

A Customer Scored: Effects of Employee Reprimands in Frontline Service Encounters

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Abstract:

This research examines the implications of manager reprimands of frontline employees following a service failure incident. Drawing upon social exchange theory and looking at both customer and employee reactions, three studies find that customers are more satisfied with failed service encounters when they are aware the employee was reprimanded. This effect is on par with other types of service recoveries, mediated by deontic justice perceptions and moderated by the customer's just-world beliefs, such that high believers are more satisfied than low believers when they are told about an employee's reprimand. Direct observation of the reprimand acts as a key boundary condition whereby customers become dissatisfied when they are present during the reprimand. Furthermore, we find that customer perceptions of frontline reprimands are tied to reprimand privacy, whereas employee perceptions are tied to reprimand civility. This research is the first to simultaneously examine the effects of workplace reprimands on customer and frontline employee satisfaction. For managers, our findings illuminate the usefulness of communicating employee reprimands to customers, thus representing a low-cost alternative to other types of recovery efforts.

Keywords: employee reprimand | frontline employees | service marketing | service failure | service recovery | human resources | deontic justice

Article:

Although companies spend increasingly large sums of money to handle customer complaints, complaint satisfaction is no higher than it was in the 1970s. Meanwhile, customers reporting problems with physical products and services grew from 32% in 1976 to 50% in 2013 (Grainer et al. 2014). In fact, service failures caused an estimated US\$76 billion of losses to U.S. businesses in 2013 (Grainer 2013). Customers often attribute these service failures to an employee's actions or inactions (Bitner 1990), which lead to customer defections (Reichheld and Sasser 1990), negative word of mouth (Maxham 2001), decreased market share (Hays and Hill 2001), and declines in customer satisfaction (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990). When an employee is the source of a failure, in addition to enacting a service recovery strategy, managers commonly reprimand the employee to guide future behavior (Podsakoff et al. 2006).

The present research is the first to consider a reprimand of a frontline employee as a potential resource for service recovery. Compensation for failed service encounters is known to take the form of either economic resources (e.g., a discount) or social resources (e.g., an apology; Bagozzi 1975; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005; Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). Drawing on social exchange theory (SET) and belief in a just world (BJW) theory, we argue that scorned customers would like to know that employees *get what they deserve* (Lerner 1977, 1980) and that the communication of an employee's reprimand acts as a social resource that has value to customers who have been inconvenienced by a failed service encounter (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). Three independent experiments are used to examine employee reprimands in frontline service encounters, including a mediator and key boundary conditions.

Our findings support the basic assertion that customers who are inconvenienced by a service failure are more satisfied with a service recovery when they are made aware that the employee was reprimanded. Although it is generally believed that employees should be reprimanded in private (i.e., without the customer's knowledge; Schwarz 2015), our research adds to the service failure and recovery literature stream by showing that customers who have been inconvenienced prefer to know that the offending employee is reprimanded. This research also adds to the literature on punishment by showing that a reprimand does not necessarily lead to negative outcomes for the employee. Practically, this research informs managers that it can be beneficial to make customers aware of an employee's reprimand, and the results reaffirm the importance of proper reprimand design and delivery on the front line.

Next, in the Conceptual Development section, we define our key constructs, review pertinent literature, and propose our hypotheses. Then, three scenario-based experiments are introduced and methods are discussed followed by discussions of the results. A discussion of the contributions for managers and theory, the limitations, and the implications for future research conclude the article. We now turn to the literature concerning service failure and recovery.

Conceptual Development

Service Failure and Recovery on the Front Line

The burgeoning field of organizational frontline research concerns the "study of interactions and interfaces at the point of contact between an organization and its customers" (Singh et al. 2017, p. 4). Considering the variability of service delivery on the front line (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1985), research across a wide range of industries has looked at how service failures and service recovery strategies impact customer satisfaction (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990; Keiningham et al. 2014). Customers often evaluate service recovery strategies based on the compensation they receive (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998), which generally takes the form of either economic or social resources (Bagozzi 1975; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). Economic resources include the replacement of physical goods or a second service attempt (Folkes 1984) or a discount or refund (Roschk and Gelbrich 2014, 2017). Social resources include an explanation (Sparks and McColl-Kennedy 1998), apology (Goodwin and Ross 1990, 1992), assurance that the failure will not happen again (Folkes 1984), or an opportunity to vent (Grainer et al. 2014; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998).

However, the frontline service marketing literature has not considered the reprimand of an employee as one type of social compensation. Defined as a “conditioned aversive stimulus” that may serve one of the two purposes, a reprimand is an unpleasant communication that can be intended to “punish or decrease the response that led to it” or to “warn of or forecast some impending aversive consequence if a response is performed” (Arvey and Ivancevich 1980, p. 124). To understand why a customer would prefer to know that an employee is reprimanded, we turn to literature on SET and BJW theory.

SET and BJW

SET holds that transactions are judged by the parties involved based on how closely they adhere to norms of exchange (Blau 1964; Homans 1958; Thibaut and Kelley 1959). Central to exchange norms is the idea that one party should get out of an exchange something similar to what they put in. Over time, adherence to, or deviation from, exchange norms guides the formation of the relationship between parties to the exchange. Violations of social norms by either party are particularly harmful to relationships, often causing the violated party to react as a means of coping with the violation. Reactions can be direct and obvious, resulting in a confrontation, or they can be more general and benign, such as an expectation that people eventually get what they deserve. A well-known example of this more general belief is captured in Lerner’s (1965) research on “just-world” perceptions (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005).

Stemming from work on cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957), BJW champions the idea that people believe the world is a just place and that everyone gets what they deserve (Lerner 1965, 1980). In situations where someone other than the self is the victim of injustice, people respond by derogating the victim’s character, blaming the victim, or helping the victim in an attempt to restore justice (Hafer and Bègue 2005). However, recent empirical research has focused on how the victims themselves cope with undeserved negative outcomes. One of these defense strategies, “compensatory rationalization,” involves offsetting undeserved events with deserved events in the present (Hafer and Rubel 2015, p. 71). For example, in the context of an undeserved service failure that is attributed to a frontline employee, a customer might expect the employee to “get what they deserve” from a manager, thereby reaffirming a just world.

Although counterintuitive at first glance, the idea that a customer will respond positively to an employee reprimand can be explained by the natural need to reaffirm one’s BJW after that belief has been violated (Kay et al. 2009). Notably, a common response to a BJW violation is a desire for restorative action (Hafer and Bègue 2005; Lerner 1980), where individuals with a high BJW are happier to know that they are made whole than to assume the world will right itself at some point in the future. After a service failure, making these individuals aware of a reprimand is an outcome that is congruent with their belief, thereby reducing their cognitive dissonance and increasing satisfaction. On the other hand, individuals lower in BJW experience less dissonance and, in turn, a smaller increase in satisfaction. While many mechanisms have been put forth as ideal tools for BJW defense, the concept of retribution is particularly effective (Lerner 1965; Rubin and Peplau 1975).

