

Does signaling high commitment to nonwork roles penalize newcomers at work?

Marcello Russo¹  | Gabriele Morandin¹  | Marc Ohana²  | Massimo Bergami¹

¹Department of Management and Bologna Business School, University of Bologna, Italy

²Department of Management, Kedge Business School, France

Correspondence

Marcello Russo, Ph.D., Department of Management and Bologna Business School, University of Bologna, Italy.

Email: marcello.russo2@unibo.it

Funding information

This paper was funded by the University of Bologna with the grant “Alma Idea 2017”

Abstract

The exploration of newcomers’ work-nonwork preferences gains significance against the backdrop of recent shifts in individuals’ life orientations. With a growing number of people aspiring to balance a successful career while maintaining active engagement in nonwork roles, understanding the implications of such endeavors becomes crucial for theory and managerial practice. This manuscript addresses this inquiry through two studies, utilizing vignette-based scenarios, involving managers evaluating hypothetical new team members of their teams who signal high commitment in both work and nonwork roles. In Study 1, the findings reveal that participants perceived newcomers expressing high commitment to nonwork roles as more capable of socially integrating in the new team. This relationship was mediated by perceived warmth. In Study 2, we extend our investigation to the organizational context, discovering that participants in family-supportive organizations evaluated newcomers signaling high commitment in both work and nonwork roles more positively, perceiving them as warmer. This contrasted with participants in family-unsupportive organizations. Both studies contribute to outlining potential individual and organizational factors that can accelerate newcomers’ social integration at work.

KEYWORDS

family supportive organizational perception, involvement in nonwork roles, organizational socialization, signaling, stereotype content model, stigma, work-life balance

INTRODUCTION

Organizational socialization represents a pivotal phase of the employment relationship. During this period, newly hired employees (*hereinafter* newcomers) grapple with the ambiguity surrounding prevailing norms, expectations, and social dynamics of the new workplace (Bauer et al., 2007; Ortileb & Ressi, 2022; Peltokorpi et al., 2022). A significant challenge for them concerns the decision of what information sharing (vs. hiding) at work to convey a favorable first impression. Newcomers may grapple with the decision of whether to demonstrate unwavering commitment to their work, aligning with expectations of job dedication (Williams et al., 2013), or instead, to signal a more balanced allocation of time and resources across all professional and nonwork activities. While this orientation has gained popularity in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, it carries tangible

implications. Ambiguity surrounds how different workplace stakeholders, such as supervisors and colleagues, might perceive this approach and whether it could lead to reputational costs, social stigma, and/or adverse career outcomes. Previous studies have shown that emphasizing involvement in nonwork pursuits can negatively impact one’s reputation, often being construed as a lack of commitment and dedication to work (Leslie et al., 2012).

Building upon on Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973) and the Stereotype Content Model (Fiske et al., 2002), this paper aims to delve into the consequences that newcomers could experience when signaling at work their intention of being highly involved in nonwork roles in addition to work. More specifically, we want to examine whether the newcomers’ expressed intention to be highly committed in nonwork activities can influence the observers’ perceptions of how quickly and effectively newcomers will adjust to the new work environment. We focus on two dimensions

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2025 The Author(s). *European Management Review* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of European Academy of Management (EURAM).

of interpersonal evaluation that can mediate this process as they might be shaped by newcomers' behaviors and signals, namely perceived warmth and perceived competence. Integrating insights from these perspectives, we formulate and empirically test our hypotheses across two distinct studies. Using fictional scenarios (Parigi et al., 2017), we manipulate the newcomers' demographics and levels of involvement in nonwork roles alongside their work commitment. In Study 1, we investigate whether the observer's perceptions of newcomer competence and warmth mediate the impact of signals indicating high (vs. low) involvement in nonwork activities on the expected social integration of the given newcomer. Additionally, we explore potential divergences in reactions based on newcomers' gender. In Study 2, we examine whether the level of family supportiveness of the organizational culture of the observers' workplace – ranging from family supportive to family unsupportive – shapes how observers evaluate the given newcomer. A visual representation of the research model is presented in Figure 1.

Our work offers significant theoretical and practical contributions. Firstly, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first study that unveils the mechanism and contextual factors linking newcomers' engagement into nonwork roles to work outcomes as perceived by the observers. In doing so, we respond to the imperative of understanding how receivers interpret signals through universal dimensions (Connelly et al., 2011; Landay & DeArmond, 2018). Our findings demonstrate that signaling a departure from social expectations surrounding a “good newcomer” (i.e., a person expected to focus on the job for most of his or her time) can significantly influence fundamental attributes by which newcomers are evaluated (Fiske et al., 2002). While the evaluation of organizational socialization often encompasses various dimensions, such

as mastering new tasks and understanding role-related expectations (i.e., role clarity), our manuscript deliberately narrows its focus to social adjustment. This aspect, gauging the extent to which the new supervisor and colleagues perceive the newcomer as capable of a swift social integration within the new team, is crucial for a positive start.

In a distinctive contribution to the work-life literature, our study reveals that it is not just a specific work-family decision, such as using the flexible work arrangements available at work, taking an extended parental leave, or working remotely to accommodate family needs, that could lead to negative career outcomes, commonly known as flexibility stigma (Williams et al., 2013). Rather, we show that it is also the expressed intention to be highly involved in nonwork roles, disclosed at work during meals or via informal chats, which can similarly trigger adverse outcomes for a newcomer. Finally, we identify the family supportiveness of the organizational culture as a boundary condition that shapes this process (Allen, 2001). It represents a critical advancement in current research, given the limited exploration of the organizational context's role in influencing people's willingness to express their authentic selves at work.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Signaling theory, as proposed by Spence (1973), posits that numerous market and workplace dynamics are characterized by information asymmetry. In such a scenario, parties aim to mitigate this imbalance by gathering signals or information that can help evaluate the quality of a good, of a relationship, or even of an individual. A classic example of signaling theory is how employees use the information about their educational background to

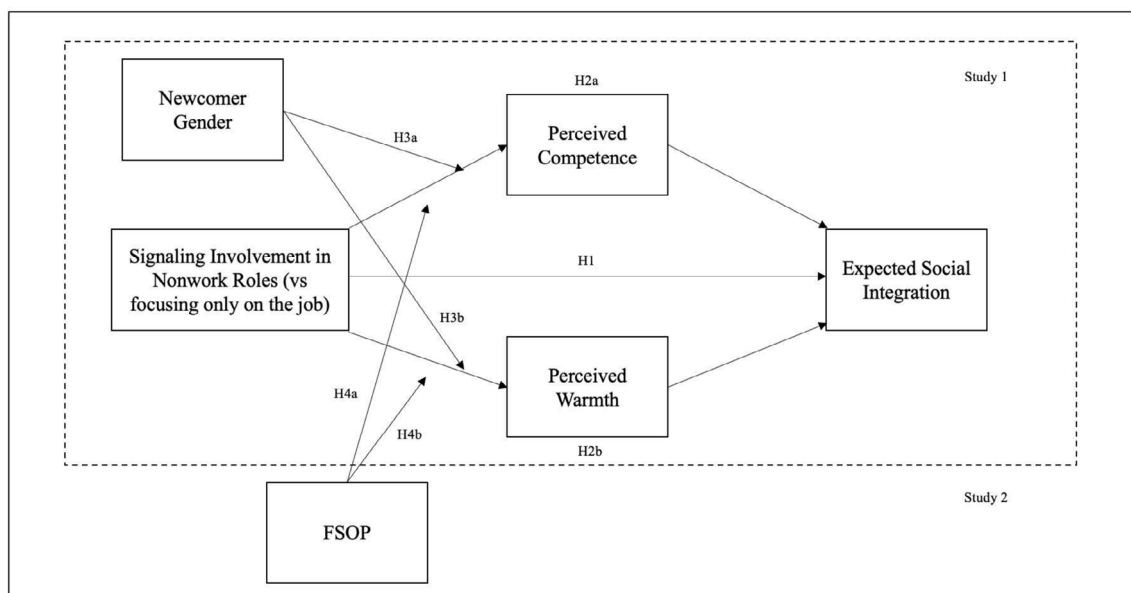


FIGURE 1 Hypothesized research models.

