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**Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy at Work**

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**Dissertation**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**May 2006**

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my friends, coworkers, and mentors who made it possible.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank all the members of my committee for their time, input, and patience with me throughout the entire dissertation process. Dr. Daly, I've learned a lot about both writing and teaching from you. I appreciate the way you managed to keep me on track throughout this dissertation. I want to thank you for the additional opportunities you gave me throughout graduate school. You have inspired me as a teacher and watching you teach the undergraduate interpersonal class was the deciding factor in coming to graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin.

Laurie, you were a great adviser my first several years in graduate school. You always explained things clearly both in class and individually. I appreciated your great support and availability to help me. Craig, I've always admired your meticulous and precise approach to conducting research and teaching. Dr. Vangelisti, thank you for helping me to learn SPSS. I did my first study in your emotion class. I also want to thank you for your help with the inductive analysis methods used in this dissertation. Dr. Dukerich, thank you for your input on the final version of this dissertation and for exposing me to some new (to me) bodies of literature in your organizational behavior class.

I would also like to thank my close friends Alicia Alexander and Stacey Connaughton for their encouragement and support throughout the course of the program. We have shared the best of times and the worst of times. Alicia, also thank you for helping me with the double-coding in this dissertation. I also want to thank my numerous friends that are not in academia for their extreme patience with my total lack

of availability throughout the course of this dissertation. I especially want to thank my former roommate Joanna Weatherall for her support and help in providing me with no distractions when I needed to focus. Finally, I would like to thank my new colleagues at Cal State Fullerton for their patience and support and lightening my workload this first year while I completed my dissertation.

# **Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy at Work**

Publication No. \_\_\_\_\_

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2006

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Envy is a ubiquitous emotion in the workplace and frequently harmful. Previous research into malicious envy in the workplace consists of theoretical discussions but minimal empirical studies. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine malicious envy in the workplace: causes of malicious envy, communicative responses to malicious envy, and the factors that influence choices of communicative responses to feelings of envy in the workplace. This dissertation consists of two studies that use both qualitative and quantitative methods. The first study used inductive analysis to generate categories for causes of malicious envy in the workplace and responses to malicious envy in the workplace. 271 participants from a broad spectrum of organizations responded to the survey for Study One. The second study developed scale items generated from the inductive analysis in Study One for causes and responses. Factor analysis was used to examine underlying dimensions for causes and responses. Correlations were

computed to determine associations between causes and responses and between several other variables (injustice, competitive organizational environment, organization based self-esteem, and hostility) and responses. A scale was also developed to measure degree of malicious envy. 429 participants from a wide variety of organizations responded to the survey for Study Two.

Factors for causes of malicious envy included unfair, deserved, favorites, reward, misled, credit, and inadequate. Factors for responses to malicious envy included reassurance, negative emotion, commiserate, ignored, notice me, talk to boss, anger at job, negative other, and harassed. There were also numerous associations between causes and responses. Factors that affect communicative responses to malicious envy in the workplace include perceived causes, strength of malicious envy, a sense of injustice, a competitive organizational environment, organizational based self-esteem, and a sense of hostility. One surprising result indicated employees were more likely to respond in constructive ways before responding in destructive ways. This dissertation contributes to the literature by focusing on malicious envy in the workplace versus general envy, developing a new scale measuring degree of malicious envy, exploring causes of malicious envy and communicative responses to malicious envy, and examining the factors that affect communicative responses to malicious envy.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	xii
Chapter One: Introduction .....	1
Rationale and Purpose.....	2
Definitions.....	3
Envy as an Emotion .....	4
Cognitive Appraisal and the Emotion of Envy .....	4
Distinction Between Envy and Jealousy.....	5
Distinction Between Malicious and Benign Envy .....	6
Hostility and Injustice.....	6
Communicative Response.....	7
Review of Literature .....	9
Theoretical Approaches to Envy.....	9
Social Comparison Theory .....	9
Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model .....	10
Equity Theory .....	11
Development of Envy in the Workplace.....	12
Competitive Organizational Climate .....	13
Organization Based Self-Esteem .....	14
Communicative Responses .....	15
Research Questions.....	17
Chapter Two: Study One .....	19
Methods and Results.....	19
Participants.....	19

Procedures.....	20
Results.....	22
Demographics .....	22
Closed-Ended Responses to Envy .....	23
Open-ended Responses to Envy.....	24
Chapter Three: Study Two.....	27
Methods and Results .....	27
Participants.....	27
Procedures and Measures.....	28
Stimulus .....	28
Degree of Envy .....	29
Degree of Malicious Envy .....	29
Injustice.....	30
Demographics .....	30
Perceived Causes .....	31
Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy.....	31
Generalized Envy.....	32
Hostility.....	33
Contextual Attributes.....	33
Results.....	33
Characteristics of Envious Event.....	34
Analysis of Research Questions.....	34
Chapter Four: Discussion.....	47
Review of Findings.....	48
Findings of Study One: Inductive Analysis.....	48
Findings of Study One: Factor Analysis.....	49
Findings of Study Two: Inductive Analysis .....	49
Similarities and Differences of Factor Analyses .....	50
Review of Research Questions .....	52

Supplemental Findings.....	60
Gender.....	60
Length of Time Employed.....	61
Supplemental Correlations.....	62
Implications and Future Directions.....	66
Causes: Differences and Similarities with Findings in Previous Research.....	66
Responses: Differences and Similarities with Findings in Previous Research.....	69
Additional Variables: Gender.....	78
Additional Variables: Competitive Organizational Climate.....	79
Additional Variables: OBSE.....	80
Additional Variables: Length of Time Employed.....	80
Limitations.....	87
Conclusion.....	89
Appendix A: Study One: Responses to Envy Questionnaire.....	123
Appendix B: Study Two: Responses to Malicious Envy Questionnaire.....	131
References.....	142
Vita.....	154

## **List of Tables**

Table 1:	Study One: Organizations and Job Titles.....	91
Table 2:	Study One: Results of Principal Component Factor Analysis for Envy Responses.....	93
Table 3:	Perceived Causes of Malicious Envy.....	96
Table 4:	Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy.....	98
Table 5:	Study Two: Organizations and Job Titles.....	100
Table 6:	Study Two: Results of Principal Component Factor Analysis for Causes of Malicious Envy.....	103
Table 7:	Rank Order Factors Causes of Malicious Envy.....	106
Table 8:	Pearson Correlations Between Causes of Malicious Envy Factors.....	107
Table 9:	Pearson Correlations Between Malicious Envy and Causes of Malicious Envy Factors.....	108
Table 10:	Study Two: Results of Principal Component Factor Analysis for Responses to Malicious Envy.....	109
Table 11:	Rank Order Factors Responses to Malicious Envy.....	112
Table 12:	Pearson Correlations Between Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	113
Table 13:	Pearson Correlations between Malicious Envy and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	114
Table 14:	Pearson Correlations Between Injustice and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	115
Table 15:	Pearson Correlations Between Causes of Malicious Envy and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	116
Table 16:	Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Responses to Malicious Envy Factors on Causes of Malicious Envy Factors.....	118

Table 17:	Pearson Correlations Between Competitive Organizational Environment and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	119
Table 18:	Pearson Correlations Between OBSE and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	120
Table 19:	Pearson Correlations Between Hostility and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors.....	121
Table 20:	Typology of Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy.....	122

# **Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy at Work**

## **Chapter One**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Emotion is a significant part of organizational life. Emotions impact and are impacted by working in an organization. Numerous different situations on the job can affect employees' emotions in positive ways, such as getting a raise or promotion. A raise could make an employee feel happy or joyful. Similarly, different events can stimulate negative emotions, such as being demoted or passed over for an expected promotion. One such emotion that is frequently negative in the workplace is envy.

Envy is a common emotion in our everyday lives. Envy is unpleasant, yet part of human nature. Most cultures have a word for envy (Schoeck, 1969) and almost everyone is capable of feeling it (Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Smith, Parrott, Diener, Hoyle, & Kim, 1999; Smith, Parrott, Ozer & Moniz, 1994). Although ubiquitous, envy is frequently harmful and can be considered a "dark-side" emotion (Bedeian, 1995; Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Vecchio, 1995, 2000).

Researchers such as Miner (1990) and Vecchio (1995, 2000) have found envy to be a widespread emotion in the workplace. Miner's (1990) study of 278 employees in 200 organizations specifically focused on envy and jealousy in the workplace and found 77 percent of the respondents had observed an envious or jealous situation at work and 58 percent had been directly involved in such a situation. In addition, Vecchio (2000) found that envy was associated with employees' inclination to quit. Duffy and Shaw (2000) studied envy in groups and found that envy was positively associated with social

loafing and negatively associated with group cohesiveness and group performance. Cohen-Charash (2000) found that envious people were more likely to exhibit harmful behavior toward the person they envied, such as sabotaging the other's work or reputation, and being uncooperative with them. Additional research suggests envious people may express their own feelings of envy by attempting to prevent their rival's successful performance via sabotage, hostility, derogation, harassment, and backstabbing (Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Vecchio, 2000). These negative expressions of feelings of envy are harmful on the interpersonal level as well as counter-productive to efficient organizational operation (Bedeian, 1995; Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Miner, 1990; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Robinson & Bennet, 1995; Schaubrock & Lam, 2004; Vecchio, 2000). Given the frequency with which people experience envy and its many potential negative consequences it is important to more closely examine the dynamics of envy in the workplace. That is the broad goal of this dissertation.

### **RATIONALE AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this dissertation is to determine (a) how employees communicatively respond to their sense of envy in the workplace and (b) what factors influence employees' choices of communicative responses to their feelings of envy. This study will also examine what employees perceive to be the cause of their feelings of envy and the relationship between those perceived causes and employees' communicative responses to envy.

This dissertation makes two arguments. First, envy can be a powerful emotion in the workplace---one that shapes how people respond to others and perform their jobs.

Second, in order to understand the nature of envy in the workplace, a deep understanding of both causes and communicative responses to envy is crucial. At this point the literature primarily consists of theoretical explications about envy in general. There are very few empirical studies on envy and only a couple of empirical studies examine envy in the workplace. The empirical studies on envy in the workplace that have been conducted so far do not focus on specific causes of envy or responses to envy. Understanding the causes of envy in the workplace is important for two reasons. First, different causes of envy may lead to different responses. Second, comprehending various causes of envy may help avert or diffuse potentially negative situations in the workplace. Developing a collection of possible communicative responses to envy is equally significant because responses (a) may affect the way people interact on the job, (b) may affect relationships in the workplace, and (c) could either promote productive work relationships or interfere with accomplishing work and organizational goals (Vecchio, 1995, 2000).

#### **DEFINITIONS**

This section will first define envy. Second, a discussion will follow about envy as an emotion and the role of cognitive appraisal in the development of envy. Third, this section will explicate the distinction between the constructs of envy and jealousy, the distinction between malicious and benign envy, and the role of hostility and injustice in the development of malicious envy. Finally, this section will conclude with a definition and description of communicative responses to envy.

## **Envy as an Emotion**

Envy is an emotion that occurs when people desire possessions, attributes, or attainments that another person possesses (Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Smith et al., 1994, 1999; Vecchio, 1995, 2000).

### ***Cognitive Appraisal and the Emotion of Envy.***

Lazarus (1966, 1991) contends emotions result from the way people appraise an event. Emotions are reactions to evaluations of an event or situation and different emotions are associated with different patterns of appraisal (Cornelius, 1996). Emotions are reactions to an appraisal of harm or benefit. Lazarus suggests there are primary and secondary appraisals. Primary appraisals determine the relevance of an event to people's well being. During the primary appraisal process people consider what impact an event will have on their goals, and whether or not the event poses a threat. Secondary appraisals involve who to credit or blame for the event as well as an assessment of coping responses (Burlinson & Goldsmith, 1998; Lazarus, 1991). Specific patterns of appraisal precede specific emotions (Lazarus, 1991). The emotion people experience is determined by the appraisals they make (Parrott, 1991). Envy is a blend of affective reactions that follows a primary and secondary appraisal (Lazarus, 1991; Parrott, 1991; Smith, 1991). A primary appraisal for envy is recognition of a rival and a trigger event, which is relevant to people's well-being or to their goals (Guerrero & Andersen, 1998; Vecchio, 1995). Lazarus (1991) considers a secondary appraisal to consist of who to blame or credit as well as "coping options and prospects" (p. 87) to reduce a perceived threat. Vecchio (1995), borrowing to some degree from Lazarus, contends that a secondary appraisal for envy consists of an assessment of loss to the rival. Affective components of envy include

feelings of inferiority (Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993) and feelings of hostility (Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1994, 1999) toward the envied person. The sense of inferiority results from an unfavorable social comparison (Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Smith et al., 1999) and a perceived social threat (Vecchio, 2000). The feelings of hostility are directed at the envied person because envious people desire to have what the envied person has, but do not.

***Distinction Between Envy and Jealousy.***

Although the terms envy and jealousy are frequently used interchangeably, most research suggests a conceptual distinction between the emotions of envy and jealousy (Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993). Envy and jealousy are distinguished in two ways. First, envy involves a dyad with one person desiring what the other has, while jealousy involves three people, with one fearing the loss of a valued relationship to another person (Smith, Kim, & Parrott, 1988). Second, envy does not involve fearing the loss of a relationship, while jealousy occurs when people either lose an important relationship to a rival or fear losing a valued relationship, whether the threat is real or imagined (Parrott, 1991; Vecchio, 2000). Envy occurs when the superior achievements, qualities, or possessions of another are perceived as a bad reflection on the self in comparison (Parrott, 1991). Jealousy is characterized by fear of loss, distrust, anxiety, and anger while envy is characterized by feelings of inferiority, longing, and resentment (Parrott and Smith, 1993). Another important distinction in defining envy is the difference between benign and malicious envy.

### ***Distinction Between Malicious and Benign Envy.***

Envy may be considered benign or malicious. Benign envy occurs when envious people do not view the envied other's prosperity with displeasure, and in fact, envious people may even view the other's prosperity with pleasure. Benign envy consists of admiration for another, which may even serve as an inspiration to envious people (Parrott, 1991; Smith, 1991). Malicious envy occurs when envious people view the other's prosperity with displeasure and wish the envied person did not possess the desired attributes (Bedeian, 1995; Bers & Rodin, 1984; Guerrero & Anderson, 1998; Miner, 1990; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Salovey & Rothman, 1991; Silver & Sabini, 1978). Thus, envy that is malicious reflects feelings of not only "I wish I had what you have," but "I wish you did not have what you have" (Bedeian, 1995, p.51). Malicious envy also contains an element of hostility, resentment, or anger and a sense of unfairness or injustice (Bedeian, 1995; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Smith, 1991; Smith, Diener, & Garonzik, 1990; Smith et al., 1994, 1999).

### ***Hostility and Injustice.***

Scholars contend that hostility is strongly associated with envy (Bedeian, 1995; Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1990). Malicious envy encompasses feelings of hostility towards another for receiving something the envious people desire and do not have (Parrot & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin 1986; Smith et al., 1994; Smith, R.H., Turner, T.J., Garonzik, R. Leach, C.W., Urch-Druskat, V., & Weston, C.M., 1996). Hostility may arise in connection with envy because of a frustrated unattainable desire. Hostility may also emerge when people feel they have experienced injustice or unfair treatment (Heider, 1958; Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Smith,

1991; Smith et al., 1994, 1996, 1999). For example, an envious employee may perceive that the distribution of rewards or benefits, such as money, attention, or responsibility was unfair (Miner, 1990). This sense of injustice is subjective, private, and unsanctioned, primarily because envy is considered a socially undesirable and inappropriate emotion (Parrott & Smith, 1993; Silver & Sabini, 1978; Smith et al., 1994). Smith et al.'s (1994) study indicated beliefs of injustice were strongly associated with hostility, especially when the subject believed the envied person had an unfair advantage. The hostile aspect of envy, which arises with a perception of injustice, is a distinguishing feature of malicious envy (Smith, 1991). According to Smith (1991) and Smith et al. (1994, 1999), without a sense of injustice and the accompanying hostility, envy will not turn malicious, but will remain benign.

***Communicative Response.***

Responses to emotions are influenced by how people appraise other's behavior. Expressions of emotion are also a means to communicate what someone is feeling (Parkinson, 1997; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998). Guerrero and Afifi (1999) contend that communicative responses are behavioral while affective responses are emotional and cognitive responses are goal oriented. Guerrero, Andersen, Jorgensen, Spitzberg, and Eloy (1995) defined communicative response to jealousy as a behavioral reaction with communication value. Guerrero et al. describes two types of communicative responses: interactive responses (face-to-face or partner directed or avoiding face-to-face) and general behavioral responses (those with communication value, but not face-to-face). Examples of interactive responses that are face-to-face might include talking to a boss

about the envious situation, or talking to coworkers about the envied person. Examples of interactive responses that are avoiding face-to-face interactions include such things as avoiding the envied person and ignoring the envied person. Some general behavioral responses that are not face-to-face would include such things as working harder, trying to get management's attention, and looking for a new job. For example, working harder may not involve face-to-face interaction if it involves activities such as writing a report or working longer hours. However, working harder would carry communication value by communicating such things as commitment to the company and interest in the job. Some responses might not be considered communicative, such as certain emotions people keep to themselves and don't express to others. For example, people may respond to feelings of envy by crying alone at home, which would not be communicative. If they cry at work in front of others, crying then becomes an outward expression of how they feel communicated to others.

Some communicative responses that fall into the two categories of interactive or general behavioral as defined by Guerrero et al. (1995) may also be a way for envious people to cope with their feelings of envy. While communicative responses are considered behavioral reactions that are interactive or general behavioral responses (Guerrero et al., 1995), coping strategies are defined as a way to relieve emotional distress (Lazarus, 1966, 1991; Salovey & Rodin, 1984, 1988; White & Mullen, 1989). Some communicative responses may also be considered coping strategies. For example, avoiding the envied person may be one way to cope with the feelings of envy and it may also be considered an interactive communicative response. Working harder may be a general behavioral communicative response and also a coping strategy. However, people

may convince themselves that the envious incident was not due to their own shortcomings, which may be considered a coping response, but not a communicative response.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The following literature review addresses the (a) theoretical contexts that frame envy (social comparison theory, self-evaluation maintenance model, and equity theory), (b) development of envy in the workplace, (c) contextual attributes that contribute to envy in the workplace, and (d) communicative responses (reactions) to envy.

### **Theoretical Approaches to Envy**

Several theories are relevant to the study of envy. Those include social comparison theory, self-evaluation maintenance model (SEM), and equity theory. Most research into envy uses both social comparison theory and SEM to frame the emotion. Equity theory is frequently cited as well.

#### ***Social Comparison Theory.***

According to social comparison theory, people compare their own attributes and performances to similar others (Albert, 1998; Festinger, 1954). Envy is experienced in situations where the attributes of another similar other, threaten one's self-esteem and the self does not measure up in comparison (Salovey & Rodin, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1986; Salovey & Rothman, 1991). The envied person who is perceived as similar and more successful provokes resentment (Bers & Rodin, 1984; Festinger, 1954; Goethals, 1986; Goethals & Darley, 1977; Guerrero & Anderson, 1998; Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith,

1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1984, 1985b, 1986; Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1990). Envy is most intense when there is a perception that a similar other is succeeding on the same self-defining dimension (Salovey & Rodin, 1984). The nature of organizational life often promotes situations where employees are comparing themselves to similar others in competitive situations, such as for a promotion, raise, territory, or benefits.

***Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model.***

According to the self-evaluation maintenance model (SEM), people are motivated to maintain positive self-evaluations (Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Tesser, 1991; Tesser & Campbell, 1980; Tesser, Millar, & Moore, 1988). The outstanding performance of a close other compared to self can either stimulate a comparison process or a self-reflective process. SEM posits that the relevance of a similar other's performance determines whether a comparison or a self-reflection will occur. Comparison lowers self-evaluation while self-reflection raises it (Salovey & Rodin, 1984, 1985b; Salovey & Rothman, 1991; Smith et al., 1990; Suls, 1977; Tesser, 1991; Tesser & Campbell, 1980). If the close other's better performance is highly relevant, one will engage in a comparison process, which lowers self-evaluation. If the close other's performance is in an area not that relevant, self-reflection will occur, which enhances self-evaluation (Tesser, 1988). When relevance is high, the predictions of SEM and social comparison are the same: comparison and lower self-evaluations occur when a person is outperformed by another, especially a close other. When the activities are of low relevance, social comparison still posits a comparison and negative affect will occur with the better performance of a close other. However, the SEM model predicts a self-reflection process will occur and the close

other's better performance will provide an opportunity for "basking in the reflected glory" of the other's good performance resulting in positive affect and raised self-evaluations (Cialdini & Richardson, 1991; Salovey & Rothman, 1991). For example, a person feels happy for their good friend who works in a job vastly different from their own and receives a raise. The person feels positively because the close other's performance is successful in a domain irrelevant to their own performance. Reflection occurs, and there is no negative affect. However, if that friend received a raise for doing an outstanding job in a position identical to their own, social comparison results leading to negative affect (Salovey & Rodin, 1984, 1985a; Salovey & Rothman, 1991; Smith et al., 1990; Suls, 1977; Tesser, 1991; Tesser & Campbell, 1980).

***Equity Theory.***

A third theoretical approach to understanding envy is equity theory. Equity theory posits that people's comparative assessment of their work contributions (inputs) and perceptions of the rewards they receive (outputs) influences their behaviors (Greenberg, 1998). As in social comparison theory and SEM, people assess themselves against a comparison other. In an organization, employees compare the ratio of their own perceived inputs and outputs to the perceived ratios of other employees (Greenberg, 1998). If people perceive their own ratio of input to output is unequal to another, inequity exists and distress results (Greenberg, 1990; Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987). Employees who perceive they are either under-rewarded or over-rewarded will strive to restore balance and reduce the distress. Equity theory has been used to explain a number of organizational behaviors, including reactions to demotions, pay cuts, and layoffs.