The desire to retaliate is a central tenant to research involving service failures. Varying degrees of retaliation exist. Some wronged consumers opt for milder forms of retaliation such as negative

word of mouth, whereas others become enraged (McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009) and some engage in customer revenge (Grégoire and Fisher 2008). The growing incidences of consumer revenge underscore the importance many customers place on BJW governing norms (Patterson, Brady, and McColl-Kennedy 2016). In fact, customer revenge as a coping mechanism to a BJW violation is supported by the premise that customers often seek to restore fairness or justice upon experiencing a situation in which they have been wronged by the firm. In other words, a common response to a BJW violation is to desire knowledge of retaliation against the transgressor. We argue that this same mechanism for defending a person's BJW is in effect after being inconvenienced by a frontline employee's actions. Thus, a customer who is inconvenienced by an employee will be more satisfied when they know that the employee is reprimanded, and this effect will be especially strong for people who are high in BJW. Therefore, we predict the following:

Hypothesis 1: Customers who are inconvenienced by an employee's actions will have higher appraisals of transaction-specific customer satisfaction when made aware (vs. not made aware) that the employee is reprimanded.

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between the awareness of a reprimand and customers' transaction-specific satisfaction is moderated by customers' BJW, such that customers who rate more highly in BJW are more satisfied by reprimand awareness.

Private Reprimands

Prevailing thought suggests it is better to praise publicly and criticize privately (Schwarz 2015). Witnessing a reprimand could lead to negative consequences such as embarrassment, shame, and possibly perceptions of injustice. In fact, prior research shows that reprimanding an employee in front of other employees can lead to negative evaluations of a supervisor's constructiveness, demeanor, harshness, and performance (Ball, Trevino, and Sims 1994). We expect that witnessing a reprimand would have similar negative effects on customers. Experimental research specifically concerned with incivility has shown that witnessing an act of employee incivility can make a customer angry, causing the customer to think deeply about the incident and make negative generalizations about other employees, the firm, and future interactions with the firm (Porath, MacInnis, and Folkes 2011). Therefore, we believe that a customer's direct observation of a reprimand, even if it is civil, acts as a boundary condition such that observation would mitigate the positive effects of knowing the employee was reprimanded.

Hypothesis 3: The positive effect of reprimand awareness specified in Hypothesis 1 does not occur when the customer directly observes the reprimand.

Considering that employee satisfaction is known to drive customer satisfaction (Heskett et al. 1994), and that shared frontline experiences often cause a convergence of emotions between dyad members in frontline exchanges (Zablah et al. 2017), we find it important to next consider employees' responses to frontline reprimands.

Employee Perceptions of Reprimands

The process of reprimanding a transgressor is complex because of the many possible outcomes, both positive and negative (Lin, Dahl, and Argo 2013). While making an effective reprimand decision is challenging, the decision not to reprimand an employee for misconduct often carries its own negative consequences. Failure to reprimand an employee for misconduct can lead to an increase in the negative behavior from that employee as well as from other employees who are aware of the misconduct (Schaefers et al. 2016; Trevino 1992). Notably, there is reason to believe that employees may actively seek out constructive feedback, such as that contained in properly constructed reprimands. Research concerning employee feedback seeking behavior, for example, demonstrates that both learning and performance goal-oriented individuals are known to seek feedback (Anseel et al. 2015; VandeWalle and Cummings 1997). Motivation to seek feedback for learning goal-oriented individuals may be due to a desire to improve performance or, in the case of performance goal-oriented individuals, with a need to impress others when expecting positive feedback (Kaplan and Maehr 2007).

Interestingly, there is evidence that employees may be neutral to, or even positively affected by, reprimands that are appropriately constructed and administered contingent upon employee actions. Appropriately designed and delivered employee reprimands can have positive effects on an employee's subsequent performance (Beyer and Trice 1984), job satisfaction, satisfaction with supervisor, trust in the supervisor, and organizational commitment (Podsakoff et al. 2006) and can curb future coworker misconduct (O'Reilly and Puffer 1989; Trevino 1992).

Reprimand Best Practices

A reprimand is more likely to have a positive effect on both employee satisfaction and performance when it is framed as related to increasing task performance as opposed to the performance of the focal person (Kluger and DeNisi 1996). Therefore, one quality of an appropriately designed reprimand is that the focus of the reprimand is correcting the task and not the shortcomings of the employee. A second quality of an appropriately delivered reprimand is that it is administered in private (Atwater, Brett, and Charles 2007; Porath, MacInnis, and Folkes 2011; Trevino 1992). Private reprimands are thought to be more humanitarian, constructive, and instructive compared to reprimands administered in front of others, while in contrast, public reprimands cause stress, humiliation, and embarrassment (Ball, Trevino, and Sims 1994).

Harshness, defined as whether the severity of the reprimand fits the severity of the misconduct (Ball, Trevino, and Sims 1994), is a third dimension of appropriate reprimands that is highly correlated with employee satisfaction. The desire for the severity of a reprimand to be commensurate with the severity of the misconduct incident is consistent with BJW in that BJW suggests a person desires that a transgressor gets what they deserve, no more, no less (Rubin and Peplau 1975). Therefore, any satisfaction gained from an incident of employee reprimand is contingent upon this "eye-for-an-eye" aspect of a correctly calibrated reprimand.

Finally, an appropriately designed reprimand should be consistent with the company's policies and procedures and with past reprimands given for similar actions (Atwater, Brett, and Charles 2007). When the actions of managers are inconsistent with their past actions, employees are unable to predict managers' future behaviors thereby causing uncertainty, a known work stressor (Beehr and Bhagat 1985). Similarly, giving explanations of why an employee's actions resulted

in a reprimand, and how to avoid receiving another reprimand in the future, helps reduce ambiguity and uncertainty. Considering these best practices regarding reprimands, we predict:

Hypothesis 4: After causing a service failure, an employee will be similarly satisfied with receiving a reprimand that is designed and delivered consistently with best practices compared with receiving no reprimand after a failure.

We now turn to a discussion on our proposed mediator, deontic justice.

Deontic Justice

Three dimensions of social justice—distributive, interactional, and procedural justice—have been instrumental in explaining how customers react to service failures and recoveries. Among other outcomes, these three justice perceptions have been consistently supported as antecedents to customer satisfaction within service failure settings (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). Also, they have been found to be highly related but distinct constructs (Cohen-Charash and Spector 2001) and have been used to investigate the party responsible for the (in)justice (Rupp et al. 2014), customer retaliation (Grégoire and Fisher 2008), appropriate levels of financial compensation after a service failure (Roschk and Gelbrich 2014), and future complaint intentions (Voorhees and Brady 2005).