convey their competences and expertise to potential employers. Information asymmetry plays a pivotal role also in organizational socialization, a process that is not just targeting the mere acquisition of job-related skills (Bauer et al., 2007). As articulated by Spence (1973: 356): «in most job markets the employer is not sure of the productive capabilities of an individual at the time he hires him. Nor will this information necessarily become available to the employer immediately after hiring». Newcomers experience significant information asymmetry when they start a new job due to a lack of information about the prevailing cultural norms, social dynamics, and role-related expectations. Their supervisors and colleagues are equally uninformed of their competences and/or behavioral intentions. Stiglitz (2000) identified two critical forms of information asymmetry: information about quality and information about intent. The former pertains to a signaling system where both sender and receiver lack information about each other's preferences and characteristics, while the latter involves the intentional and behavioral consequences of such preferences and characteristics. This paper specifically addresses the asymmetry related to intent, focusing on the newcomers' intentions to conform to or deviate from the expectations of complete devotion to work (Blair-Loy, 2003; Williams et al., 2016). Supervisors and colleagues can glean insights into these intentions from various signals, including the newcomer's communication and their responsiveness to work-related demands. For instance, several work-related events that potentially clash with one's private life, such as willingness to work long hours, adapt to last-minute schedule changes, or undertake additional weekend projects, may serve as social cues to supervisors to evaluate newcomers' intentions and adherence to work devotion expectations (Williams et al., 2016).

Our objective is to explore the potential repercussions (if any) faced by newcomers when expressing their intention of engaging in nonwork activities alongside their work commitments. When newcomers intend to project a complete adherence to traditional workplace norms, they may choose to withdraw from or conceal information about their involvement in nonwork activities. This strategy is named as "passing" (Goffman, 1963). In line with this approach, Reid (2015) observed that individuals, particularly men, often choose to hide the true reason behind their flexibility requests, especially when driven by family reasons, to avoid being perceived as too focused on nonwork responsibilities. Conversely, when newcomers prefer to signal a departure from traditional workplace norms and expectations, they may decide to openly communicate their intention to engage in various nonwork activities in addition to work. This may include clearly expressing their ambition of "having it all" (Hewlett, 2002) and trying to not give up on any personal or work commitment in their lives. Indeed, in today's society men are increasingly signaling their intention to redefine their professional identities as involved fathers,

leveraging all the available resources and work-family policies that can support them in this process (Bataille & Hyland, 2023).

As mentioned earlier, the decision to convey intentions regarding nonwork roles can have significant consequences. Uhlmann et al. (2013) discovered that recruiters were likely to evaluate candidates more negatively when they referenced to nonwork activities in their résumé. Similarly, Cohen & Single (2001) found that employees, using flexible work arrangements to accommodate family needs, were often perceived as underperformers and considered as more inclined to leave the company. Additionally, Hideg et al. (2018) revealed that women opting for an extended maternity leave were perceived as less devoted to work than those choosing a shorter leave. Nevertheless, some studies (i.e., Carlson et al., 2008; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2016) found that disclosing information about involvement in nonwork activities can lead to positive outcomes (Rothbard et al., 2022). Sharing personal information at work can favor the development of closer and more intimate connections (Park et al., 2011; Trefalt, 2013). A recent study by Nifadkar et al. (2019) indicated that when supervisors share details about their personal lives at work, subordinates develop greater trust in their skills. Given our specific focus on examining the potential impact of these dynamics on the expected social integration, which gauges how observers perceive newcomers in terms of their abilities to integrate into the new team (Bauer et al., 2007), we argue that signaling the intention of being highly committed in nonwork roles and activities can lead observers to positively judge newcomers on the expected social adjustment.

Hypothesis 1. Observers will perceive newcomers who signal the intention of being highly committed in nonwork roles as more capable of socially integrating into the team.

The stereotype content model and newcomer adjustment

The Stereotype Content Model posits that competence and warmth are two fundamental dimensions in social judgment. Competence reflects the perception of confidence, ambition, practicality, and intelligence, whereas warmth involves the perception of conciliation, tolerance, and trustworthiness (Fiske et al., 2002). Previous research has demonstrated that competence and warmth play a crucial role in defining relational dynamics, particularly between supervisors and their collaborators (Cuddy et al., 2008; Gidakovic & Zabkar, 2022; Yu et al., 2022).

Building on existing literature, we argue that newcomers' expressed willingness to be highly committed in nonwork roles could serve as a signal that influences how

the observers perceive their levels of competence and warmth. In many organizational contexts, such signaling might be perceived as a deviation from established cultural norms, potentially raising doubts about the newcomers' professional competences. This phenomenon aligns with the "set-up-to-fail syndrome" (Manzoni & Barsoux, 2002), where seemingly minor incidents, such as a newcomer missing an evening call from the boss or not joining the team for an after-work drink due to personal activities, can lead to a shift in perceptions, casting doubts on the newcomer's abilities to excel in the organization. However, it is also plausible that newcomers who communicate their intentions to be highly committed in nonwork activities may be perceived as warmer and more capable of socially integrating into the new team. Sharing and referencing personal roles at work can foster more intimate and genuine relationship (Rothbard et al., 2022), creating a "common ground" of shared experiences that positively influence social evaluations (Byron & Laurence, 2015). Research by Lee et al. (2016) suggests that sharing personal anecdotes at work enhances team effectiveness by contributing to relational self-affirmation and highlighting individual qualities and strengths within the team. The disclosure of personal information may be interpreted by recipients as signals of possessing additional competence and being a nice teammate to work with, reducing information asymmetry and facilitating both interpersonal evaluations and organizational outcomes, such as the expected social integration. Thus, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2a. Perceived competence mediates the effects of newcomers signaling the intention to be highly committed in nonwork roles and their expected social integration.

Hypothesis 2b. Perceived warmth mediates the effects of newcomers signaling about the intention to be highly committed in nonwork roles and their expected social integration.

The role of newcomers' gender

Previous research has extensively documented pervasive beliefs and stereotypes regarding the expected behaviors of men and women in society (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Behaviors perceived as communal, nurturing, empathic, and centered around the care of others are traditionally expected from women (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Conversely, societal expectations place men in the role of the family breadwinners, considering work as the central and most crucial aspect of their lives and delegating most of the nonwork activities to their partner (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002). Deviating from these role stereotypes can result in negative consequences and interpersonal penalties (Williams et al., 2016). Men deviating toward

more communal behaviors often face prejudice and negative evaluations (Moss-Racusin et al., 2010). On the other hand, women who prioritize family and caregiving responsibilities are generally evaluated more positively, as this decision aligns with societal role expectations (Rothbard et al., 2022). Supporting this view, Reid (2015) has demonstrated that women are less inclined to hide their family orientation at work, embracing it more openly compared to men. Building on this rationale, we expect that male newcomers signaling a strong commitment to nonwork activities could be perceived as less competent than female counterparts signaling a similar intention. Furthermore, we expect that the positive impact of this signaling on the perception of warmth will be more pronounced for female newcomers, given that such signals align with societal expectations about gender differences.

