

Seeing Past the Orange:
An Inductive Investigation of Organizational Respect in a Prison Context

by

Kristie M. Rogers

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Blake Ashforth, Chair
Kevin Corley
Peter Hom

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation develops grounded theory on how respect is received and internalized in organizations, and the personal and work-related outcomes of receiving respect. A company that employed inmates at a state prison to perform professional business-to-business marketing services provided a unique context for data collection, as respect is typically problematic in a prison environment but was deliberately instilled by this particular company. Data collection took place in three call centers (minimum, medium, and maximum security levels) and included extensive non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and archival documents. My sampling strategy focused on the experience of new employees as they went through the training and socialization process, a time when the experience of respect was particularly novel and salient to them. The emergent theoretical model suggests that receiving respect was experienced in two distinct ways, which were labeled generalized and personalized respect. These two types of respect were directly related to outcomes for the receivers' well-being and performance on the job. Receiving respect also changed the way that receivers thought and felt about themselves. The two types of respect (generalized and personalized) exerted different forces on the self-concept such that generalized respect led to social validation and identity security for social identities, and personalized respect led to social validation and identity security for personal identities. The social validation and subsequent identity security ultimately enabled the receiver of respect to integrate their conflicting personal and social identities into a coherent whole, an outcome referred to as identity holism. In

addition to the direct effects of receiving generalized and personalized respect on individuals' well-being and performance, identity holism served as a partial mediator between received respect and individual outcomes. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed, as well as future research directions aimed to build momentum for research on respect in organizations.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

According to Tetlock (1992: 338), “one of the most influential motivational assumptions in social science is that people seek approval and respect as ends in themselves.” But what is it about *respect* – defined as the “worth accorded to one person by one or more others” (Spears, Ellemers, Doosje, & Branscombe, 2006: 179) – that makes it so universally important? Receiving respect speaks to the value of who a person is, and because individuals form self-perceptions according to how they think others perceive them (Mead, 1934), this powerful social cue is likely a key driver of how individuals see themselves and behave in social contexts.

Among the many social contexts where respect cues are potentially sought, I suggest that respect is particularly powerful when received at work. Employment is based on an exchange relationship, where monetary compensation signals the value of a contribution (Shore et al., 2004) and, indirectly, the value of the person making the contribution. This salience of organizational members’ worth in a work context may motivate them to look to confirm/disconfirm their worth based on the respect they receive/do not receive. Indeed, Ellingsen and Johannesson (2007) suggest that employees wish to be compensated with, and are highly motivated by, respect cues from the organization and its members.

The term respect appears in several mainstream areas of organizational research, such as in the consideration dimension of leadership as conceptualized in the Ohio State leadership studies (Fleishman & Peters, 1962), as a part of

leader-member exchange (Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen, 2007; Gerstner & Day, 1997), and as a dimension of interpersonal justice (Colquitt, 2001), none of which have given attention to respect as a stand-alone construct. However, recent organizational research that focuses specifically on respect suggests that it is both salient to, and highly prized by, organizational members. When employees were asked to rate characteristics they valued most in their job, feeling respected was ranked among the highest, coming in above income, career opportunities, and the amount of leisure time afforded by the job (van Quaquebeke, Zenker, & Eckloff, 2009). Likewise, in a study of what employees view as characteristics of excellent managers, “it was found that trust and respect dominated all other categories of managerial behavior” (Drehmer & Grossman, 1984: 763). Despite the reported importance of respect, van Quaquebeke and Eckloff (2010) found that employees’ desire for respect far outweighs the respect they report receiving, particularly in relationships with supervisors (van Quaquebeke et al., 2009). Looking beyond the organizational context, a general population survey of more than 2,000 respondents revealed that 79% believe a lack of respect is a serious problem in society, and the majority believes it is getting worse (Farkas & Johnson, 2002). Thus, respect “seems to be somewhat of a blind spot within organizational priorities” (van Quaquebeke et al., 2009: 429) and while this “blind spot” is alarming, it also provides an opportunity to illuminate the dynamics of this key driver of organizational members’ behavior. Specifically, we know very little about the process through which respect is perceived and internalized.

In sum, I suggest that respect is a crucial but underexplored condition for understanding attitudes and behaviors at work and is worthy of theoretical and empirical attention. I took an inductive approach to fill this gap by collecting qualitative data and following the grounded theory method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), which allows me to construct theory from a rich understanding of life in a given organizational context. Specifically, I sought to build theory on respect in an organizational setting where it was particularly salient. I chose a company that employed incarcerated women to perform business-to-business marketing tasks from inside a prison. While society in general accords little worth to incarcerated women, stereotyping them as dangerous people, evil women, and bad mothers (Clowers, 2001; Dobash, Dobash, & Gutteridge, 1986; Schram, 1999), this company viewed them as valuable individuals deserving of a chance to be successful members of the business world. The positive approach toward these women who were banished from society resulted in industry-leading performance for the organization and a drastically lower recidivism rate for the employees.

Data collection focused specifically on critical incidents during newcomer adjustment, as adjustment typically demands a great deal of information processing and increases the salience of contextual factors that may be taken for granted later (Shore et al., 2004). I expected that this salience would enable informants to articulate their experience of respect in ways that provided rich data for building theory. Coming from a prison context, which is often characterized by dishonor, dependence, and very little respect, the inmates “may already be

feeling ashamed, humiliated, and devalued by society” (Butler & Drake, 2007: 123), making their sensitivity to respect particularly acute as they became acquainted with the new job. In fact, newcomers not only needed to navigate this unfamiliar experience of respect while at work, but also learn to manage the daily micro transition (Ashforth, 2001) from the prison context to the vastly different work environment where they swiftly changed over from the role of inmate to professional technology expert, then back to inmate at the end of the work day.

Also, additional adjustments exist in this context. The normal trajectory for high-performing employees was to start out making outgoing calls to executives, advance to other positions such as customer relations or market researcher, transfer to a call center in another unit when prison officials reduce the employees’ assigned security level, and potentially get hired on as an employee at the company’s corporate office upon release from prison. While the experience of respect during newcomer adjustment was my primary interest, these other adjustments were expected to provide data that would be particularly useful for the sake of comparison as I refined the grounded theory and identified its boundary conditions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

I set out to answer three research questions surrounding the experience of receiving respect. My first question, “How do organizational members receive and make sense of apparent respect cues in a way that makes them feel respected?,” is intended to explore the phenomenology of receiving respect and clarify the experience of perceiving respectful treatment and making sense of it. The second question, “How does receiving respect at work influence

organizational members' self-concepts?," is motivated by the implicit role that respect seems to play in both identity theory and social identity theory. Taken together, these theories suggest that one's sense of self is socially constructed, partially based on the worth that others accord to oneself (personal identities) and to the collectives to which one belongs (social identities; see Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995, for review). The final question, "In a particularly status-deprived setting, how does receiving respect affect the way organizational members do their jobs?," will shed light on whether positive outcomes of perceived respect reported in non-organizational research apply to organizational life, and if making employees feel respected serves the organization as a whole. The conceptual grounding for these questions will be further developed in Chapter 3.

This dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter 2, the literature review, reviews and addresses definitional and nomological issues that surround the respect construct, followed by reviews of respect research in other disciplines and the ways in which respect is woven into numerous areas of organizational behavior research. After establishing the definition of respect and reviewing related literatures, Chapter 3, as noted, explicates the conceptual roots of the three research questions that guided this inductive project. Chapter 4 details the methodological approach, data collection, and analysis. Chapter 5 presents the findings and a theoretical model, accompanied by an empirical chain of evidence that addresses the research questions of interest. Finally, Chapter 6 provides the discussion section, which highlights the theoretical contribution of the project, future research directions, and limitations.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory-building studies such as this one should be conducted without any preconceived perspectives or proposed relationships between constructs (Eisenhardt, 1989), but “there is a difference between an open mind and an empty head” (Dey, 1999: 251, quoted in Charmaz, 2006: 48). Thus, it is important to review previous findings about respect, as well as identify where respect appears in the organizational literature, then set those findings aside and approach the field in an open-minded way that allows the data to tell its own theoretical story.

I begin the literature review by addressing the definitional and nomological network issues associated with the respect construct. Next, I review the areas of organizational behavior research that incorporate respect, and finally review research in organizational behavior and social psychology that specifically focuses on respect.

Definition

Although respect has long had a tacit presence in various areas of organizational research, there is not a widely accepted definition of the construct in its own right, which remains a roadblock to understanding the role that respect plays in organizational life. There are various definitions and conceptualizations of respect spanning disciplines, leaving scholars contemplating whether respect “is an attitude, a mode of conduct, a feeling, a form of attention, a mode of valuing, a virtue, a duty, an entitlement, a tribute, [or] a principle” (Dillon, 2007: 201). Further, a difference in lay usage of the term respect appears across

individuals and even within a given individual across situations, such as a mother who desires respect from her child as obedience, respect from her husband as giving space to maintain her individuality, and respect from her employer as appreciating her work (Simon, 2007).

The definitions of respect offered in Table 1, a comprehensive collection of definitions in organizational behavior and a representative sampling from social psychology, suggest three important points of divergence. First, the point of view from which respect is perceived, or where respect “resides,” varies across the definitions. Some scholars define respect from the sender’s perspective (e.g., Simon, 2007), some define it from the receiver’s perspective (e.g., Huo & Binning, 2008), and for others it is not clear whether respect resides in the sender or receiver (e.g., van Quaquebeke & Eckloff, 2010). Additionally, some scholars see respect transcending a given individual, such as a perception of how organizational members “including but not limited to the self” are treated (Ramarajan, Barsade, & Burack, 2008: 5) or even “organizational members’ shared perceptions” regarding how individuals are treated within their organization (Tenbrunsel, Smith-Crowe, & Umpress, 2003: 294). Second, when definitions are referring to received respect, the *source* of the respect differs. For respect researchers rooted in social identity theory, the focus is on respect from individuals within one’s group, or how the group as a whole perceives an individual member (De Cremer, 2002; Huo & Binning, 2008; Tyler & Blader, 2003). Some definitions in organizational research are specifically focused on respect between leaders and followers (Clark, 2011; Liden & Maslyn, 1998) or

how the receiver of respect is judged by peers, leaders, or the organization as a whole (Bartel, Wrzesniewski, & Wiesenfeld, in press; Fuller et al., 2006; Ramarajan et al., 2008). However, respect can come from sources external to the group/organization (e.g., members of a competing organization, clients), which also qualify as expressions of worth. Finally, the reason that an individual is receiving respect differs and these criteria are central to some definitions, such as professional respect earned by excelling at one's job (Liden & Maslyn, 1998) or respect that is inherently owed to all humans, and cannot be gained or lost (Lalljee, Laham, & Tam, 2007).

Insert Table 1 about here

With these differences in mind, I have selected a definition that is simple, clear, and captures the core idea of the definitions presented in Table 1. Guided by Spears and colleagues (2006: 179), I define respect, as noted, as “worth accorded to one person by one or more others.” This definition captures the receiver's psychological experience of imputed worth underlying all definitions in Table 1, and also implies a relational dimension of respect, such that there is both a sent and received component. Following Katz and Kahn's (1978) distinction between sent roles and received roles, it is sensible to analogously distinguish between sent respect (the expression of worth by one party) and received respect (the perception of imputed worth by the receiving party). While there are interesting research questions surrounding sent respect, as well as the interactions between sent and received respect, the research questions in my dissertation focus on the

experience of receiving and internalizing respect and the influence that this experience has on the receiver. Thus, unless otherwise noted, the subsequent chapters will use the term respect to refer to received respect.

Regarding the source of respect and criteria for earning it, I see these as separate from the definition itself. The definition answers *what* respect is, but does not include *who* respect is coming from or *why* it is received, and the definitions in Table 1 do not provide a consistent message regarding either source or criteria for respect. Given that one of my research questions focused on how organizational members come to feel respected, the meaningful sources of respect and the receivers' attributions about *why* they are receiving respect in an organizational context remain empirical questions explored further in my data.

Nomological Network

The definitions in Table 1 suggest that respect is closely related to other constructs in organizational behavior, and is sometimes even defined in terms that are conceptually close. Thus, the distinction between received respect and closely related constructs is important to clarify, particularly regarding trust, liking, status, envy and admiration, and disrespect.

Trust is the willingness to be vulnerable in a relationship (Cronin, 2003; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998), which is based on whether an individual is seen as believable, whereas respect is the value or worth assigned to a person (Cronin, 2003; Ramarajan et al., 2008). As such, respect is a likely antecedent to trust because individuals are less inclined to be vulnerable with

someone whom they do not value or view as worthy of their consideration (Cronin, 2003).

As Lalljee et al. (2007) and Simon (2007) note, respect is often conflated with liking. However, there is value in differentiating these constructs. Liking is an overall positive feeling toward a person, whereas respect is based on a judgment of a person's worth. Respect does not necessarily need to be accompanied by liking, such as respect for an individual who is competent in her job but who is not perceived as warm toward others (Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick, 1999). Similarly, liking can exist without respect, such as liking a colleague who is enjoyable to interact with but not very competent (Cronin, 2003).

Individual status in organizations is a ranking relative to others in the social structure, and is based upon the perception that the individual is connected to valuable entities such as certain possessions, occupations, or demographic characteristics (Ravlin & Thomas, 2005). Status is a ranking inherently relative to the other individuals in a given social structure, whereas respect is not. If an employee receives more respect from a manager, it does not mean that a fellow employee must receive less respect, as implied with status hierarchies.

Envy and admiration are viewed as social emotions based on a comparison between oneself and another individual (Duffy, Shaw, & Schaubroeck, 2008; Smith, 2008). One feels envy when comparing oneself to someone who has something desirable and is generally perceived as undeserving, often resulting in hostility and even undermining (Duffy, Scott, Shaw, Tepper, & Aquino, in press), whereas admiration is felt when someone has something desirable but is seen as

deserving and not threatening (Smith, 2008). While the perception of self inevitably influences the way others are perceived, respect is based on criteria that are believed to be worthy or valued, and that are not necessarily relative to the self (Tyler & Blader, 2002).

Finally, the relationship between respect and disrespect is notable. Disrespect is not the same as a neutral or low level of respect. Low respect implies an absence of respect, such that the individual's worth is neither validated nor invalidated. Disrespect communicates that the sender is actively negating the receiver's worth. Behaviors toward those who are disrespected tend to violate norms of civility and are characterized by "rudeness and disregard" (Pearson & Porath, 2005: 8).

To summarize, respect is closely related to other concepts that relate to how individuals are judged. It is likely that a receiver of respect could distinguish between an expression of respect and the nomologically close concepts mentioned above, as respect specifically speaks to an individual's worth or value and is a social cue to which receivers are particularly attuned.

Respect in Organizational Behavior Research

Prior to developing research questions designed to advance our understanding of respect in organizations, I first acknowledge the presence of respect in organizational behavior research to date by reviewing areas of research that incorporate respect, namely leadership, justice, perceived organizational support, civility, and positive organizational scholarship. Following this, I will review the emerging stream of research specifically focused on respect.

Respect appears in several theories of leadership. The leadership literature's acknowledgement of respect dates back to the Ohio State leadership studies (Fleishman & Peters, 1962), where leadership is comprised of consideration and initiating structure. Ohio State leadership scholars see consideration as respect for followers' ideas, mutual trust between subordinates and supervisors, and consideration of feelings. Also, followers of charismatic leaders are said to respect their leader and find the leader worth imitating (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Finally, positive leader-member exchange (LMX) is characterized by mutual trust, respect, and reciprocal obligation (Chen et al., 2007; Gerstner & Day, 1997). LMX researchers are concerned with professional respect, defined as the "perception of the degree to which each member of the dyad had built a reputation, within and/or outside the organization, of excelling at his or her line of work" (Liden & Maslyn, 1998: 50) and is operationalized with items such as "I respect my supervisor's knowledge of and competence on the job" (Liden & Maslyn, 1998: 56).

In sum, the leadership literature speaks to the importance of respect to leader-follower relationships as well as followers' perceptions of leaders. As a foundational element of leader-follower relationships, respect is a likely driver of follower receptivity to leader influence and general attachment to the leader. Also, this research indicates the importance of *mutual* respect, as both the followers' respect for the leaders and the followers' perception that the leader respects them in return are key components of the leadership theories.

While organizational justice research once focused upon procedural and distributive justice, other types of justice have further advanced the literature. Bies and Shapiro (1987) introduced interactional justice to the landscape, which was later divided into interpersonal and informational justice (Greenberg, 1990). Interpersonal justice is conceptualized as the degree to which individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and politeness (Colquitt, 2001) and the operationalization includes one item that directly asks about respect: “Has (he/she) treated you with respect?” (Colquitt, 2001: 389). The inclusion of respect as a component in the array of justice conceptualizations signals its relevance to another area of organizational behavior, though it does not explore the full explanatory power of the construct in a more general sense.

Perceived organizational support refers to organizational members’ perception of the organization’s commitment to them and the extent to which their contribution to the organization is valued (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Eisenberger et al.’s (1986: 502) widely cited operationalization indicates that perceived organizational support is an omnibus construct, encompassing appreciation of employees’ contributions that likely communicate respect (e.g., “The organization values my contribution to its well-being”), as well as concern for employees’ welfare (e.g., “The organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor”) and the provision of desirable working conditions and pay (e.g., “The organization is unconcerned about paying me what I deserve” [reversed]). Overall, research on perceived

organizational support indicates that one's sense of being supported by the organization is based in part on being treated with respect.

Research on workplace civility provides unique insight on behavioral expressions of respect. Civility researchers describe civility as “a behavior involving politeness and regard for others in the workplace, within workplace norms for respect” (Andersson & Pearson 1999: 454). Interestingly, civility research indicates that perceptions of respect norms are not necessarily shared by all within a given workplace, causing some members to see behaviors as uncivil when others do not (Montgomery, Kane, & Vance, 2004), indicating that there is potential for disconnects between the intent behind respect cues and their actual interpretations.

Finally, the literature on positive organizational scholarship speaks to the value of individual flourishing and development as well as the energizing role of the work context. Dutton (2003) describes “respectful engagements” as interpersonal interactions that communicate appreciation of an individual's inherent worth. Such expressions of respect have been argued to create high-quality connections that increase self-esteem, facilitate learning and the display of authentic identities, and provide a more positive organizational experience for employees (Dutton, 2003; Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). Thus, this research implies that respect can play a transformational role in members' experiences of organizational life that serves to benefit the members and organization alike.

In sum, respect is explicitly acknowledged across core areas of organizational behavior research including leadership, justice, perceived

organizational support, civility, and positive organizational scholarship. This common thread in numerous areas of organizational research suggests that feeling respected drives organizational members' relationships with peers (e.g., civility), leaders (e.g., leader-member exchange; following a transformational leader), and the organization as a whole (e.g., perceptions of organizational justice, perceived organizational support). Additionally, as implied by the incorporation of respect in positive organizational scholarship, respect cues inferred from social interactions at work influence the way organizational members see themselves, form positive attitudes about organizational life, and behave toward others in the work context. Identifying the role of respect in these areas of organizational research speaks to the importance of gaining a better understanding of respect dynamics, and how individuals come to feel respected.

Research on Respect

Social psychologists and organizational scholars have advanced a stream of research that focuses on respect in its own right. In this section I will first review findings from respect research in social psychology, then review the sparse but emerging respect-specific research in organizational studies.

Respect in social psychology. Social psychologists explored how receiving respect may be linked to universal social needs. De Cremer and Tyler (2005) conducted six experiments and concluded that feeling respected addresses the universal needs for belonging and positive reputation. Following the idea that receiving respect fulfills these needs, Huo and Binning (2008: 1572) replicate this finding in their dual-pathway model of respect, where “the experience of respect

matters to people because it reflects two core motives of social life – the striving for status [positive reputation]...and the need to belong.”

Researchers interested in social identity theory have focused on intragroup respect issues concerning whether or not a member feels valued by the group (Spears et al., 2006). Researchers have made significant empirical strides, identifying desirable effects of perceived intragroup respect. For instance, Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, and Doosje (2002) found that members of a group who perceived respect (from other members) were willing to donate time to improving the image of the group above and beyond the time they were willing to invest in improving their personal image. Additionally, feeling respected leads to increased identification and cooperation with a group (Smith, Tyler, & Huo, 2003). Intragroup respect also provides information about whether or not an individual is accepted in a group and the extent to which she is viewed as a worthwhile contributor (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005), which has positive effects on the receiver’s self-esteem (Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004).

Social psychology research on respect, particularly the research rooted in social identity, suggests that respect from group members “can have fundamental implications for how we subsequently relate to the group in terms of both emotional and behavioral responses” (Spears et al., 2006: 190). Although this research is not necessarily conducted in organizational settings, it nonetheless provides insight into the outcomes of perceived respect at individual and collective levels. These initial leads on outcomes of respect for the groups from which respect is perceived, such as identification, cooperation, and efforts toward

improving the group, suggest that respect in organizations could operate similarly, benefitting both the individual receiving respect and the organization providing it.

Organizational research on respect. In the organizational context specifically, empirical findings suggest that respect has unique and positive effects on organizational participation and identification (Bartel et al., in press; Stürmer, Simon, & Loewy, 2008), and is positively related to in-role and extra-role behaviors (Tyler & Blader, 2002). Van Quaquebeke and Eckloff (2010) found that followers are more likely to identify with a leader, be more receptive to his or her influence, and report higher job satisfaction when they feel respected by the leader. Additionally, Boezeman and Ellemers (2008) found that simply anticipating feeling respected increased willingness to donate time to a volunteer organization.

Considering respect at a collective level, Tenbrunsel and colleagues (2003) posit that a climate for respect increases the salience of others' value in the organization and reduces self-interested behaviors, creating an environment where employees choose to act in ways that benefit peers and the organization as a whole. Similarly, Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, and Grant (2005) posit that a climate for respect communicates the organization's belief that members are intrinsically worthy and capable of adding value, which facilitates employees' thriving and ultimately leads to learning, health, and the experience of vitality. Ramarajan and colleagues (2008) conducted a field experiment to tap into this idea of climate for respect. The authors observed several units of hospitals, some of which made structural and cultural changes to improve the climate for respect.