A fourth social justice dimension, deontic justice, is defined as *the perception that a firm has a moral obligation to punish transgressors of fairness* (Beugre 2012). Deonance theory contends that individuals hold each other accountable to normative standards of fairness and, in turn, fairness as deonance is conceptualized as the principled moral obligation to be fair (Folger 2001). Perceptions of deontic justice are grounded in the rules that observers use to evaluate events and the observer's ability to understand and share in the victim's psychological experience (Cropanzano, Massaro, and Becker 2017). This conceptualization differs from other forms of justice in that deontic justice is not based only on economic self-interest or group-based identity. We note that the concept of deontic justice is quite compatible with the ideas inherent in BJW theory, as it comes into play when an undeserved negative outcome is caused by the acts of another. When a person causes an unjust negative outcome, others may want that person to receive a reprimand because it is what "ought" to be done. As originally conceptualized by Folger (2001), "the motivational state of deonance influences reactions such as creating a desire to ensure that the violator or attempted violator does not get away with it scot free" (p. 6).

Exposure to an unjust act causes a deontic state in the observer, which in turn leads to desire for the transgressor to receive what they are due. Perceptions of (in)justice are known to affect emotions that can be either inward focused (e.g., shame or guilt) or outward focused (e.g., anger and hostility; Barclay, Skarlicki, and Pugh 2005). As service failures have been shown to be perceived as unjust (Gelbrich and Roschk 2011), we expect that when employees cause these injustices, customers will want retaliation, and likewise the employees will believe they deserve a reprimand. Therefore, we predict:

Hypothesis 5: The relationships between the reprimand manipulations and transaction-specific satisfaction specified in Hypotheses 1 and 4 are mediated by the individual's perceptions of deontic justice.

Research Studies

To test our hypotheses, we conducted three scenario-based experimental studies. In Study 1, we tested whether a customer prefers to know that an employee is reprimanded after a service failure (Hypothesis 1), whether BJW moderates the relationship between customers' awareness of a reprimand and their satisfaction with the transaction (Hypothesis 2), and we examined employees' reactions to reprimands (Hypothesis 4). Study 2 utilizes picture-based scenarios with narration to examine reprimand privacy (Hypothesis 3), employees' reactions to reprimands (Hypothesis 4), and tests whether deontic justice mediates the observed effects on satisfaction (Hypothesis 5). Finally, Study 3 serves as a robustness check that addresses how reprimands compare to common service recovery strategies.

Pilot Study

As an initial test of our baseline effect that customers may perceive an employee reprimand as a type of service recovery, we designed a pilot study where 90 MTurk subjects assumed the customer role and read that the employee who caused a failure received no reprimand, a private reprimand, or a public reprimand. Cell sizes ranged from 29 to 31. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed a significant effect of reprimand condition on satisfaction, $F(2, 87) = 5.402, p < .001$, and planned contrasts showed that the private reprimand condition (mean [M] = 2.98, standard deviation [SD] = 1.68) yielded significantly higher satisfaction than both the no reprimand condition ($M = 2.14, SD = 0.99, p < .01$) and the public reprimand condition ($M = 1.99, SD = 0.97, p < .05$). There was no significant difference between the no reprimand and public reprimand conditions ($p = .649$). These results offer initial support for Hypotheses 1 and 3. Next, Study 1 looks further into how customers and employees react to reprimands and investigates our moderating hypothesis concerning BJW (Hypothesis 2).

Study 1

Experimental Design

Subjects were randomly assigned to read a core scenario from the viewpoint of either the customer or employee. Both scenarios described a service encounter in which a customer is missing part of their order from a takeout restaurant (see Web Appendix for details about the scenarios). Each subject was shown one of the two conditions in which the employee received either a private reprimand or no reprimand. The reprimand conditions clearly showed that the employee was reprimanded in private, that the manager was civil, and that the reprimand was intended to guide future behavior to avoid mistakes. After subjects read the scenario corresponding to their assigned condition, we asked subjects in every condition to answer questions about their satisfaction and administered the manipulation checks.

Data Collection and Sample

Data were gathered from students enrolled in an undergraduate introductory marketing course at a large university in the southeastern United States. Students received course credit for their participation. The use of a student sample is deemed appropriate here, as many students receive services in situations similar to those in our studies and/or work in similar frontline service positions. Nonetheless, we note that Study 3 employs a nonstudent sample to test whether our findings are robust.

Several weeks prior to participation, all subjects completed a survey with demographic questions and a measure of BJW (with origins in Lucas et al. 2007). We received 168 responses, of which 86 (51%) were from the customer's point of view. Cell sizes ranged from 41 to 43 ($M = 42$, $SD = 1.15$). The sample contained 44.7% females and the ages ranged from 17 to 30 years ($M = 20.27$, $SD = 1.29$). Finally, 55.7% of respondents had worked in a restaurant.

Dependent Variable

After subjects read the scenarios, we measured transaction-specific satisfaction (with origins in Jones and Suh 2000). In each condition, all subjects were instructed to "evaluate your experience based on this single service encounter." Subjects then responded to three semantic differential questions (each on a 7-point scale) that are often used to measure satisfaction: "based on this service encounter, I am satisfied/dissatisfied," "pleased/displeased," and "this service encounter was favorable/unfavorable" (see Appendix Table A1 for measures used in all studies and their reliability estimates).

Manipulation Checks

Checks were performed on Likert-type scales from 1 *strongly disagree* to 7 *strongly agree*. Results revealed that those in the customer role and reprimand condition ($M = 5.88$, $SD = 1.28$) were significantly more likely, $t(84) = 11.43$, $p < .001$, to perceive that they were told an employee would be reprimanded compared to subjects in the no reprimand condition ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 1.45$). Likewise, subjects in the employee role and reprimand condition ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.63$) were significantly more likely, $t(80) = 3.38$, $p < .001$, to perceive that the employee in the scenario was reprimanded compared to subjects in the no reprimand condition ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.44$).

One-sample t tests were used to assess whether subjects understood the viewpoint from which they were reading their scenario and, as expected, subjects in the customer, $t(85) = 15.60$, $M = 6.05$, $p < .001$, and employee, $t(81) = 6.17$, $M = 5.16$, $p < .001$, conditions scored significantly higher than the scale midpoint. Next, to assess the privacy of the reprimand, subjects indicated whether anyone witnessed the employee in the scenario receive a reprimand. Scores were significantly below the scale midpoint for the customer, $t(42) = -8.25$, $M = 2.28$, $p < .001$, and employee, $t(40) = -7.67$, $M = 2.32$, $p < .001$, groups. Then, subjects in the reprimand conditions were asked to rate whether the reprimands were too severe considering the service failure. Scores were significantly lower than the scale midpoint for both the customers, $t(42) = -5.83$, $M = 2.90$, $p < .001$, and the employees, $t(40) = -12.70$, $M = 1.96$, $p < .001$. Finally, participants in all

conditions rated the realism of their scenarios significantly ($p < .001$) higher than the scale midpoint. Therefore, all our manipulations performed as intended.

