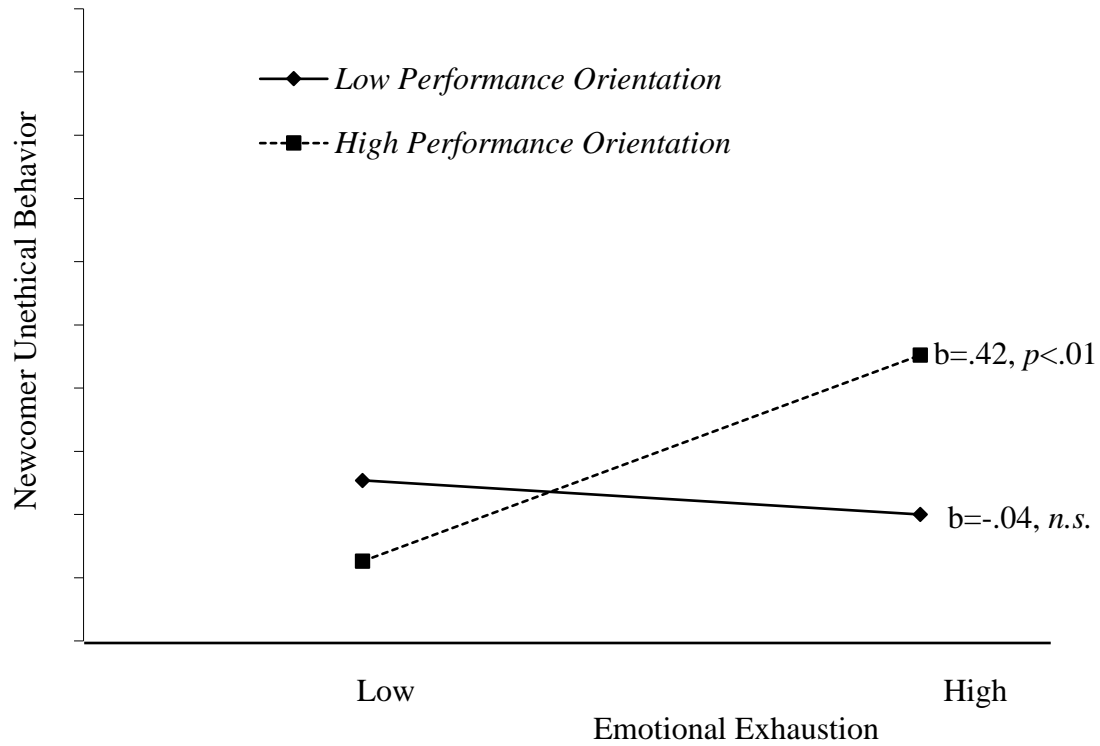


Figure 3. Newcomer unethical behavior as a function of the interaction between emotional exhaustion and performance goal orientation. The values used to determine the lines are one standard deviation above and below the mean.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficients (N = 150)*

	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Work-to-work transition	0.17	0.38								
2	Conscientiousness	3.65	0.79	0.16							
3	Coworker unethical behavior	0.39	0.11	-0.00	0.07						
4	Quality of peer coaching	3.72	0.54	-0.07	-0.16	-0.18					
5	Peer coach unethical behavior	0.51	0.59	-0.01	-0.00	0.13	-0.02				
6	Emotional exhaustion	2.57	0.49	-0.28 *	-0.20	0.07	-0.18	0.31 **			
7	Mastery goal orientation	4.36	0.45	0.15	0.18	0.00	0.33 **	0.08	-0.22		
8	Performance goal orientation	3.49	0.61	0.05	-0.03	0.05	0.29 *	0.04	0.05	0.16	
9	Newcomer unethical behavior	0.26	0.60	0.01	0.03	-0.06	0.02	0.07	0.16	-0.01	0.04

Note. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 2

*Predicting the Effects of Coaching Quality and Peer Coach Unethical Behavior on Newcomers**(N = 150)*

	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>
	Newcomer EE	Newcomer UB	Newcomer UB
Quality of peer coaching	-0.17**	0.04	0.00
Peer coach unethical behavior (UB)	0.24**	0.04	0.04
Emotional exhaustion (EE)		0.23*	0.19**
Mastery goal orientation (MGO)			-0.02
Performance goal orientation (PGO)			0.04
EE × MGO			-0.74**
EE × PGO			0.38*
<i>Control variables</i>			
Work-to-work transition	-0.36**	0.09	0.06
Conscientiousness	-0.07	0.05	0.06
Coworker unethical behavior	0.02	-0.44	-0.65
Constant	0.24	0.08	0.03
$R^2$	0.22	0.04	0.11

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; two-tailed tests.

EE: emotional exhaustion; UB: unethical behavior

Table 3

*Conditional Indirect Effect of Peer coaching on Newcomer Unethical Behavior as a Function of Goal Orientations (N =150)*

		Estimate	95% CI LL	95% CI UL
The effect of peer coaching quality on newcomer UB via emotional exhaustion				
<i>Hypothesis 7:</i>	Mean – SD MGO	-.089	[-.246	-.021]
	Mean	-.032	[-.116	-.001]
	Mean + SD MGO	.025	[-.014	.116]
<i>Hypothesis 8:</i>	Mean – SD PGO	.007	[-.033	.065]
	Mean	-.032	[-.117	-.000]
	Mean + SD PGO	-.072	[-.218	-.011]
The effect of peer coach UB on newcomer UB via emotional exhaustion				
<i>Hypothesis 9:</i>	Mean – SD MGO	.123	[.007	.334]
	Mean	.045	[-.002	.150]
	Mean + SD MGO	-.034	[-.202	.018]
<i>Hypothesis 10:</i>	Mean – SD PGO	-.006	[-.096	.048]
	Mean	.045	[-.003	.151]
	Mean + SD PGO	.097	[.001	.287]

*Note.* Bootstrap sample size: 10,000. LL: lower limit; UP: upper limit; CI: confidence interval;

UB: unethical behavior; MGO: mastery goal orientation; PGO: performance goal orientation