The study revealed that units where respectful treatment was implemented had less cases of burnout than units with no changes. This study serves as an important step toward embedding respect in the organizational literature and conceptualizing it beyond the individual level. Asking about a climate of respect captured how participants viewed respect for organizational members in a general sense, rather than as isolated perceptions of respect for themselves.

The organizational research on respect noted suggests that many respect findings in social psychology are indeed generalizable to the organizational context. Additionally, the studies of collective-level respect in organizations suggest that the experience of perceiving respect can transcend a given individual and be viewed as a property of the organization. Jointly considering respect research in social psychology and organizational studies indicates that we have a foundation for understanding why respect matters (i.e., positive individual and collective-level outcomes of respect noted in quantitative social psychology and organizational research), some consensus of what respect means at the individual levels and how it might become a collective-level property as well. However, given the reliance on quantitative and conceptual work, we know very little about the process through which respect is perceived and internalized. In other words, we have little understanding of “how” respect plays out as it does. My process-focused research questions and longitudinal design provide potential to enrich the literature accordingly.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research reviewed in the previous chapter suggests that feeling respected has positive outcomes at both the individual and collective levels. However, existing research provides little insight into *how* individuals, and organizational members in particular, interpret cues from their social context in ways that make them feel valued and display positive behaviors. This will be the focus of the three research questions presented in this chapter.

Research Question 1

Individuals are generally able to recognize unjust or disrespectful behaviors, but struggle to articulate what communicates fairness or makes them feel respected (Miller, 2001). Scholars across disciplines claim that respect can be given for various reasons, and consequently takes on different meanings; therefore, interpreting apparent respect cues is likely quite complex. In fact, research in sociology, social psychology, and philosophy suggest distinct meanings of respect and motivations for sending it. Some researchers view respect as simply a function of humanity, whereas others see respect as a judgment or evaluation of an individual relative to socially relevant criteria. Sociologists Butler and Drake (2007) break respect into two categories: respect-as-consideration, an entitlement in any human relationship, and respect-as-esteem, where people are respected for accomplishments that are earned. Social psychologists make a similar distinction, naming the categories unconditional and achieved (Lalljee et al., 2007) and conceptualizing unconditional respect as a

sender's attitude that everyone is deserving of respect. Most recently, as noted, Huo and colleagues developed and tested a dual-pathway model of respect, suggesting that there are two types of respect: status respect, which meets the human need for positive reputation, and liking respect, which meets the need for belonging (Huo & Binning, 2008; Huo, Binning, & Molina, 2010).

Similarly, the philosophy literature names two types of respect: "recognition" and "appraisal" (Dillon, 2007). Recognition respect is not thought of in terms of degree, but is "a disposition to take something appropriately into account in deliberations about action" (Dillon, 2007: 205). For example, an individual that respects the law follows the speed limit. The moral disposition of equality is also considered recognition respect, where senders who embrace an attitude of universal moral worth regard all humans as worthy of receiving respect to the same degree. Appraisal respect, on the other hand, is "always done in light of some qualitative standards; individuals deserve more or less respect depending on the extent to which they meet those standards" (Dillon, 2007: 205). As the phrase "the extent to which" implies, there is variability in the amount of appraisal respect sent to receivers. In contrast, recognition respect is either sent to all or to none.

These parallel distinctions raise the questions: Does a receiver know why he or she is receiving respect? Does his or her attribution affect the way the respect cue is received? Extant respect literature has not broached these specific issues. As noted in the previous chapter, the reliance on quantitative studies to

date provides ample insight into the outcomes of respect, but leaves the process and phenomenology of respect unexplored.

In the unique inmate population where my data collection takes place, behaviors that communicate respect are likely to be more salient than in other work environments because inmates rarely receive respect from prison officials (Butler & Drake, 2007). In contrast, the focal company's website (www.televerde.com/company) describes the organization as:

A socially responsible company driven by a desire to restructure human lives. We believe that skills and education are the great equalizers and that no matter where a person started, with a thirst for knowledge and higher education they can climb higher. To that end, we train, educate and employ women who have a genuine desire to change the course of their lives for the better.

Thus, the stark contrast makes this setting an appropriate place to explore how organizational members interpret apparent respect cues and come to feel respected. This salience is particularly crucial because it will allow me to tease out the nuances of how receivers interpret respect cues and make attributions about why they are receiving it. Thus, this research question focuses on the experience of receiving respect:

Research Question 1: *How do organizational members perceive and make sense of apparent respect cues in a way that makes them feel respected?*

Research Question 2

As outlined in the literature review, receiving respect impacts the way individuals see themselves. Empirical work linking respect and the self indicates that expressions of respect increase self-esteem (Ellemers et al., 2004) and social

identification with the collective in which respect is received (Bartel et al., in press; Stürmer et al., 2008). Further, conceptual work also suggests that receiving respect increases individuals' self-esteem, as well as their display of authentic identities (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003).

There are many terms used to refer to how individuals see themselves. I will use "self-concept," which is "the totality of an individual's thoughts and feelings with reference to himself" (Rosenberg, 1979: 8), and is made up of two parts: personal identities and social identities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brown & Turner, 1981). Personal identities refer to individual attributes (e.g., I have a PhD, I am left-handed), whereas social identities refer to membership in groups or categories that are seen as self-defining (e.g., I am an ASU student, I am a Green Bay Packers shareholder). Although researchers have extensively explored and drawn conclusion about *what* the self-concept is, we know much less about *how* personal and social identities come to be incorporated into one's self-concept (Yost, Strube, & Bailey, 1992). Specific to the organizational context, reviews suggest that despite the proliferation of studies on outcomes of organizational identification (see Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008; Riketta, 2005, for reviews), we know relatively little about the *process* through which individuals come to incorporate organizational membership into their self-concept (Ashforth et al., 2008; Pratt, 1998).

Taken together, identity theory, social identity theory (see Hogg et al., 1995, for a review and comparison of the two theories), and identity research in organizational studies suggest that one's self-concept is largely socially

constructed, based in part on the collective's efforts to actively manage member identification through socialization (Ashforth, 2001; Pratt, 2000), and in part on others' reactions to one's enactment of identities (Ibarra, 1999; Mead, 1934; Weick, 1995). Regarding the active management of member identification, organizations often transform self-concepts by creating some type of dissonance that motivates identification, typically by challenging members' current self-concepts to "create a type of identity deficit or a misfit between who one is and who one wants to become" (Pratt, 2000: 467). This dissonance is often created through divestiture socialization tactics that undermine or even stigmatize current identities, creating shame and a readiness to incorporate a more desirable identity into the self-concept (Ashforth, 2001).

Consistent with Mead's (1934) perspective on the socially constructed self and Weick's (1995) observation that individuals seek out others to help them make sense of themselves, Ashforth and colleagues (2008: 340) characterize the identification process as a dynamic interplay between the individual and the organization where "individuals begin to incorporate elements of the collective into their sense of self by enacting identities and then interpreting responses to these enactments." Ibarra (1999) supports this notion, finding that consultants and investment bankers adopted provisional identities during a role transition, and looked for positive or negative social cues for guidance as to whether they should permanently adopt the identity. Despite agreement that social responses to identity enactment play a significant role in developing or changing the self-concept, we know very little about what responses or cues are meaningful in this

process, and why some may be interpreted as meaningful whereas others are not. Due to its relational and identity-focused nature, Spears and colleagues (2006) suggest that specifically examining respect is perhaps the best way to advance our understanding of how evaluation and treatment by others affect the incorporation of identities into the self-concept. Thus, examining the social cues that speak to the value of who a person is seems worthy of empirical attention.

***Research Question 2:** How does receiving respect at work influence organizational members' self-concepts?*

Research Question 3

I seek to capture the actual process through which receiving respect affects work outcomes. The social psychology and organizational respect research reviewed in the previous chapter indicates positive outcomes of received respect, but does not articulate *how* receiving respect drives the outcomes. Received respect may motivate favorable work behaviors through increase positive affect toward the sender or, following research question 2, it is possible that respect changes the way that organizational members see themselves in a way that drives favorable work behaviors. A longitudinal observation of newcomers to the organization experiencing respect will allow me to observe the personal and work-related outcomes in ways that cannot be captured via experiment or survey. That is to say, asking informants to articulate the changes they see in themselves and observing their work behaviors will provide unique insight on the process through which respect drives outcomes.

Additionally, in the literature review I presented many positive outcomes of perceived respect that are empirically derived from social psychology and organizational behavior. Regarding the research in social psychology, Ellingsen and Johannesson (2007) note that the findings are group-specific but not necessarily work related, and, for the most part, are created in labs and isolated from the field. Thus, we must use caution when applying these social psychological findings about intragroup respect to interpersonal relationships in organizational contexts. Gaining a grounded sense of life in an organization where respect is especially salient will provide the opportunity to see the generalizability of the individual and group outcomes presented in Chapter 2's literature review.

The focal organizational setting in which the data were collected appears to be a highly respectful environment, which may require a substantial adjustment for newcomers, as it likely differs greatly from the way they are treated in day-to-day prison life (Tracy, 2005). If newcomers are deprived of respect prior to joining the organization, and respect is a novel experience that requires adjustment, the resulting behaviors are likely to be highly observable.

Research Question 3: *In a particularly status-deprived setting, how does receiving respect affect the way organizational members do their jobs?*

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY

As noted, the purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the experience and outcomes of receiving respect at work. In the first three chapters I focused specifically on the theoretical motivation of the study and anticipated contribution to the field's understanding of the phenomenology of respect. I applied the grounded theory method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to accomplish this, enabling me to inductively build theory from the day-to-day experiences of organizational members living the phenomenon.

I followed Eisenhardt and Graebner's suggestion to choose a setting that is "particularly suitable for illuminating and extending relationships and logic among constructs" and allowed me to "explore a significant phenomenon under rare or extreme circumstances" (2007: 27). In choosing a context that best fit the theoretical ambitions of the study, I considered Miller's (2001) review of work on injustice and disrespect, where he suggested that individuals can easily recognize what is unjust or disrespectful, but have a much harder time identifying what is fair, or makes them feel respected. I suggest that this is the case because respect is similar to a need, in that it is most salient when lacking or unmet (cf. Maslow, 1954; McClelland, 1961). In other words, respect is likely to be most observable where it is problematic, making the individuals most able to articulate the experience of respect those who can readily contrast situations where they are respected with situations where they are not respected. Because high-level executives and managers likely have some level of respect built into the structure

of their position, I posit that respect will be most observable among lower-level workers. According to Bamberger and Pratt (2010: 666), organizational researchers tend to focus too much on the experience of managers in what are considered to be typical for-profit organizational contexts, but “dismiss as somehow less relevant to management theory the majority of people who work in organizations, namely, those who ‘work in the trenches.’” Bamberger and Pratt go on to say that unusual or extreme contexts, when chosen for the right theoretical reasons, provide the best opportunities to observe organizational phenomena in ways that move the field forward.

Thus, to best serve my theoretical motivation I focus on a single organization that provides an extreme context in which respect is highly salient: a for-profit company that employs female inmates to do professional work from inside a state prison. My qualitative research design included extensive observation of the work environment and employee training, collection of documentation, and in-depth interviews with employees who act as professionals by day and return to their role of inmate each night, making this an ideal context for my research questions and theory-building goals. Although I initially approached the dissertation as a single case study, it took on a quasi-ethnographic feel. I entered the organizational context as an outsider of the total institution (Goffman, 1961; Scott, 2010). Thus, I had to quickly gain an understanding of the context and learn to play by the prison’s rules, which is an extreme and embedding experience beyond what is required of more traditional qualitative organizational research. Also, because of the prison being a total institution, there

was really no way for the informants to step out of the environment to talk with me about their work life. Although this isn't a true ethnography because I was able to come and go as I pleased, I truly needed to be part of the employees' experience to understand it and interpret the data accordingly. Recognizing the uniqueness of this organization, I will provide an extensive description of the setting, which will be relevant to the later discussion of transferability.

Data Collection Setting

The research site is *Televerde*, a business-to-business marketing firm that employs female inmates to work in call centers located inside a state prison. In 2008, Televerde was formally recognized by Arizona State University for their unique business model, winning the Spirit of Enterprise Innovation in Entrepreneurship Award. This award highlighted the opportunity Televerde provides for incarcerated women to obtain professional skills and earn money, while remaining a for-profit organization that leads their industry. I chose Televerde as a data site because, as highlighted by this award, it had a reputation for an especially caring and respectful work environment. To be sure, I collected preliminary data from informal interviews and observation during a visit to each of the four call centers inside the prison. I was accompanied by all three dissertation committee members for this initial visit to the call centers and we had opportunities throughout the day to question the VP-Operations who led the tour. The four of us compiled and discussed our observation notes and concluded that the preliminary data indicated respect was indeed a core part of the Televerde employees' experience. We discovered that "showing respect to ourselves and to

others” appears in a mission statement created by employees at one of the call centers. Additionally, preliminary informal interviews with employees indicated that they recognize and appreciate the respect they receive. A medium security inmate and employee said “when we walk in we are not in prison... [employees here] have a reason to hold their head high outside of that front door.” Similarly, a minimum security inmate and employee stated, “For 10 hours a day we feel like 100% human beings.” Also, the new hire training materials include a section explaining the company’s values and features quotes from Televerde managers about what those values mean in day-to-day life. One value is “People Matter,” which a manager described as follows:

I believe that by supporting, developing, and providing leadership and guidance to our employees, in addition to proper motivation and positive reinforcement, all individuals can be successful... The business is the people and the people are the business... If we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, we would miss the potential to turn a life around. Like uncut diamonds, many individuals have shining qualities beneath a rough exterior... (Training Manual, P. 34)

This evidence, in addition to conversations with the CEO, VP-Operations, and call center managers, provided strong indications that respect makes this organization unique compared to other employers. While the incarcerated status of employees may raise questions about the ultimate generalizability of this study’s findings, the uniqueness provides a revelatory context with extreme exemplars, which enabled me to gain insights into the phenomenology of respect not possible using a more traditional work setting (cf. Bamberger & Pratt, 2010; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Business model and organizational structure. Televerde does not sell products, but rather contracts with technology companies that need help reaching potential customers, improving databases, or gaining knowledge about emerging product markets. The primary service they offer is lead generation, which essentially eliminates the “cold call” task for the technology company’s sales force. The technology company (Televerde’s “client”) provides Televerde with a list of businesses with whom they wish to establish relationships and future sales. A Televerde teleservice representative (TSR; see Table 2 for a key of acronyms and role titles commonly used by informants) calls these businesses (“prospects”) on behalf of the client with the goal of making an appointment for the clients’ sales associate to meet with the prospect about a certain product. The TSRs never actually make sales, but rather generate opportunities (“leads”) for the client’s sales forces. Lead generation generally involves contacting and speaking with high-level managers (e.g., director of IT, CIO) that have the power to make purchasing decisions for costly technology hardware and software. The client pays Televerde based on the number of deliverables successfully generated, which can be leads, prospect profiles, or event registrations, depending on the goal of the campaign.

Insert Table 2 about here

Business is conducted in five call centers. One is located at the company’s corporate office in Phoenix, Arizona, while the other four are located in a state prison in the same region employing minimum, medium, and maximum security

inmates. Televerde was started in 1994 with one supervisor and five inmates making calls from a trailer in a parking lot of a hotel that was converted into a minimum security overflow unit. They formalized and grew their partnership with the state's Department of Corrections (DOC) under new management in 2000 and opened their first call center in 2001 on a medium security yard inside a large female state prison. They opened a second call center later that year on a minimum security yard. By the end of 2001, they reached \$5 million in sales. In 2005, they opened a third minimum security call center, which is uniquely located outside of the prison gates and inmates from the three lowest-security prison yards are searched and escorted by guards when they come to work in this call center each day. In 2005, the company's sales reached \$10 million. They opened their fourth prison call center in 2007 on the maximum security prison yard.

Employee selection, training, and services. With the growth of the company came a formalized selection process and standardized training program. Televerde has far more applicants than positions to fill in each call center, as it is the highest paying job available to inmates and, according to employees, the most socially desirable to the general inmate population. When seeking a new cohort of candidates, Televerde posts the job on the prison yard where they will be hiring. To be considered for the job, applicants must have a high school diploma or GED and have a DOC record free of major disciplinary incidents. Applicants meeting these criteria are given a typing test and must type more than 25 words per minute to move to the next step. Next is a written test assessing language skills. Upon passing these assessments, applicants take a personality assessment called

Predictive Index (PI) that provides Televerde with an overview of the applicant's likely work behaviors such as selling style, conflict-handling style, and communication style under stress. Televerde uses this to assess the applicant's personality relative to the prototypical TSR personality profile. If hired, this assessment is also used to match the newcomer with a mentor on the job and is displayed in her work station for co-workers and managers to see. After assessing the PI results, the applicant is given two phone interviews to conduct with call center managers. If both managers agree that the candidate should be hired, she is offered the position. If the two managers do not agree, one more manager or Televerde trainer is asked to make an evaluation and the applicant is offered the position if the majority believe she should be hired.

The applicants are generally hired and trained in cohorts of 6-12 who engage in an intensive three-week training program together. The cohort has two trainers: one from the corporate office (non-inmate) and one call center trainer who is an experienced employee that is in a designated trainer role (inmate). The first two weeks of training take place in a classroom setting where the new hires learn about how businesses operate and are structured, as well as how they use various technologies. The trainers adhere to a set curriculum, assignments, and exams. Each new hire earns three community college credits for successfully completing the two weeks of training, which are paid for by Televerde. The third week of training is in the call center where each new hire is paired with an experienced mentor. Throughout the week, the mentor helps the new hire

transition from listening to the mentor's calls, to operating the computer while the mentor calls prospects, to ultimately making calls on her own.

TSRs typically start on fairly simple calling campaigns and then move onto more difficult campaigns as they build their skill set. They are also encouraged to seek out a change in campaign assignment if they become bored and want to learn something new. Beyond movement within the TSR role, there are several positions that employees occupy within the call center, such as client coordinators who communicate directly with the clients and share information and instructions with TSRs, call center trainers who teach the new hire classes and train TSRs for special certifications requested by clients, and employees that focus specifically on quality assurance, listening to all calls where a deliverable is obtained, evaluating whether the call meets all of the client's criteria before billing the client. Although TSRs need to gain experience and be high performers before moving into another role, the roles are not actual promotions that come with increased pay or management responsibilities. DOC regulations stipulate that no inmate can manage or oversee another inmate, and raises in pay can be given for tenure only, not merit. TSRs' starting wage is between \$3 and \$4 per hour and they receive raises over time that bring them up to the state's minimum wage (approximately \$7-\$8 while data collection took place). TSRs are required to pay a portion of their income to DOC for their room and board, a portion must be put into a savings account for the inmate to receive upon release, and the rest can be used to purchase items from the inmates' store (e.g., food items, toiletries). Employees can also choose to send money to cover expenses for their families.

Employees work at the call center located in the prison yard where they live. If inmates are moved to a different security level (e.g., moved from medium to minimum security for good behavior, or moved to a lower security yard as one's release date draws closer) they can transfer to the call center on that yard. Some employees will never transfer, as the company also employs maximum security inmates that are serving life sentences.

Televerde has programs in place to help their employees succeed after release from prison. TSRs that reach the pre-release stage (within one year of release) are invited to participate in Televerde Out-Placement Services (TOPS), which is a series of topic-specific workshops designed to help employees successfully transition back into society. The workshops are offered outside of work hours and employees are not paid to participate. Volunteers from the community provide their expertise and advice on various topics, both professional and personal, such as writing a resume, reuniting with family, health and wellness, and personal finance. For the final workshop of the series, former inmates that work for Televerde's corporate office come to share their "Televerde success story" to offer support and encouragement. The pre-release employees have the opportunity to interview for jobs at the corporate office call center and, if hired, can begin working there when they are released from prison. However, these positions are highly coveted and there are far more pre-release inmates who desire the job than actual positions available.

Sampling

I conducted theoretical sampling, which allowed me to begin by following sources of data that seemed most relevant to the research questions (Eisenhardt, 1989) and related emergent themes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This sampling technique enabled me to capture the events and processes that represent the phenomenon of interest, which is crucial to the grounded theory method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Based on the salience rationale noted earlier in the chapter, I focused my data collection efforts on newcomers adjusting to the prison-based call centers because their transition likely offers the most salient experience of respect at work.

I collected preliminary data before interacting with newcomers in order to familiarize myself with the context and identify important sources of data. I began by conducting preliminary interviews and observing all call centers before launching into focused data collection. As noted, my dissertation committee and I spent a full day with the VP-Operations, who provided us with a tour of the call centers inside the prison and an overview of the relevant prison and call center operations. I observed employees working in each call center (two minimum security, one medium security, and one maximum security) and conducted informal interviews with managers and employees in all four call centers. My committee members and I took detailed notes, which I compiled the following day, and debriefed in the car after leaving the tour, which was recorded and transcribed.

I then conducted interviews with the director of HR and the director of training and development at the corporate office to gain an understanding of hiring and training procedures. Accompanied by a committee member, I also interviewed the call center directors and several managers at the prison to understand their perspective on newcomer adjustment. The information from these interviews helped me formulate my newcomer-focused data collection plan with knowledge and sensitivity to the unique context, and I consulted with a committee member with extensive knowledge about qualitative research design as I formulated this plan.

I decided that I would begin by following the entire training process for an upcoming cohort of new hires and then follow another cohort through the process in a different call center, selecting new hires from each cohort to track over time. As for sampling call center informants that were not new hires, I began with interviewing managers from each call center, as well as a training specialist and quality control manager that work in all the call centers. The interviews with managers from each call center provided depth of insight, and the interviews with managers that oversaw all call centers allowed more opportunities to discuss similarities and differences. To sample experienced employees, I began with those that I felt could provide the most information given their long tenure and experience in multiple call centers. As I moved forward with the study, I sampled experienced employees from each call center based on their time remaining before release, job role, campaign, and assigned PM. The details of my data collection are explained below.

