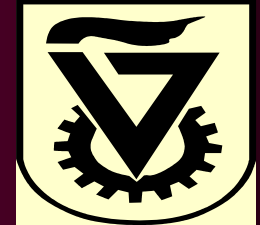


# The Effects of Angry Customers

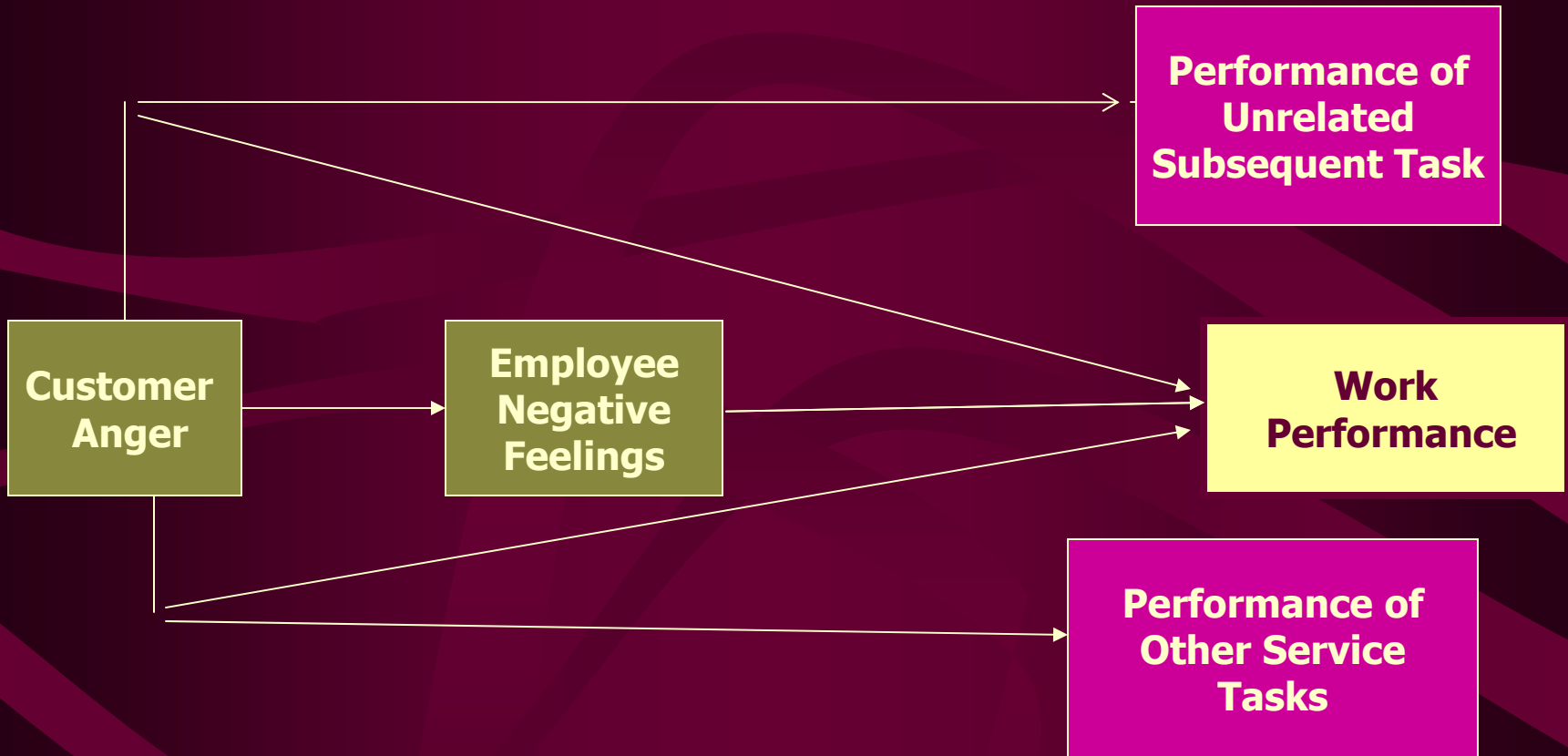


**Anat Rafaeli**

**Technion  
Israel Institute of Technology**

**Rellie Derfler  
Shy Ravid  
Ravit Rozillio**

# Basic Research Argument



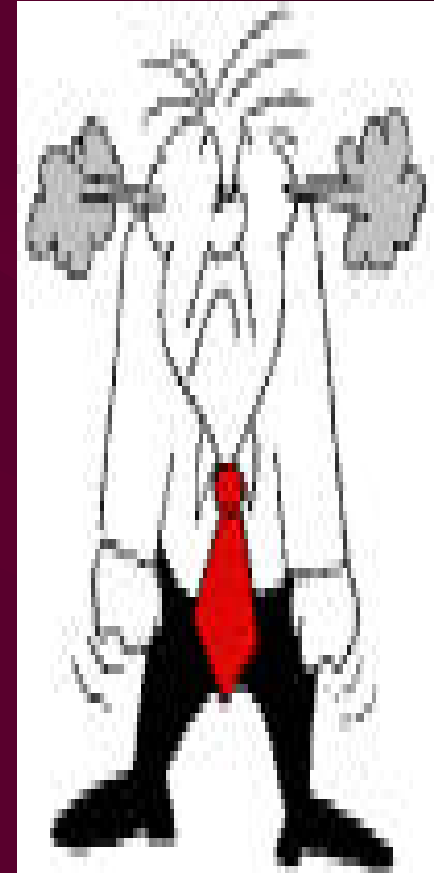
Do people think they should display anger?

“Greg and George are customers who call to complain about a bill problem.”

Greg acted **ANGRY**.

George acted **CALM**.

Who will be rewarded?



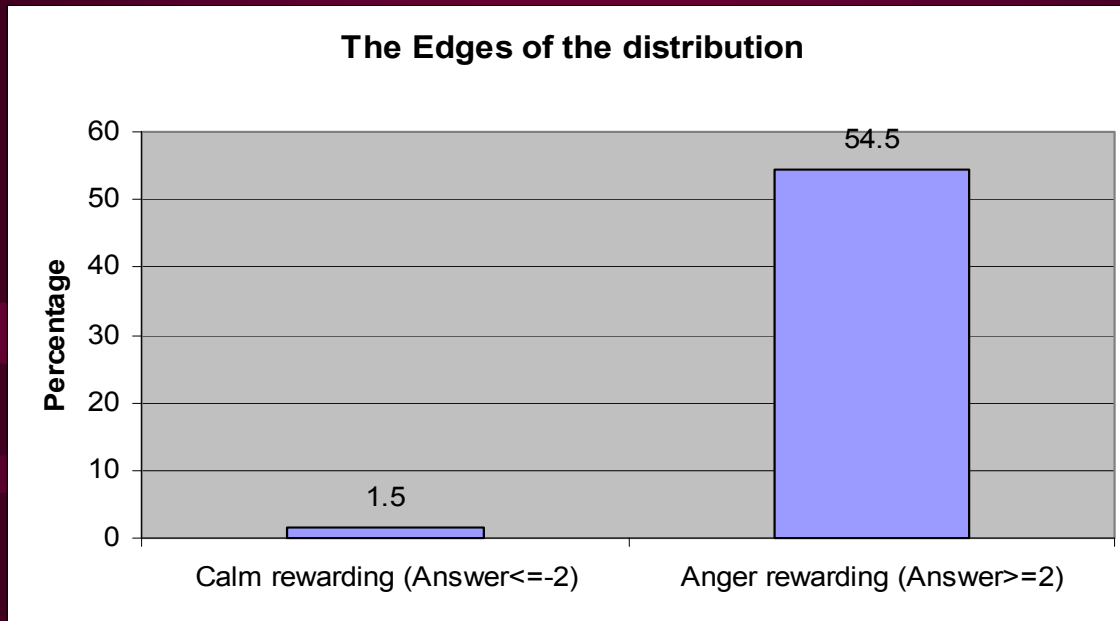
**Lazarus, Smith & Ellsworth:  
Cognitive Model of Emotions**

In Theory  
Customers  
Should  
Display Anger

**Emotions Communicate**

- Anger =  
Other responsibility
- Guilt =  
Self responsibility

# Who Will be Rewarded?



**Calm**

**Angry**

Greg for sure		Greg has higher probability		Equal probabilities		David has higher probability		David for sure
-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4

# What Happens When an Employee Encounters an Angry Customer?

## Weiss et al

- Affective Events Deplete Resources

## Gross, Richards

- Cognitive costs of concealing feelings

## Baumeister

- Anger → Ego Depletion

# Effects of Customer Anger on Employees

- Job Performance  
(quantity and quality of work)
- Performance of Subsequent Tasks  
(subsequent work and non work tasks)

As Well As ...

- Felt Emotion
- Exhaustion

# Study 2: Simulated Customer Contact Center

בקשת הלקוח:

מנוי מספר 052-325658:  
מדבר משה, הסיסמא שלי 5555. אני מס לחייל בשבוע הבא ומעוניין לפתוח את הקו שלי לחיוג לחייל ולשירות הנדידה שלכם

זמן שיחה: 0:00:06 עד כה טרופו 0 לקוחות.