Analysis and Results

To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, we examined only those participants who read scenarios from the customer’s point of view. Results of hypotheses testing in all studies can be found in Table 1. We regressed satisfaction on the reprimand condition (reprimand vs. no reprimand), BJW ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.10$), and their interaction, which revealed a significant two-way interaction, $t(79) = 2.69$, $p < .01$. Because BJW was measured as a continuous individual difference variable, to understand the nature of this interaction, we used the Johnson and Neyman (1936) “floodlight” analysis. This technique, which has recently been used in the marketing literature in a way consistent with the present research (Shepherd, Chartrand, and Fitzsimons 2015), is used to look for the range(s) of BJW for which the simple effect of the manipulation was significant as recommended by Spiller et al. (2013). This analysis showed a significant and positive effect of reprimand awareness on satisfaction (Hypothesis 1) for any subject whose BJW score was greater than 4.27 on the 7-point scale ($B_{JN} = .49$, $SE = .25$, $p = .05$), but not for any subject whose BJW scored below 4.27 (Hypothesis 2). The Johnson-Neyman region of significance is indicated by the crosshatched area in Figure 1A.

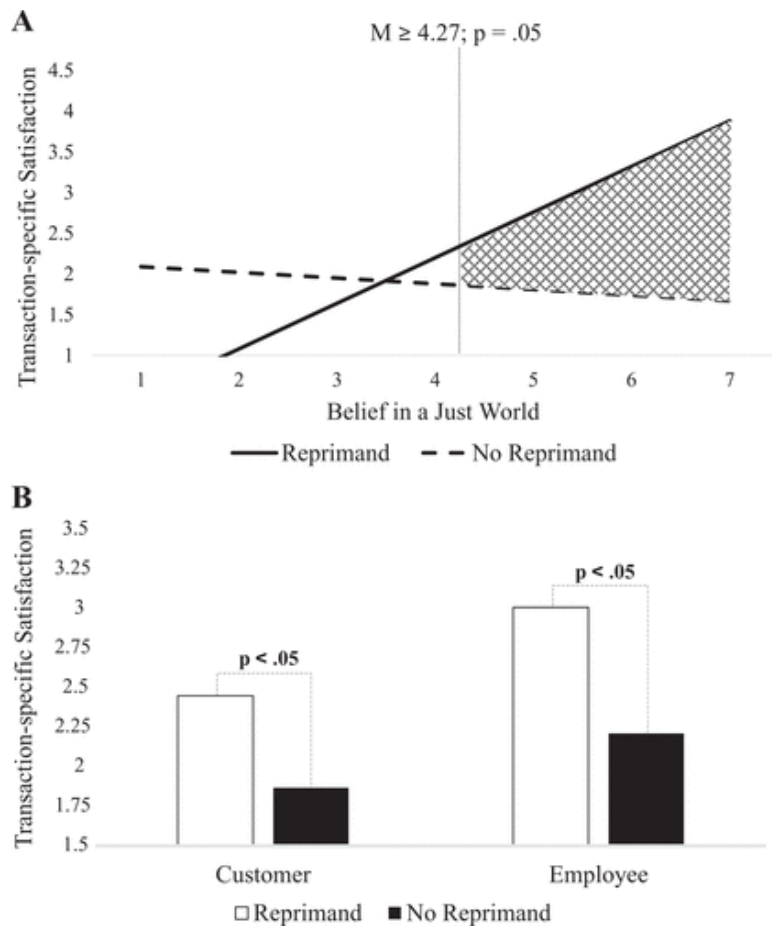


Figure 1. Study 1 results. (A) Moderating effect of belief in a just world on satisfaction. (B) Effect of a reprimand on satisfaction.

Table 1. Studies and Hypotheses Supported.

	Study 1	Study 2	Study 3
Sample	168 Students	246 Students	151 Online Panel
Hypothesis 1: Reprimand as recovery	Supported	—	Supported
Hypothesis 2: Belief in a just-world moderation	Supported	—	—
Hypothesis 3: Private reprimands	—	Supported	—
Hypothesis 4: Employee perceptions	—	Supported	—
Hypothesis 5: Deontic justice mediation	—	Supported	—

Note. Em dash “—” denotes that the hypothesis was not tested in that study.

Next, we examined what effects a reprimand has on the employee sample with a one-way ANOVA using satisfaction as the dependent variable and the employee reprimand condition as the independent variable. Results from those participants who read the scenarios from the employee’s point of view show that subjects in the employee/reprimand condition ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.68$) were significantly more satisfied, $F(1, 80) = 6.777$, $p < .05$, than subjects in the employee/no reprimand condition ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.68$; Figure 1B). This supports Hypothesis 4.

Discussion of Study 1

Study 1 results show that there are times when a customer is more satisfied by knowing that an employee receives a reprimand in support of Hypothesis 1. Furthermore, Study 1 supports Hypothesis 2 that a customer’s BJW moderates the relationship between the customer’s awareness of a reprimand and their satisfaction. In particular, there is a point at which customers’ BJW triggers satisfaction if they become aware that an employee was reprimanded. Conversely, those customers who are low on BJW respond similarly regardless of whether they are made aware that the employee receives a reprimand.

The pilot study and Study 1 support the idea that customers prefer that an offending employee is reprimanded, particularly if it is carried out in private, and that employees are at least as satisfied when they receive a reprimand that is civil compared to a scenario in which they are not reprimanded. In Study 2, we look more deeply at reprimand privacy and civility as related to employee and customer responses. Also, Study 2 examines the mediating hypothesis relating to deontic justice (Hypothesis 5). Furthermore, to enhance realism, we employ picture-based scenarios with narration. Finally, Study 2 adds generalizability to our findings in that it is set in a different frontline service context, a movie theater ticket counter.

Study 2

Experimental Design

Subjects were prompted to view a scenario from either the viewpoint of a customer or an employee. Video slideshows were used that incorporated recorded audio along with text and graphics similar to Gelbrich, Gathke, and Grégoire (2014). These types of stimuli have been shown to offer the control of an experiment while having the ecological validity of actual service encounters (Bateson and Hui 1992) and were designed following the procedures in Victorino et al. (2012). Pretested written vignettes were reproduced in picture form in a real theater and

combined with narrations by a native speaker.¹ The Study 2 scenario was adapted from an actual online review concerning a movie theater. Specifically, the core scenario for both role conditions (customer and employee) is set in a service encounter in which an employee mistakenly tells a customer that it is too late to enter a movie theater, even though the customer has a ticket. The reprimand delivery condition was manipulated by changing the last two scenes in the corresponding scenarios. Study 2 consisted of a 2 (public vs. private) × 2 (civil vs. uncivil) design from both viewpoints (customer and employee) for a total of eight conditions. After subjects watched the scenario corresponding to their assigned condition, they were asked to answer questions about their satisfaction and then the Deontic Justice Scale was administered followed by the manipulation checks.