Data Collection

The CEO and VP-Operations informed managers and employees in the call centers that I was conducting research on training and newcomer adjustment at work. Only key informants knew that I was specifically focusing on respect during newcomer adjustment, as I wished to avoid interfering with the existing respect dynamics or risk priming new hires to look for respectful cues. As such, I also did not explicitly ask questions about respect in initial conversations and interviews with organizational members, but rather asked questions about how they were treated at work and followed leads on information about respect with probes such as “How so?” or “Can you give me an example?”

Data collection took place over 15 months, with the majority collected in a 9-month window. I continued until theoretical saturation – the point at which new information becomes redundant and no new categories, or relationships between the categories, are revealed – was reached (Eisenhardt, 1989; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Observation. I spent a total of 185 hours observing training and operations in three call centers. My initial observations of all four call centers located inside of the prison helped me understand the day-to-day work that employees do, the objectives of the formal training, and the differences between each call center. I had slightly different experiences on each security level during these initial visits, so I wanted each to be represented in my sampling. Thus, I collected data at three of the four call centers, including maximum, medium, and only one of the two minimum security call centers. To maintain the anonymity of

informants, I will not explicitly link each call center to a security level, but rather label the three data collection sites Call Center 1, Call Center 2, and Call Center 3.¹

The majority of my observation time was extensive non-participant observation of the three-week formal new hire training process. My first new hire training was in Call Center 1 and I observed it in its entirety. I sat in the back of the room and took detailed notes each day during the classroom training, especially noting critical incidents or turning points for newcomers. The new hires took a mid-term and final exam and also had to develop their own business plan and pitch the idea to their peers and trainers, as well as Televerde managers who were available to be in the audience that day.

I also observed the on-the-job training period, where I was able to sit next to the new hires and listen in on their calls with an extra earpiece, or occasionally listen to recorded calls in a separate room with the trainer. I was especially focused on how the new hires were treated by managers and mentors, and even sat in on the mentors' own training class. I stopped in the call center to observe the new hires periodically, every two weeks for the next two months.

When the next formal training cohort began on a different yard – Call Center 3 – I attended all parts of the training that were previously noted as critical incidents and turning points, both in the classroom and in the call center. There were two training specialists (non-inmates) at Televerde who trade off leading the

¹ Although I will not explicitly address the relationship between security level and call center respect in my data analysis or findings, I acknowledge that there is a potential confound. Employees enter each call center with a common experience outside of work that may set the tone for their behavior in the call centers. I elaborate on the potential link between security levels and call center respect in the limitations section of Chapter 6.

new hire sessions, and I had the opportunity to observe one in Call Center 1 and the other in Call Center 3. I did not observe a new hire training session in Call Center 2 because the training content and process is the same, and I did not discern any differences in new hire responses to the training across the first two prison yards. However, to balance my observation across call centers, I sat in on training workshops in Call Center 2 as well, although they were open to all employees rather than just newcomer-focused.

Finally, after observing respect phenomena among newcomers, I wanted to see the role that respect played for experienced employees that were preparing for release. I observed a series of TOPS workshops, which took place on Saturday mornings over the course of 6 months.

Throughout observation I took detailed notes and created research memos to assist me with future data collection steps and in writing up research findings (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Table 3 provides details of my observation time in each call center.

Insert Table 3 about here

Interviews. I conducted 92 interviews with 57 informants including managers, inmate employees that were new to the organization, and experienced inmate employees (see Table 4). The tenure of informants ranged from 0-12 years with the organization. I conducted both informal and formal interviews. The informal interviews were more spontaneous and open-ended. Given the quasi-ethnographic nature of the study explained above, these informal interviews were

generally conducted when an opportunity to better understand the context presented itself. The formal interviews followed a semi-structured format based on protocols previously developed and refined by prior interviews. The duration of interviews ranged from 20 to 90 minutes, averaging about 45 minutes. Prison rules prohibit inmates to be alone with non-inmates in isolation, so interviews occurred in locations that provided privacy but adhered to the rules. Two call centers had meeting rooms that provided privacy but had windows to the call center. Interviews in these areas, even with the door closed, conformed to the rules. If these rooms were occupied or I was conducting interviews with employees in the call center that did not have a meeting room, I generally went outside the call center to a picnic table on the prison yard where we could talk without anyone overhearing.

Insert Table 4 about here

I developed standard protocols for managers (see Appendix B), experienced employees (see Appendix C), and new hires whom I tracked longitudinally at two to three points during their adjustment (see Appendix D, E, and F). I used these protocols as a guide, but was open to modifying the interview structure through probes that related most closely to the phenomenon of interest. As indicated in the protocols, the interviews of experienced employees and managers relied heavily on personal narratives and history with the company, encouraging employees to tell their story (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), whereas recurring interviews with newcomers aimed to capture their initial experiences of

respect in real time before day-to-day interactions with co-workers and supervisors became automatic. None of the protocols directly asked about respect, yet nearly all informants used the word respect when responding to my questions, enabling me to probe the specific topic. All participants signed an informed consent form approved by the IRB (see Appendix G) and were assured confidentiality to promote a trusting exchange and maximize disclosure of information.

The majority of interviews were recorded, and those that were recorded were professionally transcribed verbatim. As discussed with my committee and advised by management and trainers, I did not record the first round of interviews with the first new hire cohort I observed (Call Center 1) because I wanted to build trust and rapport, which is especially challenging for a researcher in a prison (Schlosser, 2008). By the second round of interviews the informants were comfortable enough to record interviews, and word seemed to travel among Televerde employees that I was trustworthy and my motives were non-threatening. In cases where I hadn't yet built rapport, or when a recording device would draw unwanted attention to an inmate or make them uncomfortable, I took detailed notes and dictated my thorough recollection of the interview into a recorder immediately upon returning to my car, then had this audio professionally transcribed verbatim to code in place of an actual interview transcript.

As noted, I started the data collection by interviewing managers at the corporate office about life at Televerde and how newcomers adjust (see Table 5). They suggested time intervals that they saw as crucial turning points for new hires, ranging from the first week on their own in the call center to nearly one

year into the job. I created an interview plan accordingly, such that I could track new hires' progress across three call centers at different time intervals (see Table 6).

Insert Tables 5 and 6 about here

The first new hire cohort that I interviewed was at Call Center 1. I interviewed a total of seven new hires, four of whom I interviewed three times over the course of nine months (during training, one month after training ended, and nine months after training began). I also interviewed several experienced inmate employees at this call center, as well as managers and trainers. The trainer for this call center was interviewed more frequently than anyone else, as she became a key informant for me. In fact, she was released from prison late in my data collection and transitioned to the corporate office. I did follow-up interviews, conducting two member checks with her about my preliminary findings. See Table 7 for the breakdown of the 41 interviews with 24 informants in Call Center 1.

Insert Table 7 about here

Although I did not observe the new hire training in Call Center 2, I had the opportunity to speak with new hires just after they completed the three-week training and again six months into the job. I conducted six interviews with four new hires because one of them quit between the first and second interview and I

replaced her with another informant from the same cohort at the six month follow up interview. See Table 8 for all interviews in this call center.

Insert Table 8 about here

In Call Center 3 I focused on tracking the new hire experience from their first day through their third month on the job. I met with the trainer for this cohort near the end of the first week to purposefully sample six new hires on two dimensions: performance in the training class up to this point and prior work experience. I included a new hire that was a re-hire who had worked for Televerde in prison and at the corporate office upon release, but violated parole and came back to prison. I interviewed these six new hires during the first week of training, one month after they started in the call center, and three months into the job. One of the six was terminated for poor performance so I was only able to interview her twice. See Table 9 for a summary of interviews in Call Center 3. Note that there is overlap in the call center interview tables, as the training specialists and quality assurance manager work in all call centers, and the call center director for Call Center 3 is also the director for Call Center 2. These individuals who worked in multiple call centers were asked about call center differences and shared perceptions of each.

Insert Table 9 about here

Archival documents. Although interview and observation were the primary data sources, archival materials served as useful support for triangulation

(Shah & Corley, 2006). These materials included mission statements, white papers, media reports, training materials, and text from the company's website. This was an unobtrusive form of data collection that provided information about the organization without my interference in day-to-day employee life (Webb, Campbell, Schwarz, & Sechrest, 1966; Webb & Weick, 1979). In particular, the nearly 200-page training manual that I received while sitting in on new hire training allowed me to follow along with the information the new hires were processing at any given point in the classroom portion of the training program.

Data Analysis

All recorded interviews were professionally transcribed and I proofread them for accuracy. The resulting transcripts were loaded into the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti, which helped me organize the large amount of data. I took detailed notes throughout observation, differentiating between recording what I was seeing and my theoretical interpretations of what I was seeing. I also created memos to capture my thoughts as I reflected on interviews and observations. These memos were stored in Atlas.ti and enabled me to document and diagram my thoughts on relationships between codes and categories as they emerged. This also forced me to articulate my assumptions about what I was hearing and seeing, and gave me something to refer back to when I compiled my findings for writing the dissertation (Charmaz, 2006).

I followed Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparison technique, such that data analysis and collection took place concurrently as I used open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The interview transcripts,

observation notes, memos, and written materials provided the text to be coded. As metaphorically described by Charmaz (2006), the initial stages of coding helps identify a large number of concepts and categories that provide the researcher with “bones,” and axial and selective coding enable the researcher to assemble the “bones” into the “skeleton” of a grounded theory.

Given the time intervals of my interviews with new hires (see Table 6), I coded the majority of interviews by call center, beginning with Call Center 1, then Call Center 2, and ending with Call Center 3. I used the constant comparison technique, comparing data to data, within single interviews and between interviews, and previously coded incidents to the new incidents (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In the beginning stages of open coding I compared similar incidents, such as multiple new hires’ reflections on adjustment within call centers to identify commonalities. When I began to notice differences in employees’ perceptions of respect across call centers, I treated the call centers as three “sub-cases” nested within one larger case, enabling me to compare employee perceptions within and between call centers. Later I compared dissimilar incidents, as dissimilar comparisons helped me identify boundary conditions and refine my emerging theory (Charmaz, 2006), such as a new hire’s adjustment in Call Center 1 to a new hire’s adjustment in Call Center 2. Further facilitating my comparisons, the final stage of my nine-month intensive data collection period (see Table 6) allowed me to simultaneously collect and compare the Call Center 1 cohort’s interviews at nine months into the job, the Call Center 2 cohort’s interviews six months into the job, and the Call Center 3 cohort’s interviews three

months into the job. This essentially permitted three levels of comparison: within-individual comparison over time, between individuals within a given call center, and between call centers. Continuing with the constant comparison technique, I also compared new hire's perceptions of respect to narratives shared by experienced employees and TOPS participants who were preparing for release.

To further structure my data analysis, I was attentive to separating first-order data, which are the raw data from informants, observation, or archival documents, from second-order data, which are the researcher's labels and interpretations of the raw data (Van Maanen, 1979). I ultimately created an emergent data structure to present my findings by following a 3-stage process, discussed below, used by researchers publishing qualitative studies in top-tier management journals (e.g., Corley & Gioia, 2004; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, in press). This 3-stage process, combined with the emergent data structures, was designed to make the findings easily interpretable for readers and also provide a clear trail between the raw data and emergent theory.

Stage 1: Open coding. In the open coding stage I came up with as many first-order codes as possible that I felt related to my research questions in some way and either labeled them with an "in vivo" code, meaning the informants actual words were used as a label, or a simple label that an informant would recognize. I sought the help of a committee member when I began open coding for new hires' first-round interviews. This same member participated in the initial tour of all call centers and also visited the call centers with me on two other occasions during preliminary data collection to help me refine my interviewing

skills and observation note taking. I coded three interviews and came up with a list of codes. I gave this list of codes to the committee member and we used the list to independently code a fourth interview. We compared our coding and found a high level of agreement. Where there were discrepancies, we discussed them and I provided contextual considerations from my observations. We discussed these discrepancies until we agreed on the codes assigned to the passage in question.

When I felt I was nearing the end of open coding (with approximately 175 codes), I began grouping the codes into a manageable number of *concepts*. These concepts were related to the phenomenon of interest and intended to remain as “first-order data” (Van Maanen, 1979) with a label that an informant would recognize. At this point I scheduled a meeting with two committee members to explain my progress and do a “peer debriefing” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shah & Corley, 2006) about how my emergent codes and preliminary concepts resonated with their understanding of the context and their knowledge of the organizational literature.

Step 2: Axial coding. During axial coding, researchers “look for answers to questions such as why or how come, where, when, how, and with what results” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 127) to reduce the array of concepts by placing them into *themes* based on common dimensions and properties. Themes provide the building blocks of a theoretical model and are more abstract theoretical labels than concepts. They were meant to translate the raw data into the same language as the organizational literature to which I aimed to contribute. Finally, I looked

for overarching commonalities called *aggregate dimensions* to further organize my data in a theoretical way. I again met with two committee members to explain how I was grouping categories into themes and themes into aggregate dimensions. This forced me to articulate my assumptions and rationale for each grouping, and also provided another peer debriefing.

Step 3: Selective coding. Finally, selective coding enables the researcher to identify relationships between themes and develop propositions or hypotheses to be tested in future research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This stage provided the wherewithal to see how themes fit together, at which point I began to build the foundation of a coherent emergent theory. I moved through the selective coding stage paying special attention to the longitudinal components of my data, which helped me identify relationships between themes. I held a final data meeting with the two committee members closely involved in the data collection and analysis and presented the relationships I saw between themes. Again, the committee members asked questions and asked for data trails leading from the raw data to the emergent theory. As experts in literatures where I hope to contribute, they also assisted me in identifying and framing my theoretical contribution.

Trustworthiness of Data Collection and Analysis

Shah and Corley (2006) elaborate on Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four basic criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research that align with traditional criteria for rigorous research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. I addressed each of these concerns based on Shah and Corley's (2006) recommendations.

Credibility. Credibility is closely related to what is called internal validity in quantitative research. To meet this trustworthiness criterion I spent a great deal of time in my research setting, observing the work environment and newcomer training for 185 hours, as well as conducting 92 interviews with a stratified (based on tenure, rank, and performance) group of organizational members. Additionally, I collected observation, interview, and written materials as three different types of data that allowed me to triangulate evidence, strengthening the grounding of my theorizing (Eisenhardt, 1989). I also identified key informants that I conducted member checks with as I noticed themes or relationships in the data. I had just two key informants, as I wished to minimize the number of organizational members that could have potentially disrupted the existing dynamics by paying special attention to respect. Finally, as mentioned above, peer debriefings were conducted regularly with my committee members, as well as other colleagues when I presented preliminary findings, to get a sense of how my findings fit with the existing literature in organizational behavior.

Transferability. Similar to external validity, transferability refers to the extent to which the grounded theory that emerges from a specific context can be applied to other contexts. The next chapter provides detailed descriptions of each category and theme that emerged in the research, as well as the structures and processes in the context, to help researchers understand the boundary conditions of the emergent theory. The transferability of the emergent theory will also be directly examined in Chapter 6, the Discussion. Additionally, I will evaluate the transferability of my findings as I continue with this stream of research to

quantitatively test my grounded theory in a more traditional organizational setting.

Dependability. Similar to reliability, dependable qualitative methods ensure that my emergent findings are plausible, that another researcher who collected this data would have similar interpretations, and the grounded theory that emerges is not haphazard or idiosyncratic to the researcher. The theoretical sampling that I conducted means that the data collected are highly relevant to the phenomenon of interest, and the noise from other happenings in the organization is limited. Also, I spent a great deal of time in the organization to gain the trust of informants, and had informants sign a consent form indicating they understand that interviews are confidential, which promoted a trustworthy and candid exchange, maximizing the useful information in the interview data. Finally, managing data in an orderly way was crucial to staying on track with theory development. I used Microsoft Excel to document the details of every interview (interviewee name and role, call center, date) and also my observation log, which included observation dates, times, locations, and what I was observing. Excel also allowed me to sort my interviews by call center, tenure, and position, as well as track the intervals between longitudinal interviews. Additionally, my use of Atlas.ti gave my committee members the potential opportunity to audit my data management and see that my analyses fit the grounded theory method guidelines.

Confirmability. To show that my interview data were as scrupulous as possible, all interviews were professionally transcribed verbatim, without any interpretation on my part. Also, what Van Maanen (1979) calls “the facts,” or the

actual words used by the respondent, and the “theories” that explain the facts, are kept separate in the next chapter. This is for the sake of confirmability, so that reviewers and readers can clearly see the trail from the raw data to my proposed theoretical relationships and conceptualizations (Gioia et al., Forthcoming).

Chapter 5

FINDINGS

To guide the reader through my findings, I begin by revisiting the purpose and motivation of this qualitative study and the three research questions that I sought to answer. Next, I present a brief overview of the theoretical model that emerged from my data and each major theme in the model. This overview of the model enables the reader to see the bigger picture as I delve into the raw data, first-order categories and second-order themes that make up the theoretical model.

The purpose of this study is to build on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 – which sheds light on outcomes of perceived respect that are critical to individuals’ organizational experiences – by enhancing our understanding of *how* respect is experienced. Specifically, I am interested in how organizational members interpret respect cues in ways that make them feel respected, how respect from others influences the way the receivers see themselves, and how receiving respect produces the outcomes noted in prior literature. I am also interested in additional outcomes that may be revealed through this qualitative investigation, as qualitative methods have not been used previously to specifically examine respect in organizations. Once again, my three research questions are:

1. *How do organizational members perceive and make sense of apparent respect cues in a way that makes them feel respected?*
2. *How does receiving respect at work influence organizational members’ self-concepts?*
3. *In a particularly status-deprived setting, how does receiving respect affect the way organizational members do their jobs?*

To summarize the overarching theoretical model (see Figure 1 below), the data suggest that receiving respect was experienced in two distinct ways:

generalized and *personalized*. These two types of respect were directly related to outcomes for the individuals' well-being and also outcomes related to performance on the job. Additionally, receiving respect led to outcomes through an experience that altered the way that individuals receiving respect thought and felt about themselves. In terms of the self-concept, the inclusion and enactment of personal and social identities changed through *social validation* from managers, peers, clients, and prospects and resulted in *identity security* – one's sense that it is safe/comfortable to possess and enact a given personal or social identity. The two types of respect, generalized and personalized, exerted different forces on the self-concept such that generalized respect led to social validation and identity security for *social* identities, and personalized respect led to social validation and identity security for *personal* identities. The social validation and subsequent identity security ultimately enabled the receiver of respect to integrate her disparate (and conflicting) personal and social identities into a coherent whole, an outcome referred to as *identity holism*. In addition to the direct effects of receiving generalized and personalized respect, identity holism reinforced the well-being and performance outcomes noted above.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Figure 2 represents the complete data structure for the theoretical model described above. The three aggregate dimensions – experience of respect, self-concept, and outcomes of respect – align with the three research questions. This section is organized by research question and the accompanying aggregate

dimension, where I break down the associated themes, categories, and representative raw data. To accompany the text that describes the link between raw data and the emergent theory, there is a table for each second-order theme that presents representative pieces of data for the first-order categories that make up the theme. The data points presented in the tables come from interviews that were recorded and transcribed. To indicate the source of the quotes I use unique identifier for each informant that includes the call center (“CC1” for Call Center 1, “CC2” for Call Center 2, and “CC3” for Call Center 3), informant number used in my coding, and role/tenure (where “NH” means new hire and “E” means experienced employee). For example, the third new hire in Call Center 2 would be (CC2 3 NH). Data points from observation or archival documents are indicated accordingly.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Experience of Respect

The first research question, *How do organizational members perceive and make sense of apparent respect cues in a way that makes them feel respected?*, focuses on how one comes to feel respected. As reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3, prior research provides insight about whether or not individuals feel respected and why it matters as well as empirical support for positive outcomes relevant to organizations. However, the reliance on quantitative studies leaves us in the dark about the actual process of how an individual comes to feel respected.

Specifically, the literature on respect does not reveal how an individual interprets respect cues.

Additionally, as noted in Chapter 3, research across disciplines indicates that respect is given for at least two different reasons: the first reason being that respect is something universally owed to all individuals and the second being that an individual meets some type of criteria deemed respect worthy in a given context. If indeed respect cues differ in meaning (e.g., you are valued because all humans should be valued; you are valued because you embody the characteristics appropriate for your role), does the receiver interpret such cues differently?

First exposure to respect. To provide context for the emergent categories and themes surrounding the experience of respect, Table 10 summarizes Televerde new hires' first explicit exposure to respect on the first day of training. The data come from my observation notes and the training manual given to new hires on the first day. I present these data to help the reader see the respect cues through the eyes of the new hires on their first day at Televerde, and also to show that Televerde's use of the word respect, and presumably the new hires' understanding of the respect in this context, are consistent with the way that respect is defined in Chapter 2 and used in the literature more broadly. As noted in the description of interview protocols in Chapter 5, I did not explicitly ask new hires about respect to avoid priming them to look for it, but the fact that new hires consistently used the word respect to describe the experience of feeling valued suggests that Televerde was effective in institutionalizing "respect" as a cultural watchword.

Insert Table 10 about here

There was a section on professionalism and respect in the new hire training manual that said professionalism “means that you will carry yourself in a dignified capacity, while showing respect for yourself and others at all times,” which led into the explicit coverage of respect. Discussing this part of the training manual on the first day provides all new hires with a common understanding of what respect is, as well as the respect norms in the call centers. As summarized in Table 10, the training specialists from the corporate office discussed Televerde’s respect for TSRs and how important they were to the company’s success. One way they indicated the extent to which Televerde values its employees is by explaining the transition program, personal development courses, and higher education opportunities offered by the company. This communicated to the new hires that Televerde’s behavior matched the value it claims to place on its employees.

The conversations about respect also communicated the expectations for how Televerde employees treat one another. The training specialists highlighted differences between new hires (such as the learning style example given in Table 10) and told the new hires that it is crucial to respect differences among employees. The message they seemed to convey is that this type of respect is owed to all members of the company and ideally creates a sense among new hires that the TSR role, and those that fill the role, are valued.

Generalized respect. As indicated in the generalized respect section of Figure 2, the generalized respect theme emerged from several related categories: we are all valued, respect from peers and managers, we are all treated like people, and the way we are treated is consistent.