Equity theory can also be used to explain envy when employees feel they were under-rewarded compared to a coworker (Vecchio, 1995). If people are envious of a coworker for receiving a reward they think they deserved and did not get, they likely made an assessment that they were under-rewarded. If the envious people believe the envied other had an unfair advantage, that will further exacerbate the perceptions of inequity (Smith, 1991). According to equity theory, the greater perception of inequity people feel, the more they will feel distress and the harder they will work to restore equity (Huseman et al., 1987). For example, envious people may attempt to restore equity by working harder, or at the other extreme may attempt to sabotage the rival.

### **Development of Envy in the Workplace**

Vecchio (1995) proposed a model of how employee jealousy and envy develops in the workplace. In Vecchio's model there is a (a) precipitating (triggering) event and (b) recognition of a rival, (c) an assessment of loss to the rival, (d) an affective response, (e) a reduced sense of esteem and control, and (f) an assessment of coping responses.

According to Vecchio's model, the development of envy begins with the (a) triggering event and (b) recognition of a rival, which is the primary appraisal. The triggering event could be a current external occurrence, such as observing a competitor obtain a coveted promotion. The trigger event could also occur when envious people reflect on how a past experience benefited a rival. Then envious people make (c) an assessment of loss to the rival, which is the secondary appraisal in Vecchio's terms. The assessment of loss is influenced by employee attributes, work unit attributes, and organizational attributes. Hostility and resentment are the primary emotional (d) affective responses to the

perceived loss. These emotions may be directed at the envied person or toward the person or company who is responsible for the rival's gain. Secondary emotional responses include job dissatisfaction, feelings of rejection, fear, and depression. The envious people experience (e) reduced self-esteem and control after the emotional responses. Envious people then react in some (f) coping way to help reduce the self-threatening feelings. According to Vecchio's model, these coping reactions are influenced by individual differences, work unit attributes, and organizational attributes.

Vecchio's (2000) study of workplace envy tested several variables based on his (1995) model. These variables of interest in this dissertation include (a) contextual or work unit attributes (competitiveness of rewards) and (b) the personal response variable of organization based self-esteem (OBSE).

### **Competitive Organizational Climate**

Vecchio's (2000) study examined specific episodes of envy in organizations and first focused on work unit attributes. In the study, Vecchio probed the relationship between envy and the competitive reward systems that emphasized win/lose and found that employee envy was positively correlated with competitive reward systems.

Competition in our society is generally viewed positively rather than negatively, even when it is just for personal gain (Coleman & Ramos, 1998). The most capable and deserving individuals are the victors and in competitive settings are admired for the attributes that make them competitors who succeed (Coleman & Ramos, 1998). Competitive individuals are similarly recognized and rewarded in organizations for their hard work and results. Organizations create environments that promote competition

among employees, especially for scarce resources, such as promotions, raises, and recognition (Baron & Neuman, 1996). The challenge is that often employees find themselves in competitive situations where they do not get what a coworker gets. Employees frequently face situations where coworkers' achievements and possessions are salient, recognized, and the focus of attention. Cohen-Charash (2000) found a correlation between stronger envy and behaviors designed to improve one's competitive position, such as working harder. Envy can create competitiveness while competitiveness can also create envy (Cohen-Charash, 2000; Kohn, 1992). A competitive organizational climate is positively associated with envy in the workplace (Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997; Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Martinko & Zellars, 1998; Vecchio, 1995, 2000).

### **Organization Based Self-Esteem**

Employees evaluate beliefs about themselves in the organizational context, which can have implications for work-related variables such as attitude and motivation (Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, and Dunham, 1989). One relevant belief is self-esteem. There are different types of self-esteem. One type is the situational form that people experience at work. Organization based self-esteem (OBSE) is a situational variable and is distinct from general or global self-esteem, which is a trait. OBSE refers to a job-related sense of self-worth or a setting-specific sense of being valued. Employees who have high OBSE perceive themselves to be valuable, capable, and worthy members of an organization. Vecchio (1995) contends that work-related aspects of self-esteem are more predictive of reactions to envy than global measures of self-esteem. Vecchio's

(2000) study indicated there was a negative correlation between OBSE and feelings of envy.

### **Communicative Responses**

Vecchio (2000) contends that some of the same variables that contribute to the development of envy, such as a competitive organizational climate, are likely to influence communicative responses to envy. In addition, it is quite likely that perceptions envious people have about the cause of their envy will influence choice of communicative response. Further, it is likely that those who experience malicious envy will choose negative responses more often than positive responses. Some earlier theoretical work suggests some of the negative types of responses to both jealousy and envy would likely include the following: harassing the rival, backstabbing the rival, gossiping, spreading false information about the rival (Guerrero & Andersen, 1998; Vecchio, 1995), interfering with the other's performance (Silver & Sabini, 1978; Tesser & Smith, 1980), demeaning and disparaging the other (Bers & Rodin, 1984; Salovey, 1991; Salovey & Rothman 1991; Silver & Sabini, 1978), sabotaging the other's work and reputation (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001; Vecchio, 1995), avoiding the other (Guerrero & Andersen, 1998; Salovey & Rodin, 1986), degradation of the rival's character (Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Smith et al., 1994, 1999), belittling the other, and bragging about oneself (Guerrero & Andersen, 1998). Some of these negative responses aimed at the envied other could be part of a coping effort envious people use to defend against threats to their self-image by projecting negative feelings about themselves onto the rival (Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004; Tesser, 1988).

Conceptually, research on exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect (EVLN) can be used as a framework for understanding some communicative responses to malicious envy in the workplace. Research into EVLN indicates employees who are dissatisfied on the job can respond in several ways. Employees can (a) find another job and exit, (b) attempt to improve their situation by voice, (c) stay and support their organization through loyalty, or (d) allow conditions to deteriorate through neglect (Farrell, 1983; Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers, & Mainous, 1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989). Exit includes quitting a job, looking for a new job, or thinking about leaving the organization (Rusbult et al., 1988). Voice includes actions by employees to improve the situation through speaking with a supervisor or coworkers, looking for a solution to the problem, or whistle-blowing (Rusbult et al., 1988). Loyalty refers to passively waiting for things to improve, which could mean either supportive allegiance to the company or resignation, entrapment (Withey & Cooper, 1989), and “suffering in silence” (Hirschman, 1970, p. 38). Neglect includes behaviors such as lateness, absenteeism, and reduced work effort (Farrell, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989). The four EVLN responses can be useful to examine how people respond to dissatisfying circumstances on the job (Withey & Cooper, 1989).

Many of the expected responses to envy suggested in previous theoretical discussions fall within the four EVLN categories. However, several of the suggested responses to envy do not fall into the EVLN categories, especially negative responses directed toward the envied person, such as harassing the rival and sabotaging the envied other. Since it appears some suggested responses to envy fall outside the EVLN framework this dissertation borrows from the EVLN body of research, but is not limited

by the EVLN framework in examining communicative responses to envy in the workplace.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based on the previous literature review, it appears likely that communicative response choices to envy will be influenced by strength of envy, resentment and hostility, perceptions of injustice, perceptions envious people have about the cause of their envy, and contextual attributes of a competitive work environment and OBSE. The previous discussion leads to the following research questions.

RQ1: What do employees think causes them to feel malicious envy at work?

RQ2: Are perceptions about what causes feelings of malicious envy in the workplace related to strength of malicious envy?

RQ3: How do employees communicatively respond when they feel malicious envy in the workplace?

RQ4: Does strength of malicious envy relate to employees' choices of communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?

RQ5: Are feelings of injustice related to employees' choices of communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?

RQ6: Are perceptions of causes about malicious envy related to employees' choices of communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?

RQ7: Is a competitive organizational climate related to employees' choices of communicative responses to malicious envy in the workplace?

RQ8: Is there a relationship between OBSE and how people communicatively respond to

their feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?

RQ9: Is there a relationship between resentment and hostility and communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy?

## Chapter Two

### Study One

#### **METHODS AND RESULTS**

The dissertation consists of two studies. The first study was completed as part of my doctoral internship. In Study One respondents answered open-ended questions about an envious event in the workplace, what they thought caused their feelings of envy, and how they responded to their feelings of envy. An inductive analysis of perceived *causes of envy* and *responses to envy* yielded several different categories for *causes* and *responses*.

#### ***Participants.***

Two hundred ninety people responded to the survey. Nineteen were excluded since they either indicated they had never experienced envy in the workplace or they did not correctly follow instructions for filling out the survey. The final sample consisted of 271 respondents. Of those, 156 (57.6%) were female and 115 (42.4%) were male. The median age was 32 ( $M = 34.21$ ,  $SD = 11.52$ ) with a range of 17 to 65. Participants were solicited from several different sources. Graduate students from departments across campus at The University of Texas at Austin were sought with the expectation that graduate students would likely have more work experience than undergraduates.

Additional participants were solicited from graduate organizations on campus. Volunteers were also solicited from several different listserves, such as the dissertation listserve at The University of Texas at Austin. I also approached several organizations and social clubs unaffiliated with the University of Texas that allowed me to distribute the survey

among their members. The snowball method was also used as I asked participants not affiliated with the university to take additional surveys to work with them. In some cases participants voluntarily asked if they could give the survey to fellow workers. The final sample included participants from a variety of backgrounds including: engineering, education, high technology, government, banking, sales, media, food industry, research and development, medicine, real estate, consulting, military, law firms, and the travel industry. Job titles ranged from entry level retail salesperson to chief executive officer (Table 1).

***Procedures.***

The first study examined *responses to envy* in the workplace and perceptions about why the envy occurred. The complete questionnaire is in Appendix A. Participants were asked the following three open-ended questions: (1) “Describe a time when you felt envious of someone in a work setting. What happened?” (2) “What do you think caused the feelings of envy?” and (3) “How did you respond to or cope with the envious feelings?” The answers to questions #2 and #3 are the focus of the results described in this chapter (open-ended *causes for envy* and open-ended *responses to envy*). They were next asked about what their relationship was with the envied person, when the event occurred, the type of organization they worked for, their job title, and how long they had worked at that organization at the time of the incident.

They were next asked two questions about how much envy they felt. The 5-point Likert-type scales were anchored by “very little envy” and “very much envy.” The questions were: “How much envy did you feel about this event?” and “How much envy

did you feel about this event compared to other envious events in the workplace you have experienced in the past in other situations?” Respondents were then asked “In regards to the previous envious situation you described”: (1) “I wanted what the other person received,” (2) “I felt I should have received what the other person received,” and (3) “I felt I deserved what the other person received.” These three items were anchored by “very little” to “very strongly” on 5-point Likert-type scales ( $\alpha = .81$ ). The total five items comprised a *Degree of Envy* measure ( $\alpha = .75$ ).

We created a list of 64 items that followed the *Degree of Envy* measure, which were designed to assess a wide variety of possible *responses* to the experience of envy, including emotions and attitudes toward the envied person (closed-ended *responses to envy*). Examples include “Felt angry at the person,” “I felt sad,” “Made me work harder at my job,” and “I wanted revenge on the other person.” These items were anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” on seven-point Likert-type scales. The items were devised after discussing with a number of people how they typically reacted to feelings of envy.

The next measure included two items ( $\alpha = .56$ ) from the *Subjective Injustice Belief Scale for Envy* (Smith et al., 1994). The two items were “It seemed unfair the person I envied started out with certain advantages over me,” and “It seemed unfair the person I envied had advantages over me because of lucky circumstances.” We chose to use these two items from the original seven item measure because they tapped into the sense of unfairness associated with envy, while the other five items dealt with the general unfairness of life itself, but not as related to envy. These two items were followed by

Vecchio's (1995) five-item *Employee Envy* measure ( $\alpha = .70$ ), which included such statements as, "Most of my coworkers had it better than I did," and "It was somewhat annoying to see others have all the luck in getting the best assignments." Vecchio's (1995) measure focuses on people's feelings of resentment and inferiority relative to coworkers. Items on both measures were anchored by "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree" on 7-point Likert-type scales.

## **RESULTS**

In this section I highlight the results of Study One that were relevant to the development of Study Two. I discuss demographic characteristics of the sample, the *Responses to Envy* measure, open-ended *causes for envy*, and open-ended *responses to envy*.

### ***Demographics.***

One hundred forty-one (52%) respondents indicated the person they were envious of was a peer or coworker. Forty-seven respondents (17.3%) indicated the person they were envious of was a casual acquaintance. Thirty-eight (14%) respondents indicated the person they were envious of was a close friend. Twenty-five (9.2%) indicated they were envious of their boss. Eight (3%) indicated they were envious of a person in the "other" category. Seven (2.6%) said they were envious of a subordinate. The mean length of time respondents had worked at their job when the envious incident occurred was 3.41 years, a median of 2.0 years, with a range of 3.65 days to 25 years. Some respondents had a long memory: the furthest back a respondent remembered an envious event in the workplace was 1973; the most recent was 2003.

### ***Closed-Ended Responses to Envy.***

Participants completed a 64-item measure assessing potential *responses to envy* in the workplace. Factor analysis was conducted on the 64-item *Responses to Envy* measure to determine underlying dimensions and categories for participants' *responses to envy* in the workplace. The entire data sample was used for this analysis. Responses were submitted to a principle components analysis with varimax rotation. Results were assessed using minimum eigen values of one and scree plots. An item was considered to load meaningfully on a factor when it loaded at least .60 on that factor with no loading on any other factor being greater than .40. A five factor solution accounting for 64.24% of the variance emerged in the analysis (Table 2). The first factor (1) was labeled "attack the envied person" ( $\alpha = .92$ ). Ten items loaded on this factor, which included statements such as "I wanted to sabotage the other person," "I wanted to degrade the other," and "I wanted revenge on the other person." The second factor (2) was labeled "became more motivated" ( $\alpha = .92$ ). Seven items loaded on this factor, which included statements of "It motivated me to do better," "I focused more on my work," and "It made me work harder at my job." The third factor (3) was labeled "became less committed to the job and organization" ( $\alpha = .90$ ). Eight items loaded on this factor, which included items such as "It reduced my commitment to the organization," "Made me want to leave my job," and "I felt less trust in the company." The fourth factor (4) was labeled "negative self-talk" ( $\alpha = .90$ ). Seven items loaded on this factor, which included items such as "It lowered my self-esteem," "It made me feel inadequate," and "Made me wonder what was wrong with me." The fifth factor (5) was labeled "self-promote and attention seeking" ( $\alpha = .79$ ). Three items loaded on this factor, which included items such as "I sought attention from

my supervisor,” “I sought attention from coworkers,” and “I promoted myself to others.” The first factor accounted for 25.5% of the variance, the second factor accounted for 15.97%, the third factor accounted for 11.46%, the fourth factor accounted for 6.94%, and the fifth factor accounted for 4.38%.

### ***Open-Ended Responses to Envy.***

Participants were also asked to respond to two open-ended questions about their perceptions of (a) *causes for envy* and (b) *responses to envy*. These responses were analyzed by inductive analysis to determine underlying categories (Bulmer, 1979). Responses to both open-ended questions were coded to determine underlying categories for scale development for Study Two. I and an additional coder assessed the responses to the two open-ended questions. The additional coder is an assistant professor of communication studies in a large Midwestern university with a background in interpersonal communication. We held a couple of training sessions, coded data together, and revised the coding schemes. We then independently coded data and calculated inter-coder reliability.

Because the second study focused on *malicious envy*, the coders determined if the questionnaire responses were representative of *malicious envy* or *benign envy*. *Malicious envy* was defined as *envy* that contained an element of hostility, resentment, anger, or a sense of unfairness or injustice. Any answers that contained statements about feeling hostile, resentful, angry, or a sense of injustice were categorized as *malicious envy*. Questionnaires that did not contain any statements of feeling hostile, resentful, angry, or a sense of injustice were considered benign. Benign surveys frequently contained

statements about admiring the envied person or feeling motivated by the envied person. These statements did not reflect the way I conceptualized *malicious envy*. Twenty-five percent of the surveys were double-coded to determine what percentage we agreed on as to whether they were representative of benign or *malicious envy*. Reliability was determined to be .94 using Holsti's (1969) coefficient of reliability, which is a measure of reliability for unitizing, categorizing, and coding. Responses to 33% of the total number (271) of surveys addressed issues that were considered to be *benign envy*. Those were not included in the subsequent analysis.

Next, the two coders independently developed category schemes for *causes of malicious envy* and *communicative responses to malicious envy*. Categories were defined along with examples of each. Coders then discussed similarities and differences in their schemes. Categories were refined: some were collapsed and some were eliminated. After coding schemes were developed for *causes of malicious envy* (Table 3) and *communicative responses to malicious envy* (Table 4), each coder unitized or determined the number of category units represented by each respondent's descriptions. Coders then unitized several surveys together to agree on the unitizing schemes. The coders then independently unitized 25% of the questionnaires. Reliability on the unitization was .84 for *causes of malicious envy* and .96 for *responses to malicious envy* using Holsti's (1969) coefficient, which accounts for the frequency each category was used and the number of categories in the coding scheme. Then, another 25% of the *malicious envy* questionnaires were further coded into the categories the coders had developed. Reliability was .95 using Holsti's coefficient since it accounts for the ratio of decisions

coders agreed upon to the total number of coding decisions each coder made (Holsti, 1969; Keyton, 1991).

Some of the most common categories for *causes of malicious envy* included: the situation was unfair (“It was unfair”), the envious employee felt they deserved what their coworker received (“I worked harder than him and deserved it more”), the other person was favored (“The boss played favorites”), negative feelings about self (“My own inadequacy and lack of expertise”), the envied person received a promotion or pay raise (“I wanted that same position” and “I was doing all the work and not getting pay like her”), and the envied person had better skills (“Jealous of their ability, attractiveness, likeability”) (See Table 3 for complete listing of categories). Some of the most common categories for communicative *responses to malicious envy* included: ignored the situation (“Nothing I could do”), suppressed feelings (I bottled it up”), complained to manager (“I complained to the manager”), harassed them (I controlled information stream to keep him out of the loop”), avoided the envied other (“I minimized contact”), and quit job (“I gave notice”) (See Table 4 for complete listing of categories).

## Chapter Three

### Study Two

#### METHODS AND RESULTS

Study Two focused on *causes of malicious envy* in the workplace, communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace, and what factors affect communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace. In the first section of this chapter I will discuss participants as well as procedures and measures for Study Two. In subsequent sections I will discuss results of the analyses.

#### Participants

Potential participants in the second study were told they needed a minimum of three years work experience to participate, preferably in a career-track job. Participants were drawn from numerous sources including various organizations, associations and business networks. The snowball method was also used to solicit additional respondents. Respondents from a wide variety of organizations were solicited so as not to be limited to episodes of envy within one particular organization. Four hundred forty-four people responded to the survey. Fifteen were not included since they did not correctly follow instructions for filling out the survey or they indicated they had never experienced *malicious envy* in the workplace. The final sample consisted of 429 respondents. Two hundred seventy-five (64.1%) were female and one hundred fifty-two (35.4%) were male. Two did not identify their gender. The median age was 25 ( $M = 31.37$ ,  $SD = 13.04$ ) with a range of 18 to 80. Three hundred twenty-eight (76.5%) were Caucasian, 38 (8.9%) were

Hispanic, 30 (7%) were African-American, 22 (5.1%) were Asian, 5 (1.2%) were “Other”, and 6 (1.4%) did not indicate their ethnicity.

Participants worked for retail companies (pharmaceuticals, fashion, electronics), food industry (catering, restaurants, bars), academic institutions (high schools, elementary schools, universities), research firms (marketing, telemarketing, research and development), medical and health care centers (hospitals, private practices, mental health facilities), government agencies (state agencies, federal agencies, state commissions), financial institutions (banks, insurance companies, investments), media (TV stations, magazines, newspapers), recreation facilities (health clubs, water parks, camps), engineering firms (aerospace, chemical companies, manufacturing), high technology firms (software, hardware, training), law firms, construction companies, architectural firms, military, police departments, travel industry (airlines, hotels, travel agencies), training and consulting firms, the arts (museums, dance companies, art galleries), real estate agencies, automobile companies, and miscellaneous. Job titles ranged from entry level restaurant worker to company chief executive officer (Table 5).

### **Procedures and Measures**

After being assured of anonymity, participants were given a questionnaire consisting of several parts (Appendix B). Five different forms of the questionnaire were distributed, but each form presented the measures in a different order.

### ***Stimulus.***

Participants were first asked an open-ended question to serve as a prompt to have them recall a time in the workplace when they felt *malicious envy*.

“Describe a time when you felt envious of someone in a work setting.

By envious, we mean you wanted what someone else had and felt some degree of unfairness, anger, resentment, or hostility. What happened?”

After reading this prompt, participants wrote a description of the event that provoked their envy.

***Degree of Envy.***

The open-ended prompt was followed in the next section (Section 2) by four items measuring the *degree of envy* respondents felt in that situation. The first item (question 2) asked: “To what degree did you feel envious about the situation?” which participants responded to by using a 9-point Likert-type scale. This question was followed by three more items (questions 7-9) on 5-point Likert-type scales measuring *degree of envy* respondents felt in that situation ( $\alpha = .84$ ): “I wanted what the other person received,” “I felt I should have received what the other person received,” and “I felt I deserved what the other person received.” The 9-point scale was anchored by “not at all” and “very much.” The next three items on 5-point scales were anchored by “very little” and “very strongly.” After adjusting for the relative number of scale response options, the four items were combined to create a single measure of *Degree of Envy* ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

***Degree of Malicious Envy.***

Three other questions (questions 3-5) in Section Two asked about “degree of anger,” “degree of resentment,” and “degree of hostility” participants felt about the envious situation. These items were all on 9-point Likert-type scales anchored by “not at all” and “very much.” These three items were combined to form a measure of

*maliciousness* ( $\alpha = .88$ ). Principal components analysis revealed a single factor solution for the measure of *maliciousness*. Next, I multiplied each *Degree of Envy* response by *maliciousness* scores to create a weighted measure of *Degree of Malicious Envy*.