Data Collection and Sample

Data were gathered from students enrolled in two sections of an introductory marketing course from the same university as in Study 1, and they received course credit. One section was prompted to view the interaction from the customer's perspective and the other section viewed the interaction from the employee's perspective. There were 246 subjects, of which 124 subjects viewed the service interaction from the customer's perspective (50%). Cell sizes ranged from 29 to 34 ($M = 30.75$, $SD = 1.56$). The sample was comprised of 49.5% females, and the ages ranged from 18 to 41 years old ($M = 20.56$, $SD = 2.15$).

Measures

We again measured transaction-specific satisfaction in each condition (Jones and Suh 2000). To test the mediation hypothesis (Hypothesis 5), we included a measure of deontic justice perceptions with items adapted from Beugre's (2012) measure of trait deontic justice. Before use in Study 2, these items were pretested using a sample of 102 MTurk participants.² Four items resulted in a coefficient α estimate of .89.

Analysis and Results

Manipulation checks similar to those included in Study 1 showed that all of our manipulations performed as intended. Then, using only subjects in the customer role condition, we estimated a one-way ANOVA with satisfaction as the dependent variable and the reprimand condition as the independent variable. Results show a significant effect of reprimand condition on satisfaction, $F(3, 120) = 3.041$, $p < .05$. Therefore, we examined the planned contrasts among the

¹ The civility of the written vignettes was pretested beginning with versions that were similarly civil. The tone of the uncivil vignette was iteratively made more uncivil until there was a significant difference between civility conditions, while the uncivil condition was still rated as realistic.

² To assess convergent and discriminant validity, we specified a confirmatory factor analysis model including the measure of deontic justice, along with measures of distributive, interactive, and procedural justice that were drawn from the literature. The model exhibited an acceptable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 340.56$, $df = 146$; CFI = .90; SRMR = .06), all factor loadings were significant and greater than .7, and the average variance extracted (AVE) for deontic justice was .67, showing evidence for convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981). Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the AVE from the Deontic Justice Scale to the shared variances (SV; .30–.63) with the three other justice constructs. In each case, the AVE was greater than the SVs, supporting discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

levels of the reprimand condition (Figure 2). As expected, the customer private/civil reprimand condition ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.16$) yielded significantly higher satisfaction than the public/uncivil reprimand condition ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 1.21$, $p < .05$). However, neither the mean of the public/civil reprimand condition ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.48$) nor the private/uncivil condition ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.27$) was significantly different from either the private/civil or the public/uncivil reprimand conditions. Next, results from participants who read the scenarios from the employee's point of view showed a significant effect of reprimand condition on satisfaction, $F(3, 118) = 2.894$, $p < .05$. Planned contrasts reveal that private/civil reprimand condition ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.59$) yielded significantly higher satisfaction than the public/uncivil reprimand condition ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.25$, $p < .01$). Again, neither the mean of the public/civil reprimand condition ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 1.81$) nor the private/uncivil condition ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.79$) was significantly different from either the private/civil or the public/uncivil reprimand conditions.

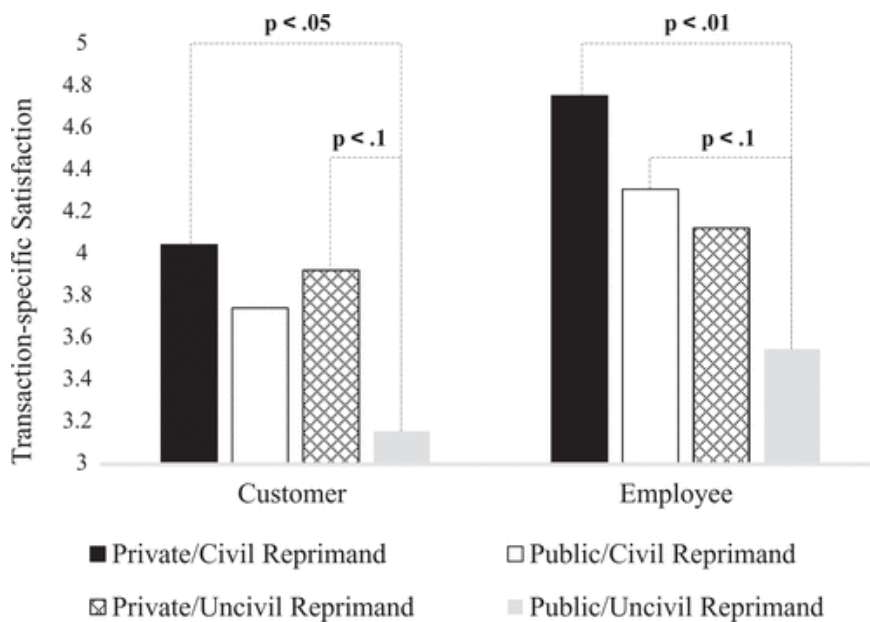


Figure 2. Planned comparisons of means from Study 2.

To derive a more nuanced understanding of the results pattern, we collapsed across reprimand conditions using two dummy coded variables. The first variable indicated whether the reprimand condition was private (vs. public), and the second variable indicated whether it was civil (vs. uncivil). First, for subjects who viewed the scenarios from the customer's perspective, a one-way ANOVA was estimated with satisfaction as the dependent variable and the privacy of the reprimand conditions as the independent variable. Subjects in the private reprimand conditions ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.21$) were significantly more satisfied, $F(1, 122) = 5.605$, $p < .05$, than subjects in the public reprimand conditions ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.37$). However, this same analysis for civility revealed that subjects in the civil reprimand conditions ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.33$) were *not* significantly more satisfied, $F(1, 122) = 4.22$, $p > .05$, than subjects in the uncivil conditions ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.29$). This lends additional support to Hypothesis 3.

Next, the same analyses were conducted for subjects who viewed the scenarios from the employee's perspective and revealed that subjects in the private reprimand conditions ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.71$) were *not* significantly more satisfied, $F(1, 118) = 2.38$, $p > .05$, than subjects in

the public conditions ($M = 3.97, SD = 1.58$). However, subjects in the civil reprimand conditions ($M = 4.54, SD = 1.70$) were significantly more satisfied, $F(1, 118) = 5.54, p < .05$, than subjects in the uncivil conditions ($M = 3.84, SD = 1.56$). This lends support for Hypothesis 4. Together, the findings support the idea that customers are concerned with whether the reprimand is delivered in private, whereas employees are concerned with civility.

Mediation

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) including the Deontic Justice Scale and Satisfaction Scale used in both the customer ($\chi^2 = 25.89, df = 13$; Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .97; Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR] = .05) and employee role conditions ($\chi^2 = 30.98, df = 13$; CFI = .99; SRMR = .04) exhibited good fit to the data. To test the mediating role of deontic justice perceptions, we used the PROCESS Version 2.15 macro for SPSS, a statistical tool that uses ordinary least squares regression with bootstrapping for investigating mediational hypotheses with continuous, dichotomous, or multicategorical independent variables (Hayes and Preacher 2014). This method allows for the quantification of the total mediation effect as the product of the coefficient estimates of two paths from two estimated submodels: the direct effect of reprimand condition on deontic justice and the direct effect of deontic justice on satisfaction (Table 2). For both role conditions (customer and employee), our analysis used reprimand condition (private/civil, public/civil, private/uncivil, and public/uncivil) as the multicategorical independent variable, where the public/uncivil reprimand condition serves as the reference category,³ deontic justice perceptions as the hypothesized mediator, and satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Table 2. Regression Results of Multicategorical Mediation in Study 2.