The core meaning of generalized respect is tied to the first category listed: we are all valued. The representative quotes provided in Table 11 indicate that members of Televerde were valued and given a voice, and it was not contingent on any characteristic or displayed behavior. Indeed, the data suggest that generalized respect is a collective- or climate-level construct, as it described the way members of the organization were treated in general. As noted in Chapter 2, this is consistent with the way Ramarajan and colleagues (2008) define organizational respect and also how Tenbrunsel and colleagues (2003) define a climate for respect.

Insert Table 11 about here

The second category, respect from peers and managers, indicates that the source of generalized respect could be management or fellow employees, and the role of fellow employees was particularly noteworthy. Televerde espoused a high level of respect and communicated it to the new hires during training (see Table 10), but the espoused respect became more meaningful to employees when it was confirmed in some manner by Televerde employees who shared their inmate status. According to a key informant (CC1 6 E), Televerde often seems too good to be true to the new hires who are accustomed to the prison environment, but

when someone “in orange” confirms that Televerde’s espoused values are enacted, or when they see the enactment for themselves, they start to believe it.

Several new hires explained that they see Televerde as authentic. For example:

I had worked for corporations and places like that before... there’s always core values and there’s always mission statements and there’s always vision statements and there’s always things they say they want to instill in you. But I think Televerde really goes a step beyond that. Honestly, I really believe that, I’m not just saying that. I think that the training really shows that... it demonstrates that they really believe in the things that they say. So, the first day I didn’t really grasp that they meant it, but over the time, during the training, I’ve learned to really respect what their core values are and their ideas. So, I just have a lot of respect for the company, honestly, that they’re here and they’re doing what they do for us and for the clients... (CC3 3 NH)

This and other data points suggest that the espoused generalized respect communicated to new hires during training was not enough for them to feel they are actually receiving generalized respect. It became real for them when a fellow “orange” employee told them it’s real, or when they observe behaviors consistent with the message. Thus, the more consistent the manager and employee behaviors were with the espoused respect, the higher the level of perceived generalized respect in a given call center.

As I will discuss later, there were significant differences between the levels of generalized respect that informants reported across the three call centers. While there was at least some generalized respect described in each call center, it was far more pronounced (and consistently described across informants) in Call Centers 2 and 3 than in Call Center 1.

We are all “treated like people” was an in vivo code in the raw data. The phrase was used by many informants when they contrasted the way they were

treated on the prison yard with the way they were treated in the call centers. Informants almost always used the word respect to describe the difference, and described the respect as “humanizing” or said they were “treated like people.” This description of the contrast is logical because an intention of total institutions is to strip away individuality and agency (Goffman, 1961) and research on correctional officers indicates that they often make sense of their work by using a defensive strategy of cognitively grouping all inmates into a demeaning, stereotypical category and treating them as though they are all the same (Riley, 2000). This common point of reference is precisely the contrast that enabled informants to articulate respectful treatment at Televerde.

Finally, the consistency of the respectful treatment was important to informants, many of whom attributed this to the inconsistency they experienced on the prison yard. When asked about the significance of the consistency described by new hires, a key informant described the difficulty that inmates have dealing with change:

If they [Department of Corrections] move you, from one housing unit to another, that is trauma like you would not believe. And, I look at the big picture and I think... it's not that big of a deal... one cell to another cell that's identical... I mean, it's not like it's a big deal, but it is very traumatic to us. That plays all the way through to every action in here [the call center]. I mean, some of the girls have trouble moving from one seat to another. It's a very traumatic transition for them. (CC1 6 E)

In sum, the experience of generalized respect was characterized by a perception that all members of Televerde were consistently valued, treated like people, and the respect came from peers and managers such that it was

experienced as a collective-level property. See Table 11 for data points from interviews with new hires that represent each of these categories.

Personalized respect. Personalized respect was described by new and experienced Televerde employees. As noted above in Figure 2, the theme emerged from the categories: my contribution is valued, respect from superiors, clients and prospects, tied to performance, and episodic.

Counter to generalized respect, personalized respect is based on an individual's behaviors or attributes that are valued in a given context. The description of personalized respect by informants was consistent with Cronin's (2003: 11) definition of respect as "the level of esteem for another individual based on one's own value-based assessment of the individual's characteristics" and Liden and Maslyn's (1998: 49) definition of professional respect as "the perception of the degree to which each member of the dyad had built a reputation, within and/or outside the organization, of excelling at his or her line of work." This type of respect communicated a very different message to individuals, as it reinforced the value of certain behaviors rather than the equal inherent worth of all organizational members communicated through generalized respect. This means that some employees received more personalized respect than others, and it tended to be expressed in an individualized way that was tied to the valued behaviors.

The data indicate that personalized respect was received through recognition from someone in a superior or higher-status role. When an informant would bring up something respect-related in an interview, I would often ask "can

you think of a specific interaction that made you feel valued?” Each time that an informant provided an example, she described an expression of value by someone in a higher-status role, usually her performance manager (PM), but also tenured employees, clients that visited the call centers, or prospects that showed respect during a phone call. When the same type of recognition or reinforcement of valued behaviors came from peers (those in the same new hire cohort) it was interpreted as “supportive” rather than as a sign of respect.

Due to the link between individual behaviors/attributes and personalized respect, data indicate that personalized respect was tied to one’s performance on the job. The metric most commonly used was the number of deliverables (i.e., leads, event registrations, profiles) obtained in a given period of time.

Personalized respect was linked to meeting or exceeding performance standards, or demonstrating behaviors that would likely contribute to success. This made personalized respect very tailored to the individual receiving it and spoke to the value of her individuating behaviors and attributes in this context. As such, this seemed to reinforce valued personal characteristics for the receiver of respect, leaving her feeling a sense of competence above and beyond the worth and equality felt when receiving generalized respect.

The final category that made up the personalized respect theme was episodic, which is best understood by contrasting generalized and personalized respect. Generalized was experienced consistently such that it seemed to be a property of the collective that was stable from one day to the next. Personalized respect, on the other hand, reinforced valued behaviors or attributes, and therefore

was received when those behaviors or attributes were observed by a superior and the superior expressed value accordingly. Informants in this particular call center acknowledged that their PMs were stretched very thin and had many tasks aside from managing individual performance, thus, it was unlikely that personalized respect was received in a consistent or predictable manner because not every laudable behavior was observed or commented upon. Rather than being described as a consistent experience, informants described personalized respect as episodes or specific interactions that were meaningful to them. In addition to pointing out an example of a time they felt respected, informants would often note the times that they did not feel respected, which were often characterized by “lows” between the “highs” of receiving personalized respect (see the last two quotes in Table 12). The satisfaction they felt from receiving personalized respect, along with the contrasting dissatisfaction felt when not receiving it, left employees highly motivated to perform well and demonstrate valued behaviors and attributes. See Table 12 for data points from interviews with new hires that represent each of the categories that together make up personalized respect.

Insert Table 12 about here

In sum, generalized and personalized respect were both experienced as imputed worth, but in very different ways. Receiving generalized respect left the employee feeling that it was a safe and humanizing environment where all were valued and viewed as equals. Personalized respect, on the other hand, was

received as individualized recognition that positively differentiated one from others based on their behaviors or attributes that were seen as valuable.

Despite the differences between these two types of respect (generalized respect indicates all “are equally valued” whereas personalized respect makes some feel more valued than others), both types of respect were present in the call centers, but to varying degrees. Members of Call Center 1 reported little generalized respect, but high levels of personalized respect. The Call Center 2 informants described very high levels of generalized respect, but few instances of personalized respect that differentiated among employees. Call Center 3 was a unique mix of both, where moderately high generalized and personalized respect were present. The implications of one type of respect dominating another, as well as the harmonious coexistence of both in Call Center 3, will be discussed in depth after reviewing the outcomes of each type of respect (Research Question 3).

Respect and the Self-Concept

The second research question, *How does receiving respect at work influence organizational members’ self-concepts?*, explores how respect affects the way an individual views the set of social and personal identities that make up the self-concept. The data suggest that this process started with encouraging new hires to see their sets of personal and social identities separately. After these identities were separated, or “decoupled,” receiving generalized and personalized respect served different purposes such that the former validated the Televerde-related social identities, which new hires were encouraged to incorporate into their self-concepts, and the personalized respect validated personal identities (e.g.,

I am competent, capable, independent). This validation of favorable personal identities and the new social identities facilitated identity security – the point at which the new hires saw their salient identities as self-defining and safe to embody. Feeling secure in these identities enabled the newcomers to change the enactment of their less-desirable inmate role identity in a way that was consistent with who they were as individuals (secure personal identities) and who they were as members of Televerde (secure social identity). I call this outcome “identity holism,” which was achieved when newcomers were able to blend their seemingly incompatible social and personal identities into a consistent and somewhat stable whole. I see this process as analogous to Lewin’s (1951) 3-stage model of change: unfreezing, change, refreezing (see Figure 3). According to Lewin, the first stage – unfreezing – motivates employees to desire change or see a need for it. Next – the change stage – the employee is provided with new ways of thinking and behaving. In the third stage – refreezing – the employee reaches a more or less stable state where the changes are integrated into her prior ways. In the case of Televerde’s new hires, these three stages were identity decoupling (unfreezing), enacting new identities (change), and achieving identity holism (refreezing). See Figure 2 for the categories that make up each theme in the self-concept aggregate dimension: decoupling identities, social validation, identity security, and identity holism.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Decoupling identities. When introducing the second research question in Chapter 3, I noted that past research indicates that one goal of organizational socialization is to change the self-concept, such that the newcomers incorporate the social identity (organizational membership) and shed incoming identities that are not consistent with the new identity (Ashforth, 2001; Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, 2000). This is often done through divestiture, where the newcomer leaves current identities behind and fills the “identity deficit” (Pratt, 2000: 467) created during socialization with the new organizational social identity. In the case of Televerde, the primary and most salient social identity for the new hires – and all employees, for that matter – was the inmate identity. While divestiture works well in settings where newcomers can leave an old self behind and take on a new self, this was not the case at Televerde for at least two reasons. First, the inmate identity was always salient to some extent. The call centers operate within the walls of the prison, and the employees wear orange prison attire at work. DOC staff check on Televerde employees throughout the day for inmate counts, and Televerde employees need to obey DOC rules while at work (e.g., Televerde employees and managers must address one another as Ms. or Mr. Last Name). Second, the inmates spend about 14 hours per day on the prison yard. Truly leaving the inmate role behind is not an option, and the dissonance that would be created by psychologically divesting the associated role identity could be problematic as the discomfort may interfere with the necessary role enactment.

However, applying Fiol, Pratt, and O’Connor’s (2009) work on identity security and intractable identity conflict to the individual level suggests that fully

divesting and replacing an incoming identity may not be necessary for an individual to form a secure self-concept. Rather than rejecting one identity and internalizing another, seeing identities as distinct from one another and acknowledging the strengths/weaknesses and uniqueness/commonalities of each can create potential for multiple identifications. Fiol and colleagues (2009; Pratt, Fiol, O'Connor, & Panico, 2012) refer to this as “decoupling” identities. Consistent with this approach, at the beginning of the new hire training process Televerde makes a point of separating the individual from the inmate role that she is currently enacting. For example, while I observed orientation on the first day of new hire training, a manager from the corporate office told the new hires, “You wearing orange is not who you are, it’s a consequence of your behavior” (Observation notes, Training 1 – CC1). As indicated in Figure 2, the decoupling identities theme is part of the self-concept aggregate dimension, and is made up of two categories: “Message from Televerde: Orange is not who you are” and “I am an inmate at home *and* a unique individual at work.”

Separating the self from the inmate, although desirable, could be challenging due to the constant salience of the inmate role identity. However, Televerde helped new hires learn about their stable attributes through a personality inventory and a learning style assessment, explaining to the new hires that “this is who you are” across situations. Specifically, the training manual contained a section called “Learning about you” and states that the personality assessment “does not say how we will behave in a certain situation, but it does give a fairly accurate prediction of how we may behave and make decisions.”

During the first day of training the trainers discussed what each trait means in the context of work (i.e., how their personal identities fit with the enactment of their new Televerde role) and how each of their trait configurations had positive qualities (e.g., I lack patience, which makes me an excellent multi-tasker). Thus, each new hires' traits were validated in some way as being desirable, and the trainers told them that by being hired they (at least somewhat) fit the ideal Televerde employee profile, indicating fit between personal identities and the Televerde role identity.

On the second day of the first training session that I observed, I asked the inmate-employee who worked as one of the trainers during this session about the way new hires see themselves during the first week of training. She explained that new hires have a difficult time seeing who they are outside of the inmate role and even will accidentally write their inmate identification numbers on their training documents instead of their names. She said:

So, that's why I always say... you heard me say yesterday a thousand times, you know, in this classroom we're not in orange, we're not inmates, we're all Televerdians and I respect and appreciate the role that I've been given and I'm going to treat you like I want to be treated. (CC 1 Trainer)

This decoupling tactic seemed to be effective, as new hires were eventually able to see themselves enact their professional role as completely separate from their inmate role. As one new hire told me after three months on the job:

Like, during the day when I'm working? I don't feel like I'm in orange. I feel like I'm wearing a suit or an outfit and I'm in the regular work place – I'm actually part of a business. You know, working... when you're here, you're almost a part of the real world. You feel like you're in a whole different element and that's nice. (CC3 2 NH)

In sum, the data suggest that Televerde's socialization efforts were not aimed toward changing or divesting the inmate identity, but rather focused on decoupling the inmate role identity and developing new hires' personal identities and Televerde social identity. See Table 13 for representative data for the decoupling identities theme.

Insert Table 13 about here

As a result of this decoupling, new hires were also able to interpret respect cues as targeting one type of identity or the other. Next, I discuss the emergent data regarding how social validation was interpreted differently based on whether it validated social or personal identities, and how this led to identity security at the personal and social levels, followed by the outcome of identity holism.

Social validation. When shaping the self-concept, individuals rely on cues from their social environment. Social validation happens when an individual enacts a given identity and observers respond positively, communicating that the individual is “a bona fide exemplar” (Ashforth, 2001: 215). Social validation is a two-way street. It requires an individual to enact an identity in an observable way so that others can evaluate the enactment and give feedback (validation or invalidation) accordingly. As suggested in the definition above, when observers see the focal individual as properly enacting the identity, they will behave in positive ways that signal the individual is indeed a legitimate incumbent or is becoming one. The data suggest that validation was experienced when employees received respect from individuals inside and outside of the organization, and the

validation was received differently depending on the type of respect. Once the validating cues were received, the employee felt competent as a person and/or as a member of a Televerde-related social category (e.g., organizational member, role identity, professional identity).

As noted in Figure 1, generalized respect led to social validation of social identities and personalized respect led to social validation of personal identities. The data suggest that the receiver of respect was likely able to make this distinction because of the identity decoupling that took place throughout new hire training.

When the received respect was generalized – whether it came from Televerde insiders or outsiders – it validated at least one of two parts of the social identity: the receivers’ membership in the social category and the positive distinctiveness of that category. Thus, employees’ interpretation of generalized respect cues was the message that yes, indeed, others saw them as members of the Televerde-related category, and being a member of the category was a good thing. The data indicate that receiving generalized respect potentially provided social validation in three Televerde-related social identities: “Televerdian” (member of Televerde), TSR (Televerde role identity), and professional identity. Informants rarely made these distinctions explicit in interviews, but the context of the conversations and the sources of generalized respect helped me understand which social identity was validated. In general, the data suggest that receivers described the validation as targeted toward the most salient Televerde-related social identity. For example, other inmates and guards could provide social validation

for the Televerdian identity, as membership in the Televerde group was salient to them when inmates who worked for Televerde behaved differently from inmates who did not work for Televerde. Fellow employees and managers provided generalized respect that validated the TSR role identity, as that particular identity was only salient within the Televerde context. For example, Table 10 documents various respect cues received by new hires on the first day of training, the third of which is a paraphrased statement from a training specialist who told the new hires that TSRs (as the entry-level position for new hires) are more valuable than the CEO and are absolutely crucial to the company's success. Finally, the professional identity was most likely validated by outsiders of the prison and Televerde, such as prospects on the receiving end of the TSRs' phone calls. Informants described professional courtesies (generalized respect) from prospects as validation that they were indeed part of the professional world and deserved to be treated as equals. Neither the Televerde nor TSR role identities were salient to these outsiders, so social validation was likely to be interpreted as validation of one's broad professional identity.

Personalized respect, whether coming from insiders or outsiders, validated the receivers' personal identities, which were generally "competent woman" or "intelligent/skilled person." This type of validation signaled that the receiver was doing a good job in her role, but the validation was for an attribute that could potentially span many roles. This experience was crucial to the development of the self-concept, as the Televerde role encouraged new hires to display their personal identities, and once these identities were validated the new hires became

more comfortable seeing themselves in terms of these favorable personal identities (see the quotes in Table 14 under personal identities for both the “internal and external responses to me enacting identity” categories).

Insert Table 14 about here

Data from the final category, “feeling competent,” indicate a sense of competence in the new hires as they enacted identities that they saw as favorable, and were also validated by both insiders and outsiders as legitimately embodying those identities. Indeed, one new hire said, “And for you to feel that validation and feel that – like that success, one of them [a manager or experienced employee] has to tell you, or you have to be put in a position to feel that way” (CC1 4 NH). As the examples in Table 14 show, the new hires not only felt that they were becoming competent people, but they directly traced this competent feeling to the social validation they received.

Identity security. Fiol and colleagues (2009; Pratt et al., 2012) recently introduced the concept of identity security to the organizational identity literature. In the context of collective (group or organizational) identities, identity security is an individual’s perception that an identity is comfortable/safe to enact and is self-defining; it results from perceiving positive distinctiveness of the identity, as well as validation of this distinctiveness from those outside of one’s group (Berry, 1991; Pratt et al., 2012). Identity security is similar to but differs from the related concept of identity strength, which Pratt and colleagues (2012: 276) follow Berry (1991) in defining as “ingroup ‘glorification’ or a ‘strongly positive ingroup

attitude” that encourages a group to focus inward rather than outward, blinding them to similarities with outgroups, and therefore is negatively related to intergroup harmony. Figure 4 below depicts the similarities and differences between these two concepts provided by Pratt and colleagues (2012).

Insert Figure 4 about here

In their conceptual work on intractable identity conflicts, Fiol and colleagues (2009) suggest that identity security is achieved when individuals can decouple identities in ways that allow them to identify the strengths and limitations of each, as well as what the identities have in common and what makes them unique. This notion of decoupling and identity security has been used exclusively at the collective level up to this point. However, my data suggest that this sense of security is also applicable when considering the simultaneous management of personal and social identities, which may also be facilitated by identifying the strengths and limitations, as well as uniqueness and commonalities, of each.

As indicated in Figure 1, identity security emerged as a direct outcome of social validation of personal and social identities. This link is consistent with work on identity security noted above, as the social validation that emerged affirmed the positive distinctiveness of social and personal identities, and also provided validation that the individual was properly enacting the identity. Outsider validation was part of the social validation theme described above, which is a key antecedent to identity security (Pratt et al., 2012). Whether it was

through negative cues reframed in a positive way, or truly positive perceptions of how other inmates and DOC perceived Televerde employees, the message from the out-group was a meaningful step toward achieving identity security. As one informant said:

I think even the other inmates respect us. We collectively respect them... but you know I think the biggest accomplishment is the respect the DOC has given us. The evolution of that more than the inmates... DOC's respect for us having grown, changed and evolved is what I prize the most. (CC1 6 E)

The emergent relationship between validation and identity security is also consistent with work on social validation and role identities, which suggests that being socially validated “helps enable one to feel comfortable or natural in the role and to enact it less self-consciously” (Ashforth, 2001: 215).

The identity security theme came from informants' statements indicating that they did indeed see the TSR role, Televerdian, and professional social identities, as well as the positive personal identities of competence and intelligence, as self-defining. This alone would indicate identity strength, and had it been a cross-sectional study I may have drawn this conclusion, but new hires' repeated mentions of progressing from insecurity to feeling comfortable and confident enacting the identity over time (which is supported by longitudinal observation data) suggest the experience of identity security rather than strength (see Table 15). Also, identity security is particularly useful in this context because it increases one's potential for keeping multiple identities in play (Pratt et al., 2012), which was crucial to managing the Televerde role identity and the inmate role identity simultaneously. Thus, the emergent data indicate that the categories

“comfortable/safe to be this” and “self-defining” contributed to the identity security theme.

Insert Table 15 about here

Identity holism. The validation for personal and social identities and the respective identity security led to an integration of the secure identities into the outcome labeled “identity holism.” Over time, informants became comfortable and confident in themselves (personal identities) and in their Televerde-related social identities, which enabled them to integrate the enactment of these identities such that personal traits could shine through in their Televerde role enactment. Once employees felt secure in their personal and Televerde/professional identities, the compatibility of these identities seemed to make their formation of a consistent self-concept relatively smooth. But perhaps the biggest challenge was matching this evolving self-concept with the seemingly incompatible inmate role identity that was constantly salient. When facing this challenge, the data suggest that security in personal and social identities changed the way that Televerde employees enacted their inmate role identity, creating commonalities across all salient identities that enabled them to maintain a positive and stable self-concept.

When considering what the literature on integrating levels of self tells us about whether personal or social identities drive behavior in certain situations, psychology researchers tend to take an either-or approach; however, according to Blader (2007) this does not leave room for thinking about how people integrate identities or make compromises among them. “This is problematic because

genuine efforts to strike a balance between individual and collective identity concerns may very well reflect an influence of both” (2007: 73). Ashforth and Johnson (2001:47) introduced the term “holistic identities” and suggested that “individuals need to marshal their internal resources and be aware of the self as a gestalt whose knowledge, skills, and abilities draw on and transcend categorical identities...” Ashforth (2007: 88) defines holistic identities as a state “where the identities overlap to such an extent that the boundaries fade and the identities blend into a richer whole.”