***Injustice.***

An established scale consisting of six items ( $\alpha = .84$ ) was included next to measure perceptions of *injustice* (Smith et al., 1994). Items included: “It seemed unfair that the person I envied started out in life with certain advantages over me” and “It seemed unfair that the person I envied had advantages over me because of lucky circumstances.” These scales were anchored by “not at all characteristic of me” and “strongly characteristic of me” on a nine-point Likert-type scale. This measure offers a second measure of *malicious envy*. I chose to include it because it has been used in prior research. However, it is limited in so far as it uses specific *causes* that may confound results.

***Demographics.***

Participants were asked their age and gender. In addition, I asked for information about: (1) the nature of the relationship with the person they were envious of (ie. stranger, casual acquaintance, close friend, subordinate, peer, boss, or other), (2) when the envious event occurred, (3) type of organization where they worked, (4) job title, (5) length of employment at the time the event occurred, and (6) how long they worked there after the event occurred.

### ***Perceived Causes.***

This section began with the open-ended question “What do you think caused the feelings of envy?” Below the question was sufficient space for respondents to write down their perceptions of what caused their feelings of envy. This question was followed by 34 7-point Likert-type scales developed from categories created in Study One to assess perceived *causes for envy*. Respondents’ descriptions were rephrased to form Likert-type items for the Study Two questionnaire. For example, one respondent said, “I had a justifiable righteous indignation at withdrawn promises given to someone else.” This statement was rewritten for the item to read: “I was envious because management promised me something and gave it to someone else.” Two or more items were constructed to measure each of the most commonly occurring categories. All items on the seven-point Likert-type scale were anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree.” This measure included categories such as unfair, promotions, and lack of skills. Examples of each of these categories include: “I was envious because the situation was unfair,” “The person I was envious of received a promotion that I wanted,” and “The person I was envious of had better skills than I did.”

### ***Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy.***

The last open-ended question asked participants how they communicatively responded to their feelings of *malicious envy*.

“Describe how you responded to the situation. Please describe any reactions, behaviors or types of communicative responses you engaged in. How did you interact or not interact with the person you envied? (ie. avoided them, complained about them, left my job, etc.).”

After reading this prompt, participants wrote a description of how they responded to their feelings of envy.

The prompt was followed by a series of seven-point Likert-type scales developed from the answers to the open-ended questions in Study One as to how participants responded to their feelings of envy. The 48-item measure consisted of items designed to tap various categories of *responses to malicious envy* based on the inductive analysis from Study One. Respondents' descriptions were rephrased to form Likert-type scales for the questionnaire in Study Two. For example, one respondent in Study One said, "I avoided the person like the plague." The rewritten item in the questionnaire for Study Two said, "I avoided the person I envied." These items were each anchored by "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree." This measure included such categories as complained to manager, quit job, and ignored it. Examples of each of these categories include: "I complained to my manager about the situation," "I quit my job after this incident," and "I ignored the situation." At least two items were constructed to measure each of the major communicative *response* categories.

### ***Generalized Envy.***

The next section included Vecchio's (1995) five-item *Employee Envy* measure ( $\alpha = .76$ ). Sample items include: "I don't imagine I'll ever have a job as good as some that I've seen" and "Most of my co-workers have it better than I do." These five-point Likert-type scales were anchored by "never" and "often."

### ***Hostility.***

Buss and Perry's (1992) eight-item *Hostility* measure was also included ( $\alpha = .86$ ). Participants responded on 5-point Likert-type scales anchored by "extremely uncharacteristic of me" and "extremely characteristic of me." Sample items included "Other people always seem to get the breaks," "I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things," and "At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life."

### ***Contextual Attributes.***

The next section consisted of measures to assess contextual attributes. The first measure was developed specifically for this study to assess *competitive organizational climate*. This scale ( $\alpha = .91$ ) consisted of four 5-point Likert-type items: "I worked in a highly competitive work climate at the time of this envious incident," "My coworkers enjoyed competing with each other," "My company promoted competition among employees," and "Employees in the organization were very competitive." These scales were anchored by "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree." Next, a 10-item measure ( $\alpha = .83$ ) assessed organizational-based self-esteem (OBSE) (Pierce et al., 1989). Items included: "I count at work," "I am valuable at work," and "There is faith in me at work." These items were anchored by "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree" on five-point Likert-type scales. The original anchors and number choices were kept intact for all established measures.

## **RESULTS**

In this section I discuss characteristics of the envious event as well as analyses conducted to probe the research questions described in Chapter One.

### ***Characteristics of Envious Event.***

In addition to age, gender, and ethnicity, participants were asked a series of questions applicable at the time the envious event occurred. First, respondents were asked who they were envious of when the incident occurred. Three hundred twenty-nine (76.69%) responded they were envious of a peer or coworker, 25 (.06%) said they were envious of a casual acquaintance, 24 (.06%) indicated they were envious of a close friend, 21 (.05%) said they were envious of their boss, 10 (.02%) indicated they were envious of “other”, 8 (.02%) indicated they were envious of a subordinate, and 8 (.02%) indicated they were envious of a stranger. Respondents were also asked what year the envious event happened. The median year reported was 2003. The furthest back an incident was reported was 1958 and the most recent was 2005. Participants were then asked how long they had worked at that organization before the event occurred. The median was 547.50 days ( $M = 1021.53$ ,  $SD = 1627.18$ ) with a range of 0-30 years.

### ***Analysis of Research Questions.***

RQ1: What do employees think causes them to feel *malicious envy* at work?

RQ1 was first analyzed by coding the open-ended responses using the same methods I used in Study One. Reliability between coders was .87 on unitization and .94 on categories for *causes of malicious envy* using Holsti’s (1969) coefficient. Results of the inductive analysis in Study Two were similar to results of the inductive analysis conducted in Study One for categories of *causes*. Categories for the most common *causes of malicious envy* that emerged in the inductive analysis along with examples of each category are shown in Table 3.

RQ1 was further analyzed by factor analysis. A factor analysis was conducted on responses to the 34-item *Causes of Malicious Envy* measure to identify underlying dimensions associated with the *causes of malicious envy*. Data were subjected to a principal components analysis using varimax rotation. Results were assessed using minimum eigen values of one and scree plots. An item was considered to load meaningfully on a factor when it loaded at least .60 on that factor with no loading on any other factor being greater than .40. Seven of the original items were dropped due to low factor loadings. A seven factor solution accounting for 69.38% of the variance emerged in the analysis (Table 6).

The first factor (1) was labeled “inadequate” ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Six items loaded on this factor, which included statements such as “I was envious because I was insecure,” “I felt envious because of my own inadequacy,” and “I was envious because I lacked certain skills.” The second factor (2) was labeled “deserved” ( $\alpha = .88$ ). Five items loaded on this factor, which included items such as “The person I was envious of did not deserve what he/she received. I deserved it,” “I was envious because I deserved it more than the person who received it,” and “I was envious because I did a better job than the other person, yet she/he reaped the rewards.” The third factor (3) was labeled “favorites” ( $\alpha = .81$ ). Five items loaded on this factor, including such statements as “I was envious because the boss played favorites,” “I was envious because the other person was favored,” and “I envied his/her close relationship with the boss.” The fourth factor (4) was labeled “credit” ( $\alpha = .87$ ). Three items loaded on this factor, including items such as “The person I was envious of took credit for my work,” “The person I was envious of received praise for my

ideas,” and “The person I was envious of received recognition for my work.” The fifth factor (5) was labeled “unfair” ( $\alpha = .75$ ). Four items loaded on this factor, including such statements as “I was envious because I was not treated fairly,” “I was envious because the situation was unfair,” and “The person I was envious of had an unfair advantage.” The sixth factor (6) was labeled “misled” ( $\alpha = .87$ ). Two items loaded on this factor including “I was envious because management promised me something and gave it to someone else” and “I was envious because what I wanted and was promised was given to someone else.” The seventh factor (7) was labeled “reward” ( $\alpha = .68$ ). Two items loaded on this factor including “The person I was envious of received a pay raise and I didn’t” and “The person I was envious of received a promotion that I wanted.” The first factor accounted for 14.96% of the variance, the second accounted for 12.95%, the third accounted for 10.62%, the fourth accounted for 9.30%, the fifth accounted for 8.95%, the sixth accounted for 6.92%, and the seventh accounted for 5.70%.

Frequencies were also run on the seven factors that emerged from the *Causes of Malicious Envy* measure. Rank order scale of factors for *causes of malicious envy* is shown in Table 7. The first factor was unfair ( $M = 4.46$ ,  $SD = 1.60$ ), the second factor was deserved ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = 1.82$ ), the third factor was favorites ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 1.60$ ), the fourth factor was reward ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 2.04$ ), the fifth factor was misled ( $M = 2.76$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ), the sixth factor was credit ( $M = 2.58$ ,  $SD = 1.75$ ), and the seventh factor was inadequate ( $M = 2.27$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ).

Pearson correlations were also run among the *causes of malicious envy* factors. Results are shown in Table 8. Correlations ranged from .10 to .53. The highest correlation was positive and significant between unfair and deserved ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ).

RQ2: Are perceptions about what *causes* feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace related to strength of *malicious envy*?

RQ2 was analyzed by Pearson correlations to determine associations between the factors that emerged for *causes of malicious envy* and *degree of malicious envy*. *Degree of malicious envy* was significantly and positively correlated with several of the cause factors (Table 9): unfair ( $r = .51, p < .01$ ), deserved ( $r = .48, p < .01$ ), favorites ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ), reward ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ), misled ( $r = .33, p < .01$ ) and credit ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ).

RQ3: How do employees communicatively *respond* when they feel *malicious envy* in the workplace?

RQ3 was first analyzed by coding open-ended responses using the same analytic strategy as I did with the perceived *causes of malicious envy*. Reliability was .88 on unitization and .96 on categories for *responses to malicious envy*. Results of the inductive analysis in Study Two were similar to results of the inductive analysis conducted in Study One for categories of *responses to envy*. Categories for the most common *responses to malicious envy* that emerged in the inductive analysis with examples of each category are shown in Table 4.

RQ3 was also analyzed by factor analysis of the 48 item *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure to determine the underlying dimensions associated with the communicative *responses to malicious envy* categories. Participants' ratings of the 48 items were subjected to a principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Results were

assessed using minimum eigen values of one and scree plots. An item was considered to load meaningfully on a factor when it loaded at least .60 on that factor with no loading on any other factor being greater than .40. Nine of the original items were dropped due to low factor loadings. A nine factor solution accounting for 68.52% of the variance emerged in the analysis (Table 10).

The first factor (1) was labeled “negative other” ( $\alpha = .94$ ). Ten items cleanly loaded on this factor, which included statements such as “I could not stand to be in the same room with the person I envied,” “I cut her/him down to others,” and “I did not help the envied person following the incident.” The second factor (2) was labeled “talk to boss” ( $\alpha = .94$ ). Four items loaded on this factor including statements such as, “I had a discussion with my manager about what happened,” “I asked my manager why the situation occurred,” and “I let my manager know I was not pleased.” The third factor (3) was labeled “commiserate” ( $\alpha = .88$ ). Five items loaded on this factor including items, “I commiserated with sympathetic coworkers about the situation,” “I discussed the situation with others who understood,” and “I complained to others about the situation.” The fourth factor (4) was labeled “negative emotion” ( $\alpha = .84$ ). Six items loaded on this factor including statements such as, “I felt sad after this incident,” “I felt resentful about the situation,” and “I was angry following the incident.” The fifth factor (5) was labeled “anger at job” ( $\alpha = .76$ ). Three items loaded on this factor including “I quit my job after this incident,” “I started looking for a new job after this event,” and “I disliked my supervisor after this incident.” The sixth factor (6) was labeled “notice me” ( $\alpha = .71$ ). Three items loaded on this factor including “I tried to gain management’s approval after

the incident,” “I tried to get management to notice me after the incident,” and “I worked harder following the incident.” The seventh factor (7) was labeled “ignored” ( $\alpha = .62$ ). Three items loaded on this factor: “I suppressed my feelings about the situation,” “I did nothing in response to the envious situation,” and “I ignored the situation.” The eighth factor (8) was labeled “harassed” ( $\alpha = .77$ ). Two items loaded on this factor including “I harassed the person I envied” and “I tried to provoke the person I envied.” The ninth factor (9) was labeled “reassurance” ( $\alpha = .32$ ). Two items loaded on this factor: “I reassured myself the situation was no reflection on me,” and “I got support from friends and family outside of work.” The reliability for the last factor was quite low.

Frequencies were also run on the nine factors that emerged from the *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure. The rank order scale of factors for *responses to malicious envy* is shown in Table 11. The first factor was reassurance (M = 4.41, SD 1.58), the second factor was negative emotion (M = 4.02, SD = 1.53), the third factor was commiserate (M = 4.01, SD = 1.74), the fourth factor was ignored (M = 3.76, SD = 1.37), the fifth factor was notice me (M = 3.33, SD = 1.64), the sixth factor was talk to boss (M = 3.19, SD = 2.17), the seventh factor was anger at job (M = 2.96, SD = 1.84), the eighth factor was negative other (M = 2.76, SD = 1.65), and the ninth factor was harassed (M = 1.59, SD = 1.16).

Pearson correlations were also run among the *responses to malicious envy* factors. Results are shown in Table 12. Correlations ranged from .14 to .58.

RQ4: Does strength of *malicious envy* relate to employees’ choices of communicative *responses* to feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace?

RQ4 was analyzed with data collected from responses to the *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure developed for Study Two and the factors that emerged from the *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure. Pearson correlations were run to determine associations between *degree of malicious envy* and the factors that emerged for *responses to malicious envy*. *Degree of malicious envy* was significantly and positively correlated with several of the *response* factors (Table 13): negative emotion ( $r = .55, p < .01$ ), talk to boss ( $r = .39, p < .01$ ), commiserate ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ), negative other ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ), reassurance ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), and notice me ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ). There was also a negative correlation between *malicious envy* and ignored ( $r = -.11, p < .05$ ).

RQ5: Are feelings of *injustice* related to employees' choices of communicative *responses* to feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace?

RQ5 was analyzed by using Pearson correlations between factors developed in the factor analysis for RQ3 on communicative *responses to malicious envy* and Smith et al.'s (1994) established *Injustice* measure. Smith et al.'s (1994) *Injustice* measure was significantly and positively correlated with several of the *responses to malicious envy* factors (Table 14): negative other ( $r = .32, p < .01$ ), harassed ( $r = .26, p < .01$ ), negative emotion ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .17, p < .01$ ), talk to boss ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ), notice me ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ), and commiserate ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ). A Pearson correlation was also run between Smith et al.'s (1994) *Injustice* scale and *malicious envy*. Results were significant and positive ( $r = .16, p < .01$ ).

RQ6: Are perceptions of *causes* about *malicious envy* related to employees' choices of communicative *responses* to feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace?

RQ6 was analyzed by using Pearson correlations between factors developed in the factor analysis for RQ1 as to the *causes of malicious envy* and factors developed in the factor analysis for RQ3 on *communicative responses to malicious envy*. Several *cause* factors were significantly and positively correlated with several *response* factors (Table 15). The strongest correlations were between the *cause* factor of unfair and the *response* factors of talk to boss ( $r = .45, p < .01$ ), negative emotion ( $r = .43, p < .01$ ), commiserate ( $r = .42, p < .01$ ), and anger at job ( $r = .41, p < .01$ ).

Multiple regression was also used for further analysis. I modeled this analysis after Guerrero and Afifi (1999). In a series of nine analyses, the dependent variables of each individual factor of *communicative responses to malicious envy* were regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors. All of the models were significant except for the regression that included ignored,  $F(7, 377) = 1.64, ns, R^2 = .03$  as a response factor. The significant models included: negative other,  $F(7, 371) = 19.65, p < .001, R^2 = .27$ ; talk to boss,  $F(7, 377) = 20.58, p < .001, R^2 = .28$ ; commiserate,  $F(7, 377) = 14.29, p < .001, R^2 = .21$ ; negative emotion,  $F(7, 377) = 20.14, p < .001, R^2 = .27$ ; anger at job,  $F(7, 377) = 18.72, p < .001, R^2 = .26$ ; notice me,  $F(7, 377) = .14, p < .001, R^2 = .16$ ; harassed,  $F(7, 377) = 6.37, p < .001, R^2 = .11$ ; and reassurance,  $F(7, 377) = .10, p < .001, R^2 = .12$  (see Table 16). Because of significant correlations among predictor variables there was concern about multicollinearity. For each regression I computed the tolerance and variance inflation. Tolerances were less than .20 and variance inflations were greater than four. None of the analyses described exhibited a multicollinearity problem. Bonferonni was used to adjust for the number of tests conducted with a criterion of .01.

In the first simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor negative other (negative behavior directed toward the envied other) was regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The causes of favorites, deserved, inadequate, and credit were significant predictors of the response of negative other  $F(7, 371) = 19.65, p < .001, R^2 = .27$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of playing favorites ( $\beta = .21$ ) contributed most to predicting a negative other response, and that if they felt they deserved something ( $\beta = .19$ ), felt inadequate ( $\beta = .17$ ), and the other received credit ( $\beta = .14$ ) also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .26 indicating 26% of the variance in the negative other response was explained by the model.

In the second simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor talk to boss (talk to their boss about the situation) was regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The causes of unfair, misled, credit, and favorites were significant predictors of the response of talk to boss  $F(7, 377) = 20.58, p < .001, R^2 = .28$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of unfairness ( $\beta = .34$ ) contributed most to predicting a talk to boss response, and that feeling misled ( $\beta = .19$ ), the envied other received credit ( $\beta = .12$ ), and favorites ( $\beta = -.10$ ) were played also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .26 indicating 26% of the variance in the negative other response was explained by the model.

In the third simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor commiserate (commiserate with others) was regressed on the predictor variables of

the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The causes of unfair, deserved, and inadequate were significant predictors of the *response* of commiserate  $F(7, 377) = 14.29, p < .001, R^2 = .21$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of unfairness ( $\beta = .34$ ) contributed most to predicting a commiserate response, and that if they felt they deserved something ( $\beta = .15$ ) and felt inadequate ( $\beta = .10$ ) also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .20 indicating 20% of the variance in the commiserate response was explained by the model.

In the fourth simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor negative emotion (feeling negative emotions about the situation) was regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The causes of unfair and inadequate were significant predictors of the *response* of negative emotion  $F(7, 377) = 20.14, p < .001, R^2 = .27$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of unfairness ( $\beta = .38$ ) contributed most to predicting a negative emotion response, and if they felt inadequate ( $\beta = .24$ ) also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .26 indicating 26% of the variance in the negative emotion response was explained by the model.

In the fifth simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor anger at job (anger directed at the job or organization) was regressed on the predictor variables of *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The causes of unfair, misled, credit, reward, and favorites were significant predictors of the *response* of anger at job  $F(7, 377) = 18.72, p < .001, R^2$

= .26. The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of unfairness ( $\beta = .22$ ) contributed most to predicting the anger at job response, and if they felt misled ( $\beta = .18$ ), the other person received credit ( $\beta = .14$ ), the other person was rewarded ( $\beta = .13$ ), and favorites ( $\beta = .11$ ) were played also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .24 indicating 24% of the variance in the anger at job response was explained by the model.

In the sixth simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor notice me (attempts to get others to notice them) was regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The *causes* of inadequate, favorites, and reward were significant predictors of the *response notice me*  $F(7, 377) = .14, p < .001, R^2 = .16$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of being inadequate ( $\beta = .19$ ) contributed most to predicting the notice me response, and if they felt favorites ( $\beta = .15$ ) were played and the other person received a reward ( $\beta = .11$ ) also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .14 indicating 14% of the variance in the notice me response was explained by the model.

In the seventh simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor harassed (harassed the envied person) was regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The *cause* of inadequate was a significant predictor of the *response harassed*  $F(7, 377) = 6.37, p < .001, R^2 = .11$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of being inadequate ( $\beta = .21$ ) contributed most to predicting the harassed response and if they felt they deserved ( $\beta = .18$ ) something the other received

also contributed to this prediction. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .09 indicating 9% of the variance in the harassed *response* was explained by the model.

In the eighth simultaneous regression analysis, the *response to malicious envy* factor reassurance (reassures self or seeks reassurance from others) was regressed on the predictor variables of the *causes of malicious envy* factors: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. The *cause* of unfair was the only significant predictor of the *response* reassurance  $F(7, 377) = .10, p < .001, R^2 = .12$ . The beta weights presented in Table 16 suggest that perceptions of unfairness ( $\beta = .23$ ) contributed most to predicting the reassurance *response*. The adjusted  $R^2$  value was .10 indicating 10% of the variance in the reassurance *response* was explained by the model.

RQ7: Is a *competitive organizational climate* related to employees' choices of communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace?

RQ7 was analyzed by computing Pearson correlations between responses to my measure of working in a *competitive organizational climate* and communicative *responses to malicious envy* factors. The *Competitive Organizational Climate* measure was significantly and positively correlated with several of the *responses to malicious envy* factors (Table 17): notice me ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ), negative emotion ( $r = .23, p < .01$ ), negative other ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), talk to boss ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .18, p < .01$ ), reassurance ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ), harassed ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ), and commiserate ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ). The *response* factor of ignored was not significantly correlated with *competitive organizational climate*. Pearson correlations were also run between the *Competitive Organizational Climate* measure and *malicious envy*. Results were significant and positive ( $r = .18, p < .01$ ).

RQ8: Is there a relationship between *OBSE* and how people communicatively *respond* to their feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace?