Hypothesis 3a. Gender and signaling will interact to shape the observers' perception of newcomers' competence, with the result that signaling the intention to be committed in nonwork roles has a higher negative relation with perceived competence for male newcomers rather than female newcomers.

Hypothesis 3b. Gender and signaling will interact to shape the observers' perception of newcomers' warmth, with the result that signaling the intention to be committed in nonwork roles has a higher positive relation with perceived warmth for female newcomers rather than male newcomers.

The moderating role of family supportive organizational culture

In the assessment of newcomers' behaviors, we posit that the observers' perception of their organization's supportiveness, specifically the family-supportive organizational perceptions (FSOP), serves as a crucial boundary condition shaping the interpretation of these behaviors. Previous research highlighted the substantial impact of context, defined as the "surrounding associated with phenomena which help to illuminate that phenomena" (Cappelli & Sherer, 1991, p. 56), on individuals' attitudes, opinions and behaviors. For instance, Johns (2006) demonstrated that individuals in individualistic or collectivistic cultures develop distinct interpretations of observed phenomena. Building on this perspective, we anticipate that observers might evaluate newcomers who signal their intention to engage in nonwork roles more positively on the competence and warmth dimensions when operating in family-supportive organizations compared to family-unsupportive organizations. This reasoning stems from the understanding that in organizations

perceived as family supportive, employees are not compelled to constantly prioritize work over the family. Consequently, there could be more opportunities in managing the work-life interface according to personal preferences and aspirations (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999). Conversely, in family-unsupportive organizations, employees might feel less at ease pursuing nonwork goals and may face social pressure to focus mostly on work responsibilities. Given the pervasive influence of culture on individuals' interpretations of expected behaviors at work, signaling the intention to be involved in nonwork roles may be perceived as consistent with the prevailing organizational norms and expectations in family-supportive cultures only.

Hypothesis 4a. Organizational culture and signaling will interact to shape the observers' perception of newcomers' competence, with the result that signaling the intention to be committed in nonwork roles has a lower negative relation with perceived competence when family supportive organizational culture is strong.

Hypothesis 4b. Organizational culture and signaling will interact to shape the observers' perception of newcomers' warmth, with the result that signaling the intention to be committed in nonwork roles has a higher positive relation with perceived warmth when family supportive organizational culture is strong.

STUDY 1

Sample, procedures, and measures

Using the Prolific platform, we initially recruited 437 participants from the UK and USA based on the following criteria: holding a managerial position with a 90% approval rate on Prolific. We deleted 22 participants who did not complete the entire survey (less than 30%) and 151 participants who declared, in the demographic section to not hold a managerial position. 264 participants constituted the final sample, with 57% being male and an average age of 37 years ($SD = 10.8$). A majority of respondents were Caucasian and held at least a 4-year degree (56.4%). Additionally, 59% reported being in a stable romantic relationship, with half of them having at least one child. Most respondents were working full-time (93.6%).

Participants were informed that they would be presented with a hypothetical scenario involving a newcomer who joined their team three months ago. The scenario depicted a male or female newcomer signaling either a strong commitment to nonwork roles or a focus on work roles only. Participants were randomly assigned to one

out of four conditions reported in Appendix: 2 (nonwork role vs. work role condition) \times 2 (male vs. female newcomer). In the nonwork role condition, the scenario portrayed the newcomer as openly discussing his or her commitment to various nonwork activities and expressing a strong desire to achieve a good work-life balance even if that would have required some sacrifices in the career. Conversely, in the work role condition, the newcomer revealed the intention to focus solely on the work, aspiring to a successful career despite potential sacrifices in the personal life. The gender of newcomers was manipulated using different names (John and Rebecca) and gender-specific pronouns in the text.

Following scenario exposure, participants completed two manipulation check items related to the newcomer's intention to achieve a good work-life balance. Data analysis revealed significant mean differences between the conditions, with those exposed to the nonwork role scenario (mean = 4.85) consistently reporting higher scores on the question: "the newcomer in this scenario cared a lot about work-life balance" compared to the work-centric scenario (mean = 1.46, mean difference = 3.39, $t = 38.58$, $df = 262$, $p < .001$). A similar dynamic was observed also with the second manipulation check item as participants who read the scenario describing the newcomer focused solely on the job reported an average of 4.50 (vs. 1.26 of those participants reading the scenario about the newcomer interested in participating to both work and nonwork activities, mean difference = 3.24, $t = 30.48$, $df = 262$, $p < .001$) on the question: "the newcomer in this scenario did not care about work-life balance".

Perceived competence and warmth were measured using items adapted from Fiske et al. (2002). Competence was captured ($\alpha = .80$) with five items: "competent, confident, independent, competitive, and intelligent". Warmth ($\alpha = .88$) was captured with four items: "tolerant, warm, good-natured, and sincere". Each item was measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). We measured the observers' perception of newcomer expected social integration using the 5-item scale developed by Ellis et al. (2017) and Chao et al. (1994). Each item was measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Participants were asked: "After reading this scenario, please respond to the following statements". A sample item is "I think this newcomer is capable of developing friendly relationships with his/her colleagues". Control variables included age, gender, marital status, presence of children at home, employment status, and work identity ($\alpha = .88$), with the latter measured using a scale by Amatea et al. (1986). Covariates were introduced based on correlations with mediators and/or outcomes, with their inclusion not altering the interpretation of results. Presence of children and work identity only correlated with the mediators and/or the outcome. We thus introduced those two covariates in our model (Becker et al., 2016). Integrating or

removing the covariates did not change the interpretation of results. Correlation table for Study 1 are reported in Table 1.

STUDY 1 – RESULTS

The hypothesized research model adopts a multiple mediation framework, wherein the effect of signaling a strong intention to be involved in nonwork roles on observers' perceptions of newcomers' expected social integration is mediated via newcomer's competence and warmth (see Figure 1). To evaluate Hypothesis 1, we assessed newcomers' expected social integration, specifically the observers' expectations on the newcomers capabilities to integrate successfully into the new organization. A comparison of mean scores revealed a significant difference between newcomers in the nonwork role condition ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.57$) and the work-role condition ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.97$, mean difference = 0.84, $t = 9.27$, $df = 262$, $p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported by data.

To examine hypothesis H2, we conducted a series of mediation analyses using PROCESS model 4 (Hayes, 2013). In testing this hypothesis, we created a dichotomous variable indicating the nonwork role and work role conditions, regardless of the actor's gender. All the indirect effects underwent bootstrap analysis with 5,000 bootstrap samples and a confidence interval of 95% (CI, see Table 2). The results presented in Table 1 indicate that signaling the intention to be highly involved in nonwork roles was significantly and positively associated with perceived newcomers' warmth ($b = 0.67$, $p < 0.001$). However, it was not significantly linked to perceived newcomers' competences ($b = 0.02$, $p = 0.782$). The findings further reveal that perceived warmth had a positive and significant association with expected social

integration ($b = 0.33$, $p < 0.001$). Conversely, perceived competence was not significantly associated with expected social integration ($b = 0.08$, $p = 0.089$). The results highlight that significant indirect effects were only evident when perceived warmth was considered as the mediator. Perceived warmth demonstrated a substantial indirect effect on expected social integration, with a point estimate of 0.22 and CI ranging from 0.14 to 0.32. In contrast, the indirect effect of signaling the intention to be highly involved in nonwork roles to expected social integration via perceived competence was not significant (CI -0.01, 0.01). Therefore, while H2a was not supported, H2b received empirical support.