Following the new hires through their training and first months on the job, and also asking experienced employees to reflect on their Televerde experience to date, revealed that most informants reached a point where they felt secure in their personal and social identities, and as a result were able to enact these identities in an integrated way. These identities became mutually reinforcing. However, new hires struggled to develop this new self-concept while maintaining their emerging identities when they went home to the prison yard each night, and also reconciling this with past identities (e.g., criminal, drug addict).

Two informants’ experiences over the course of their first nine months on the job were particularly revealing of this struggle to form a coherent self-concept (those labeled “CC1 2 NH” and “CC1 4 NH”). During the first and second week on the job both told me that going to Televerde each day is very different from the life they knew. The first case (CC1 2 NH), said she grew up homeless and understands life on the street and on the prison yard, both of which she is comfortable with. She said her strategy was to slowly pull away from the life she

was accustomed to on the prison yard because the change was not just going to happen overnight, and Televerde wasn't something she wanted to make a career of anyway. CC1 4 NH said that the way she was treated at Televerde is so different than what she was used to in the prison yard that it did not seem real. She said she spent her time on the prison yard with a rough crowd of inmates that do not work for Televerde and were drug addicts. At this point, she still saw herself as one of them and doubted she would be able to get out of prison and be sober or maintain a professional job. I talked to each of these informants about six weeks later. CC1 2 NH was contemplating quitting because she didn't feel that she was the right person for the job, and CC1 4 NH said she wasn't sure if being a part of Televerde was who she truly was. She felt like she needed to be two different people, one on the yard and one at Televerde, and although she was slowly pushing herself to be the Televerde person, she still had the same friends on the yard and still saw herself as an addict, not a professional. When I visited these two informants after nine months on the job, both were comfortable in their Televerde identities and had changed their life on the prison yard. CC1 2 NH said she avoided people and situations that may get her into trouble because she did not want to lose her opportunity at Televerde, so it was better for her to just spend time with other Televerde employees on the yard. CC1 4 NH said:

I went ahead and I kind of shed a few friends... I went ahead and I chose to do something different this time. And I, you know, people that I care about, I love, that are my friends, I just told them, you know, 'hey, I'm living different now and...if you're not going to leave that other stuff behind then I love you and if you need me, I'm here, but I'm not about it anymore, you know.' I just kind of left it at that. So I've kind of really, I guess, carried the Televerde over to the yard.

Both CC1 2 NH and CC1 4 NH also dramatically changed their outlook on the future, which was representative of other informants' outlooks as their release dates drew closer. See the quotes from each of them in the category "my future self" in Table 16 below.

Insert Table 16 about here

In sum, the validation and identity security that Televerde employees experienced helped them combine these identities to form a positive self-concept. After learning to combine personal and social identities in a way that enabled them to be themselves at work, they carried their new self into their inmate role and their anticipated future selves. This process resulted in identity holism, where personal and social identities were integrated into a stable and coherent whole. Table 16 includes several pieces of data for each category that made up the identity holism theme. The table includes more supporting data than categories in other tables because this theme is arguably the least developed theme in the literature and is the most novel outcome of respect revealed in this study.

Outcomes of Respect

The third research question, *In a particularly status-deprived setting, how does receiving respect affect the way organizational members do their jobs?*, is aimed at understanding the job-related outcomes of respect. Two themes emerged that are largely consistent with prior research on respect: well-being outcomes and performance outcomes. Each group of outcomes was linked to a particular type of respect, such that generalized respect led to well-being outcomes and personalized

respect led to performance outcomes. In addition to the direct effects of respect on these outcomes, the change in self-concept partially mediated the relationship such that identity holism reinforced both well-being and performance outcomes. See Figure 2 for the categories that make up each of these themes.

Well-being outcomes. Empirical research found that receiving respect provides a feeling of belonging to a group from which respect is received and a feeling that one is accepted and seen as a worthwhile contributor to the group (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005). Receiving respect also positively affects self-esteem (Ellemers et al., 2004). Consistent with these findings, the emergent data suggest that receiving respect at Televerde, an experience that was rare outside of the call center, was positively related to the receivers' well-being. The two categories that made up this theme were "feeling supported" and "maintain positive sense of self." Specifically, generalized respect drove this outcome.

Receiving generalized respect was a consistent experience where peers and managers treated everyone in the organization as though they were valued. This was a humanizing experience for employees that gave them a sense of stability and support. Also, consistently being treated as a person of worth helped Televerde employees maintain a positive sense of self. If they had tough days calling on a campaign or were struggling to do well, the consistent message that they are all valuable people helped them to make external attributions (e.g., it's the holidays, executives are hard to engage this time of year) rather than doubt their abilities.

In addition to generalized respect directly affecting well-being outcomes, identity holism also positively contributed. As noted, identity holism represents the harmonious integration of identities, which likely had a positive effect on well-being due to the resolved dissonance between the evolving self-concept and the inmate role identity discussed above. See Table 17 below for data that represents well-being outcomes.

Insert Table 17 about here

Performance-oriented outcomes. Prior quantitative respect research found that respect positively increased in-role and extra-role behaviors (Tyler & Blader, 2002) and members' willingness to spend time improving the collective (Branscombe et al., 2002). Building on this, the data revealed that receiving personalized respect appeared to increase Televerde employees' in-role performance. Personalized respect provided a confidence boost that seemed to increase performance for some employees. For others, the personalized respect made them very attuned to the performance standards. As noted in the personalized respect section above, this type of respect is typically tied to performance and based on the attributes and behaviors that are valued in this context. Knowing they needed to meet or exceed these standards to earn more personalized respect, employees often compared their performance to other employees. Striving to receive more personalized respect made them somewhat competitive and constantly aware of their performance relative to others, which likely boosted their individual performance.

Identity holism also contributed to performance outcomes. As noted in Table 16, part of identity holism was the feeling that employees could be themselves and do their job well. This authentic expression tended to make them more successful on the phones. For example, when asked if she felt like she could be herself in her work role, one new hire said:

Now I can. I can, my personality shows. I don't just sound like a robot, that's what they said at first, they said I sounded like a robot. I don't anymore. I'm more friendly and I get a lot of that [feedback] on my graded stuff: 'Friendly, politely, professionally, and you get what's needed.' (CC3 4 NH)

In sum, receiving personalized respect was directly related to performance outcomes, and also influenced performance outcomes through identity holism. See Table 18 below for representative data.

Insert Table 18 about here

Jointly considering generalized and personalized respect. Having outlined the outcomes of generalized and personalized respect, I now return to the issue posed earlier about how generalized and personalized respect might work together. As noted in the earlier section about the experience of respect, generalized and personalized respect were both experienced as imputed worth, but in very different ways. Receiving generalized respect left employees feeling that it was a safe and humanizing environment where all were valued, resulting in increased well-being for the individual. Personalized respect, on the other hand, was received as individualized recognition that positively differentiated one from others based on behaviors or attributes that were seen as valuable in this context,

and the outcome was increased performance on the job. Given this contrast, how might these two types of respect work with/against each other?

Despite the differences between these two types of respect, both were present in each of the call centers, but at different levels. Data from Call Center 2 indicate a very high level of generalized respect, but few instances of personalized respect. In this call center employees were extremely supportive of one another and had a cohesive team mentality. In addition to their bonds with one another, members of Call Center 2 also felt a strong loyalty to Televerde. As one new hire commented:

I think just Televerde makes us its responsibility and we're given so much that we want to just give back, you know. I don't know how to put it in words. It's just, they treat us with such respect that we don't ever want to lose that, so we respect it back. (CC2 1 NH)

There was very little competition between employees in Call Center 2, as they all felt highly valued and did not seem to have anything to prove by outshining others in the call center. According to interviews with a trainer familiar with all the call centers and email correspondence with the VP-Operations, this call center consistently had the lowest performance of any call centers. It is possible that this is confounded with characteristics of the workforce occupying this security level; however, the lack of competition and collaborative team environment linked to the high level of generalized respect certainly seemed to be contributing factors.

Members of Call Center 1 reported very little generalized respect, but some received high levels of personalized respect. Even for those who received personalized respect, it was episodic and they could sometimes go long periods of

time without feeling valued. They reported many emotional highs and lows. As one employee described: “My experience at first was great, then it went bad, now it’s getting better again” (CC1 1 NH). The lack of generalized respect meant there was little tying employees together in this call center as a whole, creating an environment where the climate differed by small groups of employees that were assigned to specific performance managers and campaigns. As members of this call center reported: “It’s funny because, okay, we all sit in different aisles, but it’s like a different atmosphere completely” (CC1 1 NH) and “you just see this like sub-culture, this underlying business” (CC1 4 NH). As a result of the high personalized and low generalized respect, there was high variance in the experiences of the new hires that I observed and interviewed, ranging from some who felt they received the respect they deserved and were satisfied with the job, to others who did not feel valued in either a generalized or personalized sense and really only kept the job because they needed to make money. Some also were very dissatisfied with Televerde when the espoused values and respect presented in the new hire training (see Table 1 for examples) did not match the reality in the call center. This disconnect between espoused and enacted values left some employees, even those that were very high performers, disappointed with Televerde. For example, one commented:

I was very excited and one of the most – the first things that kept up that excitement in me was the fact that they said they looked at this like a family. They want to give women an opportunity to succeed. They want to give us opportunities we never had, basically belief in the fact that yes, I was a drug addict but I’m capable of so much more, you know what I mean? That was really a big draw for me. It’s not really like that. (CC1 4 NH)

Another commented:

They say that they care so much about our lives and try to prevent recidivism and that they care about us individually. And now that I've worked here for this long I really feel that it has nothing to do with us and they really don't care about us. I think that it's all about the money. (CC1 7 NH)

Again, according to key informants, Call Center 1 consistently had the highest performance of any of the call centers, but the data suggest that employees were less satisfied with themselves and the company, and did not feel a strong loyalty to Televerde.

According to the data, Call Center 3 was a mix of moderate to high levels of both generalized and personalized respect. Employees in this call center consistently performed well and the well-being of employees seemed to also be high. So how could this call center maintain an environment where everyone felt valued, but employees were still very focused on individual performance? It seems that this call center was able to do this because of two sets of practices – the first was reinforcing the importance of generalized respect, particularly through the institutionalized peer socialization in addition to the formal training that was common across all call centers, and the second was maintaining a high level of transparency about the performance standards and evaluation processes in the call center.

Regarding the first set of practices, Call Center 3 formally socialized new hires (in addition to the standard 3-week training) in a way that sets the tone for generalized respect. After the new hires made it through the training class that I observed in Call Center 3, the experienced employees organized a “new hire

mixer” that includes very strong signals about the importance of the culture and the acceptance of new members. Several examples illustrate these signals:

1. The new hires received their official name plates and were introduced to the call center by their mentor, who each gave a brief bio about her mentee.
2. An experienced employee gave a presentation about the new hires’ roles in the call center, including “responsibilities at the call center, professional etiquette, chain-of-command, camaraderie and more.” As noted in the new-hire mixer invitation, they also had a Q&A session to “discuss daily life within the call center. We will cover clients, snacks, log book, personal presentation and more,” which formalized norms that were not otherwise explicit.
3. The new hires received a call center map indicating where each experienced employee sat and were challenged to play a game that required them to go around the call center and start conversations with members they may not speak with otherwise.
4. An experienced employee gave a presentation on “career path options,” educating the new hires on all opportunities and positions that Televerde offers and encouraging them to set goals.

As discussed in the generalized respect section above, generalized respect became “real” for new hires through peer interactions, because the new hires initially relate differently – and have a different level of trust – with their fellow inmates than outside managers. This new hire mixer gave experienced employees the opportunity to bring the generalized respect to life for the new hires. The majority of new hires that I observed and interviewed described Televerde as authentic, and felt that the Televerde image presented to them in new hire training closely matched actual day-to-day life in the call center. Activities such as the new hire mixer, as well as the developmental opportunities provided by Televerde, likely contributed to this perception.

Regarding the second set of practices that kept both types of respect in play, transparency was a key component. In terms of personalized respect, the expectations and standards were clearer in Call Center 3 than anywhere else, including Call Center 1 where personalized respect was dominant. I observed a half-wall-sized white board in this call center that was made into a chart containing each campaign and a ranking of the employees on the campaign, with the number of deliverables obtained next to their name. This was one sign that the performance of each employee was very salient in the call center. As for supporting interview data, two new hires that I interviewed throughout their adjustment were approached by the trainer and call center manager who told them that they needed a certain number of deliverables that week in order to keep their jobs. They received feedback on what they could be doing better, and both of them exceeded the goal, but one other woman from the training class did not and was fired. The standards that needed to be met and the ways that each of the new hires could improve their performance were communicated very clearly.

According to one of these new hires:

They're [management] nice you know. They don't just tell you what you're doing... 'this this this – wrong.' They give you, 'you're doing this wrong, but this is what you can do.' They give you an alternative to what you can do. They give you points on how you can present yourself on the phone. How to carry a conversation. (CC3 4 NH)

Comparing this experience to the performance pressures described by new hires in Call Center 1, where new hires did not have a clear understanding of the criteria for being “good” performers and felt they were competing against other TSRs to keep their full-time status in the call center, it seems that the clear

performance standards clarified the criteria for personalized respect and also maintained the established generalized respect in Call Center 3. The data suggest that the common understanding of the performance standards, and the recognition that these standards appeared to be attainable based on how others were performing, paired with the developmental feedback received, seemed fair and did not jeopardize the level of generalized respect in the call center, as employees seemed to be competing against a standard rather than one another.

Overall, Call Center 3 had highly motivated employees who were focused on performing very well, and they also had a high level of generalized respect that promoted individual well-being. Because of the attention placed on performance standards, it seemed that new hires in this call center were slightly more stressed and tense than those in Call Center 2, but the call center was certainly more balanced in terms of productivity and generalized respect than either of the others that I observed.

Summary

To summarize the results of this study, the data suggest that receiving respect was experienced in two distinct ways, generalized and personalized respect. Generalized respect gave employees the sense that “all are valued” and personalized respect communicated that “I am valued for my attributes and performance-related behaviors.” These two types of respect were directly related to outcomes for the individual, such that generalized respect led to individual well-being and personalized respect led to performance outcomes. Although these two types of respect were experienced very differently, some level of each existed

in all of the call centers. The call center environment was very collaborative and individual well-being was very high when generalized respect was dominant, whereas individual performance and interpersonal competition were high when personalized respect was dominant. In Call Center 3 there was a moderately high level of both generalized and personalized respect, which were kept in play through management maintaining extremely transparent performance standards and evaluation processes regarding personalized respect, and experienced employees bringing the generalized respect to life for new hires. The data indicate that respectful interactions with experienced employees helped new hires learn how to enact respect, and may have been a factor in institutionalizing respect in Call Center 3. This is exemplified by a quote in Table 11:

They're all [other call center employees] real respectful and so are the PM's too, you know? And they teach us how to be respectful with one another. (CC3 4 NH)

Receiving respect also led to outcomes by changing the way that individuals receiving respect saw themselves. During the socialization process, Televerde decoupled the new hires' personal and social identities and separately validated them in ways that helped new hires feel secure in their personal identities and Televerde-related social identities. The two types of respect, generalized and personalized, appeared to exert different forces on the self-concept such that generalized respect led to social validation and identity security for Televerde-related social identities, and personalized respect led to social validation and identity security for personal identities. This ultimately enabled the receiver to achieve identity holism, where she integrated incongruent personal and

social identities (both Televerde-related and inmate role) into a coherent whole. In addition to the direct effects of generalized and personalized respect on well-being and performance outcomes, the effects of respect were also mediated and reinforced through identity holism.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to advance organizational research by gaining a better understanding of the phenomenology of respect. I sought to do this by articulating how individuals come to feel respected in organizations, how respect affects the way the individual sees him or herself, and how this experience produces outcomes for the individual and organization. In this section I first explain the emergent theoretical model by reviewing each research question and the theoretical answers that the emergent model suggests. Second, I discuss implications and future research directions for research on respect, as well as identity and identification, and organizational behavior more broadly. Third, I highlight the practical implications of the emergent theoretical model. Fourth, I note the limitations of the study and provide concluding remarks.

The first research question, *How do organizational members perceive and make sense of apparent respect cues in a way that makes them feel respected?*, was the core of the study and explored the essence of how individuals experienced respect. The data suggest that informants experienced respect in two distinct ways: generalized and personalized. Generalized respect provided employees with the sense that “all are valued” in this organization and was not based on any criteria beyond organizational membership. Personalized respect, on the other hand, communicated that “I am valued for my attributes and performance-related behaviors” and was “earned” by organizational members who demonstrated behaviors and attributes valued in the context.

Although I was initially focused on how *individuals* experienced respect, the data suggested that a common experience transcended individuals in a given call center and differentiated the centers, such that one call center had a high level of generalized respect, one had a high level of personalized respect, and one had moderately-high levels of both generalized and personalized. Thus, rather than this study being a single case study, the three different call center environments provided three unique cases within the study that allowed me to compare and contrast experiences of respect. Although generalized and personalized respect cues communicated very different and potentially incompatible messages to the receiver, some level of each was reported in all three call centers to varying degrees.

In the call center where generalized respect was high and personalized respect was low, the environment was very collaborative and members felt supported and safe. Employees reported receiving apparent respect cues from managers in this call center, but experienced employees, namely the “founding members” of the call center, acted in ways that explicitly reinforced the importance of generalized respect. For example, in addition to the mission, vision, and values of the company as a whole, this call center had its own mission statement written by the employees hired when the call center first opened its doors. This group of founding members explained in a group interview that it was imperative for all new hires to understand and embrace the mission. Therefore, the experienced employees asked each new hire to read the mission statement and

sign it. The last line of this mission provides an example of the message they send regarding generalized respect:

[Our] personal mission is to hold ourselves to high standards while keeping in line with Televerde's mission. We, as employees here, fulfill the responsibility of doing this by creating a pleasant, professional work environment where teamwork, respect, and loyalty are key.

Thus, the acknowledgement that generalized respect is a priority in this call center, and the fact that explicit communication from – and the daily example set by – experienced employees brings the espoused generalized respect to life, making generalized respect the salient and dominant type in this call center.

Alternatively, employees were focused on status differences and competing with one another in the call center where personalized respect was high and generalized was low. Informants in this call center did not describe interactions with employees that made generalized respect come to life, and cited nearly all incidents of respect as coming from PMs. Because this was the main source of validation, and each PM had a slightly different management style, employees struggled to describe the call center as a whole. Instead, they noted that each campaign or work group had its own “personality,” and within the campaigns the highest performers received the most positive attention from the PM. It seemed that because employees did not perceive a consistent message of generalized respect in this call center, the need to feel valued went unmet, making instances of personalized respect that much more valuable to them. Without a foundation of generalized respect to validate their basic worth as individuals, employees in this call center became very focused on outperforming their peers in

hopes of receiving positive feedback from PMs, or on opportunities to advance to “higher status” and more difficult campaign.

These two call centers described above demonstrated skewed cases where either generalized or personalized respect overshadowed the other, but the third call center maintained a more or less harmonious balance of moderately high levels of both generalized and personalized. Both types of respect were simultaneously kept in play through several tactics in this call center. First and most notably, experienced employees brought Televerde’s espoused generalized respect to life for new hires, similar to the ways that experienced employees reinforced generalized respect in the high generalized/low personalized call center described above. Additionally, Televerde displayed clients’ signage – including messages expressing gratitude from high-status clients – in highly visible areas throughout the call center, which provided further validation that Televerde employees were valued professionals. Second, management maintained extremely transparent performance standards and evaluation processes regarding personalized respect, including a large white board displaying each employee’s performance, and certificates of accomplishments posted in employees’ cubicles for consistently displaying valued behaviors or generating a certain amount of revenue. This high level of transparency for receiving such recognition communicated to employees that they were competing against a standard of excellence, rather than one another, which emphasized the importance of earning personalized respect without jeopardizing the high level of generalized respect. In fact, I speculate that the efforts to maintain both personalized and generalized

respect in Call Center 3 actually made this call center even more effective at managing personalized respect than Call Center 1, which had the highest level of personalized respect but lowest level of generalized.

In sum, the experience of respect appeared to be both an individual and collective experience. Generalized respect was a property of the collective and the associated cues represented how valued organizational members were in general. Informants in a given call center reported similar accounts of generalized respect, affirming the collective nature of this type of respect. Personalized respect cues were interpreted as a signal of how valued the individual was in particular, but even though personalized respect messages were individualized, this was also a collective experience such that personalized respect expressions were prevalent, or even institutionalized, in particular call centers. Interview data in all three call centers indicate that whether or not an informant received personalized respect, she was able to describe it as was part of the call center climate based on the salience of criteria for personalized respect and how observable expressions of personalized respect were to others in the call center (e.g., certificates in cubicles for high performers). Thus, although the interpretation of apparent respect cues was an intrapersonal process, the respect cues themselves, whether generalized or personalized, tended to be a property of the collective such that climates for generalized respect and climates for personalized respect existed.

The second research question, *How does receiving respect at work influence organizational members' self-concepts?*, was sparked by previous research suggesting self-related implications of receiving respect. Indeed, the

emergent theory suggests that receiving respect changed the way new hires at Televerde saw themselves, which in turn changed the way they enacted various roles. The data indicate that Televerde's socialization process, particularly the decoupling of identities and expressions of respect, facilitated this. Decoupling identities served as a *sensebreaking* exercise for new hires (Ashforth et al., 2008; Pratt, 2000). When they entered Televerde they had been living with a single salient social identity (i.e., inmate) in an environment that discouraged uniqueness or differentiation from others. As a result, it seemed that new hires entered the organization defining themselves as a stereotypical inmate and having little if any sense of their positive personal identities that may distinguish them from other inmates. During the first steps of the new hire training process, Televerde provided the new hires with the results of a personality assessment and helped them interpret the output. They explained what each of the traits meant and how each of their trait configurations had positive qualities (e.g., I lack patience, which makes me an excellent multi-tasker). New hires also took a learning style assessment that provided them with the information and tools needed to be successful in the training class (I am a fast learner that can learn by observing or by doing). In addition to serving new hires by helping them understand their positive attributes, these assessments also sent a clear message that all new hires were unique and their unique personal identities were valued by Televerde. This message that new hires were individuals was incompatible with the incoming mentality that they were replaceable occupants of the stigmatized inmate social

identity, forcing the new hires to decouple their inmate role identity from their personal identities and recognize that “me the inmate” is not the entire “me.”