RQ8 was analyzed by calculating Pearson correlations between responses to the *OBSE* (organizational-based self-esteem) measure (Pierce et al., 1989) and factors that emerged from the factor analysis on RQ3 on communicative *responses to malicious envy*. The *OBSE* measure was significantly and negatively correlated with several of the *responses to malicious envy* factors (Table 18): anger at job ( $r = -.19, p < .01$ ), harassed ( $r = -.16, p < .01$ ), and negative other ( $r = -.12, p < .05$ ).

Pearson correlations were also run on the *OBSE* measure and *malicious envy*. Results were not significant.

RQ9: Is there a relationship between *hostility* and communicative *responses* to feelings of *malicious envy*?

RQ9 was analyzed by computing Pearson correlations between Buss and Perry's (1992) established *Hostility* measure, and factors that emerged from the factor analysis performed on RQ3 about the communicative *responses to malicious envy*. The *Hostility* measure was significantly and positively correlated with several of the *responses to malicious envy* factors (Table 19): negative other ( $r = .34, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), negative emotion ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), harassed ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ), commiserate ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ), notice me ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ), and talk to boss ( $r = .11, p < .05$ ).

Pearson correlations were also run between the *Hostility* measure and *malicious envy*. Results were significant and positive ( $r = .18, p < .01$ ).

## Chapter Four

### DISCUSSION

Research into *malicious envy* in the workplace is important because *envy* is ubiquitous in organizations (Miner, 1990; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Smith, et al., 1994, 1999; Vecchio, 1995, 2000) and when *malicious* it can be a harmful emotion with devastating consequences (Bedeian, 1995; Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Miner, 1990; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Robinson & Bennet, 1995; Schaubrock & Lam, 2004; Vecchio, 2000). While some previous research has focused on *envy* in the workplace, none has specifically addressed *malicious envy* in the workplace and how people communicatively *respond* to their feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace. For this dissertation I was interested in *causes of malicious envy* in the workplace, how people *respond* to their feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace, and what affects how people *respond* to their feelings of *malicious envy* in the workplace.

Results from Study One and Study Two indicate there are numerous perceived *causes of malicious envy* and *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace. Results from Study Two indicate there are a number of factors that are associated with how people communicatively *respond* to their feelings of *malicious envy*. Those factors include perceived *causes*, strength of *malicious envy*, feelings of *injustice*, a *competitive organizational climate*, a sense of *OBSE*, and feelings of *hostility*. Previous research has focused on associations between workplace *envy* and variables such as competition for

reward, propensity to quit, and *OBSE* (Vecchio 1995, 2000), but not on *malicious envy* or the specific factors that affect communicative *response* choices.

In the following sections of this chapter I will first review and discuss the specific findings from Study One: the inductive analysis and the factor analysis. Next I will discuss the findings from Study Two: the inductive analysis, the factor analysis and the similarities and differences between the factor structures in Study One and Study Two. Then I will discuss the results of each research question in turn. Next, I will review and discuss supplemental findings including gender differences, length of time employed at that job, and additional variables of interest. Finally, I will discuss implications, future directions, and limitations.

### **Review of Findings**

Study One examined *causes* and *responses to envy* in the workplace. These *causes* and *responses* served as a basis for developing scales for Study Two. For Study Two, the focus was narrowed to *malicious envy*. Study Two focused on *causes of malicious envy* in the workplace, communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace, and the factors that affect communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace.

### ***Findings of Study One: Inductive Analysis.***

The inductive analysis in Study One revealed the most common *causes of envy* in the workplace were (a) people's sense of unfairness, (b) people's belief they deserved what the envied other person received, (c) people's sense the envied other was favored, (d) people's belief the envied person had better skills, and (e) people's negative feelings

about themselves. The inductive analysis also revealed that envious people *responded* by (a) ignoring the situation, (b) suppressing their feelings, (c) complaining to their managers or to others, (d) harassing the envied person, (e) avoiding the envied person, (f) working harder, (g) sabotaging the envied person, (h) suppressing their feelings, (i) promoting themselves, and (j) quitting their jobs.

***Findings of Study One: Factor Analysis.***

The factor analysis in Study One indicated people *respond* to their feelings of *envy* by (a) attacking the envied person, (b) becoming more motivated, (c) becoming less committed to their jobs and organizations, (d) engaging in negative self-talk, and (e) promoting themselves and seeking attention from others.

***Findings of Study Two: Inductive Analysis.***

The results of the inductive analysis in Study Two were very similar to the results in Study One for categories of both *causes of malicious envy* and *responses to malicious envy*. The inductive analysis in Study Two revealed participants perceived the most common *causes of malicious envy* in the workplace were (a) the envied other received something they felt they deserved, (b) the boss played favorites, (c) the situation was unfair, (d) the envied person had better skills or abilities than they did, and (e) they were promised something that the envied person received and they did not. The inductive analysis also indicated respondents perceived the most common *responses to malicious envy* were (a) ignoring the situation, (b) avoiding the envied other, (c) complaining to the manager, (d) complaining to others, (e) discussing the situation with the manager, (f)

suppressing feelings, (g) working harder, (h) harassing the envied person, and (i) quitting their jobs.

***Similarities and Differences of Factor Analyses.***

There were some differences in the factor structure for the *Response to Envy* measure in Study One and the *Response to Malicious Envy* measure in Study Two. The factors for *responses to envy* in Study One were attack other, motivated, less committed, negative self, and self-promote. Attack other included negative *responses* directed at the envied person such as “provoked” the envied person and “sabotaged” the envied person. Motivated included positive *responses* such as “worked harder” and “focused on work.” Less committed included such *responses* as “looked for a new job” and became “less committed to the job.” Negative self included negative feelings respondents had about themselves such as “I felt inadequate” and “I felt unworthy.” Self-promote included *responses* that sought attention from others such as “I sought my supervisor’s attention” and “I promoted myself to others.”

The factors for the *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure in Study Two were negative other, talk to boss, commiserate, negative emotion, anger at job, notice me, ignored, harassed, and reassurance. Negative other refers to negative behavior directed at the envied person such as “hostile toward envied other” and “less friendly” to envied other. Talk to boss describes communicating with the boss about the envious event such as “I discussed the situation with my manager” and “I asked my manager why it happened.” Commiserate refers to discussing the situation with others who were sympathetic such as “I discussed it with supportive friends” and “I commiserated with

coworkers.” Negative emotion describes feeling negative emotions about the envious event such as “I felt sad” and “I felt frustrated.” Anger at job includes *responses* reflecting anger directed toward the boss or the company such as “I quit my job” and “I disliked my supervisor.” Notice me includes *responses* designed to get others’ attention such as “I tried to gain management approval” and “I tried to get management to notice me.” Ignored includes *responses* of acting like the situation does not bother the envious people, such as “I suppressed my feelings” and “I pretended it didn’t bother me.” Harassed included such *responses* as “I harassed the person” and “I tried to provoke the person.” Reassurance included *responses* of seeking reassurance from self and others such as “I reassured myself it was no reflection on me” and “I sought support from family and friends.”

Attack other in Study One was similar to negative other in Study Two since both direct negative behavior at the envied other. Less committed in Study One included similar items to anger at job in Study Two, such as “I quit my job,” and “I started looking for a new job.” Self promote in Study One was similar to notice me in Study Two since both refer to attempts to get others to notice them at work. The primary difference between the factor structures in the two studies was one of the factors in Study One described a positive *response*: motivated. The difference may have been due to the focus of each study. The *envy* measure developed for Study One focused on *responses to envy* in general and included both *malicious* and *benign envy*. Since the measure in Study One included both *malicious envy* and *benign envy*, the factors included the positive *response* of “motivated me to work harder.” Motivation is a common *response* for those who experience *benign envy* (Parrott, 1991; Smith, 1991). Parrott (1991) and Smith (1991)

indicate *benign envy* consists of admiration and frequently motivates or inspires people to work harder or do better. In addition, Cohen-Charash (2000) and Lazarus and Cohen-Charash (2001) found a correlation between *benign envy* and employees working harder to improve their competitive position. While Study One focused on *envy* in general, Study Two focused specifically on *malicious envy*. The *Response to Malicious Envy* measure in Study Two was developed from the surveys in Study One that were determined to be *malicious envy* in the inductive analysis by the coders. Thus, the *response to malicious envy* factors that resulted from the factor analysis in Study Two did not include positive factors such as motivated me.

### ***Review of Research Questions.***

In this section I will review and discuss results from each research question in turn.

The first research question asked: *What do employees think causes them to feel malicious envy at work?* The factor analysis in Study Two revealed the following factors for causes of *malicious envy*: inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward. Inadequate refers to feelings of inadequacy such as “I lacked skills” and “I was insecure.” Deserved includes feelings that participants deserved something the envied person received such as “I worked harder” and “I deserved it.” Favorites described a sense that the boss was playing favorites such as “The boss played favorites” and “The other was granted privileges.” Credit included the perception the envied other received credit or recognition for respondents’ work such as “They took credit for my work” and “They received praise for my ideas.” Unfair included perceptions that the situation was

unfair such as “The situation was unfair” and “The other had an unfair advantage.” Misled consisted of feelings the envious people had been promised something that was then given to someone else such as “It was promised to me and given to the other” and “They broke a promise to me.” Reward included perceptions the other received some kind of reward that respondents wanted such as “They got a pay raise” and “They got a promotion.”

Rank ordering of the factors from the factor analysis in Study Two indicated most people felt the situation that caused them to feel *malicious envy* was when they (a) perceived it as unfair, (b) they felt they deserved what the envied person received, (c) they believed the company or boss played favorites, (d) they sensed the envied person was rewarded, (e) they felt they were misled, (f) they perceived the envied person received credit, and (g) they themselves felt inadequate. Correlations were computed among the factors for *causes of malicious envy*. The highest correlation was between unfair and deserved ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ), suggesting that the more respondents felt they deserved what the other received, the more they felt it was unfair. Most of the correlations among *causes* were small, suggesting *causes of malicious envy* may be related, but not so strongly that the seven different factors measured the exact same thing.

The second research question asked: *Are perceptions about what causes feelings of malicious envy in the workplace related to strength of malicious envy?* Correlations were computed between factors that emerged for *causes of malicious envy* and the *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure. Results indicated an association between *causes of malicious envy* and degree of *malicious envy*. Results indicated the more participants felt the envious event was unfair, that they deserved what the other person received, that

favorites were being played in the workplace, that the other was rewarded, that they were misled, and that the other person was given credit, the more they felt *malicious envy*.

Feelings of inadequacy were not associated with *malicious envy*. The lack of association between inadequate and *malicious envy* may be because feelings of inadequacy are primarily thoughts people have about themselves, not about interactions with others.

The third research question asked: *How do employees communicatively respond when they feel malicious envy in the workplace?* The factors for *responses to malicious envy* in Study Two were: negative other, talk to boss, commiserate, negative emotion, anger at job, notice me, ignored, harassed, and reassurance. Rank ordering of the factors from the factor analysis in Study Two indicated most people (a) sought reassurance, (b) felt negative emotion about the incident, (c) commiserated with others, (d) ignored the situation, (e) tried to get others to notice them, (f) talked to their bosses about it, (g) felt anger at the job, (h) directed negative behavior at the envied other, and (i) harassed the envied other. Interestingly, different from previous studies, the most common *responses* were not harmful behaviors directed at the envied other. While some earlier research indicated envious employees were likely to direct harmful behavior toward the envied other (Cohen-Charash, 2000; Duffy & Shaw, 2000; & Vecchio, 2000), the results in Study Two indicate envious employees were more likely to respond in less negative ways such as seeking reassurance and commiserating with others. They were less likely to use more negative *responses* such as harassing the envied other.

Correlations were also computed among the factors of *responses to malicious envy*. The strongest correlations were between negative emotion and commiserate ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ), and between negative emotion and negative other ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ),

suggesting the more participants felt negative emotions in association with the envious event, the more likely they were to commiserate with others and to direct negative behavior toward the envied other. Most of the correlations were small to moderate, which indicated *responses to malicious envy* may be related, but not so strongly that the nine different factors measured the exact same thing. The correlations also suggest that more than one *response to malicious envy* may be used.

The fourth research question asked: *Does strength of malicious envy relate to employees' choices of communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?* Correlations were computed between the factors that emerged from the *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure and responses to the *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure. Results indicated an association between *malicious envy* and communicative *responses to malicious envy*. The results indicated the more they felt *malicious envy*, the more likely they were to respond by feeling negative emotions, talking to their boss about it, commiserating with others, being angry at their job, directing negative behavior at the envied other, seeking reassurance, and trying to get others to notice them. In addition, the more they felt *malicious envy*, the less likely they were to ignore the situation. The correlation between *malicious envy* and harassed was not significant. This is a bit surprising since at face value it would appear that people who feel strong *malicious envy* would be more likely to harass the envied other in response to their feelings of *malicious envy* as compared to people who do not feel strong *malicious envy*. However, very few people indicated harassment was a common response.

The fifth research question asked: *Are feelings of injustice related to employees' choices of communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?*

Correlations were computed between factors that emerged from the *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure and Smith et al.'s (1994) established *Injustice* measure. Results indicated an association between feelings of *injustice* and *malicious envy*. Findings in this analysis suggested that when envious employees feel a sense of *injustice* they are more likely to respond to their envious feelings by directing negative behavior at the envied other, talking to the boss, commiserating with others, feeling negative emotions, feeling anger at their job, trying to get others to notice them, and harassing the envied other. Ignored and reassurance were not significantly correlated with *injustice*. Previous research has indicated an association between *envy* and feelings of *injustice* as well as an association between feelings of *injustice* and the development of *envy* (Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1994, 1999). Miner (1990) also found an association between employees' perceptions of distribution of rewards as unjust and the development of *envy*. However, previous research did not focus on the impact of *injustice* on communicative *responses to malicious envy*. Results in Study Two also indicated a significant association between feelings of *injustice* and degree of *malicious envy*.

The sixth research question asked: *Are perceptions of causes about malicious envy related to employees' choices of communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?* Correlations were computed between factors that emerged from the *Causes of Malicious Envy* measure and the factors that emerged from the *Responses to Malicious Envy* measure. Results indicated numerous associations between several *cause* and *response* factors. Interestingly, the *response* factor of ignored was not significantly correlated with any of the *cause* factors.

A series of nine simultaneous ordinary least squares multiple regressions were also computed using the *causes of malicious envy* factors (inadequate, deserved, favorites, credit, unfair, misled, and reward) as predictor variables and each of the *responses to malicious envy* factors (negative other, talk to boss, commiserate, negative emotion, anger at job, notice me, harassed, reassurance, and ignored) as dependent variables. In the first analysis, the *causes* of playing favorites, respondents felt they deserved something, respondents felt inadequate, and the other received credit predicted the communicative *response* of negative behavior directed toward the envied other. In the second analysis, the *causes* of unfairness, feeling misled, the other received credit, and the boss played favorites predicted the communicative *response* of talk to boss. In the third analysis, the *causes* of unfairness, respondents felt they deserved something, and respondents felt inadequate predicted the communicative *response* of commiserate with others. In the fourth analysis, the *causes* of unfairness and feelings of inadequacy predicted the communicative *response* of negative emotion. In the fifth analysis, the *causes* of unfairness, being misled, someone else received credit, the other was rewarded, and favorites were played predicted the communicative *response* of anger at job. In the sixth analysis, the *causes* of feeling inadequate, favorites were played, and the other was rewarded predicted the communicative *response* of notice me. In the seventh analysis, the *cause* of being inadequate predicted the communicative *response* of harassed the other. In the eighth analysis, the *cause* of unfairness predicted the communicative *response* of seeking reassurance. None of the *cause* factors predicted ignored as a communicative *response*.

The seventh research question asked: *Is a competitive organizational climate related to employees' choices of communicative responses to malicious envy in the workplace?* Correlations were computed between responses to my *Competitive Organizational Climate* measure and communicative responses to malicious envy factors. Correlations indicated a positive association between a *competitive organizational climate* and communicative responses to malicious envy. This analysis suggested the more *competitive* the working *climate*, the more likely a person is to respond to feelings of *malicious envy* by trying to get others to notice them, the more likely they will feel negative emotions, direct negative behavior toward the envied other, talk to the boss, feel anger at their job, seek reassurance, harass the envied other, and commiserate with others. Ignore was not significantly correlated with a *competitive organizational climate*.

Previous research suggests a *competitive organizational climate* is associated with *envy* in the workplace (Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997; Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Martinko & Zellars, 1998; Vecchio, 1995, 2000). Vecchio (2000) found employee *envy* positively correlated with *competitive* reward systems in organizations. In Study Two there was also an association between working in a *competitive organizational climate* and degree of *malicious envy*, suggesting the more *competitive* the working *climate*, the stronger the degree of *malicious envy*.

The eighth research question asked: *Is there a relationship between organization based self-esteem (OBSE) and how people communicatively respond to their feelings of malicious envy in the workplace?* Correlations were computed between factors that emerged in the communicative responses to malicious envy analysis and the Pierce et al. (1989) *OBSE* measure. Results indicated an association between *OBSE* and responses to

*malicious envy*. This analysis indicates the stronger an employee's sense of *OBSE*, the less likely they will respond to feelings of *malicious envy* with anger at their job, harassing the envied other, or directing negative behavior toward the envied other. Correlations were not significant with any of the other *response* factors: talk to boss, commiserate, negative emotion, notice me, ignored, or reassurance. Different from Vecchio (2000) who found a negative correlation between *OBSE* and *envy*, in Study Two, I found there was no association between feelings of *malicious envy* and *OBSE*.

The ninth research question asked: *Is there a relationship between hostility and communicative responses to feelings of malicious envy?* Correlations were computed between Buss and Perry's (1992) established *Hostility* measure and factors from the *communicative responses* analysis. Results indicated an association between feelings of *hostility* and *communicative responses to malicious envy*. This analysis indicated the more *hostility* the envious people feel, the more likely they are to direct negative behavior toward the envied other, feel anger at their job, feel negative emotion, harass the other, commiserate with others, try to get others to notice them, and talk to their boss. Ignored and reassurance were not significantly correlated with *hostility*. There was also a positive association between feelings of *hostility* and feelings of *malicious envy*. Previous research found an association between *hostility* and *envy* (Bedeian, 1995; Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1990). Vecchio (1995) also proposed that *hostility* arises in association with *envy* and may be directed at the envied other or toward the company. The factor in Study Two of negative other reflects negative behavior directed toward the envied other, while the factor anger at job reflects anger directed at the company, job, or supervisor. Anger at job was the seventh factor in order of frequencies and negative other was eighth.

## Supplemental Findings

Additional analyses were completed to address issues that emerged as the dissertation progressed. In this section I will examine (a) gender differences associated with *malicious envy*, (b) association between *length of time* participants were *employed* at the job when the envious event occurred and *malicious envy*, (c) associations between *envy*, *maliciousness*, and *malicious envy*, (d) associations between *maliciousness* and every variable, associations between *envy* and every variable, and (e) correlations between Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure and every variable.

### **Gender.**

Previous research has found mixed results for possible *gender* differences in connection with jealousy and *envy* (Bringle & Buunk, 1985; Vecchio, 1995; White, 1984). Most of the research addresses *gender* differences in regards to jealousy, not *envy*. However, Vecchio (1995) found a correlation between *gender* and employee *envy*, suggesting males reported a stronger degree of *envy* than females. In Study Two, results indicated no significant difference between males and females for *malicious envy*  $t(419) = -.04$ , ns. I also ran independent samples T-tests between *gender* and the *causes of malicious envy* factors and between *gender* and *responses to malicious envy* factors. Results were not significant between *gender* and any of the *cause* factors. Results were significant for *gender* and the *responses to malicious envy* factors of commiserate  $t(417) = -2.42$ ,  $p < .05$ , negative emotion  $t(410) = -3.16$ ,  $p < .01$ , ignored  $t(418) = -2.51$ ,  $p < .05$ , harassed  $t(416) = 4.32$ ,  $p < .001$ , and reassurance  $t(422) = -4.01$ ,  $p < .001$ . Males and females were significantly different on each of those *responses*. The mean difference (-.43) on commiserate indicates women ( $M = 4.16$ ) are more likely than men ( $M = 3.73$ )

to commiserate with others as a *response* to their feelings of *malicious envy*. The mean difference (-.49) on negative emotion indicates women (M = 4.19) are more likely than men (M = 3.70) to feel negative emotion as a *response* to their feelings of *malicious envy*. The mean difference (-.35) on ignored indicates women (M = 3.88) are more likely than men (M = 3.53) to ignore the situation as a *response* to their feelings of *malicious envy*. The mean difference (.58) on harass indicates men (M = 1.95) are more likely than women (M = 1.37) to harass the envied other as a *response* to their feelings of *malicious envy*. The mean difference (-.63) on reassurance indicates women (M = 4.64) are more likely than men (M = 4.01) to seek reassurance as a *response* to their feelings of *malicious envy*.

#### ***Length of Time Employed.***

The correlation between *length of time* participants were employed in that job before the envious incident occurred and when they experienced *malicious envy* was positive and significant ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ). The longer employees were there also positively and significantly correlated with *OBSE* ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ) and significantly and negatively correlated with *hostility* ( $r = -.18, p < .01$ ). This indicates the longer the employees worked there, the stronger their feelings of *malicious envy*, the more likely they were to have a strong sense of *OBSE*, and the less likely they were to feel *hostility*. This finding is a bit contradictory because it would seem that if they felt stronger *malicious envy* they would feel stronger *hostility*, not less. *Length of time* employed was not significant with a *competitive environment* ( $r = -.01, ns$ ) or *injustice* ( $r = -.07, ns$ ). None of the correlations between *length of time* employed and *cause* factors were

significant: inadequate ( $r = -.01$ , ns), deserved ( $r = .05$ , ns), favorites ( $r = .00$ , ns), credit ( $r = -.07$ , ns), unfair ( $r = .08$ , ns), misled ( $r = .09$ , ns), and reward ( $r = .03$ , ns).