To examine Hypotheses 3a and 3b concerning the role of the actors' gender, we compared mean scores of perceived competences and warmth, comparing male and female newcomers when signaling a strong intention to be involved in nonwork roles. The comparison of mean score for perceived competences between male ($M = 5.69$, $SD = 0.68$) and female newcomers ($M = 5.88$, $SD = 0.78$, mean difference = .19, $t = 1.51$, $df = 127$, $p = .13$) revealed no significant differences. Similarly, the mean difference related to perceived warmth between male ($M = 6.02$, $SD = 0.76$) and female newcomers signaling a commitment to be highly involved in nonwork roles ($M = 6.07$, $SD = 0.79$) was not statistically significant (mean difference = .05, $t = -.34$, $df = 127$, $p = .73$). Further analyses were conducted to contrast men's values on perceived competence and warmth in the nonwork role vs. work role conditions. For men, the only significant mean difference was found in the perceived warmth score, indicating that male newcomers were perceived as significantly warmer when signaling a strong intention to be involved in nonwork roles ($M = 6.02$, $SD = 0.76$) compared to male newcomers signaling a strong intention to be only focused on the job ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.89$) with a significant

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the Study's 1 variables.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	36.94	10.79									
2. Gender	.43	.49	.19**								
3. Marital status	.59	.49	.29**	.00							
4. Children	.50	.50	.39**	.15*	.45**						
5. Employment status	.94	.25	.00	-.02	.13*	.11					
6. Work identity	5.67	1.00	.03	-.10	.09	-.04	.00				
7. Scenario	-	-	-.06	.00	.00	.08	.04	.00			
8. Perceived competence	5.75	.84	.10	.00	-.02	.09	-.00	.22**	.04		
9. Perceived warmth	5.35	1.14	.02	.09	-.09	.12*	.05	.19**	.60**	.42**	
10. Social integration	3.71	.85	-.02	-.02	-.00	.10	.07	.12*	.50**	.28**	.62**

Note: $N = 264$. Gender was coded 0 for male and 1 for female. Marital status was coded 0 for single and 1 for "married or domestic relationship". Children were coded 0 for "no" and 1 for "yes". Employment status was coded 0 for Part-time and 1 for Full-time. Scenario was coded -1 for the work role scenario and 1 for the nonwork role scenario.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

TABLE 2 Mediation results for the effect of signaling the intention to be highly involved in (non)work roles on expected social integration via perceived warmth and perceived competence (study 1).

Variables	Perceived warmth	Perceived competence	Expected social integration
<i>Control</i>	β	β	<i>B</i>
Presence of children	.19	.17	.04
Work identity	.22***	.19***	.01
<i>Main</i>			
Scenario (nonwork role vs. work role conditions)	.67***	.02	.19***
<i>Mediator</i>			
Perceived warmth			.33***
Perceived competence			.08
Total R ²	.40	.06	.42
F	58.04***	5.67***	36.80***
<i>Indirect effect</i>			
	LLCI	ULCI	
Total	.23	.14	.32
Perceived warmth	.22	.14	.32
Perceived competence	.01	-.01	.01

Notes: n = 263.

**p < .001.

*p < .05 – number of bootstrap samples for bias corrected interval = 5,000.

mean difference (mean difference = 1.49, $t = 10.26$, $df = 132$, $p < .001$). The same pattern was observed for female newcomers, who were perceived as warmer when signaling a strong intention to be involved in nonwork roles ($M = 6.07$, $SD = 0.80$) compared to female newcomers signaling a strong intention to be focused only on the job ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 1.12$, mean difference = 1.23, $t = 7.15$, $df = 128$, $p < .001$). Thus, the results did not support Hypotheses 3a and 3b, as male newcomers were not perceived as more negatively in terms of both competence and warmth compared to female newcomers.

STUDY 1 – DISCUSSION

The findings from this study reveal that when newcomers signal intention to be highly committed in nonwork roles, observers are inclined to assess them as more capable of socially integrating into the new organization. Notably, our analysis further indicates that the mediating role of perceived warmth, rather than perceived competence, explains the relationship between signaling a commitment to nonwork roles and observers' expectations of newcomers' social integration. Contrary to our expectations, there were no significant differences between male and female newcomers. In summary, the results of Study 1 suggest that when newcomers express the intention of being highly involved in nonwork roles, they are more likely to be perceived as warmer compared to those signaling a focus solely on the job. This likability, in turn, influences observers' expectations of social integration.

In our next study, we will explore whether the organizational context in which observers are employed may shape the evaluation of newcomers' expected social integration.

STUDY 2

Sample, procedures, and measures

We recruited 200 participants holding a managerial position through the Prolific platform from the same countries as Study 1. We used the same selection criteria as Study 1. We excluded 21 responses from participants who were no longer in a managerial position at the time of data collection. The final dataset consisted of 179 participants, with 52.5% female and an average age of 39.74 years ($SD = 10.00$). Most of the respondents were Caucasian and possessed minimum a 4-year degree (50.2%). 68.7% of the respondents had a stable romantic relationship, and 57% of them had at least one child. Almost all respondents were employed full-time (97.8%).

Similar to Study 1, participants were informed that they would be presented with a hypothetical scenario depicting a newcomer who joined their team three months ago, working under their supervision. After reading the scenario, participants were required to answer a set of corresponding questions. They were randomly assigned to two conditions: nonwork role vs. work role, employing a similar scenario and manipulation as in Study 1. Following the scenario, each participant responded to two manipulation check items,

rating on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Definitely not to 5 = Definitely so) assessing whether the newcomer in that given scenario cared or not about work-life balance. Data analysis revealed that participants who read the scenario 1 (describing a newcomer signaling the intention to be only focused on the job) reported an average of 2.07, compared to 4.57 for those who read the scenario 2 (newcomer signaling a strong intention to be highly involved in both work and nonwork roles) on the item: “the newcomer in this scenario cared a lot about work-life balance” (mean difference = 2.50, $t = 16.68$, $df = 177$, $p < 0.001$). Similar findings were observed for the second manipulation check item, “the newcomer in this scenario did not care about work-life balance”. Participants reading the scenario 2 reported an average of 1.52 (vs. 3.97 for scenario 1), and the mean difference was significant (mean difference = 2.45, $t = 16.47$, $df = 177$, $p < .001$). This indicates that participants perceived newcomers to care more about work-life balance when signaling a strong intention to be involved in both work and nonwork roles. Moreover, we incorporated a measure pertaining to observers’ perception of the organizational culture within their specific workplace. Participants were asked to assess whether they perceived their organization’s culture to be family-supportive, using a five-item scale ($\alpha = .81$) developed by Wayne et al. (2013). One sample reversed item is: “*In my organization, the way to advance in this company is to keep non-work matters out of the workplace*”. Each item was measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). We controlled for the same variables as in Study 1: age, gender, marital status, presence of children, employment status, and work identity ($\alpha = .86$), with the latter measured using the same scale as in study 1. We introduce marital status and gender as covariates as they

correlated with the study’s mediators and outcome. The inclusion or exclusion of covariates did not alter the interpretation of the results (Becker et al., 2016). Correlation table for Study 2 reported in Table 3.

STUDY 2 – RESULTS

The hypothesized research model (Hypotheses 4a and 4b) is structured as a moderated mediation model, wherein the effect of signaling the intention to be highly involved in nonwork roles on expected social integration is mediated via perceived warmth and perceived competence. Additionally, this mediation process is moderated by the family-supportive organizational culture within the observers’ own organization (refer to Figure 1). To assess this model, we conducted a series of analyses utilizing models four and seven in the PROCESS framework (Hayes, 2013). All indirect effects were subjected to bootstrap analysis with 5,000 bootstrap samples and a confidence interval of 95% (CI, see Table 4). The same scales employed in Study 1 were used to measure the observers’ perception of newcomers’ competence ($\alpha = .75$), warmth ($\alpha = .87$) and social integration ($\alpha = .89$).