Aside from personalized respect affecting personal identities, generalized respect cues were interpreted as validation that new hires were indeed valued members of a desirable social category (Televerdian, TSR, professional). Security in these identity made it feel safe and comfortable to enact a social identity other than inmate, which helped the new hires distance themselves further from their initial view of themselves as ordinary inmates that lacked power, control, competence, and worth.

As a result of this process, new hires became secure in their personal identities that became salient in training (I am a competent woman, I have excellent attention to detail, I am a quick and adaptable learner) and in their Televerde-related social identities (e.g., I can hold professional conversations, I am a technology expert, I understand how businesses work and can improve the way managers use technology to run them). This security ultimately enabled receivers of respect to enact their personal identities in ways that helped produce the concrete role behaviors of successful Televerde employees. As they became comfortable enacting their broadly applicable personal identities within their Televerde role, they also displayed these personal identities in ways that changed how they enacted other roles, including the inmate role. I referred to this as identity holism, at which point employees integrated personal and social identities into a coherent whole. See Figure 5 for a visual representation of the progression from identity decoupling to identity holism.

Insert Figure 5 about here

Thus, the data suggest that receiving respect, both generalized and personalized, provided social validation and security in personal identities and Televerde-related social identities, which together changed the way that individuals enacted other social identities, including their inmate role. The fourth quote in Table 16 represents this progression in an informant that I tracked for six months. Televerde helped this new hire realize that she had keen analytical skills (personal identity) which she used to persuade prospects when enacting her Televerde role identity (social identity). Eventually she became comfortable enough in this personal identity that she enacted it in her inmate role identity as well, advocating for other inmates by collecting data and building an argument to persuade DOC to take health precautions rather than merely treat symptoms. The enactment of a single personal identity across multiple (and conflicting, in this case) social identities represents the identity holism outcome.

The third question, *In a particularly status-deprived setting, how does receiving respect affect the way organizational members do their jobs?*, directed my attention toward outcomes noted in prior quantitative research on respect, as well as other outcomes that may not easily be captured deductively or that may be most apparent in this specific context. The emergent theory suggests that the two types of respect, generalized and personalized, were directly related to unique sets of outcomes. Generalized respect, the sense that all are valued, was related to individual well-being, likely due to the stable, supportive, and safe environment

that generalized respect facilitated. Personalized respect directly related to performance outcomes, which is likely attributable to the way that receiving personalized respect – or a desire to receive personalized respect – directed organizational members' attention toward meeting/exceeding performance standards and demonstrating valued behaviors and attributes. In addition to the direct effects of generalized and personalized respect on well-being and performance outcomes, the effects of respect were also mediated and reinforced through identity holism, as this favorable and stable sense of self promoted both well-being and performance outcomes, likely through the comfort provided by expressing an authentic and coherent identity. In sum, respect led to positive outcomes both for individual well-being and performance directly by communicating that the employee was valued and indirectly by changing the self-concept, which in turn affected identity holism, well-being outcomes, and performance outcomes.

Theoretical Implications and Future Research

As noted, the specific goal of this study was to build theory on the experience of respect in organizations. While this research design and unique context certainly allowed me to generate theoretical implications for this growing area of research, significant and interesting theoretical implications also emerged for research on identity and identification in organizations. I briefly discuss the theoretical implications for each area of research below and the accompanying future research directions, followed by a discussion of research implications for organizational behavior more broadly.

Implications for respect research. This study contributes theoretically to research on respect in organizations in several ways. First, the data suggest that respect was indeed foundational to members' experience of organizational life in this context, as it provided social validation that shaped the way members' thought about themselves and consequently behaved in their jobs. As noted in Chapter 4, I did not ask informants about respect or use the word in my protocol, yet the word "respect" was used by informants in nearly all interviews. When asked what differentiated Televerde from other places they worked, or from life as an inmate, respect was generally the response. Additionally, when new hires were asked what was most surprising to them about Televerde, they often referenced the respect with which they were treated. In call centers where generalized respect was high, they often mentioned that Televerde was surprisingly authentic, as the espoused values that seemed too good to be true came to life in day-to-day call center interactions. Thus, the data suggest that respect is indeed a foundational element of how members experience organizational life.

The emergent theory suggests that individuals' experiences of receiving respect can be categorized as either generalized or personalized, which lead to differing outcomes. Paying attention to the process of how one comes to feel respected and finding empirical support for these two distinct experiences of respect can aid researchers in understanding the bifurcation in existing respect research from numerous disciplines noted in Chapter 3. What seems to be missing from the literature is a coherent and agreed-upon way of conceptualizing respect

as a multi-dimensional construct. The data suggest that both generalized and personalized cues indeed qualify as respect (imputed worth from others), but the attributions for why respect is received differs greatly between the two types.

Beyond the assertion that two types of respect are indeed experienced in distinct ways, the emergent theory goes a step further by suggesting ways that these two types of respect operate together, both for the individual and for the collective. Regarding the individual, is it possible to feel both valued as an equal member of a group and valued as a particularly stellar member of a group? The data suggested that this was indeed possible when moderately high levels of generalized and personalized respect were maintained in the call center. But how exactly did the simultaneous presence of both generalized and personalized respect described above facilitate feeling both valued as an equal and valued as a unique individual? Analogous to Brewer's (1991) notion of optimal distinctiveness, experiencing both generalized and personalized respect simultaneously provided a feeling of belonging as an organizational member but also being distinct as a unique contributor. That is, receiving generalized respect established a foundation for feeling valued and safe in a context, which promoted individual well-being as well as positive attitudes and attachment toward the collective from which generalized respect was received. Receiving personalized respect rewarded the individual for job performance and provided a sense that her particular attributes and behaviors were valued. Thus, similar to the experience of optimal distinctiveness where individuals feel simultaneously similar to – and distinct from – others, experiencing generalized and personalized respect together

enabled individuals to feel valued as equals and valued as individuals. I speculate that the institutionalized salience of both generalized and personalized respect in the call center that maintained a high level of both created a system where the respect pendulum could not swing too far in either the generalized or personalized direction for a given employee, as the opposing cues were readily available when one felt less valued than others (lack of generalized respect) or when one felt that she did not stand out in any notable positive ways (lack of personalized respect). For example, if employees became too focused on whether or not they were receiving personalized respect, they had consistent reminders from physical artifacts (e.g., client signage and notes expressing gratitude) and interactions with experienced employees to remind them that they were valued as members of Televerde (generalized respect). Also, managements' emphasis on performance and the constant presence of individual performance artifacts (performance on white board; certificates for accomplishments) made it clear that although all employees were owed generalized respect, performance was highly valued and personalized respect was clearly tied to it in the call center with high generalized and personalized respect.

Acknowledging this intrapersonal experience of both generalized and personalized respect, and the findings that respect perceptions transcended a given individual in each of the call centers such that there was agreement between informants about generalized or personalized respect perceptions, what are the theoretical implications for organizations' management of respect dynamics? The data suggest that there are certainly trade-offs of promoting solely generalized or

personalized respect, as a high level of personalized but low level of generalized may jeopardize individual well-being, whereas a high level of generalized but low level of personalized promotes a collaborative team environment to the point that individual performance is not a priority. Based on the data, I speculate there is no one best way to manage respect dynamics, but facilitating some level of each is crucial to maintaining both individual well-being and a performance focus for organizational members. That said, some organizational contexts likely lend themselves better to an environment of dominant generalized or personalized respect. For example, in situations where a foundation of respect is lacking, such as low-status occupations, promoting a sense of generalized respect may be crucial to meeting organizational members' basic need to feel valued.

Alternatively, in contexts where little collaboration is necessary and competition between organizational members is beneficial, such as a national sales force where representatives have little interaction and operate in separate geographical territories, the organization may wish to focus on standards for personalized respect instead of generalized. Ultimately, these are empirical questions that can be addressed in future respect research. For example, under what conditions might one type of respect be far more beneficial than the other? Are there situations where either generalized or personalized respect would actually be damaging to the organization?

Another contribution to respect research is related to sources of respect. There were categories in the data suggesting that respect was not received uniformly from all sources. In fact, when new hires first started at Televerde and

received similar respect cues from experienced employees and their fellow new hires, the cues were interpreted differently. For example, personalized respect from an experienced employee was interpreted as validation, whereas personalized respect from other new hires in the cohort was perceived as a sign of support from peers. Additionally, receivers interpreted apparent respect cues from internal (Televerde) and external (clients, prospects) sources differently, such that being recognized for poise and ability to hold conversations with high-level executives by a PM or Televerde employee validated that they were meeting or exceeding Televerde role standards, but the same cue from a client or a prospect on the phone validated that they were meeting or exceeding professional standards that transcended Televerde, speaking to their competence in the business world and professional identity more broadly. Future research could clarify differing interpretations of respect cues based on the source by assessing similar respect cues from several parties and whether the sources of respect have differential effects on the receiver. I speculate that status differences greatly influence interpretation of respect cues, such that cues from higher-status sources carry more weight than lower-status sources. However, receiving personalized respect cues from a visiting manager of much higher status that is quite removed from day-to-day life (e.g., the university president telling an assistant professor that she is good at her job) may not be very meaningful, as it is unlikely that this person could be informed enough to match the receiver's behaviors to the valued attributes in the organizational context (cf. Ashforth & Rogers, 2012). Cues such

as this may not be interpreted as genuine or credible, despite the source of the respect cues.

To increase the relevance of the emergent model in other contexts, future research should consider potential moderators, particularly regarding the link between receiving respect and social validation. The source and contexts of the respect cues, characteristics of the individual receiving respect, and interactions between the two types of respect are likely moderators of the relationship between receiving respect and experiencing social validation. Three examples will suffice.

As noted above, the data provide hints that the source of respect is likely an important moderator in the relationship between received respect and social validation, but what other contextual variables might impact the effects of respectful cues? One moderator may be the context in which respect is received. For example, how is personalized respect interpreted differently when received in a one-on-one interaction versus a setting where peers are present? Is respect more meaningful when cues are observable by superiors, subordinates, or even family members?

Individual differences likely play a moderating role in the relationship between respect cues and social validation. I speculate that a key individual difference to consider is core self-evaluation (Judge & Bono, 2001). It is possible that this self-evaluation, which is stable over time and across contexts, affects whether or not respect cues are interpreted as meaningful. For example, an individual with high core self-evaluation may interpret social cues as respectful and experience the accompanying social validation even when respect was not

intended by the sender of the cues. Conversely, an individual with low core self-evaluation may not internalize, or even perceive, sent respect cues as a way of avoiding self-enhancement.

Finally, the emergent model suggests that generalized respect only validates social identities and personalized respect only validates personal identities. Future research should consider under what circumstances personalized respect may validate social identities and generalized respect may validate personal identities. For example, if an individual is secure in his personal identities and seeking validation in his social identities, will he be more likely to interpret personalized respect as directed toward the role rather than personal attributes that make him successful in the role? If an individual is receiving only generalized respect is there a way that the cues might be interpreted as validation of personal identities?

Implications for identity and identification research. According to the emergent theory, receiving respect influences the way organizational members see themselves, both as individuals and as a part of the organization. The data suggest that informants experienced significant changes in their self-concepts over the course of the study. The changes seemed to happen in three phases, analogous to Lewin's unfreezing, movement, and refreezing, such that the identities were decoupled during socialization (unfreezing), allowing new hires to think of their personal identities separately from their inmate role identity. Next, the personal identities and Televerde-related social identities were enacted (movement), and

the validated identities were ultimately integrated (refreezing) into a coherent self-concept labeled “identity holism.”

This idea, depicted in Figure 3, suggests a new way of thinking about the organization’s role in helping members – especially newcomers – manage their social identities. As noted in Chapter 3, previous research on socialization and identification suggests that incompatible social identities are often divested to promote identification with a new social identity. Shedding the less-favorable inmate social identity was not an option for the Televerde employees, but changes in social identification occurred in other ways. As noted above, Televerde was able to help new hires manage conflicting identities by decoupling the inmate role identity from more favorable identities, making new hires receptive to respect and validation aimed toward either personal identities or Televerde-related social identities. This raises interesting questions about socialization and managing identification. Are there other conditions beyond the one discussed here, where, rather than divestiture, a goal of socialization may be to create identity security, such that a newcomer feels validated in compatible *and* incompatible role identities? What are the advantages (and disadvantages) to keeping multiple, and potentially conflicting, identities in play simultaneously rather than shedding incoming identities and holding tightly to a new social identity? For example, if security leads to identity holism, the newcomer may embrace a coherent self-concept across contexts, which could make enactment of the new social identity easier for the newcomer. Additionally, not divesting incoming identities may

enable a newcomer to draw on experiences in previous roles in ways that improve his or her enactment of the new role (cf. Beyer & Hannah, 2002).

Another interesting implication of the emergent theory bridges research on personal identity change and social identifications. As described above, the inmate identity remained in play throughout the new hires' socialization but Televerde did not actively try to change the inmate identity or how new hires enacted the role. Instead, Televerde's role was to identify or create positive personal identities and validate them in ways that made the new hire feel secure about enacting the validated identities. Changing the way the individual viewed her personal identities, and increasing her comfort with displaying them, changes the way that she subsequently enacted her role identities. Thus, perhaps socializing newcomers to identify with a new role or organization is not always the most effective way to ensure attachment to – and enactment of – the role. Focusing on validating personal identities that fit with prototypical enactment of the new role may be a more effective approach even when there is not a conflicting social identity in play such as the inmate role at Televerde, as the validated personal identities will likely feel authentic when enacted in the new organizational role and in other social roles as well. Thus, future identification research could explore whether it is more effective to focus solely on promoting identification with a new role identity or if the desired enactment of the role is better achieved through validation of personal identities that fit with the newly-acquired role.

Finally, this study pushes identity research forward by adding empirical flesh to the ideas of decoupling identities, identity security, and identity holism, which to date have only been discussed in conceptual organizational work. As organizational contexts become increasingly complex, the importance of managing multiple – and potentially conflicting – identities becomes increasingly apparent for both organizations and individuals (e.g., Ashforth & Johnson, 2001; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). The concepts of decoupling identities and identity security can potentially change the way that identity researchers consider the management of multiple identities at individual and collective levels by acknowledging the importance of feeling safe when enacting an identity and feeling that it is self-defining without allowing it to limit the potential constellation of identities that make up the response to the question, “Who am I?” or “Who are we?” Additionally, the concept of identity holism merits further exploration in its own right. This state of equilibrium, where personal and social identities are harmoniously integrated, provides identity researchers with a new way of thinking about how identities can be managed, not just in organizational life, but across life domains. As it stands, research on multiple identities and identifications suggests various tactics used to manage them (e.g., differentiating or integrating; Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006). Identity holism may provide a goal or end state toward which these tactics can be directed, as identity holism represents a state where multiple identities are not just “managed” but are yoked in a synergistic way that can enhance the enactment of each identity and leave individuals feeling authentic in their self-expressions and role enactments. Future

research should empirically investigate outcomes of this seemingly-desirable end state, as well as additional drivers of identity holism.

Implications for organizational behavior. In addition to the specific research areas of respect and identity, the respect-related findings have implications for other areas of OB, particularly areas concerned with individuals' self-perceptions. I provide two examples, briefly suggesting ways that the findings enhance research on performance feedback and self-efficacy.

As noted, the data spoke to the relevance of social cues in shaping organizational members' self-concepts, particularly those cues that signaled respect. This finding can enhance our understanding of feedback and feedback-seeking behaviors in organizations. For organizational members, feedback “involves information about how their behaviors are perceived and evaluated by relevant others” (Ashford & Cummings, 1983: 372). Research suggests that the way individuals see themselves (e.g., self-esteem) is an important driver of positive and negative feedback-seeking behaviors (Northcraft & Ashford, 1990). Applying the theoretical model from this study to feedback research, I posit that a foundation of generalized respect would increase the likelihood of seeking feedback on performance, particularly negative feedback. Generalized respect provides a basic threshold of worth for members of the context, which may provide a sense of safety, knowing that their imputed worth will be maintained regardless of the feedback valence. In fact, negative performance feedback may be even more actively sought in the presence of generalized respect as a way for individuals to increase their potential for receiving personalized respect. Seeking

out and being receptive to negative feedback will likely increase personalized respect, as these behaviors signal overall effectiveness to superiors, peers, and subordinates (Ashford & Tsui, 1991).

A second area of research that can be enhanced by the emergent theoretical model is work on self-efficacy, a self-perception that is a key driver of performance on the job (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). According to Bandura (1982: 122), self-efficacy is one's belief about "how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations." Self-efficacy is "malleable" and can be increased by positive social cues or "verbal persuasions" (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003: 231). The emergent model indicates that respect cues are likely to serve this purpose, as they communicate to the receiver that he or she is valued by others, and provide social validation that builds or reinforces the receiver's self-efficacy. Specifically, I speculate that personalized respect is most likely to speak to one's self-efficacy, as it is based on individual performance or contribution to organizational goals.

Practical Implications

In addition to the theoretical implications noted for respect, identity, and OB research, the theoretical model also has implications for practicing managers. First, managers should be aware that receiving respect is directly related to individual well-being, performance outcomes, and the way employees see themselves, making expressions of respect a priority for managers. However, acknowledging the importance of respect is not sufficient. Managers need a basic

understanding of the distinction between generalized and personalized respect to maximize how valued their employees feel and how well they perform.

The data suggest that managers are a key source of both generalized and personalized respect. Employees interpret generalized respect cues from managers as though they are acting on behalf of the organization (cf. Eisenberger et al., 2010), communicating that all organizational members are valued. Additionally, managers are a key source of personalized respect, as employees perceive them to be knowledgeable about the criteria for personalized respect and in a position to reward employees who meet the criteria accordingly. Based on categories in the data regarding sources of respect, I speculate that personalized respect cues from managers are particularly meaningful relative to similar cues from tenured employees or outsiders. But, as important sources of both generalized and personalized respect, how can managers create and perhaps institutionalize a reasonable balance between the two? Although there are organizational settings where a high level of generalized *or* personalized respect may best serve the organization (e.g., generalized in situations where individuals can only be successful in collaborative teams; personalized in organizations where a high level of competition between employees is desired), it seems that a moderately high level of both generalized and personalized respect would be best in most contexts. The data suggest that the largest threat to balancing both generalized and personalized respect occurred when personalized respect contradicted generalized in some way. For example, when personalized respect criteria were not clear, employees perceived expressions of personalized respect toward others as

favoritism or unfair treatment rather than valid acknowledgements of employees' contributions, which negated the generalized respect message that all organizational members were valued. Thus, managers should be particularly vigilant about communicating criteria for personalized respect in a transparent way.

Managers should also recognize that while they are an important source of respect, they are not the only source. By institutionalizing practices among employees that reinforce generalized respect, such as the new hire mixer described in Call Center 3, the message becomes clearer to new hires and also serves as a reminder to experienced employees that all members are valued (Sutton & Louis, 1987).

In sum, managers can express respect appropriately and build a healthy work environment by understanding the differences between employee interpretations of generalized and personalized respect cues. Additionally, managers seem to be a very meaningful source of respect, and they should take seriously their role of helping employees make sense of themselves.

Limitations

Three limitations of this study, which are common to inductive research designs in general, should be noted. First, the emergent theory provides insight into the process through which respect is received and affects various outcomes. However, despite the longitudinal nature of the study, this design is not ideal for drawing objective conclusions about causality. There are several reasons for this, one being that it is very difficult to “control” for other causes of experiences and

outcomes of interest. I approached the data collection setting with biases, as all researchers do. For example, I was focused specifically on respect dynamics and may have labeled a phenomenon “respect” that other researchers would have labeled differently. However, avoiding the use of respect in my protocols and probing about the topic when informants brought it up makes it plausible that respect was the correct label, even considering what I was biased toward seeing when I approached the context. Another causality issue that is specific to this study is the potential confounds that existed between prison security levels and call center respect. Employees enter this organization with a common experience outside of work hours, and these experiences differ by security level. One could argue that the differences in call centers were attributable to the security level rather than actual respect dynamics deliberately instilled by the organization. I acknowledge that security level was a likely driver of interpersonal and social dynamics in each call center; however, the proximal versus distal causes of respect dynamics were not the focus of this study. My primary interest was how organizational members perceived and experienced respect. Thus, the reason that certain respect dynamics were in place were not nearly as crucial to my theorizing as the ways that informants interpreted and internalized respect cues.

Second, credibility of the findings is a concern in inductive studies, and can be especially problematic when only one researcher is immersed in the data collection and analysis. To combat credibility concerns, I followed the steps outlined in Chapter 4 regarding trustworthiness of data collection, analysis, and findings (Shah & Corley, 2006). The practices that were most useful in this study

were obtaining a thorough understanding of the context through extensive data collection, conducting member checks with Televerde employees and managers, and conducting peer debriefings with my committee members and colleagues. Additionally, I meticulously managed the data, using both Excel and Atlas.ti to track my extensive data collection and analysis, and was careful to separate first and second order data in ways that allowed me to show the trail from raw data to the theoretical model.

The third, and perhaps largest concern for this study, is transferability. The unique and extreme nature of the prison context is both an opportunity and a threat. It presents a setting where the experience of respect, which is likely more subtle in other contexts, is transparently observable, but it also poses the threat of idiosyncratic findings. I went into great detail in Chapter 4 to explain the context in ways that enable readers to see the similarities and differences between this context and more traditional work settings. There are certainly many factors that make this organization unique; however, the data support prior quantitative research indicating that respect is a universally important experience because it meets basic social needs that all individuals carry with them, regardless of where they work. To the extent that this is true, the respect dynamics identified in this study should be broadly generalizable, but likely generalize in less extreme ways. In particular, it is unlikely that a typical group of newcomers would enter an organization with an identity as salient and incompatible as the inmate role identity, or be as eager as many Televerde new hires were to radically change the way they view themselves and are perceived by others. However, I posit that the

core ideas of the emergent theory – respect is experienced in two distinct ways, respect provides social validation and a sense of security in the validated identity, the two types of respect produce unique outcomes for individual well-being or job performance – are broadly transferable. Ultimately, the transferability of the emergent theory is an empirical question. As I continue to move my respect research program forward, I will conduct quantitative studies in more traditional organizational settings that deductively examine the transferability of the emergent theory.