Correlations were positive and significant between *length of time* employed and *response* factors of talk to boss ( $r = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and reassurance ( $r = .12$ ,  $p < .05$ ), indicating the longer participants worked there, the more likely they were to talk to their boss about the situation and to seek reassurance. Correlations were not significant between *length of time* and *response* factors of negative other ( $r = .05$ , ns), commiserate ( $r = .01$ , ns), negative emotion ( $r = .09$ , ns), anger at job ( $r = -.08$ , ns), notice me ( $r = -.08$ , ns), ignored ( $r = -.09$ , ns), and harassed ( $r = -.01$ , ns).

### ***Supplemental Correlations.***

I also computed some additional statistical tests to determine correlations between *envy*, *maliciousness*, and *malicious envy*. Not surprisingly, correlations were high and significant between *maliciousness* and *malicious envy* ( $r = .83$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and between *envy* and *malicious envy* ( $r = .81$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Correlations were moderate and significant between *envy* and *maliciousness* ( $r = .36$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

I also computed correlations between *maliciousness* and every variable and between *envy* and every variable for comparison to the correlations between *malicious envy* and each variable. Correlations were very similar between *maliciousness* and each variable as compared to correlations between *malicious envy* and each variable with a couple of exceptions. When correlating the measures of *injustice*, *competition*, *OBSE*, *hostility* and Vecchio's (1995) *Employee Envy* measure with *envy*, the results were very similar to results of correlations with *malicious envy* except for the correlation between

*envy* and *injustice*, which was not significant ( $r = .07$ , ns). The correlation between *malicious envy* and *injustice* was positive and significant ( $r = .16$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and the correlation between *maliciousness* and *injustice* was also positive and significant ( $r = .19$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Results suggest that when respondents perceived an element of *injustice*, they were more likely to experience greater feelings of *maliciousness* and *malicious envy* than when they did not perceive a sense of *injustice*. *Length of time* employed was also positively and significantly correlated with *envy* ( $r = .10$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and *maliciousness* ( $r = .11$ ,  $p < .05$ ), suggesting the longer they were employed at that job, the greater *envy* and *maliciousness* they felt in association with the envious incident.

Correlations between *malicious envy* and factors from *causes of malicious envy* were very similar to correlations between *maliciousness* and factors from *causes of malicious envy*. The correlations between *envy* and factors from *causes of malicious envy* varied a bit from the correlations between *malicious envy* and factors from *causes of malicious envy*, particularly in the order of correlation size. Correlations between *malicious envy* and *causes of malicious envy* factors were as follows: unfair ( $r = .51$ ,  $p < .01$ ), deserved ( $r = .48$ ,  $p < .01$ ), favorites ( $r = .36$ ,  $p < .01$ ), reward ( $r = .35$ ,  $p < .01$ ), misled ( $r = .33$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and credit ( $r = .12$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Inadequate was not significant. Correlations between *envy* and *causes of malicious envy* factors were as follows: deserved ( $r = .43$ ,  $p < .01$ ), reward ( $r = .35$ ,  $p < .01$ ), unfair ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < .01$ ), favorites ( $r = .27$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and misled ( $r = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Credit and inadequate were both not significant.

Correlations between *malicious envy* and factors from *responses to malicious envy* were very similar to correlations between *maliciousness* and factors from *responses*

to *malicious envy*. The correlations between *envy* and factors from *responses to malicious envy* varied a bit from the correlations between *malicious envy* and factors from *responses to malicious envy*, particularly in the order of correlation size. Correlations between *malicious envy* and *responses to malicious envy* factors were as follows: negative emotion ( $r = .55, p < .01$ ), talk to boss ( $r = .39, p < .01$ ), commiserate ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ), negative other ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ), reassurance ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), and notice me ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ). There was also a negative correlation between *malicious envy* and ignored ( $r = -.11, p < .05$ ). The primary difference in correlations between *maliciousness* and *response to malicious envy* factors as compared to correlations between *malicious envy* and *response to malicious envy* factors was correlation size and order of negative other ( $r = .46, p < .01$ ) and talk to boss ( $r = .39, p < .01$ ). In the correlations between *malicious envy* and *response to malicious envy* factors, the correlation size of negative other was fifth in size while talk to boss was second. In the correlations between *maliciousness* and *response to malicious envy* factors negative other was second in size while talk to boss was fifth. Correlation size and order was more varied between *envy* and *responses to malicious envy* factors than between *malicious envy* and *response to malicious envy* factors. Correlations between *envy* and *response to malicious envy* factors were as follows: negative emotion ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ), talk to boss ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ), notice me ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ), commiserate ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ), reassurance ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ), negative other ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ). Harassed and ignored were not significant.

In addition, I correlated Vecchio's (1995) *Employee Envy* measure with *malicious envy*, *maliciousness*, *envy*, and the measures of *Injustice*, *Competitive Organizational*

*Climate*, *OBSE*, and *Hostility*. Correlations were positive and significant between Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure and *envy* ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ) and positive and significant with *malicious envy* ( $r = .10, p < .05$ ). Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure was not correlated significantly with *maliciousness*. Correlations between Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure and the other measures were as follows: *Hostility* ( $r = .52, p < .01$ ), *Injustice* ( $r = .44, p < .01$ ), *OBSE* ( $r = -.30, p < .01$ ), and *Competitive Organizational Environment* ( $r = .17, p < .01$ ). Results suggest an association between Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure and feelings of *hostility*, *injustice*, and a *competitive environment*. Those with a strong sense of *OBSE* were less likely to feel *envy*. Correlations were slightly higher between Vecchio's measure of *Employee Envy* and the measures of *Hostility*, *OBSE*, *Injustice*, and *Competitive Organizational Environment* than between our *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure and the measures of *Hostility*, *OBSE*, *Injustice*, and *Competitive Organizational Climate*.

I also computed correlations between Vecchio's (1995) *Employee Envy* measure and all *cause* and *response* factors. Correlations were positive and significant between Vecchio's (1995) *Employee Envy* measure and the *cause* factors of favorites ( $r = .26, p < .01$ ), reward ( $r = .24, p < .01$ ), inadequate, ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), credit ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ), deserved ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ), unfair ( $r = .16, p < .01$ ), and misled ( $r = .16, p < .01$ ). Correlations were generally higher between *cause* factors and our *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure than between *cause* factors and Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure. All *cause* factors were positive and significant with Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure, while the *cause* factor of inadequate was not significant with our *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure.

I also computed correlations between Vecchio's (1995) *Employee Envy* measure and *response to malicious envy* factors. The following *response* factors were positive and significant: negative emotion ( $r = .25, p < .01$ ), negative other ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), anger at job ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ), harassed ( $r = .17, p < .01$ ), notice me ( $r = .17, p < .01$ ), and commiserate ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ). The *response* factors of talk to boss ( $r = .03, ns$ ), ignored ( $r = .07, ns$ ), and reassurance ( $r = .00, ns$ ) were not significant. Correlations were generally higher between *response* factors and our *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure than between *response* factors and Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure. There was also a negative correlation between our *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure and the *response* factor of ignored. The correlation between our *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure and the *response* factor of harassed was not significant, while the correlation between Vecchio's *Employee Envy* measure and the *response* factor of harassed was significant.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

In this section I will discuss the differences and similarities between findings in this dissertation and findings from previous research. I will first discuss differences and similarities from previous research as associated with *causes of malicious envy*, then in association with *responses to malicious envy*, and finally in association with additional variables. I will also suggest some possible areas for future research.

### ***Causes: Differences and Similarities with Findings in Previous Research.***

No previous empirical studies have focused on *causes of malicious envy*. Results of this dissertation indicated several *causes of malicious envy*: (a) people's sense of unfairness, (b) people's beliefs about deserving something, (c) people's beliefs that the

boss played favorites, (d) people's beliefs the other received a reward, (e) people's perceptions the other was given credit, (f) people's belief they were misled, and (g) people's feelings of being inadequate. All of these factors were associated with *malicious envy* except for inadequate. Inadequate was measured by items such as "I felt envious because of my low self-esteem," "I was envious because I was insecure," and "I felt envious because of my own inadequacy."

The lack of association between *malicious envy* and inadequate was somewhat surprising since according to social comparison theory, *envy* occurs when people feel inadequate or inferior compared to others. The feelings of inadequacy or inferiority associated with *general envy* arise from an unfavorable social comparison, which threatens people's self-esteem and likely leads to feelings of inadequacy and inferiority (Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004; Smith et al., 1999). So, to be consistent with social comparison theory it would seem that *malicious envy* would be associated with inadequate.

There are a couple of possible explanations for why inadequate was a factor, but was not significantly associated with *malicious envy*. First, inadequacy may reflect a more trait-like condition that is consistent over time, while the other *causes* appear to be more situation specific. Inadequate encompasses envious people's feelings about their own shortcomings and not necessarily about the specific situation. All of the other *causes* are external and are associated with the situation or the envied person, while inadequate is internal and associated with feelings of inferiority. Second, inadequate may reflect feelings associated with *general envy*, not *malicious envy*. Previous research suggests that *general envy* contains an element of feeling inferior, which is associated with depression

and sadness (Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993, Smith et al., 1999), while *malicious envy* is associated with *hostility* (Bedeian, 1995; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1990, 1996, 1999). So, while people who experience *malicious envy* may have negative feelings about the situation and others involved in the envious situation, the envious people don't necessarily have negative feelings about themselves. Envious people also don't appear to think the *cause* of their *malicious envy* is due to any shortcomings on their own part. *Malicious envy* does not seem to be associated with internal causes, but only external causes. Examining why there is no association between feeling inadequate and *malicious envy* could be an interesting area to examine further.

The findings of *causes for malicious envy* of deserved, reward, and credit are consistent with what would be expected according to equity theory. According to equity theory, employees compare their perceived ratio of inputs (amount of work performed) and outputs (rewards received) to others' inputs and outputs (Greenberg, 1990, 1998). If employees feel their inputs are greater than others' inputs and their outputs are less than others' outputs, they will experience inequity. So, if employees feel they worked harder and deserved the reward and credit more than coworkers who received the reward and credit, they will likely feel under-rewarded compared to their coworkers and develop *envy* (Greenberg, 1990; Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987; Vecchio, 1995).

Unfairness was the most frequent *cause of malicious envy* in the rank order of factors for *causes of malicious envy*. This is also not surprising since it is consistent with previous research that suggests a sense of unfairness or *injustice* is associated with *malicious envy* (Bedeian, 1995; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Smith,

1991; Smith, et al., 1990, 1994, 1999). Smith (1991) and Smith et al. (1994, 1999) contend that a sense of *injustice* along with associated feelings of *hostility* is the element that creates *malicious envy*, which would remain benign without the sense of *injustice* and associated feelings of *hostility*.

***Responses: Differences and Similarities with Findings in Previous Research.***

The primary *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace included (a) sought reassurance, (b) felt negative emotion about the incident, (c) commiserated with others, (d) ignored the situation, (e) tried to get others attention (notice me), (f) talked to their bosses about it, (g) felt anger at the job, (h) directed negative behavior at the envied other, and (i) harassed the envied other. Most of the *responses to malicious envy* in this dissertation could be considered either positive or negative and as directed outward towards others or inward towards self (Table 20). Those *responses* that could be considered negative and directed outward include negative other, harassed, and anger at job. Those *responses* that could be considered positive and directed outward include talk to boss and commiserate. The *response* that could be classified as negative and directed inward is negative emotion. The *response* that could be considered positive and directed both inward and outward is seek reassurance. This *response* seeks reassurance from others and from self. Other *responses* directed outward include notice me and ignored. Notice me attempts to get the attention and approval of others, so it could be classified as positive or negative depending on which attention-getting communication strategies the envious people use. Ignored could also be considered positive or negative depending on what the envious people are trying to communicate by using that strategy.

Most of these factors are communicative since they are behavioral with communication value. Each factor could be considered as falling into the two types of communicative (behavioral) *responses* as defined by Guerrero et al. (1995): interactive or general behavioral. Negative other directs negative behavior at the envied person and includes such things as “became less friendly” and “avoided the person.” Negative other could be considered an interactive communicative *response* since it includes behaviors that are either face-to-face or actively avoiding face-to-face interactions. Harassed could also be considered communicative since it includes interactive *responses* such as “harassed the envied person” or “provoked the envied person.” Anger at job could be considered a general behavioral communicative *response* since it does not necessarily include face-to-face interaction or avoiding face-to-face interaction. Anger at job includes general behaviors such as “looked for a new job” or “quit my job.” Talk to boss is an interactive communicative *response* and includes items such as “I discussed the situation with my manager” and “I told my manager I was not pleased.” Commiserate is also an interactive communicative *response* since it is face-to-face and includes such behaviors as “commiserated with coworkers” and “discussed it with supportive friends.” Notice me could be considered a general behavioral communicative *response* since it includes items such as “tried to gain management’s approval” and “worked harder.” Ignored could be considered either an interactive communicative *response* or a *response* that is not communicative depending upon the situation. It could be argued that ignoring a situation or a person carries communicative value since the act of ignoring frequently communicates something. For example, in some cases ignoring could be construed as “the silent treatment,” and interpreted as intentionally not responding to someone, which

can communicate such things as feelings of anger or *hostility*. However, someone could also ignore a situation or person because the situation or person is not that important to them and they are not trying to communicate anything. The items from the ignore factor included “I pretended it didn’t bother me,” which is intentionally communicating something to others, and “did nothing,” which is not necessarily communicating anything. Reassurance could also be considered either a communicative or non-communicative *response*. One item included in the reassurance factor was “sought support from family and friends,” which would be considered an interactive communicative *response*. The second item included in the reassurance factor was “reassured myself it was no reflection on me,” which would be considered non-communicative. Negative emotion could be considered non-communicative since it primarily included emotions such as “felt sad,” “felt resentful,” and “felt angry,” which are all internal emotional states. However, if the emotions are expressed to others, such as “I cried,” that would be considered an interactive and communicative *response*.

Some of the *response to malicious envy* factors are consistent with the framework developed for research on exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect (EVLN). Exit is one possible *response* to job dissatisfaction. Exit behaviors include quitting a job, thinking about quitting a job, and looking for a new job (Rusbult et al., 1988). The factor of anger at job is similar to exit and contains two items that are consistent with exit behaviors: “quit job” and “looked for new job.” According to EVLN research, voice as a response to job dissatisfaction includes attempting to improve the situation by talking with supervisors or coworkers (Rusbult et al. 1988). The factor of talk to boss is similar to voice and includes items such as “discussed the situation with the manager” or “asked the manager why the

situation occurred.” Another factor, commiserate includes the item “discussed the situation with others,” which is similar to the voice response to job dissatisfaction of “talking with coworkers.” Another EVLN response to job dissatisfaction is neglect, which allows conditions to deteriorate through doing nothing or reducing work effort (Farrell, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989). The factor of ignore could be considered similar to neglect with items such as “did nothing” and “ignored the situation.” The EVLN response to job dissatisfaction of loyalty is considered either supportive allegiance to the company or “suffering in silence” (Hirschman, 1970; Withey & Cooper, 1989). “Suffering in silence” as an aspect of loyalty could also be considered similar to the factor of ignored, which includes the items “pretended it didn’t bother me” and “suppressed my feelings.” Several of the *response to malicious envy* factors fell outside the EVLN framework including: negative other, negative emotion, notice me, harassed, and reassurance.

The *response to malicious envy* factors of anger at job and negative other are also consistent with Vecchio’s (1995) model of *envy*, which suggests that *hostility* and resentment are the primary emotional *responses* associated with *envy*. Vecchio indicates the *responses* of *hostility* and resentment are likely directed at either the envied person or at the person or company responsible for the rival’s gain. The factor of negative other includes items of negative behavior directed toward the envied other such as “was hostile toward the other,” “resented the other,” and “became less friendly.” The factor of anger at job included items such as “disliked supervisor” and “quit job,” which are examples of directing *hostility* toward the person or company responsible for the rival’s gain.

A couple of surprising results that were different from either previous research or what might be expected included (a) positive *responses to malicious envy* were more likely than negative *responses*, (b) the *response of harass* was not associated with *malicious envy*, (c) the *cause of unfair* was not associated with the *responses of negative other or harass*, and (d) no *causes of malicious envy* factors predicted the *response of ignored*.

Previous research indicates that *responses* to envious feelings in the workplace are frequently negative or harmful (Cohen-Charash, 2000; Duffy and Shaw, 2000; Miner, 1990; Vecchio, 2000), while findings in this dissertation indicate negative *responses* are not necessarily the first or most common *response to malicious envy*. Reassurance was the most common *response* factor to *malicious envy*. This might seem somewhat contradictory given that previous studies focused on *general envy*, not *malicious envy*, and it would seem as though negative *responses* would more likely be associated with *malicious envy* than *general envy*.

There are several possible explanations for why results indicated people *responded* positively to *malicious envy* more frequently than *responded* negatively. First, not many participants described extremely negative *responses* to their feelings of *malicious envy* in the open-ended question in Study One. Scales were developed from the open-ended questions in Study One for Study Two. Since the items were generated from the most common *responses*, those did not include *responses* such as “sabotaged the other” and “took revenge on the other.” However, in the scales in Study One we included a number of extremely negative *responses*, which resulted in one strong negative factor in the factor analysis (attack other). This factor included items such as “I degraded the

other,” “I got even with the other,” and “I took revenge on the other.” It may be easier to respond to negative items on a scale than to write descriptive negative experiences from people’s own lives due to social desirability and not wanting to admit to those *responses* (Babbie, 2001; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

Impression management could be another possible explanation for the positive *responses*, so as to create a positive image at work and not look bad to management and coworkers. *Malicious envy* is not considered a positive emotion and most people want to conceal it and do not want to admit to feeling it (Parrott, 1991; Vecchio, 2000).

Impression management involves behaviors people engage in to strategically manage others’ impressions of them (Goffman, 1959; Lewis & Neighbors, 2005). In organizations, impression management research indicates employees want to be viewed favorably and not negatively (Giacalone & Rosenfeld 1989; Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 2002; Russ, 1991). It is possible employees who want to be viewed favorably by their organizations would choose to create a good impression by engaging in behaviors such as talk to the boss as opposed to harass the envied other, even if they have negative feelings about the envied other and wish they could harass them. It may also be a consideration that the costs of a negative *response* might outweigh the benefits. If the employees are still hoping for a promotion, raise, or recognition they may determine that responding negatively could hurt future chances while responding in a more positive manner may enhance future opportunities.

Another explanation for positive rather than negative *responses* could be loyalty to the company. According to exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect (EVLN) research, loyal employees wait for things to improve (Farrell, 1983; Hirschman, 1970; Rusbult et al.,

1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989). Waiting could include either behaviors reflecting allegiance to the company or behaviors reflecting resignation to the situation. Employees may be satisfied with their jobs overall with the exception of this particular envious incident. Thus, the employees may continue to remain loyal to the company, especially if they have worked there a long time. Employees may also consider the investment they have already made in the company and determine it is in their best interest to stay and to *respond* in more positive rather than negative ways to this particular incident.

Finally, a fourth possible reason for employees using more positive *responses* than negative *responses* is the company's cultural norms for emotion display. Perhaps it is not acceptable in most organizations to display negative emotional behavior, even when people feel negative emotion (Cohen-Charash, 2000; Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987, 1989; Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988). Organizational norms govern which emotions are appropriate or inappropriate to display on the job (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). Extensive research has been conducted into emotional display and organizational cultural norms. Organizational norms greatly influence what emotions people display on the job. Vecchio (1995) also suggests employees who are promoted to higher levels of management do not display *envy* because they want to appear professional. Why people *respond* positively to their feelings of *malicious envy* deserves further study and could be an interesting topic of research to pursue in the future.

Another surprise result was that the *response* of harass was not associated with *malicious envy*. Harass was measured by items such as "I harassed the person I envied" and "I tried to provoke the person I envied." It seems counter-intuitive that harass would not be associated with *malicious envy*. However, results in this dissertation indicate that

*malicious envy* is associated with all *responses* except harass. Previous research suggests likely *responses to malicious envy* include strong negative *responses* such as degrading the envied others, sabotaging their work and reputation, and interfering with their performance (Cohen-Charash, 2000; Salovey & Rothman, 1991; Vecchio, 1995, 2000). Another somewhat unexpected finding was that the *cause* of unfair was not associated with the *responses* of negative other and harass. Unfair predicted both negative emotion and anger at job. Although respondents felt negative emotion toward the envied other, it appears they did not express it or direct their negative feelings toward the envied other. Possible explanations for both harass not being associated with *malicious envy* and unfair not being associated with negative other and harass are likely to be the same as why people would *respond* positively to their feelings of *malicious envy* more often than negatively: impression management, loyalty, and organizational cultural norms for displays of emotion.

Another surprising result: no *causes for malicious envy* predicted the *response* of ignored, even though it is a common *response to malicious envy*. The *response* of ignored is also not associated with any of the other variables in this dissertation, except for *malicious envy* ( $r = -.11, p < .05$ ) and *gender* ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ). Other variables include *injustice, hostility, competitive organizational climate, organization based self-esteem (OBSE), and length of time* of employment. This lack of association between ignored and all the variables except for *malicious envy* and *gender* is somewhat unexpected. While ignored is associated with *malicious envy*, it is also not associated with any of the *causes*. Ignored is a more passive *response* than the other *responses to malicious envy*. Perhaps ignored is a more cognitive strategic *response* than the other *responses*. Ignored could be

intended for several different purposes. There may be other variables not examined in this dissertation that influence whether or not people respond by ignoring the situation.

Maybe there was no association between ignore and *causes* because most of the *causes* were about the situation or other person, not about the envious people themselves. Ignore could be a *response* when the situation genuinely does not bother the envious people or they want to convey the impression that it does not bother them. This would be another interesting area for future research: to examine why there was no association between the *causes* and the *response* of ignore.