Initially, we ran the mediation model. The findings presented in Table 4 revealed that signaling a strong intention to be involved in nonwork roles was significantly and positively associated with perceived newcomers’ warmth ($b = 1.13$, $p < 0.001$). However, it was not significantly related to perceived newcomers’ competence ($b = -.03$, $p = 0.90$). Furthermore, perceived warmth was positively and significantly linked to expected social integration ($b = .49$, $p < 0.001$), whereas perceived competence did not significantly impact expected social integration ($b = -.01$, $p = 0.88$).

TABLE 3 Study 2: descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among variables.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	39.74	9.99										
2. Gender	.53	.50	.13									
3. Marital status	.69	.46	.03	.11								
4. Children	.57	.49	.28**	.05	.29**							
5. Employment status	.98	.14	-.12	.01	.06	.02						
6. Work identity	5.43	.99	-.07	.10	-.02	-.01	-.05					
7. Scenario	-	-	-.02	.04	.08	.00	.14	-.21**				
8. Perceived competence	5.74	.79	.08	.21**	.11	.02	-.00	.06	-.00			
9. Perceived warmth	5.28	1.13	.02	.11	.19*	.09	.10	-.07	.52**	.50**		
10. Expected social integration	3.62	.93	-.12	.08	.13	-.01	.08	-.08	.51**	.29**	.70**	
11. FSOP	3.58	.81	-.08	.00	.07	-.07	-.01	.08	-.02	-.00	-.06	-.09

Note: $N = 179$. Gender was coded 0 for male and 1 for female. Marital status was coded 0 for single and 1 for “married or domestic relationship”. Children were coded 0 for “no” and 1 for “yes”. Employment status was coded 0 for Part-time and 1 for Full-time. Scenario was coded 1 for the work role scenario and 2 for the nonwork role scenario. FSOP = family-supportive organizational perceptions.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

TABLE 4 Moderated mediation results for the effect of signaling the intention to be highly involved in (non)work roles on expected social integration via perceived warmth at different levels of FSOP (study 2).

Variables	Perceived warmth	Perceived competence	Expected social integration	
<i>Mediation model</i>				
Control	β	β	β	
Gender	.17	.31**	.01	
Marital Status	.35*	.16*	.01	
<i>Main</i>				
Scenario (nonwork role vs. work role conditions)	1.13***	-.03	.38**	
<i>Mediator</i>				
Perceived warmth			.49***	
Perceived competence			-.01	
Total R ²	.29	.05	.52	
F	24.40***	3.25*	37.88***	
<i>Moderated mediation model</i>				
<i>Moderator</i>				
FSOP	-.10	-.02		
Scenario x FSOP	.40*	.24		
Total R ²	.32	.07		
F	16.12***	2.50*		
<i>Index of moderated mediation</i>				
		LLCI	ULCI	
Perceived warmth	.20	.01	.44	
Perceived competence	-.01	-.05	.05	
<i>Conditional indirect effects of X on Y via perceived warmth at values of the moderator(s)</i>				
	FSOP	Effect	LLCI	ULCI
Scenario	-.8102	.40	.18	.61
Scenario	.0000	.56	.33	.69
Scenario	.8102	.72	.39	1.08

Notes: n = 179.

***p < .001.

**p < .01.

*p < .05 – number of bootstrap samples for bias corrected interval = 5,000.

Subsequently, in the moderated mediation model, we introduced the moderator and interaction term. The interaction term (scenario x FSOP) was found to be significant when perceived warmth was considered as an outcome ($b = 0.40$, $p < .05$). The results indicated that the index of moderated mediation (point of estimate 0.20) for the specific indirect effect through perceived warmth alone was statistically different from zero, with 95% confidence ranging from 0.01 to 0.44. This implies that this specific indirect effect is contingent upon the level of family supportiveness in the organizational culture wherein the observers are employed. However, the interaction term was not significant when perceived competence was considered as an outcome ($b = 0.24$, $p = .10$), leading to the non-support of H4a (perceived competence) but the support of H4b (perceived warmth).

A graphical representation of the moderating effect of FSOP on the relationship between signaling the intention

to be highly involved in nonwork roles (vs. signaling the intention to be focused only on the job) and perceived warmth is illustrated in Figure 2. Simple slope tests indicated that the relationship between the scenario and perceived warmth was significant at +1SD ($b = 3.22$, $p < .001$) and -1SD ($b = 2.46$, $p < .001$) of the mean of FSOP. It is evident that when observers are employed in a family-supportive organization, they are inclined to perceive newcomers who signal the intention to be highly committed in nonwork roles as warmer.

STUDY 2 – DISCUSSION

Study 2 aimed at validating the results observed in Study 1 and at examining a potential boundary condition shaping the relationship between the decision to signal a strong intention to be involved in both work and

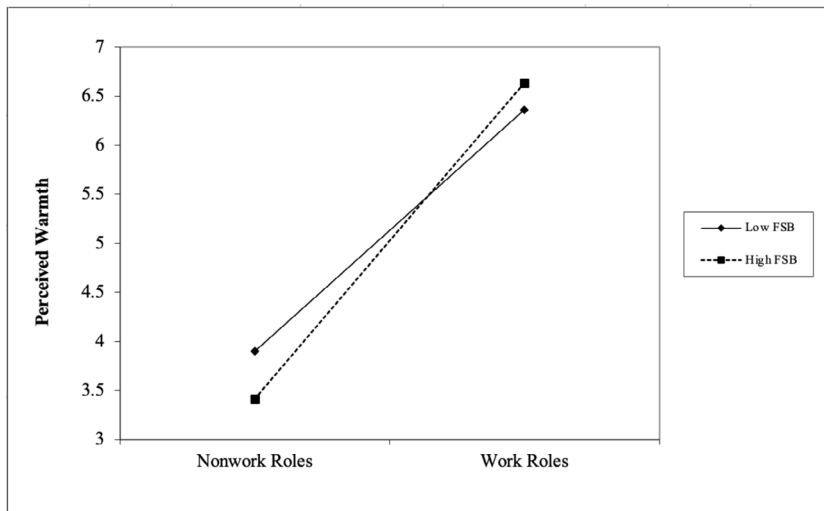


FIGURE 2 The moderating effect of the Observers' FSOP on the relationship between signaling the intention to be involved in nonwork roles (versus only focused on work roles) and newcomers' perceived warmth – study 2.

nonwork roles and the observers' expectations of newcomers' social integration. The findings from this study underscore the influence of the organizational context on observers' social evaluation processes. Notably, we discovered that observers working in organizations characterized by high levels of Family-Supportive Organizational Culture (FSOP) tended to rate newcomers who signaled the intention to be highly committed in nonwork roles more favorably.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

In this study, we delved into the repercussions faced by newcomers when publicly expressing at work the intention to be committed in their nonwork roles in addition to their work. Our findings reveal a positive association between signaling this dual commitment and the observers' expectations of newcomers' abilities to integrate into the social dynamics of the new organization. Additionally, we found that the observers' perception of newcomers' warmth played a pivotal role in explaining the effects of this intention on expected social integration. Contrary to our expectations, we did not find that this effect was contingent upon the newcomers' gender. Notably, our study also highlighted the significant influence of the organizational culture in shaping observers' judgments, indicating that individuals were more likely to view newcomers positively when they signaled an intention to be highly involved in both work and nonwork roles when employed in organizations characterized by a family-supportive culture.