מערכת ניהול לקוחות - פרטי בעל החשבון

פרטים אישיים		פרטי חשבון	שירותי רשת
<b>פרטים מזהים</b>			
מספר טלפון	052 - 325658	הצג	
שם פרטי	משה		
שם משפחה	תנן		
מספר תעודת זהות	036547891		
טלפון קווי להתקשרות	03 - 6543215		
סיסמת לקוח	5555	סיסמה	הפעל <input type="radio"/> בטל <input checked="" type="radio"/>
<b>פרטי כתובת</b>			
רחוב	תנקין	מספר בית	6
ישוב	חולון	מיקוד	96587
<b>פרטי התחברות</b>			
שם תוכנית ההתחברות	יום	תאריך ההתחברות	24/01/2001
סוג המכשיר	נוקיה 3300	שימוש בדיבורית	לא <input checked="" type="radio"/> כן <input type="radio"/>

שחזור נתונים שנשכחו    שחזור שינויים    שחזור נטיים שיקנה

## Manipulation:

Customer request

## Task:

Handling details.

Three different folders

# Manipulation of Customer Anger

Affect-free Customer	Angry Customer
<p>Hello, I did not inform you guys yet that <u>my home phone</u> number changed. I would like to <u>update</u> it please. My number is 03-7526654. Thank you very much, George Ashley.</p>	<p>I must tell you it is a nightmare to get contact with you! Your service is horrible, and I know what service is. <u>Update my home phone</u>: 03-7526654. George Ashley</p>
<p>Hi, I would like to move <u>to the weekend deal</u> that you offer. My password is "Friends". Thank you, Josh.</p>	<p>I am really pissed off from your lousy service. Move me <u>to the weekend deal</u>. The password is "Friends". Josh.</p>

## Data

- Undergraduate Students
  - Training  
(15 minutes; rules, tools).
  - Practice  
(6 minutes; no pay).
  - Real Work
- 15 minutes; up to 40 customers; pay of 50 cents for correct handling in less than 30 seconds).