There was a positive association between a sense of *injustice* and negative *responses to malicious envy*, which was not surprising. The most likely *responses to malicious envy* when there was a sense of *injustice* included negative other, harassed, negative emotion, and anger at job. The least likely *responses* were more positive: talk to boss, notice me, and commiserate. This result suggests that when there is a perceived element of *injustice* involved the *responses* are more likely to be negative than positive. This is also the case when respondents felt *hostility*. The most likely *responses to malicious envy* in association with *hostility* are negative other, anger at job, negative emotion, and harass. Again the least likely *responses* were more positive. This result is not surprising. Previous research indicates *hostility* is associated with *malicious envy* (Bedeian, 1995; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Smith, 1991; Smith et al. 1990, 1994, 1996). *Hostility* is also associated with *injustice* in previous research (Heider, 1958; Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1986; Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1994, 1996, 1999). *Hostility* and *injustice* were also positively associated in this dissertation. It appears that whenever a sense of *injustice* or feelings of

*hostility* arise in association with *malicious envy*, *responses* are more likely to be negative than positive.

***Additional Variables: Gender.***

There were no *gender* differences on *malicious envy* in this study. There was also no association between *gender* and *causes*. However, unlike previous studies, there were some gender differences in *responses to malicious envy*. Results on *gender* differences for *responses to malicious envy* are what might be expected according to some previous research on *gender* differences: women are more likely than men to commiserate, feel negative emotion, ignore the situation, and to seek reassurance in *response* to feelings of *malicious envy*. Men are more likely than women to harass the envied other. This is consistent with some previous research suggesting that men communicate to be competitive, while women communicate to maintain relationships and be nurturing (Fischer, 1993; Tannen, 1990, 1994). Taylor (2002) suggests that women instinctively have the urge to nurture or to “tend and befriend” others, especially in times of need or stress, while men tend to *respond* with a “flight or fight” *response*. Taylor considers the nurturing urge to be a female trait, not a male trait. Some other research suggests that women communicate in the workplace to gain social and interpersonal success, while men communicate in the workplace to be competitive or gain exploitive success (Buss, Larsen, Westen, & Semmelroth, 1992; Vecchio, 1995). In the emotion literature some research suggests men are more likely to express anger and hostile emotions than women (Fischer, Mosquera, Van Vianen, & Manstead, 2004; LaFrance & Banaji, 1992). Additionally, research suggests different emotion display rules apply to men and women

in the workplace. Women talk about feelings more than men and express socially acceptable emotion displays more than men (Brody, 1985). Men are more likely to express anger and aggression than women (Fischer, 1993; Coats & Feldman, 1996).

***Additional Variables: Competitive Organizational Climate.***

A *competitive organizational climate* was positively associated with *malicious envy* and with all *responses to malicious envy*. These results are similar to other previous research (Cohen-Charash, 2000; Vecchio, 2000). Notice me was the strongest correlation with *competitive organizational climate* among the *response to malicious envy* factors. Notice me was measured by items such as “I tried to gain management’s approval after the incident,” “I tried to get management to notice me after the incident,” and “I worked harder following the incident.” This makes sense since it is likely that people who are competing with each other will do things to try to draw attention to themselves. Findings are similar to Vecchio’s (2000) results, which also found *envy* to be positively associated with *competitive* reward systems. Baron and Neuman (1996) argue that organizations create environments that promote competition among employees for rewards and scarce resources. Duffy and Shaw (2000) posit that social comparison in organizations creates competition among employees. Cohen-Charash (2000) also found a positive association between *envy* and actions designed to improve employees’ *competitive* positions. It would be interesting to study *competitive environments* in organizations further to examine whether *competitive environments* promote healthy employee relationships and productivity or destructive behavior, especially as associated with *malicious envy*.

***Additional Variables: OBSE.***

Not surprisingly, *organization based self-esteem (OBSE)* was negatively associated with anger at job, harass, and negative other. *OBSE* addresses feelings of self-worth and self-esteem specifically related to “working on the job.” It would be expected that those employees with strong feelings of self-esteem on the job would not likely *respond* to feelings of *malicious envy* by directing anger at their jobs, harassing fellow envied employees, or directing negative behavior toward the envied other. Employees with a strong sense of *OBSE* view themselves as worthwhile, effective, and important within their organizations (Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Pierce et al., 1989). Thus, they would not be too likely to *respond to malicious envy* by directing negative behavior toward the company or coworkers. The most negative *responses to malicious envy* were most strongly and negatively associated with *OBSE*. However, I found no association between *malicious envy* and *OBSE*. This result is different than Vecchio’s (2000) findings that there was a negative association between *envy* and *OBSE*. It would seem more likely there would be a negative association between *malicious envy* and *OBSE* than between *general envy* and *OBSE*. *Malicious envy* is more negative than *general envy*, which would seem more likely to indicate a negative association with *OBSE*.

***Additional Variables: Length of Time Employed.***

Results indicate the longer employees had worked at the organization where the envious event took place, the stronger sense of *OBSE* they felt. This is not surprising since if people are employed somewhere for a long time, they likely feel valued and important in their jobs, which is consistent with *OBSE* research (Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Pierce et al., 1989). Results also indicated the longer employees worked at their

organizations, the less *hostility* they felt. This would also make sense if the envious employees considered themselves to be valued members of the workforce. However, a surprising result was the finding that the longer employees worked at their organizations, the stronger their feelings of *malicious envy*. This seems inconsistent since *hostility* and *malicious envy* are positively correlated with each other and since *hostility* is negatively correlated with the *length of time* employees worked at their place of employment. It would seem as if employees should experience less *malicious envy* the longer they were employed at that organization, or conversely, they would feel stronger *hostility* along with the *malicious envy*.

In addition, findings indicate the longer the employees worked at their jobs, the more likely they were to talk to their bosses about the situation or seek reassurance. This also would be consistent with stronger feelings of *OBSE* and a lack of *hostility*. None of the other *responses to malicious envy* were associated with *length of time* of employment before the envious event occurred.

In addition, partial correlations were computed controlling for *length of time* participants were employed at their jobs when the envious event occurred with all of the variables: *cause of malicious envy* factors, *response to malicious envy* factors, *malicious envy*, *injustice*, *competitive organizational environment*, *OBSE*, *hostility*, and Vecchio's (1995) *Employee Envy* measure. None of the correlations were significantly different from the correlations obtained when *length of time* they were employed before the envious event occurred was not controlled.

Although not the most common responses to *malicious envy* in the workplace, results also indicate people may quit their jobs, harass others, experience negative

emotion, direct negative behavior toward others, and become angry at their jobs, companies, and supervisors. These are all serious consequences to *malicious envy* in the workplace and should not be ignored. These *responses* are consistent with previous findings (Duffy & Shaw, 2000; Vecchio, 2000).

Future studies should focus on the relationship between *malicious envy* and specific organizational outcomes, such as productivity and turnover. It might appear that people who experience strong *malicious envy* could be dissatisfied and choose to leave the organization. However, it could also be argued that *malicious envy* encourages productivity by sparking competition among workers. Additional studies could also explore what leads people to use one communicative *response* over another. Why do some people talk to their boss about the situation while others harass the envied person? Do some people *respond* by both talking to their boss and harassing the envied person? Also, what specific factors about the situation cause one person to suppress their feelings and another to direct negative behavior at the envied other? Another area for further exploration could include comparing communicative *responses to malicious envy* to communicative *responses to benign envy*. Another future study could examine the specific events and situations that trigger *malicious envy* in the workplace.

Two streams of literature can be considered as further contexts for the results of this dissertation: emotions in the workplace and organizational justice. Emotions are powerful and affect how people communicate, interact and develop relationships in the workplace, how they perform their jobs, and ultimately promote positive or negative *responses* to organizational goals (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000; Larsen, Diener, & Lucas, 2002; Lord & Kafner, 2002; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Emotions in the workplace can

include some of the most positive emotions and the most negative emotions. For example, people can feel extreme happiness when accomplishing a goal at work or extreme unhappiness when failing to reach a goal.

Affective Events Theory (AET) examines *causes* and consequences of emotion at work and the connection between emotions and subsequent behavior (Glomb, Steel, & Arvey, 2002; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). According to AET, emotions are considered reactions to affective events that provide emotional shocks to people. An affective event is an incident that triggers an appraisal of a job related event and an emotional reaction to that event (Basch & Fisher, 1998). These affective events trigger different emotions, which are associated with certain behavioral *responses*. Negative affective events lead to negative emotions on the job, and positive affective events lead to positive emotions on the job, which in turn contribute to attitudes about the workplace and work behaviors (Lord & Kafner, 2002; Glomb et al., 2002; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). *Malicious envy* could be considered a negative emotion triggered by an event with associated *responses*, such as talking to others about the event or directing negative behavior toward others.

Studying the association between emotions and behavior is important for organizations. Emotions can influence behavior on the job and also impact such things as job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (Larsen et al., 2002). Affective states and emotion affect employees' perceptions of their work, decisions they make at work, perceptions of their organizations, and their behavior. If employees are not happy it likely shows up in their work behavior (Hartel, Zerbe, & Ashkanasy, 2005).

In this dissertation we found that *malicious envy* is a powerful negative emotion that is associated with different communicative *responses*. Communicative *responses to*

*malicious envy* can range from strongly negative *responses* such as harassing others and quitting the job to more positive *responses* such as discussing the situation with others. How people experience and *respond to malicious envy* has both positive and negative implications for organizations. Certain organizational practices and structures may provoke *envy*, which is not necessarily bad. The inherent competitive nature of most organizations likely incites *envy* to motivate employees to do better and achieve more, thus benefiting the organization and its goals at the same time (Tangney & Salovey, 1999). It could be argued that *envy* sparks productivity, healthy competition, and can contribute to achieving organizational goals. However, *envy* can also provoke negative *responses*, which can be counter-productive to organizations. Perhaps it is important to examine the dysfunctional *responses to malicious envy* and what triggers those *responses*. There may be ways organizations can help employees learn to better deal with and express negative emotions such as *malicious envy* in ways that are more productive and less harmful to others and the organization.

While people experience the full range of emotions from positive to negative in the course of daily work life, individuals do not respond to those emotions in exactly the same way. Understanding how people react and deal with emotions on the job, especially negative ones could contribute to understanding job performance and interpersonal relationships on the job (Muchinsky, 2000). Careers and jobs consume a substantial amount of time and energy. People frequently spend more time on their jobs with coworkers than at home with their families. Because people spend so much of their lives involved with their jobs it is important to understand the role of emotions in the

workplace and how emotions affect that part of people's lives. Especially since negative emotions can interfere with how people feel about others, themselves, and their jobs.

In addition to emotions in the workplace, another context for this dissertation's findings is in the area of organizational justice. This dissertation found that perceptions of an *injustice* influence communicative *responses to malicious envy* more negatively than when there is no perception of an *injustice*. Perceptions of an *injustice* are based on an assessment as to whether outcomes, procedures, and systems are fair or not. Outcomes include such things as pay raises and promotions. Assessments are also made about procedures used to make decisions about outcomes and the systems in which decisions or actions occur (Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992). When employees perceive they are the victims of an *injustice*, negative emotions arise such as anger and *hostility*, which are followed by a desire to make things even (Glomb et al., 2002). The process of responding to an *injustice* begins with naming the *injustice* or recognizing that it occurred. The next step in responding to an *injustice* is determining who to blame for the *injustice*, which could include the person, procedure, or system considered responsible for the *injustice*. Then a decision is made about what to do, if anything, in *response* to the perceived *injustice*. A target of an *injustice* is more likely to *respond* to it if they believe the perpetrator performed the *injustice* intentionally and it was within the perpetrator's control whether to perform the *injustice* or not.

Previous research indicates *hostility* arises with *envy* when people perceive that an *injustice* has occurred (Smith et al., 1994). As the results in this dissertation indicate, the stronger the sense of *injustice*, the more *hostility* and *malicious envy*, the more negative the communicative *response*. This dissertation found the strongest negative *responses to*

*malicious envy* occurred when *hostility* and a sense of *injustice* were associated with *malicious envy*. Those negative *responses* included the following factors: negative other, harassed, negative emotion, and anger at job. These are all negative *responses* that are destructive to self, others, and the company. Further, the emotions of anger and *hostility* along with perceptions of *injustice* may sometimes result in deviant behavior directed at coworkers, supervisors, or the company (Fitness, 2000; Grandey & Brauburger, 2002). Those who become aggressive and even violent in the workplace often see themselves as recipients of an *injustice* (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998).

There are several practical applications for organizations from this dissertation. First, organizations should try to avoid perpetrating blatant *injustices*. Second, they should also be able to explain and justify why decisions were made and communicate those decisions in a way that lessens perceptions of *injustice* and *hostility*. Third, another thing to consider is decision making practices and the impact of those processes on employees. Fourth, practitioners might also want to consider what events trigger positive versus negative *responses*. Fifth, organizations could strive to provide a way for employees to manage and express negative emotions such as *malicious envy*, *hostility*, frustration, and disappointment in less harmful ways than engaging in negative *responses* and behaviors (Sheppard et al., 1992). Management may find ways to assist employees in *responding* to their negative emotions in more constructive ways. Sixth, organizations may well keep in mind that people who believe they were treated unfairly have poorer work attitudes, and engage in behaviors that contribute to lower job performance (Cropanzano, Weiss, Suckow, & Grandey, 2000). Some of those work attitudes include organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover (Cropanzano et al., 2000).

Behaviors include performance, withdrawal, organizational citizenship behavior, and theft (Brockner, & Weisenfeld, 1996; Cropanzano et al., 2000). Seventh, negative emotions also contribute to more conflict in the workplace. Practitioners may also want to focus on conflict management rather than allowing or encouraging destructive behavior and *responses* to emotions. Eighth, another area of concern for organizations: more violence is occurring in workplaces directed at supervisors, coworkers, or the companies. Finally, another area managers might want to consider is organizational culture. Some cultural norms may consider emotions such as *hostility* and *malicious envy* and negative *responses* such as negative other as acceptable. Perhaps organizations could encourage cultural norms that make dysfunctional behavior unacceptable. This dissertation is the beginning of a framework for predicting communicative *responses* to negative emotions such as *malicious envy* in the workplace.

#### **LIMITATIONS**

While this study contributes to our understanding of communicative *responses* to *malicious envy* in the workplace, there were several limitations. One limitation is the use of self-report data in remembering an incident of *envy* as well as how one responded to it. People may not remember as clearly as they think they do, and thus the data may not be entirely reliable. Another limitation with self-report is social desirability. Social desirability may also have impacted how respondents answered the questions on this particular topic. People may want to look good when they answer a question and that can influence how they answer questions, especially if the topic is negative (Babbie, 2001; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). *Envy*, especially *malicious envy*, is not considered a desirable

emotion and people frequently try to conceal it (Vecchio, 1995). Another limitation with this dissertation: a couple of the measures, such as the *Subjective Injustice Belief* measure in Study One and the reassurance factor in Study Two had low reliabilities. This is likely due to only including two items from the *Subjective Injustice Belief* measure in Study One and only two items loaded on the reassurance factor in Study Two. However, they did not load on any other factors. It is also difficult to tap characteristics of emotions such as *envy* for several reasons. Sometimes more than one emotion is experienced at the same time and there can be some overlap between emotions, such as a combination of resentment and hostility. Some emotions are similar and it can be difficult to distinguish which one is being measured (Berscheid, 1983). The nature of emotion is dynamic and complex, not static with a clear starting and ending point. Another issue in measuring emotions: with self-report it can be difficult to determine whether emotional experience or emotional expression is being measured (Brody & Hall, 1993). Rumination may also affect the intensity of the recalled emotion. More intense emotions are easier to remember, which could bias what is remembered (Thomas & Diener, 1990). There are also differences in measuring global and discrete emotions. Discrete measures for specific emotions may be connected to specific circumstances (LaFrance & Banaji, 1992). This dissertation also focused on perceived *causes* and *responses* to a specific episode of *envy* in the workplace, not to generalized feelings of *envy* in the workplace. This dissertation reveals associations between *causes of malicious envy* and communicative *responses to malicious envy* as well as correlations between *malicious envy* and other variables. However, this dissertation does not show direct causality between *causes* and *responses* and between other variables and *malicious envy*.

Determining if there is a causal relationship between *causes of malicious envy* and communicative *responses to malicious envy* and between *malicious envy* and other variables explored in this dissertation could be another interesting area of study in the future.

## CONCLUSION

Previous research into workplace envy focused on (a) developing an instrument to measure *envy* in the workplace (Vecchio, 1995), (b) the association between workplace *envy* and individual differences (self-esteem, Machiavellianism), work unit attributes (autonomy, competitive reward, supervisory considerateness), and personal *response* variables (sense of control, OBSE, and propensity to quit) (Vecchio, 2000), and (c) impact of workplace envy on group effectiveness (Duffy & Shaw, 2000). This dissertation contributes to this body of research by examining specific factors that impact communicative *responses* to feelings of what I labeled as *malicious envy* in the workplace. Previous research has not focused on *malicious envy* or specific factors that affect choice of communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace.

This dissertation makes several contributions to the literature on *envy* in the workplace by focusing on several areas not previously studied: (a) it focuses on *malicious envy* in the workplace as opposed to *general envy*, (b) it includes a new *Degree of Malicious Envy* measure developed for this dissertation, (c) it examines what envious people perceive *causes* their feelings of *malicious envy*, (d) it explores communicative *responses* to feelings of *malicious envy*, and (e) it examines some factors that affect choices of communicative *responses to malicious envy*. Results from Study Two indicate

the factors that affect choice of communicative *responses to malicious envy* in the workplace include: perceived *causes*, strength of *malicious envy*, a sense of *injustice*, a *competitive organizational environment*, *OBSE*, and a sense of *hostility*. Some of these variables have been studied in previous research in connection with *envy* (Miner, 1990; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Smith, et al., 1994, 1999; Vecchio, 1995, 2000), but not in connection with communicative *responses to malicious envy*.

This dissertation extends what is already known about *envy* and reactions to *envy* in the workplace. Further studies into *malicious envy* in the workplace could continue to reveal significant information that affects both employees and ultimately their organizations. Hopefully this study will point to a new and fruitful direction to study *malicious envy* and its consequences in the workplace.

Table 1: *Study One: Organizations & Job Titles*

<u>Type of Organization</u>	<u>Job Title Examples</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>
Engineering	Design Engineer Hydrogeologist Senior Product Manager	42
Education	Principal Education Diagnostician Elementary School Teacher	32
High Technology	Senior Business Analyst Computer Programmer Senior Management	29
Government	Vice President Government Relations Assistant Director Program Director	24
Financial	Financial Analyst Accountant Senior Investment Advisor	21
Sales/Retail	Import/Export Music Sales Electrical Parts	19
Media	Radio Promotions Publishing Executive Editor Public Relations	17
Food Industry	Head Waiter Clerk Catering Cook	16
Research	Biochemical Research Assistant Cost Analyst Earth Scientist	14
Health/Medical	Pharmacist Nursing Supervisor Vice Presidents Sales and Marketing	14

<u>Type of Organization</u>	<u>Job Title Examples</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>
Real Estate	Real Estate Agent Realtor Leasing Consultant	7
Consulting	Consultant CEO Vice President	7
Military	Platoon Leader Lieutenant Commanding Officer's Aide	7
Legal	Attorney Legal Secretary Training Coordinator	6
Travel	Travel Agent Hotel Bellman Resort Member Services	5
Other/Miscellaneous	Salon Assistant Manager Non-Profit Policy Associate Temporary Staffing Supervisor	9
Left it Blank		1

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Table 2: *Study One: Results of Principal Component Factor Analysis for Envy Responses*

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>	<u>Factor 5</u>
	Attack Other	Motivated	Less Committed	Negative Self	Self Promote
<u>Abbreviated</u>					
<u>Questionnaire Item *</u>					
29. Sabotage other	<b>.84</b>	-.05	.07	.07	.05
20. Degrade other	<b>.83</b>	-.04	.14	.09	.04
31. Revenge on other	<b>.80</b>	-.04	.07	.05	.06
46A. Increased conflict	<b>.75</b>	-.04	.24	.06	.12
5. "Get even"	<b>.74</b>	.16	.07	.17	.01
47. Provoke other	<b>.74</b>	-.03	.12	.07	.19
8. Angry at other	<b>.73</b>	.01	.21	.12	.02
44. Diminished other	<b>.73</b>	-.02	.08	.06	.26
43. Attacked other	<b>.70</b>	-.04	.02	.05	.21
13. Avoided other	<b>.62</b>	-.03	.16	.03	-.18
25. Motivated me	.01	<b>.87</b>	-.21	.02	.10

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>	<u>Factor 5</u>
	Attack Other	Motivated	Less Committed	Negative Self	Self Promote
<u>Abbreviated</u>					
<u>Questionnaire Item</u>					
61. Focused on work	.02	<b>.84</b>	-.10	.03	.05
7. Worked harder	.03	<b>.84</b>	-.14	.02	.10
52. Committed to job	.04	<b>.83</b>	-.23	-.04	.04
3. Better at job	-.05	<b>.81</b>	-.23	.03	.14
38. Committed to goals	-.04	<b>.74</b>	-.01	.02	-.01
54. I felt inspired	-.09	<b>.65</b>	-.18	.01	.09
15. Reduced org. commitment	.12	-.23	<b>.84</b>	.12	.09
2. Want to leave job	.13	-.07	<b>.78</b>	.16	-.02
16. Less trust in company	.17	-.15	<b>.77</b>	.15	.08
14. Less committed to job	.14	-.28	<b>.77</b>	.11	.06
59. Looked for new job	.06	-.03	<b>.71</b>	.08	.05
1. Reduced job satisfaction	.20	-.09	<b>.70</b>	.18	.02
40. Felt angry at system	.11	-.19	<b>.63</b>	.16	.11