		Path to Mediator		Path to Dependent Variable	
		Deontic Justice		Transaction-Specific Satisfaction	
		Coefficient	<i>p</i>	Coefficient	<i>p</i>
Customer role conditions					
Predictors	Intercept	4.02 (.19)	<.001	.69 (.43)	>.05
	Private/uncivil reprimand (relative to public/uncivil)	0.66 (.26)	<.05	.36 (.29)	>.05
	Public/civil reprimand (relative to public/uncivil)	1.09 (.27)	<.001	.08 (.33)	>.05
	Private/civil reprimand (relative to public/uncivil)	1.13 (.25)	<.001	.19 (.31)	>.05
	Deontic justice			.61 (.11)	<.001
	Model adjusted R^2	.18	<.001	.28	<.001
Employee role conditions					
Predictors	Intercept	4.52 (.23)	<.001	.42 (.45)	>.05
	Private/uncivil reprimand (relative to public/uncivil)	0.57 (.28)	>.05	.18 (.33)	>.05
	Public/civil reprimand (relative to public/uncivil)	1.16 (.29)	<.001	-.04 (.41)	>.05
	Private/civil reprimand (relative to public/uncivil)	0.93 (.28)	<.01	.57 (.38)	>.05
	Deontic justice			.69 (.10)	<.001
	Model adjusted R^2	.13	<.001	.28	<.001

Note. Standard errors are reported in parentheses.

³ Because we predict that each condition will be more satisfied than the public/uncivil conditions, the public/uncivil reprimand condition was chosen as the reference category.

Table 2 shows the results of the regression submodels for both the customer and employee role conditions.⁴ As recommended by Hayes and Preacher (2014), 99% corrected confidence intervals (CIs; based on 10,000 bootstrap samples) were produced to test indirect effects while reducing the possibility of family-wise error. The product of the path coefficient between a condition and the mediator and the path coefficient between the mediator and the dependent variable constitute that condition's relative indirect effect. Evidence of mediation is found when at least one of the CIs of the relative indirect effects does not include 0. As expected, the mediated effects on satisfaction from the customer reprimand conditions private/civil (0.69, 99% CI [0.263, 1.353]), public/civil (0.67, 99% CI [0.218, 1.374]), and private/uncivil (0.66, 99% CI [0.023, 1.002]) were each significant. The mediated effects for two of the employee reprimand conditions, private/civil (0.64, 99% CI [0.164, 1.345]) and public/civil (0.80, 99% CI [0.300, 1.517]), also were positive and significant and their CI did not contain 0.

Discussion of Study 2

Results of Study 2 support the idea that customer perceptions are tied to the privacy of the reprimand rather than its civility, whereas employee perceptions are tied to the civility of the reprimand rather than its privacy. Moreover, Study 2 demonstrates the mediating role of deontic justice perceptions to facilitate greater satisfaction for both customers and employees when a reprimand is given that is relatively civil and private. Conversely, when a reprimand is given that is relatively public and uncivil, satisfaction with the encounter decreases for both customers and employees. Importantly, this study helps us understand why a person would desire to know that a reprimand has occurred.

Study 3 extends the boundaries of the reprimand effect demonstrated in Studies 1 and 2. First, to understand how a reprimand compares to other, common service recovery strategies, Study 3 compares a reprimand to customers' most preferred form of service recovery. Second, Study 3 utilizes a nonstudent sample and a more realistic, pictorial version of the stimuli used in Study 1. Finally, a control group was added to the Study 3 design to assess the incremental value of the two recovery options.

Study 3

Using picture-based scenarios, we first pretested the effects of three common service recovery strategies: (1) financial compensation, (2) an apology, or (3) a promise that the failure would not happen again in the future. Results revealed that financial compensation ($M = 3.5$) increased satisfaction significantly more than either an apology ($M = 2.6$) or a promise ($M = 2.5$) and therefore represents a stringent comparison to a reprimand.

Experimental Design

Study 3 used scenarios designed through similar methods to those used in Study 2. However, these picture-based videos with text and voiceovers depict the written vignettes used in the Study

⁴ When run as a simple mediation model (Hayes's PROCESS Model 4 without multicategorical independent variables), we find the same results. However, application of a simple mediation model is technically incorrect for our application, as it assumes that the independent variable is continuous or dichotomous.

1 customer scenarios—a failure during a restaurant takeout order. The recovery condition was manipulated by changing the last scene in the corresponding scenarios. Reprimand was operationalized as a manager telling the customer that they would reprimand the employee. Based on prior research that shows compensation after a service failure “pays off starting with the first dollar” (Gelbrich, Gathke, and Gregoire 2014, p. 12) and has the highest return on satisfaction up to 20%, financial compensation was operationalized as a coupon for 10% off the customer’s next visit. Thus, Study 3 consisted of three conditions (reprimand vs. financial compensation vs. no reprimand or compensation control) from the customer’s viewpoint.

Data Collection and Sample

Data were gathered from an MTurk online panel, and subjects were paid 50 cents for participating. We received 151 responses and cell sizes ranged from 48 to 53 ($M = 50.3$, $SD = 2.55$). The sample comprised of 50.3% females, and the ages ranged from 18 to 67 years old ($M = 37.05$, $SD = 11.72$). Finally, 54.3% of respondents had worked in a restaurant.

Analysis and Results

Manipulation checks showed that our manipulations performed as intended. We estimated a one-way ANOVA with satisfaction as the dependent variable and the recovery condition as the independent variable. Results showed a significant effect of recovery condition on satisfaction, $F(2, 148) = 3.600$, $p < .05$. Therefore, we examined the planned contrasts among the levels of the recovery condition (Figure 3). Results show that subjects in the reprimand condition ($M = 2.73$, $SD = 1.69$) experienced significantly higher satisfaction than did those in the no recovery control condition ($M = 2.08$, $SD = 1.27$, $p < .05$) and were no less satisfied than those customers receiving financial compensation ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.72$, $p > .05$).