Our overarching aim was to explore whether newcomers faced social consequences when deviating from dominant workplace norms that emphasize the importance of exclusive focus on job responsibilities without other distractions (Williams et al., 2016). Our findings contribute to existing research in several ways. Firstly, this is one of the few studies that examine the observers'

reactions to an individual's intention to balance both work and nonwork roles, whereas previous work has predominantly focused on the perspective of the individual (Reid, 2015; Rothbard et al., 2022). Furthermore, we revealed that this intention significantly influences the perception of the newcomers' social evaluation, through the warmth dimension rather than the competence dimension. This contribution extends the current literature, which has mostly examined the impact of this stigma on individuals' agency and commitment (Hideg et al., 2018). We demonstrated that expressing the desire to achieving a good work-life balance can also yield positive consequences, leading to an enhanced perception of warmth. This contrasts with previous research associating such intentions predominantly with negative outcomes (Leslie et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2016). Our findings align with the Allport's seminal contribution (Allport, 1954) that reactions to stereotypes are rarely purely negative; instead, they often encompass ambivalent beliefs blending both negative and positive attributes (Fiske et al., 2002; Yu et al., 2022). Contrary to the traditional view associating the commitment in nonwork activities to a worse evaluation, we demonstrated that this approach can also have a positive connotation, improving how observers perceive a newcomers' social skills and friendliness. Our findings support recent research suggesting that sharing personal information at work can foster trust (Nifadkar et al., 2019) and interpersonal liking (Rothbard et al., 2022). By integrating signaling theory with the stereotype content model, our study introduces a mechanism linking signals into meaningful interpretation through the dimensions of competence and warmth. We found that, of these two stereotypes accounting for over 80% of the variance in forming individual impressions (Fiske, 2012; Wojciszke, 2005), perceived warmth was significantly shaped by newcomers' intentions, emerging as the primary dimension in the model. This underscores the assumption that humans, distinct from nonhuman subjects, prioritize warmth in facing new encounters,

answering the fundamental question, ‘friend or foe?’ (Dupree & Fiske, 2017).

Furthermore, our study establishes that the observers’ organizational context plays a crucial role in influencing the evaluation process, either mitigating or exacerbating the effects of these dynamics. The findings corroborate the idea that social cognitions do not develop in a vacuum, but they are rather shaped by the broader organizational context (Johns, 2006). Observers employed in family-supportive organizations evaluated more positively those newcomers who signaled the intention to be highly involved in both work and nonwork roles compared to those observed employed in family-unsupportive organizations. This insight suggests that individuals tend to evaluate others based on a potential alignment with the main cultural beliefs and social norms of their own organization.

Our paper extends prior socialization research that often focused on newcomers’ characteristics influencing the socialization process (Ellis et al., 2017). For example, Bauer et al. (2021) found that the success of the socialization process is influenced by newcomers’ resources, including their personality and precedent relationships with other member of the new organization. Here, we shed light on another vital individual characteristic—the legitimate aspiration to build a successful career without compromising other life domains. This important life goal, increasingly sought after globally, serves as a proxy to consider the implications of a more balanced professional identity that departs from the moral imperative of being mostly focused on the job. Our findings demonstrate that supervisors’ judgments on newcomers’ capacity to socially integrate into a new organization could be positively influenced by the pursuit of a balanced and sustainable professional identity, where both work and other life commitments are deemed important.

Practical implications

Our paper holds significant practical implications, particularly for newcomers navigating the early stages of joining a new organization. These individuals often grapple with the dilemma of what information to disclose or conceal to convey a first good impression. By showcasing the advantages associated with referencing nonwork roles during the socialization process on perceived warmth, this paper may encourage newcomers revealing their true self at work, without the fear of experiencing negative consequences. Our results underscore the importance of navigating the socialization process authentically, and making deliberate and conscious decisions about the information newcomers choose to share at work to cultivate a positive self-image—a primary goal of the signaling process. Previous research (Casciaro & Lobo, 2008) has shown that individuals prefer to work with lovable fools (someone perceived as friendly even if less

competent) over knowledgeable jerks (someone perceived as highly competent but unpleasant). Consequently, newcomers may intentionally choose to disclose more about their personal lives to reinforce a warmer and more approachable image.

Moreover, our research underscores the pivotal role of a supportive organizational culture in mitigating bias towards individuals signalling their intention to invest in and participate in nonwork roles. This extends beyond fostering a family-friendly culture to promoting a broader culture of work-life balance through policies and practices. Organizational leaders play a crucial part in normalizing an interest in work-life balance by adopting role-modeling behaviors, such as openly embracing or disclosing their non-work activities to others at work. These behaviors contribute to the establishment of greater acceptance surrounding work-life balance, creating an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing the joy derived from their non-work activities (Rofcanin et al., 2017). Building on our findings regarding the crucial role of family supportive organizational culture, family-supportive supervisor training (Hammer et al., 2015) would represent an effective method for improving supervisors’ attitudes towards newcomers expressing the desire for achieving a good work-life balance. Such an intervention might help mitigate the tendency to associate the involvement in non-work activities with low devotion to work, enabling employees to freely express and pursue both their work and nonwork goals (Cable et al., 2013).

Limitations and direction for future research

The study’s hypotheses were tested using data from two vignette studies, where we manipulated various conditions, including newcomers’ intention to be engaged in nonwork roles (versus focusing only on the job) and their gender. The study specifically focused on one facet of the socialization process – social integration – omitting consideration of other performance-related outcomes, such as task mastery and in-role performance. This limitation may explain why the statistically significant relationship between signaling, competence, and the study’s outcomes was not observed. Future research is necessary to explore if similar dynamics apply also to other crucial outcomes of the socialization process. Performance, for instance, could potentially mitigate the negative social evaluations associated with involvement in nonwork roles, as prior research suggests supervisors respond positively to proactive behaviors exhibited by “stars” (Long et al., 2015). Therefore, newcomers’ prior professional experience, current performance and/or proactive attitude may influence the interpersonal evaluation process, fostering greater tolerance towards investment in nonwork domains.¹

¹We thank an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this important limitation of the paper.

Additionally, future research should examine whether observers' reactions would differ based on the role of the enactor. While a supervisor's decision to share personal information at work has been shown to elicit positive reactions in terms of interpersonal trust (Nifadkar et al., 2019), it remains uncertain if the same response would be elicited if such behavior would be exerted by an executive manager in a traditional organizational setting, wherein a full commitment to work might be expected. It is also crucial to investigate how observers' reactions would change if they were asked to assume the role of a colleague rather than the one of the supervisor, and whether their comprehension of the newcomer's behavior differs based on the nature of their relationship with the focal actor (Russo & Morandin, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

In the contemporary workplace, employees increasingly anticipate organizational support for their career and family/personal life aspirations. This study delves into the consequences associated with newcomers signaling the intention to deviate from the traditional expectation of complete focus and dedication solely to the job, focusing specifically on the potential impact of these dynamics on social integration—an integral facet of the socialization process. Our findings reveal that signaling the intention to be highly involved in nonwork roles, alongside work commitments, can lead to a more positive evaluation of newcomers' social integration capabilities, particularly through an enhanced perception of warmth. Notably, we demonstrated that the organizational context plays a significant role in this process. The observers working in family-supportive organizations rated more favorably newcomers who signaled the intention to invest in both work and nonwork roles compared to the observers employed in family-unsupportive organizations. These insights offer newcomers valuable information for making strategic decisions about personal disclosures to successfully navigate their socialization process. By understanding the positive outcomes associated with signaling a commitment to both work and nonwork roles, individuals can align their communication strategies with organizational cultures that are more supportive of such important life goals, fostering a smoother and more positive integration in the team.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors express their gratitude to Aliasghar Bahoo Torodi and Raymond Trau for their valuable feedback on this paper. Additionally, we extend our appreciation to the associate editor and the anonymous reviewers whose constructive comments played a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of this manuscript. Open access publishing facilitated by Università degli Studi di Bologna, as part of the Wiley - CRUI-CARE agreement.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare the presence of no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The Data are available from authors upon request.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

M.R. and G.M. conceived the present idea. M.R. took the lead in writing the manuscript. G.B. developed the theoretical sections and verified the analytical methods. M.O. performed the data analyses and wrote the research method section. M.B. contributed to writing and improving the discussion section and encouraged the team to revise the front end after the revisions. M.B. also rewrote some parts of the theoretical discussion in the revision process.