Conclusion

I conducted this study to contribute to organizational behavior literature by articulating the process through which respect cues were internalized as meaningful, and the importance of receiving respect to individuals' self-concepts and behaviors. The unique research context of multiple business-to-business call centers embedded within a state prison enabled me to assess respect where it was especially problematic and salient, providing a terrific opportunity for building theory. The emergent theory suggests that respect was experienced in two different ways – generalized and personalized – and the experience of receiving respect was linked to well-being and performance-related outcomes. Additionally, receiving respect provided social validation and promoted identity security in both personal and social identities, which altered the way that individuals viewed themselves. Changing the self-concept enabled employees to form a positive and coherent sense of self called identity holism that transcended life domains, even when roles or identities seemed incompatible. The emergent theory enriches

organizational literature on respect and speaks to the importance of further theoretical and empirical attention to respect in organizational studies.

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Table 1

Definitions of Respect

Source	Definition of Respect
Organizational Behavior	
Liden and Maslyn (1998: 49)	“Professional respect was defined as the perception of the degree to which each member of the dyad had built a reputation, within and/or outside the organization, of excelling at his or her line of work.”
Cronin (2003: 11)	“The level of esteem for another individual based on one’s own value-based assessment of the individual’s characteristics.”
Tenbrunsel, Smith-Crowe, and Umpress (2003: 294)	[Climate for respect is] “the organizational members’ shared perceptions regarding the extent to which individuals within their organization are esteemed, shown consideration, and treated with dignity”
Fuller et al (2006: 819)	“We define an individual’s evaluation of their standing within the organization (i.e., their level of inclusion or exclusion) as ‘respect.’”
De Cremer and Mulder (2007: 440, their emphasis)	“Respect signals a <i>full recognition</i> as a person, which holds the assumption that respect provides information about our status, prestige, and a feeling of being accepted by others in a group and community.”
Dillon (2007: 202)	“Respect is, most generally, a form of regard: a mode of attention to and perception and acknowledgement of an object as having a certain importance, worth, authority, status, or power.”
Simon (2007: 323)	“Respect for someone involves the willingness to include that person as a factor in the equation that regulates one’s actions.”
Lalljee et al. (2007: 452)	“Unconditional respect for persons is the respect that some have claimed is owed to everyone simply as a function of their being persons. It is not conditional on a person’s status or achievements. It cannot be acquired or lost.”

Sleebos et al. (2007: 328, their emphasis)	“...the subjective appraisal made by individual group members of <i>the perceived value of the self for the group</i> .”
Boezman and Ellemers (2007: 771)	“...respect reflects the evaluation that one is accepted, appreciated, and valued as a member of the organization.”
Ramarajan et al. (2008: 5)	“We define organizational respect as an individual's perceptions regarding the extent to which employees in the organization, including but not limited to the self, are treated with dignity and care for their positive self regard through approval and positive validation.”
van Quaquebeke and Eckloff (2010: 344)	“A person’s attitude towards other people, in whom he/she sees a reason that, in itself, justifies a degree of attention and a type of behavior that in return engenders in the target a feeling of being appreciated in importance and worth as a person.”
Clarke (2011: 319)	“A set of judgments relating to the perceived worthiness, ethical behaviors, and shared values that exist between leader and follower.”
Bartel et al. (in press: 2)	“Respect is an identity-based status perception that reflects the extent to which one is included and valued as a member of the organization.”
Social Psychology	
De Cremer (2002: 1336)	“I wish to define respect as a social construct that is derived from the opinions of the group as a whole and that is symbolic of one’s position within the group.”
Tyler and Blader (2003: 356)	“Respect reflects judgments about one’s status within the group.”
Spears, Ellemers, Doosje, and Branscombe (2006: 179)	“...worth accorded to one person by one or more others... In short, respect involves some sort of positive worth being communicated by others...”
Huo and Binning (2008: 1571)	“The feeling of respect, in its broadest sense, is operationalized as an individual’s assessment of how they are evaluated by those with whom they share common group membership.”

Table 2

Televerde Acronyms and Roles

Acronym	Meaning	Inmate/non-inmate
CCD	Call center director, oversees management of multiple call centers	Non-inmate
CCM	Call center manager, responsible for daily operations of a single call center	Non-inmate
CCT	Call center trainer, trains new and experienced employees in the call center	Inmate
DOC	Department of Corrections, commonly used to refer to the correctional officers or prison regulations	Non-inmate
PM	Performance manager, acts as direct supervisor to call center employees	Non-inmate
TSR	Teleservice representative, employees who are making calls in the call centers. Also, the position where all new hires start	Inmate
TS	Training specialist, designs and implements training programs	Non-inmate

Table 3

Observation Log

Observation Site	Number of Hours
Call Center 1	115
Call Center 2	12
Call Center 3	31
TOPS	27
Total	185

Table 4

Total Interview Count

Role	Number of Informants	Total number of interviews
Management	18	27
Inmate employees - new hires	17	42
Inmate employees - experienced	21	23
Total	56	92

Table 5

Interviews with Top Management

Role	Times Interviewed
CEO	1
VP-Operations	1
Director of HR	1
Director of Training and Development	2
TOPS Manager	2
HR/TOPS Associate	1
Total	8

Table 6

Longitudinal Interviews with New Hires

Call Center	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1	X	X							X
2			X						X
3						X	X		X

Table 7

Call Center 1 Interviews

Role	Number of Informants	Total number of interviews
Call Center Director/Manager	1	1
Performance Manager	2	2
Quality Assurance Manager	1	3
Training Specialist	2	3
Sales Optimization**	3	2
Project Coordinator*	1	1
New Hire TSRs*	7	17
Call Center Trainer*	1	5
Quality Assurance Specialist*	2	2
Experienced TSR*	4	5
Total	24	41

*indicates interviewee is an inmate

**indicates at least one group interview took place with the informants

Table 8

Call Center 2 Interviews

Role	Number of Informants	Total number of interviews
Call Center Director	1	5
Performance Manager	2	2
Quality Assurance Manager	1	3
Training Specialist	2	3
New Hire TSRs*	4	6
Experienced TSR**	3	2
Founding members of call center**	5	1
Total	18	22

*indicates interviewee is an inmate

**indicates at least one group interview took place with the informants

Table 9

Call Center 3 Interviews

Role	Number of Informants	Total number of interviews
Call Center Director	1	5
Performance Manager	2	3
Quality Assurance Manager	1	3
Training Specialist	2	3
New Hire TSRs*	6	17
Experienced TSR*	3	4
Total	15	35

*indicates interviewee is an inmate

Table 10

Respect on First Day of Training

Representative Data	Source	Type of Data
<p>“Defining respect is a difficult thing for anyone to do. Webster’s dictionary defines respect as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a relation or reference to a particular thing or situation 2. an act of giving particular attention : consideration 3. a: high or special regard : esteem b: the quality or state of being esteemed <p>When we hold people or things in high regard, we do certain things to let them know that we feel this way. As a TSR, you will find that showing respect to your clients, co-workers, prospects, and managers will serve you greatly. A few ways of doing this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have regard for the feelings and rights of others • Avoid harming others • Being sensitive to the likes and dislikes to avoid offending others • Avoid unnecessary tensions” 	Text directly quoted from new hire training manual	Archival Document
<p>After taking a learning style assessment, the training specialist noted that everyone in the class is different, and therefore everyone will learn in different ways. She told them to be respectful of one another’s learning styles and not to get frustrated when others ask questions. She tells them that respect is an ambiguous thing, and asks them what it means to be respectful. She listens to their suggestions, and concludes that respect means courtesy, empathy, and treating others as you want to be treated.</p>	Training Specialist 1 speaking to new hire class (Training 1 – CC1)	Observation Notes
<p>You are more valuable than even the CEO. You are crucial to the company’s success because you are the ones on the frontline making the money. You may be at the bottom of the organization’s chart, but you are a very high priority, which is something the CEO will echo</p>	Paraphrased statement by Training Specialist 1 speaking to new hire class	Observation Notes

when you meet him. You may feel like you are on the bottom, but you are at the top and would be the last to be let go if Televerde downsized.

(Training 1 – CC1)

Trainer tells them to “Encourage and support one another”; “Maintain a professional attitude at all times”; “Respond when spoken to, and interrupt tactfully when necessary”; “If you want respect, give it”.

Quotes from Training Specialist 2 (Training 2 – CC3)

Observation Notes

After explaining the transition program (TOPS) that Televerde offers to employees to prepare them for release, the opportunities they have for employment at the corporate office, and tuition reimbursement/scholarship programs offered, he asks the class, “Do you feel like Televerde values its employees?” The class responds, saying, “yes” in unison.

Training Specialist 2 (Training 2 – CC3)

Observation Notes

Table 11

Representative Data for Generalized Respect

1 st Order Categories	Representative Data
We are all valued	<p>“...we’re treated with respect and like our opinions count. You know, we can say something and it matters. It makes a difference in here. And that’s a big part of why I like being in here.” (CC2 1 NH)</p> <p>“... at Televerde you are always treated with respect, you are treated like an adult. You are going to be acknowledged as a human being, someone of value, someone that has worth. You’re going to be given the benefit of the doubt. You’re going to be given the opportunity to explain your point of view.” (CC3 1 NH)</p>
Respect from peers and managers	<p>“I’ve just noticed the way everyone talks to each other whether they’re in orange or whether they’re a PM [performance manager]. Everybody has a good rapport. And you know, they talk to each other like we’re not sitting here in orange.” (CC2 3 NH)</p> <p>“They’re all [other call center employees] real respectful and so are the PM’s too, you know? And they teach us how to be respectful with one another.” (CC3 4 NH)</p>
We are all “treated like people”	<p>“The big difference [between Televerde and prison yard] is they don’t treat us like we’re inmates here... none of the PM’s or like even you or the director – even the CEO, like they don’t treat us like inmates. They treat us like straight up employees, you know, like co-workers.” (CC1 2 NH)</p> <p>“We’re humans here. In the yard we’re inmates. Here we’re people, in the yard we’re inmates. That’s basically how I can state it.” (CC3 6 NH)</p>
The way we are treated is consistent	<p>“And it’s a consistent environment, whereas on the yard we can go and see one officer and say, ‘oh, okay, they’re consistent,’ or we can see an officer and say, you know, it’s like ‘which mom is walking to the door?’ You know? So, but here [Televerde], it’s more or less consistent and the more consistent we [Televerde employees] are the more consistent they</p>

[Televerde management] are.” (CC2 4 NH)

“It [life in the call center] is a constant. I mean there’s – the people coming and going, you know, because people move to another unit, is probably the only change that I see. Other than that it doesn’t change that much.” (CC2 1 NH)

Table 12

Representative Data for Personalized Respect

1 st Order Categories	Representative Data
My contribution is valued	<p>“On my third week I had like three leads in one day, you know, and it was crazy so I remember, [my PM] she’s like ‘way to go.’ You know, like ‘good job, nobody else got any leads today.’ Nobody was even supposed to get leads because it was actually the week of Thanksgiving so there was like no contact... And I pulled three... so it made me feel good and like whenever I do something good... or I improved on something, yeah, they let us know.” (CC1 2 NH)</p> <p>“She [my PM] wouldn’t spend her time away from her campaign and her TSRs to talk to me for an hour if I wasn’t worth it... after that I felt super important... She’ll like write me notes and put it on my desk: ‘You’re doing a great job; I just want you to know that it’s not going unnoticed’ ... It makes me want to cry.” (CC1 1 NH)</p>
Respect from superiors (manager, experienced employee, client, prospect)	<p>“One thing that is actually really nice to hear – they would have clients listening to some of the phone calls, they thought the callers were actually [in-house] or, they didn’t know that I was from Televerde and in here. So, to present yourself that way is really nice... you’re almost a part of the real world. You feel like you’re in a whole different element and that’s nice.” (CC3 2 NH)</p> <p>“Well I mean one time we came to work and [my PM] had... typed something up for us [my team]. It was so nice. It was like a whole paper just telling us like how good we were at what we were doing, how appreciated we were, basically how this company wouldn’t be what it is without us... It doesn’t happen so frequently because like I said they’re always really busy, but... every manager has their way of like telling you ‘hey,’ you know, ‘nice job.’” (CC1 2 NH)</p>
Tied to performance	<p>“... [my PM] had given me a goal of seven [deliverables], and I had six, and so she came to me and she was like, ‘you know, I just want you to know you’re doing good at your job’ ... I think I went home and danced I was so excited about that. And it’s not like you want constant empty compliments. That’s not what I’m looking for. I’m looking</p>

to give you a valuable job.” (CC1 4 NH)

“I didn’t think I was going to pass my midterm yesterday and I almost... was going to take my midterm and tell them I didn’t want to do it anymore... And, when they told me I passed the midterm, I was like, ‘okay I can do this, I can do this’... and I found that when I started making my flashcards, and I have my cellie, she’ll be quizzing me on them. Then, before she even starts to read it, I’m already writing it down. It’s like, ‘is this what this means?’ And, she’s like – ‘yeah, you got it.’ She’s like – ‘see, you know what you’re doing.’” (CC3 4 NH)

Episodic

“If you would have asked me last month, I think I probably would have been like ‘oh, ... I’m doing this just for the money’... now that I see that my efforts are being noticed, it’s made me so happy that another PM [performance manager] came up to me and said ‘hey, you were recommended to me, and I would like you to think about coming to my team’... all the hard work... it paid off.” (CC1 1 NH)

“There’s days when I felt professional. There’s days when I don’t... Everyday life, coming here, that doesn’t make me feel like a professional. I eat a sack lunch with rotten meat in it every day... There are days when, like, the client comes here and I come in in my best oranges and make sure my hair and makeup are done and I look good, and I’m able to speak about what they’re asking about. That makes me feel like I’m not in prison. That makes me feel like I have an opportunity to do something with myself, you know.” (CC1 4 NH)

Table 13

Representative Data for Decoupling Identities

1 st Order Categories	Representative Data
Message from Televerde: There is more to you than “orange”	<p>“You wearing orange is not who you are, it’s a consequence of your behavior” (CC1 TOPS Manager)</p> <p>“So, that’s why I always say... you heard me say yesterday a thousand times, you know, in this classroom we’re not in orange, we’re not inmates, we’re all Televerdians and I respect and appreciate the role that I’ve been given and I’m going to treat you like I want to be treated.” (CC1 Call Center Trainer)</p>
I am an inmate <i>and</i> a unique individual	<p>“Well I mean when you're on the yard and you have like 150, 180 women on a yard in orange and three brown [Correctional Officers] and, you know, they can threaten or they can give you tickets... well when you transition into the professional state of mind it's like, you know, this is me you're messing with. This is me, my money, my savings account, my retention when I get out.” (CC2 4 NH)</p> <p>“They’re [Televerde management] open to our opinions. We’re always encouraged to express a new idea or to be creative or anything like that, where basically with DOC you’re expected to fit into a box, do as you’re told, speak if you’re spoken to, and always give respect even if you’re disrespected. So you’re made to feel very small; you’re made to feel like a number. [At Televerde] I feel like a human being, I feel like I’m not in prison when I go to work every day.” (CC3 1 NH)</p>

Table 14

Representative Data for Social Validation

1st order category	Representative Data (Social Identities ²)	Representative Data (Personal Identities)
Internal responses to me enacting identity	“The whole call center is excited for somebody to get their first lead... they ding a bell anyway for every time anyone gets a lead, and they clap, but when you get your first lead it’s like the whole call center is like on their feet and... it’s great... You know, it’s exciting.” (CC2 1 NH)	“I have a really low self image and I mean I kind of had it forever, but going through the training and then passing and then getting into the call center has bumped it up a little bit, so now I’m like ‘hey, you know, there’s things I can do.’ Like maybe I’m not all – like down here... like I thought I was like, you know, beneath people and stuff, so that’s pretty cool.” (CC2 2 NH)
External responses to me enacting identity	“They’ve [other inmates] seen me out in the yard studying, and they are like ‘is that what you have to do?’ But you know they’re kind of amazed on what you have to do... Plus when you say you get college credits for it too, they are like ‘wow.’” (CC3 2 NH)	“And it’s not just the way that the people who you work with treat you, as far as like the inmates, or the Televerde staff, but it’s the way that the prospects on the other side of the phone treat you because they don’t know who we are. All they know is that you’re a person who can carry on an intelligent conversation on their level and they give you that respect, and that is like ‘wow,’ it’s a very freeing experience. It’s like you’re not even here [in prison].” (CC3 1 NH)
Feeling competent	“Well, the more like registrations I would get and the more that people would be... applauding me, you know, if I would get a bunch of registrations. Or some people tell me ‘dang, you sounded really good right now’... I was like ‘dang, I guess I am kind of good at this, huh?’” (CC1 2 NH)	“I mean you get pushed. You get pushed harder than in any other environment here. And, when you make it through the other side [of training], you did well, you did okay, you definitely become – you’re proud of yourself for that. So, yeah, it makes you feel like – I mean, for lack of a better word, that you have more worth. That you can still do something even though you’re where you’re at [in prison].” (CC3 3 NH)

² As noted in Chapter 5, the validated Televerde-related social identities included “Televerdian” (member of Televerde), TSR (Televerde role identity), and professional identity.

Table 15

Representative Data for Identity Security

1st order category	Representative Data (Social Identities ³)	Representative Data (Personal Identities)
Comfortable /safe to be this	<p>“Yeah, I mean because at first it was just difficult for me... I came in 16 years old, pretty much as a thug on the streets... so I didn’t have any idea how to talk to CEO’s... I felt really uncomfortable a lot of the time because I wanted to meet the standard but I didn’t know if I was able to do it... so I guess saying it wasn’t ‘me’ at that time – I learned something actually, since I made that statement [8 months ago]... you are what you make yourself so... It is me if I want it to be.” (CC1 2 NH)</p>	<p>“But I have learned through this job not just about technology, not just about processes, but what this job has given to me – I should say what Televerde has given to me is confidence in myself, understanding that I don’t have to continue to be an addict or a hustler, that I have more potential than I ever thought I had.... So you know, did I think I was capable of anything more? No, I didn’t. Do I think I’m capable of much more than where I’m at today? Absolutely. And I’ve come a long way.” (CC1 7 E)</p>
Self-defining	<p>“Because it’s like – when we come here, and I’ve heard this from so many women and I feel the same way – when you come to work here every day, you’re not in prison. You’re not wearing orange. You’re not, you know – I’m an educated, intelligent professional who has intelligent, educated conversations with Vice Presidents and CIOs and Directors of Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies on a daily basis. That’s who I am.” (CC3 1 NH)</p>	<p>“I’ve only been here [prison] 7-8 months. First time in prison. When I first got here, I wasn’t planning on doing anything. I was real depressed and I know the way I am. I’m usually like assertive and confident. I don’t know if you saw it when I was in training. I was really out of it. I would just sit there and I would take everything in. I was lost and I’m coming back to me and that feels really nice. I have to say I think working here has been a big part of that. I feel like I’ve evolved into something. I feel like I have a purpose and that’s made a huge difference because I didn’t know what to expect when I first got here. I thought that I would just waste away.” (CC3 2 NH)</p>

³ As noted in Chapter 5, the validated Televerde-related social identities included “Televerdian” (member of Televerde), TSR (Televerde role identity), and professional identity.