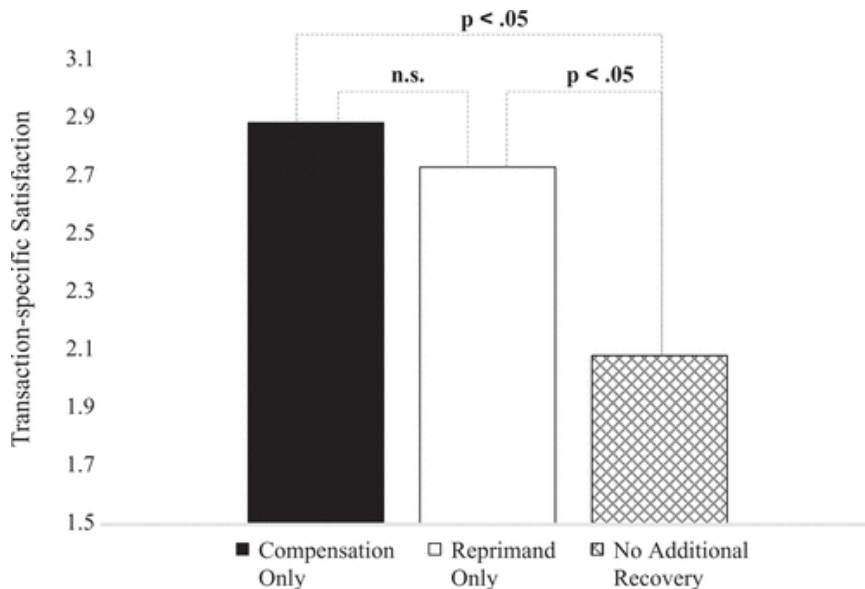


Figure 3. Planned comparisons of means from Study 3.

Discussion of Study 3

Results of Study 3 suggest that making a customer aware of an impending reprimand has value on par with preferred methods of service recovery and does so with a nonstudent sample and picture-based videos, suggesting that our results are robust.

General Discussion

Service failures have long been a focal point for both academics and practitioners. While customer satisfaction with a product is contingent upon many tangibles associated with the product or manufacturing process, satisfaction with a service is vastly more dependent upon the role of the frontline employee (Bitner 1990). In fact, employee actions or inactions that lead to service failures cause substantial financial losses to firms in the United States (Grainer 2013). Although many firms attempt to change employee behaviors using reprimands (Arvey and Ivancevich 1980), prior studies do not examine how these reprimands might be used as a form of social compensation for service failures. In three scenario-based experiments, we show the importance of understanding how employee reprimands are perceived by customers and frontline employees as part of a service recovery strategy.

Theoretical Implications

Reprimand as service recovery

Because apologies and explanations make intuitive sense when managing service failures, other forms of social compensation may have been overlooked in the service recovery literature. In this research, we show that other options exist beyond traditional recovery strategies. Specifically, this is the first study to identify the communication of a reprimand as a form of social compensation that can be used as part of a service recovery effort. The literature on SET leads us to believe that after an employee has inconvenienced customers, the customer would want to know that the employee's actions receive appropriate consequences. Specifically, because of a customer's BJW, it is expected that the employee will receive some corrective action. Our finding that subjects who are high on BJW are more satisfied when made aware of a reprimand supports this vantage point. Furthermore, the finding that a customer's deontic justice perceptions mediate the relationship between reprimand and satisfaction further supports the assertion that customers believe that employee actions that inconvenience customers should be met with consequences. However, the successful use of an employee reprimand as a form of recovery is dependent upon the delivery. Specifically, we find that customers want to be aware of the reprimand but do not want to witness it personally.

The effect of reprimands on employees

Although the use of employee reprimands as a form of service recovery provides valuable insight, it is also important to recognize this strategy's influence on employee satisfaction. If not considered, the customer-focused benefit from this strategy may be offset by negative internal repercussions. While it is common knowledge that reprimands are best done in private (Schwarz 2015), we find that this managerial adage is only partially correct. Whereas it is best to reprimand employees out of the sight of customers and other employees, it can be beneficial for the firm to communicate this reprimand to customers. This finding remains true from the

employee perspective, such that a correctly designed and delivered reprimand does not diminish—and may increase—the employee’s satisfaction with a failed service encounter. Furthermore, investigating “employee issues relevant to successful service” addresses a recent strategic priority outlined in Ostrom et al. (2015).

Managerial Implications

Given the prevalence of both service failures and mismanaged service recovery attempts, it is important to understand how to most effectively manage these situations. The importance of effective service recovery management is underscored by the number of customers who are unhappy with the outcomes of service recovery attempts (Berry and Parasuraman 1991) and by the existing evidence that customer satisfaction is highly dependent on the firm’s resolution of customer problems (Spreng, Harrell, and Mackoy 1995). Therefore, it is important to consider how reprimands can be effectively utilized as a customer resource and employee training tool.

Contrasting effects of a visible reprimand

It is important for managers to understand that an employee reprimand can impact both the customer and the employee. One of the challenges associated with employee reprimands is that managers might appease one party while offending the other. Furthermore, if reprimanding an employee caused negative emotions, those emotions can transfer to customers via contagion (Pugh 2001). However, we show that employees are not negatively affected by reprimands that are designed to be civil, constructive, and appropriately severe and that are meant to guide the employee’s behavior in ways that are beneficial to all parties involved. When an employee’s behavior goes against an organization’s rules or norms, that employee may expect to be reprimanded.

The customer’s need for a reprimand

Although making a customer aware of an employee reprimand seems counterintuitive, Study 1 suggests that there are times when customers are more satisfied to know that the employee “gets what they deserve.” This effect is particularly strong for those customers who are high in BJW. Study 2 supports the idea that this effect is due to their need for deontic justice; that is, they believe the reprimand “should” happen. Results from Study 3 suggest that the effect of reprimanding an offending employee is at least on par with other, more established recovery methods. This is an important finding, as the communication of a reprimand can serve as a low-cost alternative to financial compensation.

How to effectively reprimand an employee

Whereas reprimand perceptions are tied to civility for frontline employees, they are tied to privacy for customers. Hence, the first aspect of a proper reprimand is that it should be delivered outside of view and earshot of customers and other employees. Indeed, private reprimands have been shown to be perceived as fairer and more compassionate than public ones and therefore more useful in bringing change (Ball, Trevino, and Sims 1994). Another basic requirement of an appropriate reprimand is that it should be contingent upon the actions of the employee

(Podsakoff et al. 2006) and commensurate with the severity of the employee's actions. In other words, employees should only be reprimanded if they perform an action that is clearly outside the boundaries of their prescribed role and, if that occurs, it is important to ensure that the reprimand is appropriately severe in relation to the employee's actions (Ball, Trevino, and Sims 1994). Finally, managers should deliver reprimands that are consistent with company policy and past reprimand activity (Atwater, Brett, and Charles 2007). Not only should managers be consistent with how they have implemented reprimands in the past, but firms with multiple managers need to coordinate to ensure that each of them designs and delivers reprimands in like fashion. This consistency within and across managers reduces ambiguity and uncertainty, two known workplace stressors (Beehr and Bhagat 1985).

Building on the above recommendations, one way to deliver effective reprimands consistently across the front line is to consider the idea of training managers with the use of established reprimand guidelines or scripts. Such scripts should provide guidance on when reprimands are appropriate as well as how and where to deliver the reprimand. Our work suggests that reprimand scripts would need to emphasize matching the reprimand to the severity of the customer's inconvenience level, with consideration of past reprimand activity, and above all, in a private setting that is away from customers and coworkers.