ETHICAL INFORMATION

This paper was conducted in respect of ethical procedures and respect of human rights.

ORCID

Marcello Russo  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0452-7673>

Gabriele Morandin  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7892-5308>

Marc Ohana  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1698-0704>

REFERENCES

- Allen, T.D. (2001) Family-supportive work environments: the role of organizational perceptions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58(3), 414–435. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2000.1774>
- Allport, G.W. (1954) *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Amatea, E.S., Cross, E.G., Clark, J.E. & Bobby, C.L. (1986) Assessing the work and family role expectations of career-oriented men and women: the life role salience scales. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 48(4), 831–838.
- Bataille, C.D. & Hyland, E. (2023) Involved fathering: how new dads are redefining fatherhood. *Personnel Review*, 52(4), 1010–1032. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-06-2019-0295>
- Bauer, T.N., Bodner, T., Erdogan, B., Truxillo, D.M. & Tucker, J.S. (2007) Newcomer adjustment during organizational socialization: a meta-analytic review of antecedents, outcomes, and methods. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(3), 707–721. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.707>
- Bauer, T.N., Erdogan, B., Caughlin, D., Ellis, A.M. & Kurkoski, J. (2021) Jump-starting the socialization experience: the longitudinal role of day 1 newcomer resources on adjustment. *Journal of Management*, 47(8), 2226–2261. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320962835>
- Becker, T.E., Atinc, G., Breaugh, J.A., Carlson, K.D., Edwards, J.R. & Spector, P.E. (2016) Statistical control in correlational studies: 10 essential recommendations for organizational researchers. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 37(2), 157–167. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2053>
- Blair-Loy, M. (2003) *Competing devotions: career and family among women executives*. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Blair-Loy, M. & Wharton, A.S. (2002) Employees' use of work-family policies and the workplace social context. *Social Forces*, 80(3), 813–845. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2002.0002>

- Byron, K. & Laurence, G.A. (2015) Diplomas, photos, and tchotchkes as symbolic self-representations: understanding employees' individual use of symbols. *Academy of Management Journal*, 58, 298–323.
- Cable, D.M., Gino, F. & Staats, B.R. (2013) Breaking them in or eliciting their best? Reframing socialization around newcomers' authentic self-expression. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 58(1), 1–36. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839213477098>
- Cappelli, P. & Sherer, P.D. (1991) The missing role of context in OB: the need for a meso-level approach. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 13, 55–110.
- Carlson, D.S., Witt, L.A., Zivnuska, S., Kacmar, K.M. & Grzywacz, J.G. (2008) Supervisor appraisal as the link between family–work balance and contextual performance. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 23(1–2), 37–49. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-008-9083-z>
- Casciaro, T. & Lobo, M.S. (2008) When competence is irrelevant: the role of interpersonal affect in task-related ties. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 53(4), 655–684. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.53.4.655>
- Chao, G.T., O'Leary-Kelly, A.M., Wolf, S., Klein, H.J. & Gardner, P.D. (1994) Organizational socialization: its content and consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(5), 730–743. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.79.5.730>
- Cohen, J.R. & Single, L.E. (2001) An examination of the perceived impact of flexible work arrangements on professional opportunities in public accounting. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 32(4), 317–328. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010767521662>
- Connelly, B.L., Certo, S.T., Ireland, R.D. & Reutzel, C.R. (2011) Signaling theory: a review and assessment. *Journal of Management*, 37(1), 39–67. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310388419>
- Cuddy, A., Fiske, S. & Glick, P. (2008) Warmth and competences as universal dimensions of social perception: the stereotype content model and the BIAS map. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 40, 61–149.
- Dupree, C.H. & Fiske, S.T. (2017) Universal dimensions of social signals: Warmth and competence. In: Burgoon, J.K., Magnenat-Thalmann, N., Pantic, M. & Vinciarelli, A. (Eds.) *Social signal processing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 23–33.
- Eagly, A.H. & Karau, S.J. (2002) Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573–598. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573>
- Ellis, A.M., Nifadkar, S.S., Bauer, T.N. & Erdogan, B. (2017) Newcomer adjustment: examining the role of managers' perception of newcomer proactive behavior during organizational socialization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(6), 993–1001. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000201>
- Fiske, S.T. (2012) The continuum model and the stereotype content model. In: Van Lange, P.A.M., Kruglanski, A.W. & Higgins, E.T. (Eds.) *Handbook of theories of social psychology*, Vol. 1. Sage Publications Ltd., pp. 267–288.
- Fiske, S.T., Cuddy, A.J.C., Glick, P. & Xu, J. (2002) A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 878–902.
- Gidakovic, P. & Zabkar, V. (2022) The formation of consumers' warmth and competence impression of corporate brands. The role of corporate association. *European Management Review*, 19(4), 639–653.
- Goffman, E. (1963) *Stigma: notes on the management of spoiled identity*. New York City, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Hammer, L.B., Demsky, C.A., Kossek, E.E., Bray, J.W., Allen, T.D. & Eby, L.T. (2015) Work–Family Intervention Research. In: Allen, T.D. & Eby, L.T. (Eds.) *The oxford handbook of work and family*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 349–361.
- Hayes, A.F. (2013) *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: a regression-based approach*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Hewlett, S.A. (2002) Executive women and the myth of having it all. *Harvard Business Review*, 80, 66–73.
- Hideg, I., Krstic, A., Trau, R.N. & Zarina, T. (2018) The unintended consequences of maternity leaves: how agency interventions mitigate the negative effects of longer legislated maternity leaves. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(10), 1155–1164.
- Johns, G. (2006) The essential impact of context on organizational behavior. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(2), 386–408. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.20208687>
- Landay, K. & DeArmond, S. (2018) Recruitment process outsourcing and recruiter and hiring firm characteristics. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 17(4), 183–192. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000206>
- Lee, J. J., Gino, F., Cable, D. M. & Staats, B. R. (2016) Preparing the self for team entry: how relational affirmation improves team performance. Harvard Business School working paper series # 16–111.
- Leslie, L.M., Manchester, C.F., Park, T.Y. & Mehng, S.A. (2012) Flexible work practices: a source of career premiums or penalties? *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(6), 1407–1428. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0651>
- Long, D.M., Baer, M.D., Colquitt, J.A., Outlaw, R. & Dhensa-Kahlon, R.K. (2015) What will the boss think? The impression management implications of supportive relationships with star and project peers. *Personnel Psychology*, 68(3), 463–498. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12091>
- Manzoni, J. & Barsoux, J. (2002) *The set-up-to-fail syndrome*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Moss-Racusin, C.A., Phelan, J.E. & Rudman, L.A. (2010) When men break the gender rules: status incongruity and backlash against modest men. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 11(2), 140–151. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018093>
- Nifadkar, S.S., Wu, W. & Gu, Q. (2019) Supervisors' work-related and nonwork information sharing: integrating research on information sharing, information seeking, and trust using self-disclosure theory. *Personnel Psychology*, 72(2), 241–269. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12305>
- Ortleb, R. & Ressi, E. (2022) From refugee to manager? Organisational socialisation practices, refugees' experiences and polyrhythmic socialisation. *European Management Review*, 19(2), 185–206.
- Parigi, P., Santana, J.J. & Cook, K.S. (2017) Online field experiments: studying social interactions in context. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 80(1), 1–19.
- Park, N., Jin, B. & Jin, S.A.A. (2011) Effects of self-disclosure on relational intimacy in Facebook. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 1974–1983.
- Paustian-Underdahl, S.C., Halbesleben, J.R., Carlson, D.S. & Kacmar, K.M. (2016) The work–family interface and promotability: boundary integration as a double-edged sword. *Journal of Management*, 42(4), 960–981.
- Peltokorpi, V., Feng, J., Pustovit, S., Allen, D.G. & Rubenstein, A.L. (2022) The interactive effects of socialization tactics and work locus of control on newcomer work adjustment, job embeddedness, and voluntary turnover. *Human Relations*, 75(2), 177–202.
- Reid, E. (2015) Embracing, passing, revealing, and the ideal worker image: how people navigate expected and experienced professional identities. *Organization Science*, 26(4), 997–1017. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2015.0975>
- Rofcanin, Y., Las Heras, M. & Bakker, A.B. (2017) Family supportive supervisor behaviors and organizational culture: effects on work engagement and performance. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(2), 207–217. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000036>
- Rothbard, N.P., Ramarajan, L., Ollier-Malaterre, A. & Lee, S.S.L. (2022) Omg! My boss just friended me: how evaluations of colleagues' disclosure, gender, and rank shape personal/professional boundary blurring online. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(1), 35–65.