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>	<u>Factor 5</u>
	Attack Other	Motivated	Less Committed	Negative Self	Self Promote
<u>Abbreviated</u>					
<u>Questionnaire Item</u>					
19. Less willing to contribute	.18	-.26	<b>.59</b>	.17	.09
63. Felt inadequate	.05	.04	.16	<b>.87</b>	.07
60. Lowered my self-esteem	.07	.05	.18	<b>.85</b>	.09
41. Lowered my self-confidence	.07	-.04	.17	<b>.85</b>	.04
50. I felt unworthy	.08	.04	.06	<b>.77</b>	.08
21. I felt depressed	.15	-.05	.19	<b>.76</b>	-.09
6. What is wrong with me	.06	.00	.06	<b>.73</b>	.05
36. I felt sad	.13	.05	.21	<b>.67</b>	-.16
58. Sought supervisor attention	.06	.12	.12	-.02	<b>.84</b>
57. Sought coworker attention	.29	.15	.12	.10	<b>.78</b>
45. Promoted self to others	.25	.21	.12	.02	<b>.68</b>

\* Item number next to abbreviated questionnaire item is original item number in survey

Table 3: *Perceived Causes of Malicious Envy*

Causes of Malicious Envy Categories	Examples
<i>Promotion or Opportunity:</i> The envied other received a promotion or special opportunity instead of the envious person.	<p>“I wanted that same position.”</p> <p>“He was granted privileges the rest of us weren’t.”</p> <p>“I wanted to go to Spain.”</p>
<i>Pay Raise, Status, Hours, or Perks:</i> The envied other received or had more money, additional status, more hours, or other work-related perks.	<p>“She made more money than me.”</p> <p>“Someone else got my corner office.”</p> <p>“She got all my hours.”</p>
<i>Appreciation, Praise, or Recognition:</i> The envied other was more appreciated or received praise or recognition the envious person did not.	<p>“Lavish and exaggerated praise of the other person far out of proportion to her actions.”</p> <p>“Sad I’m not given recognition and rewards for my efforts.”</p> <p>“My work was not appreciated.”</p>
<i>Negative Feelings About Self:</i> The envious person feels inferior, inadequate, or insecure compared to the person they envied.	<p>“I wasn’t secure in myself.”</p> <p>“My own inadequacy and lack of expertise.”</p> <p>“They didn’t like me.”</p>
<i>Unfairness or Injustice:</i> The envious person feels the situation was unjust, unfair, or treatment was unequal.	<p>“The other person was treated better than I was.”</p> <p>“Unjust treatment by the company.”</p> <p>“Unfair company policy.”</p>
<i>Favoritism:</i> The envious person feels management favored certain people over others.	<p>“The boss chose favorites.”</p> <p>“He played favorites.”</p> <p>“She had her favorite people.”</p>
<i>Deservedness:</i> The envious person feels the envied other did not deserve whatever they got, that he/she should have received it.	<p>“I worked harder than him and deserved it more.”</p> <p>“He did not deserve it. I did.”</p> <p>“I deserved it.”</p>
<i>Took Credit or Recognition:</i> The envious person feels the envied other took credit or recognition for their work.	<p>“He got all the praise for MY ideas.”</p> <p>“She stole credit from me.”</p> <p>“She got recognition for my idea.”</p>
<i>Other’s Abilities, Qualities, or Skills:</i> The envious person feels the envied other has stronger abilities, qualities or skills.	<p>“Jealous of their ability, attractiveness, and likeability.”</p> <p>“They had better skills.”</p> <p>“He was more qualified.”</p>
<i>Relationship Issues:</i> Envied other has closer relationship to boss.	<p>“I envied his close relationship with the senior manager.”</p> <p>“His weekend socializing with the boss.”</p> <p>“She was an attractive but unintelligent</p>

	girl.”
<i>Broken Promises:</i> Something promised the envious person by management was given to the envied other.	<p>“I was to be trained for these tasks.”</p> <p>“A project I was promised and wanted was given to someone else.”</p> <p>“I had a justifiable, righteous indignation at withdrawn promises.”</p>
<i>Worked Harder:</i> Envious person felt they worked harder and produced more and better results than the envied other. Also felt they had earned what the envied other received.	<p>“She produced less results than I did.”</p> <p>“I worked harder and she got...”</p> <p>“I did a better job than she did.”</p>
<i>Equal to or Better:</i> The envious person feels they are at least an equal to the envied other and often that they are more experienced, smarter, or better.	<p>“She had less smarts.”</p> <p>“I was more experienced.”</p> <p>“I was just as good as them.”</p>

Table 4: *Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy*

Communicative Response to Envy Categories	Examples
<i>Ignore Situation:</i> Envious person ignores the situation, lets it go, or does nothing.	“I accepted the situation.” “I got over it.” “There was nothing I could do about it.”
<i>Complained to Manager:</i> Complained directly to manager or supervisor about what happened.	“I complained to the manager.” “I let him know about my displeasure.” “Bitched to my boss.”
<i>Confronted Manager:</i> Envious person took hostile attitude with manager about situation.	“I took it out on my boss for being so stupid.” “I gave him an ultimatum.” “I blew up at the boss.”
<i>Disliked Manager/Envied Other:</i> Strong negative emotional response of dislike or hatred directed toward the manager, the envied other, or both.	“I loathed the people who were unjustly rewarded.” “I couldn’t stand to be in the same room with her.” “I started to dislike my boss.”
<i>Depressed:</i> Envious person experienced emotions of sadness and depression following incident.	“I had a good cry.” “I was bummed.” “I sulked.”
<i>Positive Self-Talk:</i> Envious person rationalized to self why incident happened and pumped themselves up internally.	“I reassured myself it was no reflection on me.” “I told myself it wasn’t important.” “I decided the other person was a better choice than me.”
<i>Suppressed Feelings:</i> Envious person covered up or hid feelings, kept feelings to themselves.	“I stuffed and bottled them.” “I bit my lip.” “I pretended it didn’t bother me at all.”
<i>Complained to Others:</i> Envious person complained to others, either coworkers or family and friends outside of work.	“I bitched and whined.” “I complained to others.” “I vented to friends outside of work.”
<i>Talked to Others:</i> Envious person gained support through discussing the situation with others and not complaining about it.	“I talked to sympathetic coworkers.” “I talked to my wife and my pastor.” “I formed a support group with other managers who felt the same way.”
<i>Worked Harder:</i> Envious person continued working, worked harder, or focused on his/her work, not the situation.	“I focused on my own work.” “I just kept working.” “I jumped in and offered to help.”
<i>Sabotage:</i> Stopped helping or training the envied person.	“I would not do my portion.” “I stopped helping him” “I would no longer train him.”

<i>Harrassment</i> : Made things more difficult for the envied person.	<p>“I controlled information stream to keep him out of the loop,”</p> <p>“Cut him off so he knew less about what I was doing.”</p> <p>“I was downright rude to her.”</p>
<i>Undermined</i> : Tried to make the envied person look bad.	<p>“I undermined his likeability.”</p> <p>“I cut her down when people talked about her so lovingly.”</p> <p>“I undercut him.”</p>
<i>Avoidance</i> : Envious person tried to avoid being around person he/she envied.	<p>“I avoided the person like the plague.”</p> <p>“I minimized contact.”</p> <p>“I ignored them.”</p>
<i>Quit Job</i> : Envious person started looking for a new job or quit.	<p>“I gave notice.”</p> <p>“I quit.”</p> <p>“I looked for a new job and let him know about it.”</p>
<i>Talked Behind Back</i> : Envious person talked behind the envied person’s back.	<p>“I bad-mouthed him behind his back.”</p> <p>“I talked about her behind her back.”</p> <p>“I said bad things about her.”</p>

Table 5: *Study Two: Organizations & Job Titles*

<u>Type of Organization</u>	<u>Job Title Examples</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>
Retail/Sales	Pharmaceutical Salesperson Model Department Manager	72
Restaurant/Food Industry	Chef Caterer Bartender	52
Education	High School Teacher Elementary School Teacher University Professor	37
Research/Telemarketing	Telemarketing Researcher Marketing Researcher Call Center Operator	34
Medical/Health Care	Doctor Chiropractor Psychotherapist	30
Government	Federal Worker City of Fullerton Employee State Agency Employee	27
Financial/Banking	Stockbroker Loan Officer Vice President	24
Media	TV News Anchor Publisher (Magazine) Newspaper Photographer	23
Recreation	Gymnastics Coach Camp Counselor Water Park Manager	22
Engineering	Aerospace Engineer Flight Technician Chemical Engineer	16

<u>Type of Organization</u>	<u>Job Title Examples</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>
Computer/High Tech	Software Manufacturer Computer Technician IC Shop Employee	13
Legal	Lawyer Senior Partner Law Clerk	11
Construction/Labor	Plumber Laborer Moving Company Laborer	11
Architecture/Landscaping	Architect Landscape Botanical Gardener	9
Military/Police	Police Officer Dispatcher Military Police	8
Travel	Flight Attendant Hotel Desk Clerk Hospitality Hostess	8
Training/Consulting	Consultant Corporate Trainer Trainer	7
Arts	Dancer Band (Musician) Art Gallery Employee	7
Real Estate	Real Estate Agent Real Estate Secretary Real Estate Broker	5
Automobile	Car Salesperson Auto Mechanic Dealership Employee	5

<u>Type of Organization</u>	<u>Job Title Examples</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>
Other/Miscellaneous	Electrician Non-profit Energy Worker	6
Left it Blank		1

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Table 6: *Study Two: Results of Principal Component Factor Analysis for Causes of Malicious Envy*

	<u>Factor 1</u> Inadequate	<u>Factor 2</u> Deserved	<u>Factor 3</u> Favorites	<u>Factor 4</u> Credit	<u>Factor 5</u> Unfair	<u>Factor 6</u> Misled	<u>Factor 7</u> Reward
<u>Abbreviated</u> <u>Questionnaire Item *</u>							
15. Insecure	<b>.83</b>	.01	.13	.04	-.05	-.00	-.13
7. Inadequate	<b>.83</b>	-.06	.05	-.05	-.06	.05	.02
23. Lacked skills	<b>.81</b>	-.12	.04	.11	.01	-.01	.14
4. Low self-esteem	<b>.80</b>	.08	.10	-.10	-.03	.07	-.18
26. Other's abilities	<b>.76</b>	-.16	.06	.05	-.07	-.02	.24
8. Other's skills	<b>.69</b>	-.21	.04	.10	-.12	-.00	.15
6. I did better job	-.11	<b>.80</b>	.12	.16	.10	.16	.01
18. They did not deserve	-.11	<b>.79</b>	.08	.21	.16	.14	.08
25. I deserved it	-.05	<b>.78</b>	.06	.20	.21	.14	.20
27. I worked harder	-.06	<b>.76</b>	.08	.20	.22	.05	.17
33. Other did nothing	-.15	<b>.56</b>	.28	.02	.18	.14	.16
12. Relationship w/boss	.22	.06	<b>.82</b>	-.02	-.01	.01	.05

	<u>Factor 1</u> Inadequate	<u>Factor 2</u> Deserved	<u>Factor 3</u> Favorites	<u>Factor 4</u> Credit	<u>Factor 5</u> Unfair	<u>Factor 6</u> Misled	<u>Factor 7</u> Reward
<u>Abbreviated</u> <u>Questionnaire Item</u>							
29. Socialize w/boss	.18	.03	<b>.81</b>	.06	.03	.04	.02
17. Boss played favorites	-.07	.10	<b>.70</b>	.10	.32	.21	-.02
5. Other favored	.04	.28	<b>.66</b>	-.02	.16	.11	.04
21. Other granted privileges	.01	.09	<b>.56</b>	.29	.32	-.07	.18
32. They took credit for my work	.02	.22	.01	<b>.87</b>	.04	.02	.01
20. Received praise for my ideas	.12	.16	.09	<b>.86</b>	.08	.08	.01
16. Received recognition/ my work	.06	.19	.09	<b>.83</b>	.08	.10	.09
28. Not treated fairly	-.16	.23	.20	.05	<b>.76</b>	.22	-.01
30. Unjust treatment	-.10	.13	.12	.07	<b>.73</b>	.33	.13
14. Situation unfair	-.23	.33	.08	-.03	<b>.69</b>	.09	-.04
24. Other had unfair advantage	.13	.16	.20	.07	<b>.54</b>	-.12	.22
3. Broken promise	.04	.23	.10	.09	.17	<b>.86</b>	.09

	<u>Factor 1</u> Inadequate	<u>Factor 2</u> Deserved	<u>Factor 3</u> Favorites	<u>Factor 4</u> Credit	<u>Factor 5</u> Unfair	<u>Factor 6</u> Misled	<u>Factor 7</u> Reward
<u>Abbreviated</u> <u>Questionnaire Item</u>							
10. Promised and given to other	.06	.23	.13	.10	.18	<b>.84</b>	.09
13. They got pay raise	.04	.20	.06	.14	.22	-.08	<b>.77</b>
1. They got promotion	.13	.29	.11	-.01	-.01	.25	<b>.74</b>

\* Item number next to abbreviated questionnaire item is original item number in survey

Table 7: Rank Order Factors Causes of Malicious Envy

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Unfair	4.46	1.60
Deserved	4.17	1.82
Favorites	3.95	1.60
Reward	3.58	2.04
Misled	2.76	1.92
Credit	2.58	1.75
Inadequate	2.27	1.40

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Table 8: *Pearson Correlations Between Causes of Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Inadequate	--	-.18**	.17**	.10*	-.17**	.04	.12*
2. Deserved		--	.35**	.39**	.53**	.45**	.41**
3. Favorites			--	.23**	.43**	.28**	.24**
4. Credit				--	.19**	.23**	.24**
5. Unfair					--	.43**	.32**
6. Mised						--	.29**
7. Reward							--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 9: *Pearson Correlations Between Malicious Envy and Causes of Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Malicious Envy	--	-.06	.48**	.36**	.12**	.51**	.33**	.35**
2. Inadequate		--	-.18**	.17**	.10*	-.17**	.04	.12*
3. Deserved			--	.35**	.39**	.53**	.45**	.41**
4. Favorites				--	.23**	.43**	.28**	.24**
5. Credit					--	.19**	.23**	.24**
6. Unfair						--	.43**	.32**
7. Misled							--	.29**
8. Reward								--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 10: Study Two: Results of Principal Component Factor Analysis for Responses to Malicious Envy

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8	Factor 9
	Negother	Talkboss	Commiserate	Negemot	Angjob	Noticeme	Ignored	Harassed	Reassurance
<u>Abbreviated</u>									
<u>Questionnaire Item *</u>									
43. Minimized Contact	<b>.85</b>	.02	.09	.10	.10	.02	-.03	-.01	.04
47. Less friendly	<b>.84</b>	.03	.15	.06	.09	.06	-.00	.07	-.03
31. Disliked person	<b>.80</b>	.02	.23	.12	.10	.05	-.06	.15	-.06
6. Avoided person	<b>.79</b>	.06	.08	.05	.10	-.00	.06	-.02	.19
26. Not be in same room	<b>.78</b>	.04	.13	.13	.13	.12	-.11	.11	-.04
29. Hostile toward other	<b>.75</b>	.06	.20	.26	-.01	.04	.04	.19	-.12
15. Not help other	<b>.74</b>	.15	.05	.07	.21	.06	-.05	.08	.15
32. Not train other	<b>.71</b>	.11	.07	.01	.22	.13	-.07	.10	.15
13. Resented other	<b>.69</b>	.14	.12	.35	-.09	.05	.05	.10	-.06
11. Cut them down to others	<b>.63</b>	.11	.35	.06	.10	-.01	.01	.35	-.08
41. Discussed w/mgr.	.08	<b>.88</b>	.17	.11	.10	.12	-.16	.01	.07
28. Asked mgr. why	.06	<b>.86</b>	.15	.09	.09	.09	-.11	.04	.14
25. Told mgr. not pleased	.14	<b>.83</b>	.17	.07	.17	.16	-.19	.03	.06

<u>Abbreviated Questionnaire Item</u>	<u>Factor 1 Negother</u>	<u>Factor 2 Talkboss</u>	<u>Factor 3 Commisserate</u>	<u>Factor 4 Negemot</u>	<u>Factor 5 Angjob</u>	<u>Factor 6 Noticeme</u>	<u>Factor 7 Ignored</u>	<u>Factor 8 Harrassed</u>	<u>Factor 9 Reassurance</u>
12. Complained to mgr.	.09	<b>.82</b>	.18	.13	.13	.13	-.18	.10	.06
30. Discussed w/others	.18	.11	<b>.82</b>	.18	.04	.06	-.04	-.05	.21
27. Complained to others	.24	.16	<b>.80</b>	.12	.16	.01	-.07	.08	.01
16. Commiserated w/coworkers	.25	.21	<b>.71</b>	.06	.14	.05	-.04	.11	.00
38. Told others unhappy	.27	.25	<b>.69</b>	.29	.14	.06	-.11	-.00	.04
5. Discussed w/friends	.11	.08	<b>.58</b>	.29	-.01	.09	-.09	-.08	.52
7. Felt sad	.16	.01	.08	<b>.75</b>	.05	.09	.02	.07	.20
2. Cried	-.01	-.06	.04	<b>.69</b>	.14	.12	-.17	.17	.16
14. Exper. frustration	.30	.24	.32	<b>.61</b>	.13	.03	.06	-.07	-.12
36. Felt resentful	.38	.29	.16	<b>.59</b>	.15	-.01	.12	.02	-.02
17. Felt frustrated	.22	.25	.34	<b>.58</b>	.13	-.01	.21	-.17	-.16
9. Felt angry	.34	.31	.27	<b>.54</b>	.20	-.10	.06	-.10	-.11
18. Quit job	.17	.12	.14	.11	<b>.76</b>	-.10	-.02	.18	.02
10. Looked for new job	.25	.23	.11	.18	<b>.75</b>	.01	-.05	-.00	.06
19. Disliked supervisor	.32	.14	.19	.23	<b>.61</b>	.08	.01	.02	-.08

<u>Abbreviated Questionnaire Item</u>	<u>Factor 1 Negother</u>	<u>Factor 2 Talkboss</u>	<u>Factor 3 Commisserate</u>	<u>Factor 4 Negemot</u>	<u>Factor 5 Angjob</u>	<u>Factor 6 Noticeme</u>	<u>Factor 7 Ignored</u>	<u>Factor 8 Harrassed</u>	<u>Factor 9 Reassurance</u>
46. Tried to gain mgmt. approval	.12	.23	.10	.07	.03	<b>.84</b>	.03	.06	-.05
35. Tried to get mgmt. to notice me	.23	.15	.11	.05	.15	<b>.78</b>	.06	.08	-.04
23. Worked harder	-.03	.05	-.05	.06	-.24	<b>.64</b>	.12	.06	.24
34. Pretended it didn't bother me	-.01	-.14	-.06	.04	.00	.16	<b>.73</b>	.01	.09
45. Suppressed feelings	.06	-.03	.07	.11	-.10	.10	<b>.64</b>	.03	-.16
21. Did nothing	-.05	-.20	-.19	-.02	-.00	-.12	<b>.59</b>	.03	.19
1. Ignored situation	-.17	-.34	-.10	-.17	.07	.02	<b>.56</b>	.02	.06
20. I harassed person	.28	.09	.02	.06	.08	.05	.02	<b>.82</b>	-.02
22. Provoked person	.28	.02	.02	-.00	.08	.14	.07	<b>.81</b>	-.01
37. Reassured self no reflection on me	.06	.22	.08	-.03	-.01	.02	.26	.02	<b>.61</b>
3. Support from family & friends	.09	.07	.33	.45	.05	.14	-.15	-.09	<b>.58</b>

\* Item number next to abbreviated questionnaire item is original item number in survey

Table 11: *Rank Order Factors Responses to Malicious Envy*

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Reassurance	4.41	1.58
Negative Emotion	4.02	1.53
Commiserate	4.01	1.74
Ignored	3.76	1.37
Notice Me	3.33	1.64
Talk to Boss	3.19	2.17
Anger at Job	2.96	1.84
Negative Other	2.76	1.65
Harassed	1.59	1.16

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Table 12: *Pearson Correlations Between Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Negative to Other	--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
2. Talk to Boss		--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38*	.14**	.29**
3. Commiserate			--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
4. Negative Emotion				--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
5. Anger at Job					--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**
6. Notice Me						--	.05	.24**	.24**
7. Ignored							--	.01	-.04
8. Harassed								--	.02
9. Reassurance									--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 13: *Pearson Correlations Between Malicious Envy and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Malicious Envy	--	.37**	.39**	.38**	.55*	.37**	.15*	-.11*	.05	.22**
2. Negative to Other		--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
3. Talk to Boss			--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38**	.14**	.29**
4. Commiserate				--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
5. Negative Emotion					--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
6. Anger at Job						--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**
7. Notice Me							--	.05	.24**	.24**
8. Ignored								--	.01	-.04
9. Harassed									--	.02
10. Reassurance										--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 14: *Pearson Correlations Between Injustice and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Injustice	--	.37**	.15**	.14**	.21*	.17**	.15*	-.07	.26**	-.02
2. Negative to Other		--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
3. Talk to Boss			--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38**	.14**	.29**
4. Commiserate				--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
5. Negative Emotion					--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
6. Anger at Job						--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**
7. Notice Me							--	.05	.24**	.24**
8. Ignored								--	.01	-.04
9. Harassed									--	.02
10. Reassurance										--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 15: *Pearson Correlations Between Causes of Malicious Envy and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<u>Causes</u>								<u>Responses</u>							
<u>Causes</u>																
1. Inadequate	--	-.18**	.17**	.10*	-.17**	.04	.12*	.19**	-.05	.02	.18**	-.04	.22**	.06	.19**	-.02
2. Deserved		--	.35**	.39**	.53**	.45**	.41**	.36**	.36**	.34**	.29**	.33**	.22**	-.06	.21**	.26**
3. Favorites			--	.23**	.43**	.28**	.24**	.39**	.17**	.24**	.31**	.30**	.28**	.08	.13**	.19**
4. Credit				--	.19**	.23**	.24**	.31**	.24**	.20**	.17**	.26**	.19**	-.07	.16**	.12*
5. Unfair					--	.43**	.32**	.29**	.45**	.42**	.43**	.41**	.16**	-.03	.11*	.32**
6. Misled						--	.29**	.28**	.38**	.24**	.26**	.37**	.19**	-.02	.19**	.20**
7. Reward							--	.27**	.27**	.19**	.28**	.29**	.25**	-.09	.19**	.17**
<u>Responses</u>																
8. Negative Other								--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
9. Talk Boss									--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38**	.14**	.29**
10. Commiserate										--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
11. Negative Emotion											--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
12. Anger at Job												--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<u>Causes</u>								<u>Responses</u>							
<u>Responses</u>																
13. Notice Me													--	.05	.24**	.24**
14. Ignored														--	.01	-.04
15. Harassed															--	.02
16. Reassurance																--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 16: *Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Responses to Malicious Envy Factors on Causes of Malicious Envy Factors*