Limitations and Future Research

A recent systematic review found that negative behavioral consequences (i.e., reprimands or negative nonverbal responses) consistently resulted in greater compliance in children when compared to positive behavioral consequences (i.e., praise or positive nonverbal responses; Owen, Slep, and Heyman 2012). However, our research was limited to include only reprimands or no reprimands. As reprimands can have the negative outcomes discussed in our conceptual development section, future research could consider the differential effects of praise versus reprimands and how these alternatives are perceived by customers. Also, the scenarios used here were designed without consideration of whether participants were in a social exchange relationship (e.g., a business with which they had a long-term relationship) or an economic exchange relationship (e.g., a business they are trying out for the first time). Future research could investigate whether individuals in an economic exchange were more satisfied with financial compensation than a reprimand.

It is likely that a variety of factors could influence the employee's satisfaction with receiving a reprimand. For example, if employees feel they were not adequately trained or otherwise supported by management, they may not feel that they were given the tools necessary to avoid a particular service failure. Future research could investigate how an employee's perceptions of company support may moderate their satisfaction after receiving a reprimand. Also, in some situations, it may be unfeasible for managers to reprimand an employee after a transgression. For a reprimand to be considered, a manager would have to be made aware of an employee causing an issue. This is not always the case, even when there is a customer complaint. Furthermore, future research could look deeper into the myriad elements that could be useful in designing appropriate reprimands in frontline service contexts.

Research within the organizational behavior literature explores the role of third-party perceptions in situations involving mistreatment of others (Skarlicki and Kulik 2005). This idea provides additional support for our findings on an employee's willingness to be reprimanded. Although our study supports the growing stream of research on third-party perceptions, it also generates more questions as to next steps. Future research could examine whether these third-party perceptions can extend outside of the organization and have similar effects on customers.

Measuring BJW has seen some criticism. It has been suggested that BJW is an implicit belief that is hard to measure as an individual difference variable. Adding to this issue, many of the scales used to measure BJW have been known to have psychometric issues (Hafer and Begue 2005), in particular, the commonly used scale from the study by Rubin and Peplau (1975). The BJW Scale used in this article was developed, in part, to address some of the psychometric issues with measuring BJW (Lucas et al. 2007). Furthermore, there is conflicting evidence that it may be socially desirable to be high on BJW. Thus, the evidence for our moderating hypothesis should be interpreted in light of these concerns. Furthermore, BJW is only one of the many possible moderators of these relationships. Future research could test other likely moderators, such as agreeableness, empathy, positive affectivity, from the customer's point of view. Or, to investigate moderators of employee acceptance of reprimands, research could dive deeper into the design elements of a reprimand such as timing, tone, and content.

Furthermore, it has been shown that customers judge the resolution of a service failure based on whether the customer believes that the service recovery effort was just. In fact, a recent meta-analysis shows that receiving amends that are proportional with the service failure is extremely important to how a customer evaluates a service recovery incident (Orsingher, Valentini, and de Angelis 2010). This desire for an "eye-for-an-eye" response may have consequences for the characteristics a customer would wish an employee reprimand to contain. The failures in our scenarios were relatively minor and, aside from the uncivil reprimand in Study 2, the reprimands were also relatively mild. However, there may be characteristics of a service failure that cause a customer to prefer knowledge that an employee receives an uncivil reprimand. For example, if an employee's actions could cause a person serious harm (e.g., undercooked chicken may lead to salmonella poisoning), it is reasonable to expect that the customer may want to know that the employee receives a more severe reprimand. Similarly, future research could examine whether there are any times during which the customer would prefer to directly observe an employee's reprimand. Future research could examine what causes a customer to become dissatisfied when they directly witness a reprimand and in which types of service failures a reprimand is more likely to raise satisfaction. It seems possible that if a customer was inconvenienced enough, they may want to observe the employee's reprimand; that is, the scorned customer may want to see heads roll.

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Appendix A

		Constructs and Measures	
		Measures (Scale Sources; Reliability)	
Dependent Variable		Transaction-specific Satisfaction (Jones and Suh 2000; Study 1/2(Customer)/2(Employee)/3: $\alpha = .93/.89/.94/.96$)	
		Evaluate your experience based on this single service encounter. Based on this service encounter I am: Satisfied/Dissatisfied Based on this service encounter I am: Pleased/Displeased This service encounter was: Favorable/Unfavorable	
Moderator		Belief in a Just World (Lucas et al. 2007; Study 1: $\alpha = .72$)	
		People generally deserve the things that they are accorded. I feel that people usually receive the outcomes that they are due. People usually use fair procedures in dealing with others.	
Manipulation Checks		Privacy (Arvey and Ivanchevich 1980; Study 1)	
		The manager disciplined the employee in a private setting where no one else was present.	
Mediator		Civility (Porath, MacInnis, and Folkes 2011; Study 1: $r = .69$)	
		The manager was respectful. The manager was considerate.	
Justice Perceptions Used for Discriminant Validity Assessment		Scenario Realism (Wan 2013; Study 1/2/3)	
		The situation described in the scenario is: Unrealistic/Realistic	
		Deontic Justice Perceptions (Scale Development/Study 2(Customer)/2(Employee): $CR = .89/.75/.82$)	<u>γ</u>
		With respect to its moral obligations to its employees, the company handled this encounter fairly.	0.851
		During his efforts to serve the customer's needs, the manager did what he was supposed to do.	0.733
		The company fulfilled its obligations, considering my hassle.	0.839
		With respect to its moral obligations to its customers, the company handled this encounter fairly.	0.842
		Distributive Justice Perceptions (Voorhees and Brady 2005; Scale Development: $CR = .95$)	
		The outcome I received was fair.	0.934
		The outcome I received was right.	0.727
		The deal I received was fair.	0.926
		The company's efforts resulted in a positive outcome for me.	0.975
		The final outcome I received from the company was fair, given the time and hassle.	0.907
		Interactive Justice Perceptions (Voorhees and Brady 2005; Scale Development: $CR = .92$)	
		During their efforts to serve my needs, the company's employees showed a real interest in trying to be fair.	0.852
		In dealing with my needs, the company's personnel treated me in a courteous manner.	0.794
		The company's employees worked as hard as possible for me during the encounter.	0.889
		The company's employees were honest and ethical in dealing with me during the encounter.	0.798
		I was treated fairly during my interactions with the service employees.	0.823
		Procedural Justice Perceptions (Voorhees and Brady 2005; Scale Development: $CR = .94$)	
		The company responded quickly to my needs.	0.843
		The company has fair policies and practices for dealing with customers.	0.896
		The process was fair.	0.948
		Overall, the procedures followed by the service firm were fair.	0.817
		With respect to policies and procedures, the company handled my encounter fairly.	0.797

Note: Correlation coefficient (r) significant at $p < .001$; CR = construct reliability.