Table 16

Representative Data for Identity Holism

1 st Order Categories	Representative Data
Being myself as a professional	<p>“One of my assignments in my personal development class is what kind of person are you? What kind of jobs have you had that you liked or disliked and do you see a pattern in them?... when I looked at them, all of those jobs are done by myself, just me. I interact with people, but for the most part, the biggest part of my job duties are done solely by myself, and so I found that the job world that I’m choosing to take on, the career that I’m choosing to follow, is part of my personality, so that’s why it fits.” (CC1 7 E)</p> <p>“I think I can be myself and be successful. I don’t want to pretend to be someone else, because I’m going to get out of here and I’m going to do it as me, so it’s good to get that confidence as myself right now while I’m here.” (CC2 1 NH)</p> <p>“So I try to hold onto the core values and where I come from, but at the same time just kind of want to adapt and become a better person as well... the thing I’ve struggled with my whole life is boundaries, like figuring out what is too much and what is not enough... and that’s a beautiful thing at prison or Televerde or whatever you want to say has brought me... I can decide where a good boundary is and I can stick to that. So knowing that my goofiness and my personality, that is who I am. There’s a time to reign that in for sure... But [it is] definitely okay to display my personality ...that’s kind of an area where just being okay with myself, knowing who I am and being okay with that. So now there’s no reason I need to completely change myself, but there’s definitely different levels of my personality that I can let out, you know.” (CC1 4 NH)</p>
Being my new self as an inmate	<p>“One thing that Televerde taught me to do is that just because I have a voice or I’m one, doesn't mean that my voice doesn’t count. So I’m setting up a project. My goal is to find out how many people have suffered from gastro-intestinal difficulties since they’ve been here because of our diet. Because I want them to realize hard numbers, and that's one thing that this Televerde has taught me. People understand the bottom line numbers. If there’s a bunch of inmates saying, you know, ‘we don’t like the food, it’s not good for us’... well that’s not being part of the solution. That’s just being part of the problem. I figure if I... am</p>

able to show... 'you're spending X amount of money on medications to treat these symptoms that could easily be treated with fresh food or vegetables.' So that's my goal. And before Televerde, before this, I would probably never – I would probably just sit back quietly saying, 'yeah, somebody will change this someday'..." (CC2 4 NH)

"[since I started working at Televerde] I gained so much self-confidence and a sense of self-worth. I felt pride, and I felt so much more willing to be accountable for my actions because I was proud of my actions. It just changed the way I looked at everything, the way I even held myself, and conducted myself and conversations that I have not just here but on the yard. The way I conduct myself when I go home. The way I conduct myself with the staff of DOC, and you know the staff of DOC can usually tell inmates who work for Televerde because we just carry ourselves differently. Not that we're arrogant, not that we're conceited, but we have a sense of pride and respect, not just for us, but for others. You know what I mean? And it's reflected." (CC3 1 NH)

"We [Televerde employees] find that we eat together, we go to the store together, we walk the track together. It's just because A) it's a trust factor, because you build trust in here. And, B) there's a level of intelligence... I mean, the girls that don't want to step out of that box that was their criminal mentality, whether it be that they want to play cards all day... play spades all day long, all day long. We call them yard birds. Yes, we have a name for them. That mentality gets really old when you become a Televerdian. Even if you did it before, you find that you outgrow them. When you come back home, it's really hard to blend back in again, because it's like, ugly. You know, if you start talking to a coworker and saying – 'hey, I was calling on this campaign and oh my god' – the yard birds, they make fun of you or they – or they just tune out and eventually walk away. So, you find that you lose those people that were in your life that were not wanting to grow or change." (CC1 6 E)

My future
self

"I mean I'm not quite sure how my funding is going to look at this point, but I'm trying to at least get my level one certification [for substance abuse counseling] before I get out... So that's kind of something I want to do because I'm like thinking, you know, what can I do where my felonies will assist me? Like what can I do where I think that where I've been to can help other people? And so I'm going to give that a shot I guess. But my fear has adapted since I came here, now that I know what I'm capable of I fear not trying, like missing an opportunity to try versus failing

when I do try. Like at least I tried, you know what I mean, like I can fail miserably, but... knowing that I'm capable of giving it my all." (CC1 4 NH)

"When I came in here I learned a lot. I learned that I'm... much more capable of doing so many more things than I ever held myself to... I've learned here that I can be somebody big if I really want to, you know, and like all I keep thinking of is the word capable, like I can do anything pretty much that I set my mind to." (CC1 2 NH)

"When I was here [prison] before (cause I've been here before like I said), I didn't really care about what happened with me. I just came to do the time the judge gave me and just pay the consequences for what I did. But I didn't do anything with my time. I just sat around and kicked rocks, gossiped on the yard, did a lot of things that weren't productive. I just got another scholarship again. And so I'm working towards getting an associates [diploma] before I get out of here. That way I have something to show, save up some money, so I can get on my feet when I get out. And maybe pay some fines that I owe. Then I want to continue to go to school when I get out. I was thinking about going back to [my home town] but I don't think I am. Because it's been all bad. I'm originally from [my home town]. Most people I know over there are just drug addicts and I need a different – when I'm freshly out of here I need something new, something different, that way I can get used to it and build stability. Otherwise I'll just fall back into the same thing." (CC3 4 NH)

Table 17

Representative Data for Well-Being Outcomes

1 st Order Categories	Representative Data
Feeling supported	<p>“It’s just that they [employees] have each other’s back to the fullest and it’s great. I mean you can come to them about work. You can come to them about your family. You can come to them about anything, and you know, someone can help you get through whatever it is you’re going through.” (CC2 1 NH)</p> <p>“I knew for myself I could do it, but when other people tell you, you know, sometimes it just means more and it hits you harder and, you know, not just [that] I don’t want to disappoint myself. Now I don’t want to disappoint these people.” (CC2 3 NH)</p>
Maintain positive sense of self	<p>“I learned that I’m very capable of showing up to work every day, being responsible for my behavior at work and my, you know, being responsible for my actions... That I’m very intelligent and I’m very smart and that there’s no reason why I can’t do this out there.” (CC1 6 NH)</p> <p>“I know that almost anything I put my mind to I can accomplish it. I am [a] very strong little person... a lot of people [inmates] think that if you work [at] Televerde, you’re a snob... It’s just that we value our job... I worked hard for this. And this takes priority of everything that is going on in the yard. I’ve gotten a lot of confidence if that’s what you’re asking me. When I come in, I feel good about myself. This isn’t something easy that anybody can have. Not just anybody can do.” (CC3 6 NH)</p>

Table 18

Representative Data for Performance Outcomes

1 st Order Categories	Representative Data
Increased confidence in performance	<p>“It’s because of that respect, the confidence that they gain. And the more confident you become inside, the more confident you sound on the phone. And that’s really what all this is about. Half the time when you’re on the phone, doing this type of marketing, half of what you’re selling is yourself, really. If you feel intelligent and you feel confident you’re going to easily portray that confidence and that intelligence and that other person is going to be like ‘hey they really know what they’re talking about!’ So of course that brings success and then more confidence, and then it feeds on itself in a positive snowball effect.” (CC3 1 NH)</p> <p>“And I like feeling needed and important so that was like [a] really, really good confidence booster for me... I mean just busted it out [performed very well on the campaign]... and actually got to meet that client a few weeks ago. Yeah, so that was really promising, and then I started another one of their, like, executive events on my own. I was the only one calling and I was actually doing really well...” (CC1 4 NH)</p>
Comparing performance to others	<p>“I was doing [a specific campaign], I would look at what the numbers were for the other girls and I would set goals for myself as to what I wanted to accomplish. I would meet those. I found myself getting really competitive.” (CC3 2 NH)</p> <p>“But my point is that I came on the campaign like brand new, newer than everybody, and I started getting leads like crazy, like I just trickled all the way on up to the top... everybody’s good, you know. But I was just so surprised because like I have the second most leads on the board, you know, and there’s people who have been calling at it for years, like two years, you know, and I’m already kind [of] at their level.” (CC1 2 NH)</p>

Figure 1

Emergent Theoretical Model

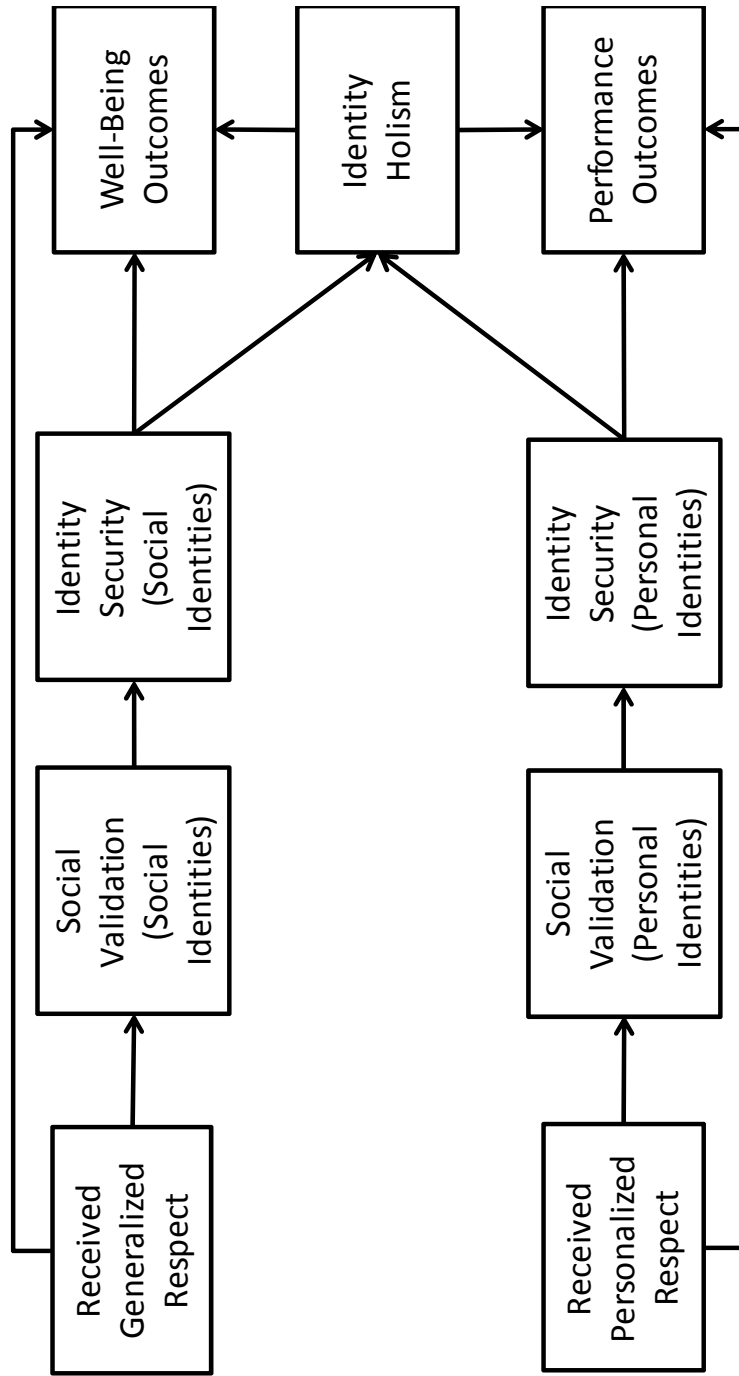


Figure 2

Emergent Data Structure

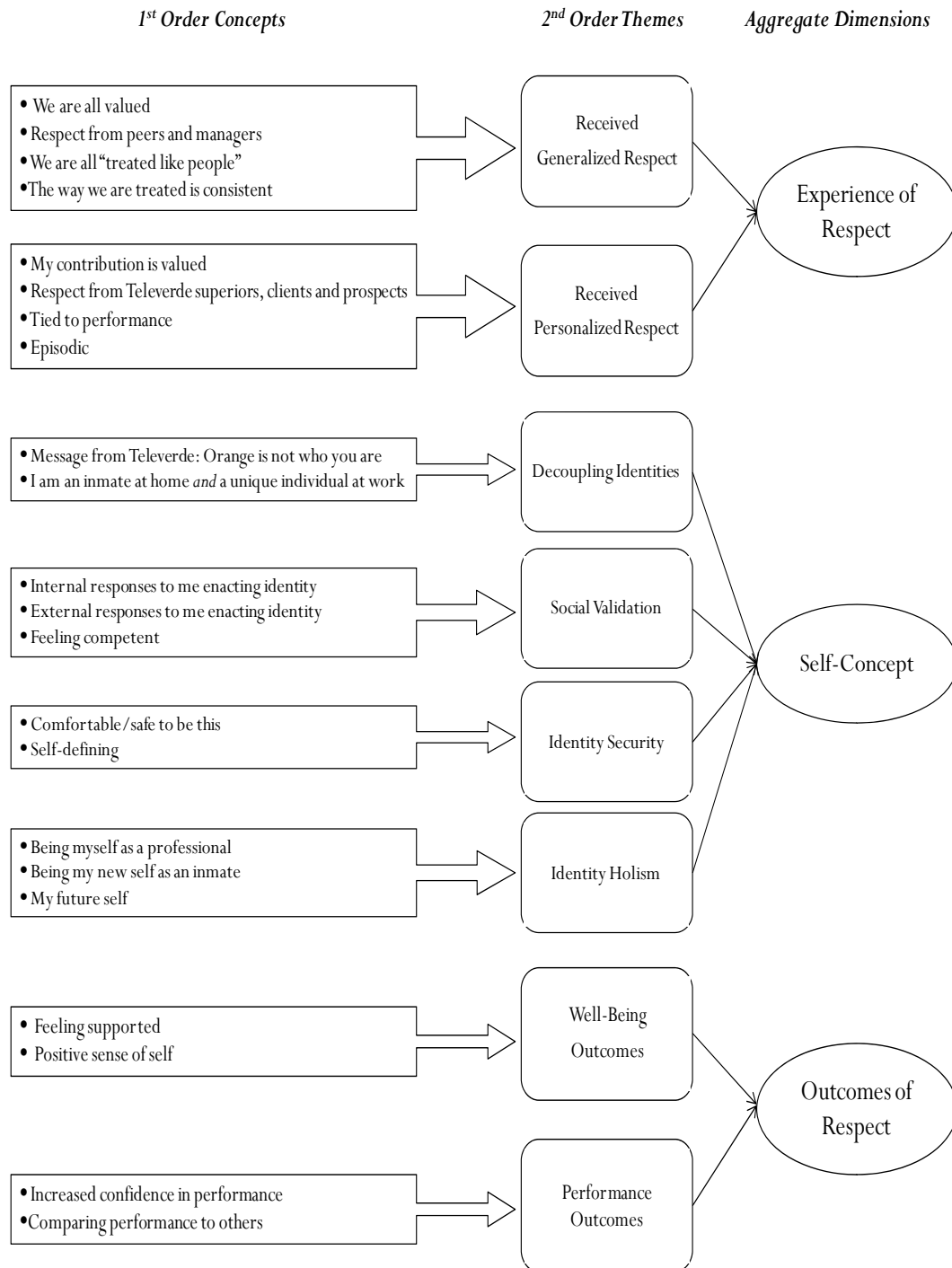


Figure 3

Change in Self-Concept

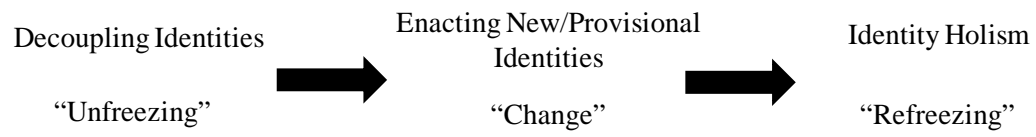


Figure 4

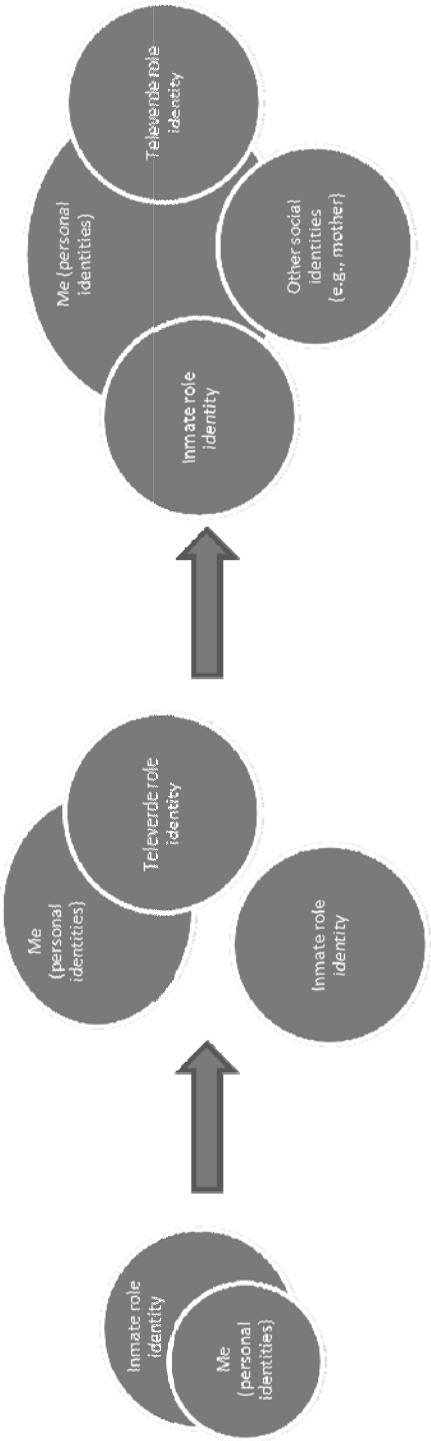
Identity Strength and Identity Security



From Pratt et al. (2012)

Figure 5

Change in Personal and Social Identities¹



¹ The change in size of the “Me: personal identities” circle represents development and growth of personal identities.

APPENDIX A

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY IRB APPROVAL

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To: Kevin Corley
BA

From: Mark Roosa, Chair
Soc Beh IRB

Date: 12/11/2009

Committee Action: Expedited Approval

Approval Date: 12/11/2009

Review Type: Expedited F7

IRB Protocol #: 0912004610

Study Title: Work Adjustment and the Role of Respect

Expiration Date: 12/10/2010

The above-referenced protocol was approved following expedited review by the Institutional Review Board.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without approval by the Institutional Review Board.

Adverse Reactions: If any untoward incidents or severe reactions should develop as a result of this study, you are required to notify the Soc Beh IRB immediately. If necessary a member of the IRB will be assigned to look into the matter. If the problem is serious, approval may be withdrawn pending IRB review.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, or the investigators, please communicate your requested changes to the Soc Beh IRB. The new procedure is not to be initiated until the IRB approval has been given.

Please retain a copy of this letter with your approved protocol.

APPENDIX B

MANAGER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- How much of what I will see in this call center training is the same across centers?
 - What are the key differences?
- What seems to be most shocking to new employees?
- How long would you say it takes for the average employee to get “up to speed?”
 - What are the signs that indicate this to you?
- When training a new supervisor or call center manager, how do you explain the most challenging parts of the job?
- What guidance do you provide as to how they treat new employees?
- How many of the current employees in this call center would like to work at headquarters when they are released?
- How would you describe the personalities of each call center?
- Do you intentionally create cultures or do allow employees to form them on their own?
 - If so, how?
- Are there employees that you think would be particularly useful for me to speak to prior to observing training?
- If you had the opportunity to ask an employee any question as an “outsider” rather than a manager, what would it be?

APPENDIX C

EXPERIENCED EMPLOYEE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- I'd like to start off by learning a bit about your job – Walk me through a typical day for you.
- How would you describe the personality of this call center?
- Everyone here seems to have a unique experience of Televerde. Can you tell me your “Televerde story”?
- Reflecting on your time here, have you learned anything about yourself while working at TV that you wouldn't have learned otherwise (behaviors, skills, confidence, potential)?
 - What? Can you give me an example? Tell me when you saw it, and when TV saw it.
- Can you sum up for me, in just one or two sentences, the biggest difference between DOC interactions and Televerde interactions?
 - Do you attribute these differences to the managers/COs or to your fellow employees/inmates?
- Biggest challenge during time at TV
 - How did you get through it?
 - Did anyone help you, who?
- How do you see the values coming to life at Televerde?
 - Through actions of/interactions with orange [peers]?
 - Through actions of/interactions with Managers?
 - Are there any that don't come to life?
- In general, have you seen differences between employees that have “made it” and those who haven't?

- What things have been most surprising to you?
 - Pleasant
 - Unpleasant

APPENDIX D

NEW HIRE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: INTERVIEW 1

Walk me through your experience, from the application process until now.

- What stands out as most important?
- What was the most surprising thing to you during training?
- What was your biggest challenge during classroom training?
 - Did you have help getting through it?
 - Who?
 - Why that person?
- What was your biggest challenge during on-the-job training?
 - Did you have help getting through it?
 - Who?
 - Why that person?
- Has the way you see yourself changed at all during this process?
- What is the biggest difference between your experiences at Televerde and past work experiences?
- How would you describe the differences between the way you are treated at Televerde and the way you are treated outside of work hours?
- How would you compare the way you felt on day 1 of week 1 to day 1 of week 2? Week 3?

APPENDIX E

NEW HIRE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: INTERVIEW 2

- Last time we talked you hadn't been in the call center very long. Now that you have some experience, how well do the things you learned about in training, particularly what Televerde is all about, match what life is really like in the call center?
- What's been your hardest day or biggest challenge since you've been on the phones?
 - What pulls you through those frustrating times?
- How does what you learn about TV in training match up with life in the call center?
- Have you participated in client visits?
- How would you describe the way that people treat one another here?
- Can you give me an example of how you feel supported by other TSRs?
 - Do you have an example of a time you have not felt supported?
- What is your relationship like with your PM?
- How has the way you think about TV changed from before you started, when you went through the new hire training, until now?
- Do you see yourself differently since you started here? Has your life here changed at all?

APPENDIX F

NEW HIRE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: INTERVIEW 3

- Walk me through a typical day for you.
- How would you describe the personality of this call center?
- How much does training reflect what really happens in the call center?
- Reflecting on your time here, have you learned anything about yourself while working at TV that you wouldn't have learned otherwise?
(behaviors, skills, confidence, potential?)
 - Can you give me an example? Tell me when you saw it, when TV saw it.
- Can you sum up for me, in just one or two sentences, the biggest difference between DOC interactions and TV interactions?
- Biggest challenge during your time here
 - How did you get through it?
 - Did anyone help you? Who?
- How do you see the values coming to life at Televerde?
 - Through actions of/interactions with orange [peers]?
 - Through actions of/interactions with Managers?
 - Are there any that don't?
- What has been most surprising to you?
 - Pleasant?
 - Unpleasant?

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent Statement

Title of project: Newcomer Adjustment

Researchers:	Kristie Rogers	Kevin G. Corley
	Research Associate	Associate Professor
	W. P. Carey School of	W. P. Carey School of
	Business	Business
	Arizona State University	Arizona State University
	Tempe, AZ 85287-4006	Tempe, AZ 85287-4006
	Phone: (480) 965-7118	Phone: (480) 965-3431
	kristie.rogers@asu.edu	kevin.corley@asu.edu

You are invited to participate in a research study on how newcomers adjust to their jobs, and what specific training or interactions bring them up to speed. One of our purposes in this study is to learn more about the transition into your daily work life and how Televerde influenced that transition.

Description

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete at least one interview, and a follow-up if you agree to, with me Kristie Rogers. The interviews contain several questions regarding your experiences in Televerde. The interviews should take 30-60 minutes and will be audio-recorded with your permission.

After completion of the interview, the audio-recording will be transcribed. Once the recording has been transcribed and the accuracy of the transcription assured, the recording will be destroyed.

Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to participate at any time. Responding to all of the questions in the interview is important, but you may decline to respond to any specific question. If you decide to participate, you may still withdraw from the study at any time. Withdrawal from the study will not affect your employment status. There are no foreseeable risks to you during the course of this study. By participating in this study you will be helping us understand more about an important aspect of employee's experiences in work organizations.

Confidentiality

The information collected in this study will be kept confidential. Data will be secured in the office of the researchers ensuring that no one other than the researchers will have access to your transcript, unless you specifically give written permission to do otherwise. At no time will any individual data be shared with others inside the organization; only aggregated data with no reference to specific names or positions will be shared with other members of the organization. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Similarly, we are not interested in personal information about your life prior to incarceration and no questions will be asked in that direction.

Contact

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can have your manager contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Research Compliance Office, at (480) 965-6788.

Consent

I have read and understood the above information. I understand and agree to be interviewed for this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____