- Russo, M. & Morandin, G. (2023) A network approach to work-family conflict. *Human Resource Management Review*, 33(2), 100943. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2022.100943>
- Spence, M. (1973) Job market signaling. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 87(3), 355–374.
- Stiglitz, J.E. (2000) The contributions of the economics of information to twentieth century economics. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(4), 1441–1478. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1162/003355300555015>
- Thompson, C.A., Beauvais, L.L. & Lyness, K.S. (1999) When work-family benefits are not enough: the influence of work-family culture on benefit utilization, organizational attachment, and work-family conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 54(3), 392–415. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1998.1681>
- Trefalt, Š. (2013) Between you and me: setting work-non-work boundaries in the context of workplace relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56, 1802–1829.
- Uhlmann, E.L., Heaphy, E., Ashford, S.J., Zhu, L. & Sanchez-Burks, J. (2013) Acting professional: an exploration of culturally bounded norms against non-work role referencing. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34, 866–886.
- Wayne, J.H., Casper, W.J., Matthews, R.A. & Allen, T.D. (2013) Family-supportive organization perceptions and organizational commitment: the mediating role of work-family conflict and enrichment and partner attitudes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98(4), 606–622. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032491>
- Williams, J.C., Berdahl, J.L. & Vandello, J.A. (2016) Beyond work-life “integration”. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 67(1), 515–539. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-122414-033710>
- Williams, J.C., Blair-Loy, M. & Berdahl, J.L. (2013) Cultural schemas, social class, and the flexibility stigma. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(2), 209–234. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12012>
- Wojciszke, B. (2005) Morality and competence in person- and self-perception. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 16(1), 155–188. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463280500229619>
- Yu, A., Pichler, S., Russo, M. & Hammer, L. (2022) Family-supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB) and work-family conflict: the role of stereotype content, supervisor gender, and gender role beliefs. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 95(2), 275–304. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12379>

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Marcello Russo (PhD) is a full Professor of Organizational Behavior at the University of Bologna and the Global MBA director at Bologna Business School in Italy. He has been a visiting Scholar at Kedge Business School, France, and Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. He is an expert on work-life balance, with a focus on what individual strategies and organizational factors can help individuals accomplish their ideal model of work-life balance and it has been published in leading scholarly journals, including Harvard Business Review, MIT Sloan Management Review, Journal of Management, Academy of Management Annals.

Gabriele Morandin is a full Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Department of Management. He chairs the School of Economics and Management of the University of Bologna and is Associate Dean

for Faculty & Research at Bologna Business School (BBS). He is also a member of the International Network on Technology, Work, and Family (INTWAF) at the Université du Québec à Montréal (Canada) and has been a visiting Professor at Kedge Business School (France) and at the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business of the American University of Beirut (Lebanon). He studies leadership and its interconnections with work and nonwork domains, as well as with information and communication technologies. His publications appeared among others in the *Academy of Management Annals*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *Employee Relations*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *European Management Review*, *Financial Accountability & Management*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Human Resource Management Journal*, *Human Resource Management Review*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, and *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. He sits on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. He gained national and international awards for research and teaching.

Marc OHANA has been a Professor of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management at KEDGE Business School since 2010. He received his HDR (Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches) from Paris Dauphine University and his PhD from Aix-Marseille University. His research centers on organizational justice, social exchange, social identity, and micro-CSR. He teaches leadership at master’s and executive education levels.

Massimo Bergami is a full Professor of Organization at the University of Bologna and Dean of Bologna Business School. His research interests are focused on creativity, creative industries, identity, and identification. He received a Ph.D. in Management at the University of Bologna; he was a visiting Scholar at the University of Michigan, a post-Doctoral Associate at the University of Florida, and an Adjunct Professor at Bocconi University. He attended the International Teachers Program at New York University and he is a Guest Professor at Nankai University (Tianjin, Cina) and Mirbis (Mosca, Russia). He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of Ferrarelle Spa as well as of the Board of Trustees of EFMD (European Foundation for Management Development). He has been a member of the Board of Directors at Ferretti Spa, Ducati Motor Holding, Brunello Cucinelli, Telecom Italia Media, Tuscia University, and Previlabor. He has held numerous positions for the Italian Government and he received the decoration of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic.

How to cite this article: Russo, M., Morandin, G., Ohana, M. & Bergami, M. (2026) Does signaling high commitment to nonwork roles penalize newcomers at work? *European Management Review*, 23(1), 55–69. <https://doi.org/10.1111/emre.70008>

APPENDIX

Female (male) newcomer signaling a strong intention to be involved in nonwork roles.

Rebecca (John) is a recently hired employee who joined your company three months ago. Rebecca (John) has many years of work experience and (s)he has a bachelor in Journalism. During these three months, you noticed that (s)he is a conscientious and likeable person, who masters well her (his) new tasks and who has developed friendly relationships with the other members of the team. Talking to her (him), you realized that Rebecca (John) gives high importance to achieving a good work-life balance.

For example, during lunch (s)he told you about the numerous activities in which (s)he is involved during non-working hours – sport, community, and her (his) strong passion for photography – and (s)he frequently discloses to the team her (his) aspiration to have a good career but also sufficient time to dedicate to her (his) family, friends and personal hobbies.

Female (male) newcomer signaling the intention to be involved in work roles only.

Rebecca (John) is a recently hired employee who joined your company three months ago. Rebecca (John) has many years of work experience and (s)he has a bachelor in Journalism. During these three months, you noticed that (s)he is a conscientious and likeable person, who masters well her (his) new tasks and who has developed friendly relationships with the other members of the team. Talking to her (him), you realize that (s)he gives low importance to achieving a good work-life balance.

For example, during a lunch (s)he told you to not be involved in any particular activity beyond the work, and (s)he frequently discloses to the team her (his) aspiration to have a good career even if this would imply some sacrifices on the personal side.