Dependent Variables	Predictor Variables	B	$\beta$	t
Negative Other	Inadequate	.21	.17	3.50***
	Deserved	.17	.19	3.09**
	Favorites	.21	.21	3.92***
	Credit	.13	.14	2.74**
Talk to Boss	Favorites	-.14	-.10	-1.99*
	Credit	.15	.12	2.48**
	Unfair	.46	.34	5.90***
	Misled	.22	.19	3.70***
Commiserate	Inadequate	.13	.10	1.97*
	Deserved	.15	.15	2.41*
	Unfair	.37	.34	5.57***
Negative Emotion	Inadequate	.26	.24	4.79***
	Unfair	.37	.38	6.62***
Anger at Job	Favorites	.13	.11	2.10*
	Credit	.14	.14	2.76**
	Unfair	.25	.22	3.80***
	Misled	.18	.18	3.53***
	Reward	.12	.13	2.52**
Notice Me	Inadequate	.23	.19	3.67***
	Favorites	.16	.15	2.76**
	Reward	.09	.11	2.07*
Harassed	Inadequate	.17	.21	3.77***
	Deserved	.11	.18	2.60**
Reassurance	Unfair	.23	.23	3.63***

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

Table 17: *Pearson Correlations Between Competitive Organizational Environment and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Competitive Environment	--	.22**	.21**	.12*	.23*	.18**	.31**	-.03	.15**	.15**
2. Negative to Other		--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
3. Talk to Boss			--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38**	.14**	.29**
4. Commiserate				--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
5. Negative Emotion					--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
6. Anger at Job						--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**
7. Notice Me							--	.05	.24**	.24**
8. Ignored								--	.01	-.04
9. Harassed									--	.02
10. Reassurance										--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 18: *Pearson Correlations Between OBSE and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. OBSE	--	-.12*	.07	.06	-.08	-.19**	.02	-.03	-.16**	.12*
2. Negative to Other		--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
3. Talk to Boss			--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38**	.14**	.29**
4. Commiserate				--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
5. Negative Emotion					--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
6. Anger at Job						--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**
7. Notice Me							--	.05	.24**	.24**
8. Ignored								--	.01	-.04
9. Harassed									--	.02
10. Reassurance										--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 19: *Pearson Correlations Between Hostility and Responses to Malicious Envy Factors*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Hostility	--	.34**	.11*	.20**	.22**	.22**	.20**	.02	.21**	-.00
2. Negative to Other		--	.28**	.49**	.53**	.48**	.23**	-.10	.44**	.21**
3. Talk to Boss			--	.45**	.41**	.40**	.29**	-.38**	.14**	.29**
4. Commiserate				--	.58**	.41**	.20**	-.21**	.14**	.48**
5. Negative Emotion					--	.50**	.20**	-.09	.16**	.40**
6. Anger at Job						--	.09	-.15**	.27**	.20**
7. Notice Me							--	.05	.24**	.24**
8. Ignored								--	.01	-.04
9. Harassed									--	.02
10. Reassurance										--

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 20: *Typology of Communicative Responses to Malicious Envy*

	Positive	Negative
Outward	Talk To Boss Commiserate Notice Me Ignored Reassurance	Negative Other Harassed Anger At Job Notice Me Ignored
Inward	Reassurance	Negative Emotion

## Appendix A

*Instructions:* Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project! Please take your time to fill out the following questions. All of your responses are anonymous; please answer honestly. Participation in this project is voluntary. If you would like to skip any questions or stop participating at any point, please feel comfortable in doing so. Please write on the back if you need more space.

Please indicate whether you are Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

People experience a wide range of emotions in the workplace and exhibit different behaviors in response to those emotions. In the course of everyday life in the workplace it is perfectly normal to experience feelings of envy from time to time.

1. Describe a time when you felt envious of someone in a work setting. What happened?

(Questionnaire Continues on Back of This Page)

What do you think caused the feelings of envy?

2. How did you respond to or cope with the envious feelings?

3. Was the person you were envious of a: (Please check one or two appropriate responses)

- Close friend
- Casual acquaintance
- Boss
- Subordinate
- Peer
- Other

5. What year did this happen? (e.g., 1999). \_\_\_\_\_  
(Questionnaire Continues on Next Page)

When this event occurred:

1. What type of organization were you working at (e.g., retail, engineering, banking, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was your job title? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How long had you worked there? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How much envy did you feel about this event?  
(Please place an X on one line below.)  
 Very little envy  
 A little envy  
 Some envy  
 Much envy  
 Very much envy
5. How much envy did you feel about this event compared to other envious events in the workplace you have experienced in the past in other situations?  
 Much less envy  
 A little less envy  
 Same amount of envy  
 A little more envy  
 Much more envy

In regards to the previous envious situation you described:

6. I wanted what the other person received.  
 Very little  
 A little  
 Somewhat  
 Strongly  
 Very strongly
7. I felt I should have received what the other person received.  
 Very little  
 A little  
 Somewhat  
 Strongly  
 Very strongly
8. I felt I deserved what the other person received.  
 Very little  
 A little  
 Somewhat  
 Strongly  
 Very strongly

(Questionnaire Continues on Back of This Page)

How did this event affect you? *Please indicate* on the following scales the degree to which you either agree with or disagree with the following statements about how the incident affected you. Please indicate whether you 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (somewhat disagree), 4 (uncertain), 5 (somewhat agree), 6 (agree), 7 (strongly agree). Please carefully read each item before responding.

The <u>envy</u> provoking event:	SD	D	SD	U	SA	A	SA
1. Reduced my job satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Made me want to leave my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Motivated me to do better at my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Made me become less productive at my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Made me want to “get even” with that person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Made me wonder what was wrong with me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Made me work harder at my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Felt angry at the person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Led me to talk to the person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Led me to complain to the person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Led me to raise the issue to my boss	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I ignored it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I avoided the envied person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I became less committed to my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. It reduced my commitment to the organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I felt less trust in the company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I felt betrayed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I felt scared about my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(Questionnaire Continues on Next Page)

	SD	D	SD	U	SA	A	SA
19. I became less willing to contribute more than my share	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I wanted to degrade the other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I felt depressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I felt angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I was verbally abusive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I talked to my friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. It motivated me to do better	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I felt ill will towards the other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I questioned the fairness of the situation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. It made me tense in conversations & meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I wanted to sabotage the other person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. I was happy for the other person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. I wanted revenge on the other person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Interfered with my decision making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. Made me not want to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. Increased my mistakes at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. I focused on something positive instead	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. I felt sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. I felt deflated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. I became more committed to my goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. I decided the incident was not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(Questionnaire Continues on Back of This Page)

	SD	D	SD	U	SA	A	SA
40. I felt angry at the “system”	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. It lowered my self confidence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I felt rejected by the other person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. I attacked the person I was envious of	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I diminished the other’s Accomplishments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. I promoted myself to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. It reduced my satisfaction with my supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. It increased conflict with the other person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. I provoked the other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. I felt more competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. I felt helpless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. I felt unworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. I felt resentful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. I became more committed to my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. I felt hostile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. I felt inspired	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. I felt threatened	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. I interfered with the other’s efforts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. I sought attention from coworkers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. I sought attention from my supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. I looked for a new job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. It lowered my self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(Questionnaire Continues on Next Page)

	SD	D	SD	U	SA	A	SA
61. I focused more on my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. I commiserated with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. Made me feel inadequate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

---

	SD	D	SD	U	SA	A	SA
1. It seemed unfair the person I envied started out with certain advantages over me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. It seemed unfair the person I envied had advantages over me because of lucky circumstances	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Most of my co-workers had it better than I did	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My supervisor valued the efforts of others more than he/she valued my efforts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I don't imagine I'll ever have a job as good as some jobs that I've seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I don't know why, but I usually seem to be the underdog at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. It was somewhat annoying to see others have all the luck in getting the best assignments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

---

(Questionnaire Continues on Back of This Page)

*Instructions:* Please indicate on the following scale from 1 to 7 to what degree you were satisfied or dissatisfied with the following items. Please indicate whether you were 1 (strongly dissatisfied), 2 (dissatisfied), 3 (somewhat dissatisfied), 4 (uncertain), 5 (somewhat satisfied), 6 (satisfied), 7 (strongly satisfied).

At the time of the event how generally satisfied were you with:

	SD	D	SD	U	SS	S	SS
1. My job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My coworkers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My progress in my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My chances for getting ahead	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My organization's system for recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. My organization's concern for its members' welfare	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

---

You have now completed the questionnaire. THANK YOU!

## Appendix B

*Instructions:* Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project! Please take your time to fill out the following questions. All of your responses are anonymous; please answer honestly. Please write on the back if you need more space.

Please indicate whether you are: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

People experience a wide range of emotions in the workplace and exhibit different behaviors in response to those emotions. In the course of everyday life in the workplace it is perfectly normal to experience feelings of envy from time to time.

Please describe a time when you felt envious of someone in a work setting. By envy we mean you desired what someone else received, obtained, or had access to (e.g. skills, recognition, opportunities, accomplishments, relationships, etc.). This situation should be one in which you felt some degree of unfairness, resentment, anger, or hostility about the situation or the person. What happened? Please be as specific as possible.

In terms of the situation you just described, please indicate the degree to which you felt the following emotions by circling a number from 1. “Not at All” to 9. “Very Much”.

To what degree did you feel <b>envious</b> about the situation?										
<i>Not at All</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<i>Very Much</i>
To what degree did you feel <b>anger</b> about the situation?										
<i>Not at All</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<i>Very Much</i>
To what degree did you feel <b>resentment</b> about the situation?										
<i>Not at All</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<i>Very Much</i>
To what degree did you feel <b>hostility</b> about the situation?										
<i>Not at All</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<i>Very Much</i>
To what degree did you feel a sense of <b>unfairness</b> about the situation?										
<i>Not at All</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<i>Very Much</i>

---

***In regards to the envious situation you just described on the first page:***

---

I wanted what the other person received.

- Very little
- A little
- Somewhat
- Strongly
- Very strongly

I felt I should have received what the other person received.

- Very little
- A little
- Somewhat
- Strongly
- Very strongly

I felt I deserved what the other person received.

- Very little
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Strongly
  - Very strongly
- 

**How much envy did you feel about this event compared to other envious events in the workplace you have experienced in the past in other situations?**

- Much less envy in this event than in others
- A little less envy in this event than in others
- Same amount of envy in this event than in others
- A little more envy in this event than in others
- Much more envy in this event than in others

Please indicate the degree to which the following statements are characteristic of you using the following scale:

- (1 - 3) = Not at all Characteristic of Me (**NotChar**)
- (4 - 6) = Moderately Characteristic of Me (**ModChar**)
- (7 - 9) = Strongly Characteristic of Me (**StrongChar**)

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	NotChar			ModChar			StrongChar		
1. I was dealt an unfair hand by life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2. I am feeling unfairly treated by life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3. I have resentment over the unfairness of life itself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4. It seemed unfair that the person I envied started out in life with certain advantages over me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5. It seemed unfair that the good fortune of the person I envied came naturally to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6. It seemed unfair that the person I envied had advantages over me because of lucky circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Was the person you were **envious** of a: (Please check one or two appropriate responses)

- Stranger
- Casual acquaintance
- Close friend
- Subordinate
- Peer/Coworker
- Boss
- Other Describe Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What year did this happen? (e.g., 1999). \_\_\_\_\_

**When this event occurred:**

What type of organization were you working at (e.g., retail, engineering, banking, etc.)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was your job title? \_\_\_\_\_

How long had you worked there before this envious event occurred? \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you continue to work there after the envious event occurred? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think **caused** the feelings of envy in the situation you described on the first page? Please be as specific as possible.

*Please indicate* the degree to which you either agree with or disagree with the following statements about what **caused** your feelings of envy **in the situation** you described on the first page. For each statement, please use the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)
- 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)
- 3 = Somewhat Disagree (**SomeDis**)
- 4 = Uncertain (**Un**)
- 5 = Somewhat Agree (**SomeAgr**)
- 6 = Agree (**Agr**)
- 7 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

Please carefully read each item before responding.

<b>The feelings of <u>envy</u> in this situation were caused by:</b>							
	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>SomeDis</b>	<b>Un</b>	<b>SomeAgr</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
1. The person I was envious of received a promotion that I wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. The person I was envious of was treated better than I was.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I was envious because management promised me something and gave it to someone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I felt envious because of my low self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I was envious because the other person was favored.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I was envious because I did a better job than the other person, yet she/he reaped the rewards.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I felt envious because of my own inadequacy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. The person I was envious of had better skills than I did.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)  
 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)  
 3 = Somewhat Disagree (**SomeDis**)  
 4 = Uncertain (**Un**)  
 5 = Somewhat Agree (**SomeAgr**)  
 6 = Agree (**Agr**)  
 7 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

*Continued from previous page*

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>SomeDis</b>	<b>Un</b>	<b>SomeAgr</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
9. The person I was envious of received recognition for doing the same thing I did but I did not receive recognition.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I was envious because what I wanted and was promised was given to someone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. The person I was envious of received perks and I did not.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I envied his/her close relationship with the boss.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. The person I was envious of received a pay raise and I didn't.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I was envious because the situation was unfair.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I was envious because I was insecure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. The person I was envious of received recognition for my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I was envious because the boss played favorites.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. The person I was envious of did not deserve what he/she received. I deserved what he/she received.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I was envious because the other person was more noticed than me because he/she was better looking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. The person I was envious of received praise for my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. The person I was envious of was granted special privileges.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. The person I was envious of received praise and I did not.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I was envious because I lacked certain skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. The person I was envious of had an unfair advantage.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I was envious because I deserved it more than the person who received it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)
- 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)
- 3 = Somewhat Disagree (**SomeDis**)
- 4 = Uncertain (**Un**)
- 5 = Somewhat Agree (**SomeAgr**)
- 6 = Agree (**Agr**)
- 7 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

*Continued from previous page*

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>SomeDis</b>	<b>Un</b>	<b>SomeAgr</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
26. I was envious of the other person's abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I was envious because I worked harder than the other person, yet she/he received what I wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I was envious because I was not treated fairly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I was envious of his/her socializing with the boss.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. I was envious because of unjust treatment by the company.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. I was envious because the other person was singled out for no reason.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. The person I was envious of took credit for my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. I was envious because the other person had done nothing to distinguish themselves from the rest of us, yet they were chosen.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. I was envious because I felt left out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please describe how you responded to the situation. Please describe any reactions, behaviors, or types of communicative responses you engaged in. How did you interact or not interact with the person you envied? (e.g. avoided them, complained about them, left my job, etc.). If you need more space please use the back of this page.

Please indicate the degree to which you either agree with or disagree with the following statements about how you responded to the incident you described on the first page. For each statement, please use the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)
- 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)
- 3 = Somewhat Disagree (**SomeDis**)
- 4 = Uncertain (**Un**)
- 5 = Somewhat Agree (**SomeAgr**)
- 6 = Agree (**Agr**)
- 7 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

Please carefully read each item before responding.

<b>I responded to the <u>envy</u> provoking event by:</b>							
	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>SomeDis</b>	<b>Un</b>	<b>SomeAgr</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
1. I ignored the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I cried after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I got support from friends and family outside of work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I told myself the incident was not that important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I discussed it with supportive friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I avoided the person I envied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I felt sad after this incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I bad-mouthed the envied person after this happened.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I was angry following the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I started looking for a new job after this event.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I cut her/him down to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I complained to my manager or a superior about the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I resented the person I was envious of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I experienced a lot of frustration due to this event.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I did not help the envied person following the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I commiserated with sympathetic coworkers about the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I was frustrated after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I quit my job after this incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)  
 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)  
 3 = Somewhat Disagree (**SomeDis**)  
 4 = Uncertain (**Un**)  
 5 = Somewhat Agree (**SomeAgr**)  
 6 = Agree (**Agr**)  
 7 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

*Continued from previous page*

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>SomeDis</b>	<b>Un</b>	<b>SomeAgr</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
19. I disliked my supervisor after This incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I harassed the person I envied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I did nothing in response to the envious situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I tried to provoke the person I envied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I worked harder following the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I focused on my own work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I let my manager know I was not pleased.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I could not stand to be in the same room with the person I envied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I complained to others about the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I asked my manager why the situation occurred.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I felt hostile toward the envied person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. I discussed the situation with others who understood.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. I disliked the person I envied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. I decided not to teach or help train the envied person following the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. I blew up after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. I pretended the situation did not bother me at all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. I tried to get management to notice me after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. I felt resentful about the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. I reassured myself the situation was no reflection on me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. I told others how unhappy I was with the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. I made it difficult for the envied person to do his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)
- 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)
- 3 = Somewhat Disagree (**SomeDis**)
- 4 = Uncertain (**Un**)
- 5 = Somewhat Agree (**SomeAgr**)
- 6 = Agree (**Agr**)
- 7 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

*Continued from previous page*

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>SomeDis</b>	<b>Un</b>	<b>SomeAgr</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
40. I was angry at management after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. I had a discussion with my manager about what happened.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I was rude to the person I envied after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. I minimized contact with the person I envied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I undermined the envied person following the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. I suppressed my feelings about the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I tried to gain management's approval after the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. I was less friendly to the person I envied following the incident.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. I talked about the envied person behind his/her back following this situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please indicate how often you feel the following statements are **generally** true for you. Please use the following scale:

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Rarely
- 3 = Seldom
- 4 = Occasionally
- 5 = Often

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Often</b>
1. Most of my co-workers have it better than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My supervisor values the efforts of others more than he/she values my efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I don't imagine I'll ever have a job as good as some jobs that I've seen.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I don't know why, but I usually seem to be the underdog at work.	1	2	3	4	5

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Rarely
- 3 = Seldom
- 4 = Occasionally
- 5 = Often

*Continued from previous page*

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	Never	Rarely	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
5. It is somewhat annoying to see Others have all the luck in getting the best assignments.	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate the degree to which the following statements are **generally** characteristic of you. Please use the following scale:

- 1 = Extremely Uncharacteristic of Me (**ExUnchar**)
- 2 = Uncharacteristic of Me (**Unchar**)
- 3 = Don't Know (**DonKno**)
- 4 = Characteristic of Me (**Char**)
- 5 = Extremely Characteristic of Me (**ExChar**)

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	ExUnchar	Unchar	DonKno	Char	ExChar
1. I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy.	1	2	3	4	5
2. At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Other people always seem to get the breaks.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know that "friends" talk about me behind my back.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back.	1	2	3	4	5
8. When people are especially nice, I wonder what they want.	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate the degree to which you either agree with or disagree with the following statements at the **time of the envious incident**. Please use the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)
- 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)
- 3 = Uncertain (**Uncer**)
- 4 = Agree (**Agr**)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>Uncer</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
1. I worked in a highly competitive work climate at the time of this envious incident.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My coworkers enjoyed competing with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My company promoted competition among employees.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Employees in the organization were very competitive.	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate on the following scales the degree to which you **generally** either agree with or disagree with the following statements. Please use the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (**StrDis**)
- 2 = Disagree (**Dis**)
- 3 = Uncertain (**Uncer**)
- 4 = Agree (**Agr**)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (**StrAgr**)

Please carefully read each item before responding.

	<b>StrDis</b>	<b>Dis</b>	<b>Uncer</b>	<b>Agr</b>	<b>StrAgr</b>
1. I count at work.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am taken seriously at work.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am important at work.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am trusted at work.	1	2	3	4	5
5. There is faith in me at work.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I can make a difference at work.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am valuable at work.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am helpful at work.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am efficient at work.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am cooperative at work.	1	2	3	4	5

**You have now completed the questionnaire. THANK YOU!!!**

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## **Vita**

Patty Callish Malone was born to Norman and Elena Callish in Washington D.C. on July 4, 1950. After completing her high school degree at Cordova High School in 1967 in Sacramento, California, she next received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from California State University Sacramento. Following that Patty had successful careers in television, sales, and corporate America. She worked as a Television News Anchor in California, Nevada, and Mississippi. She also worked in Public Affairs for General Dynamics in Pomona, California and as a Sales Director for Mary Kay Cosmetics. Patty then received a Master of Science Degree from the University of Southern Mississippi in August of 2000. She then entered the doctoral program in Communication Studies at the University of Texas at Austin where she taught several different courses in Communication Studies. She began teaching at California State University Fullerton while completing her dissertation in 2006. Her research interests focus primarily on organizational communication. Patty enjoys teaching courses in interviewing skills, presentation skills, and organizational communication.

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