# Performance Quality

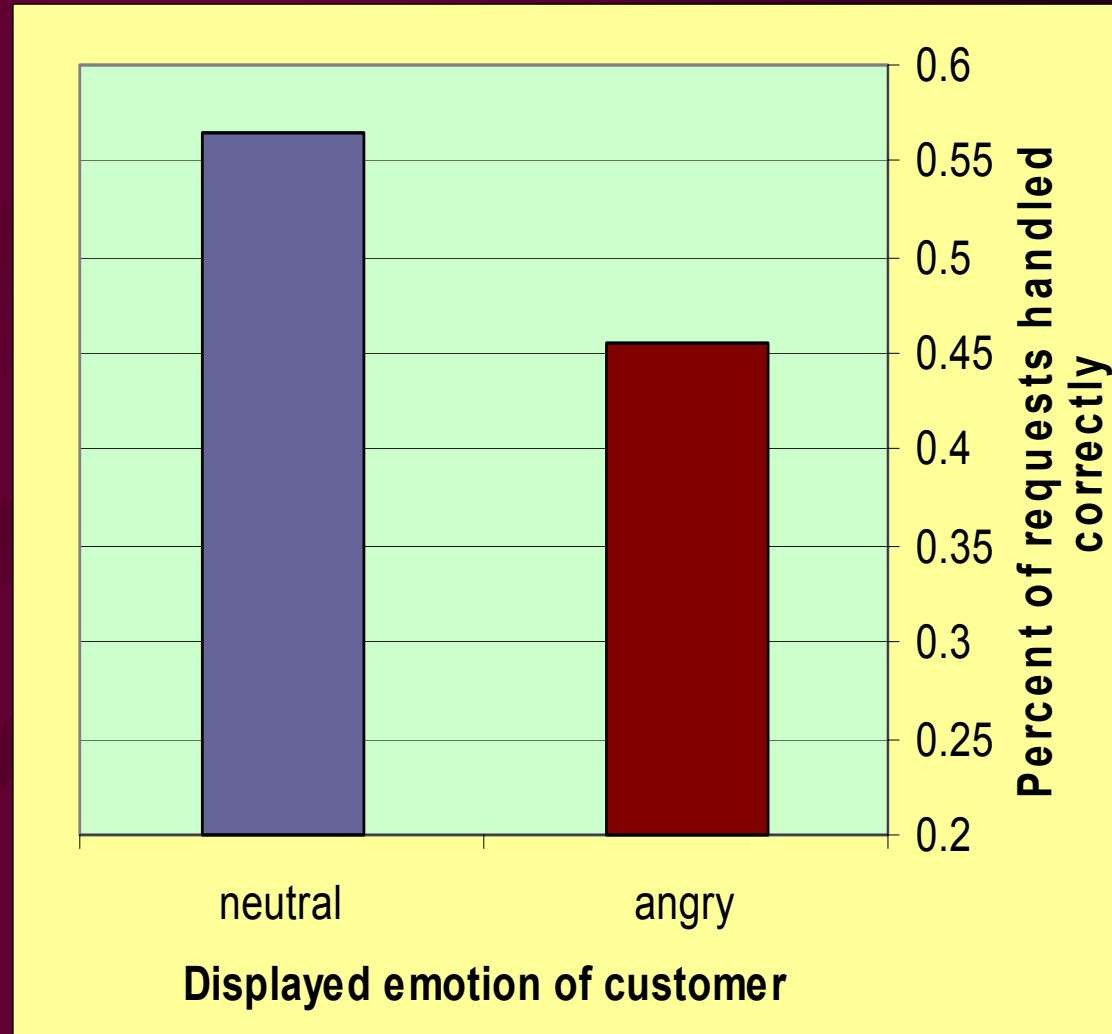


## Effects on Accuracy

% of requests handled correctly

	N	M	SD
Angry Requests	34	0.66	0.10
Affect Free Requests	35	0.72	0.12

$t = -2.05, p < .05$



# Effects on Performance Quantity

% requests handled correctly and quickly

	N	M	SD
Anger Condition	34	0.46	0.17
Neutral Condition	35	0.54	0.15

$t = -2.07, p < .05$

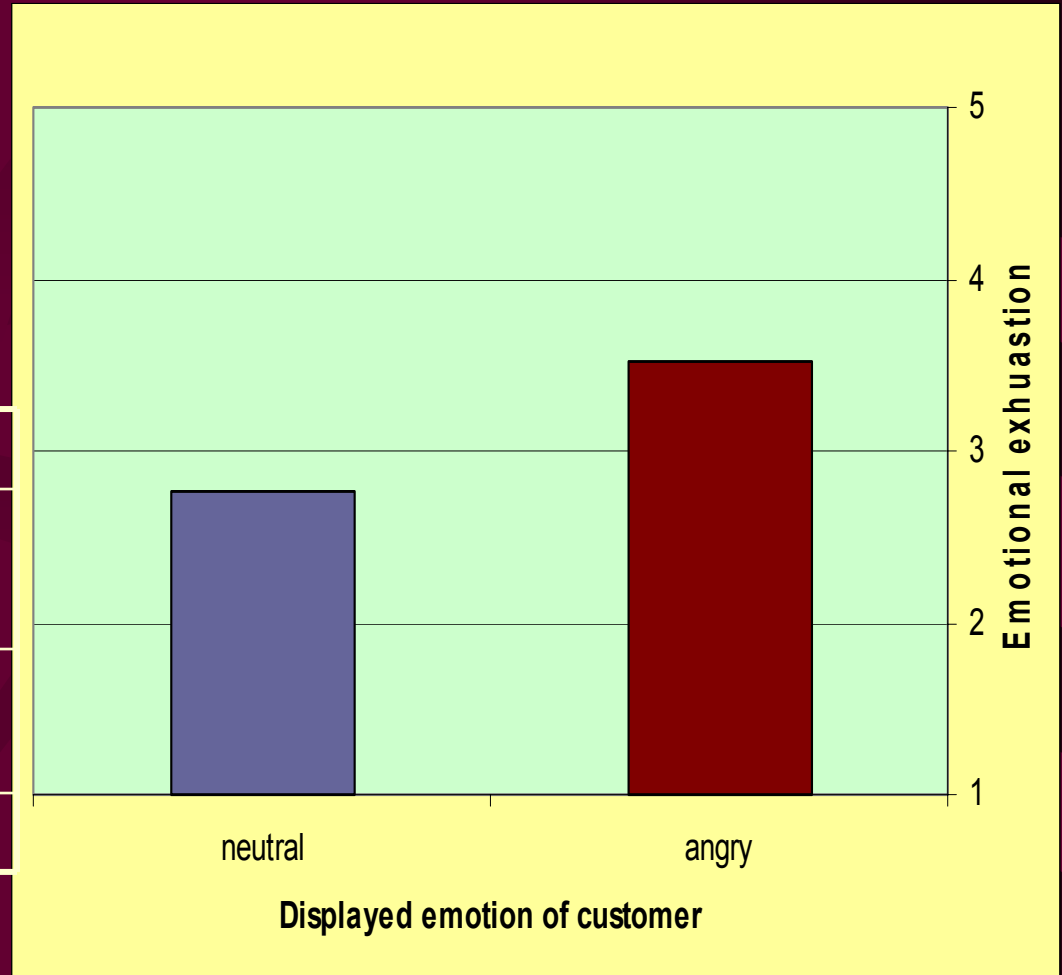


# Effects on Employee Exhaustion

Reported exhaustion  
(1-7 scale)

	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Angry Requests</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>1.18</b>
<b>Affect Free Requests</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>1.13</b>

**$t = 2.71, p < .01$**

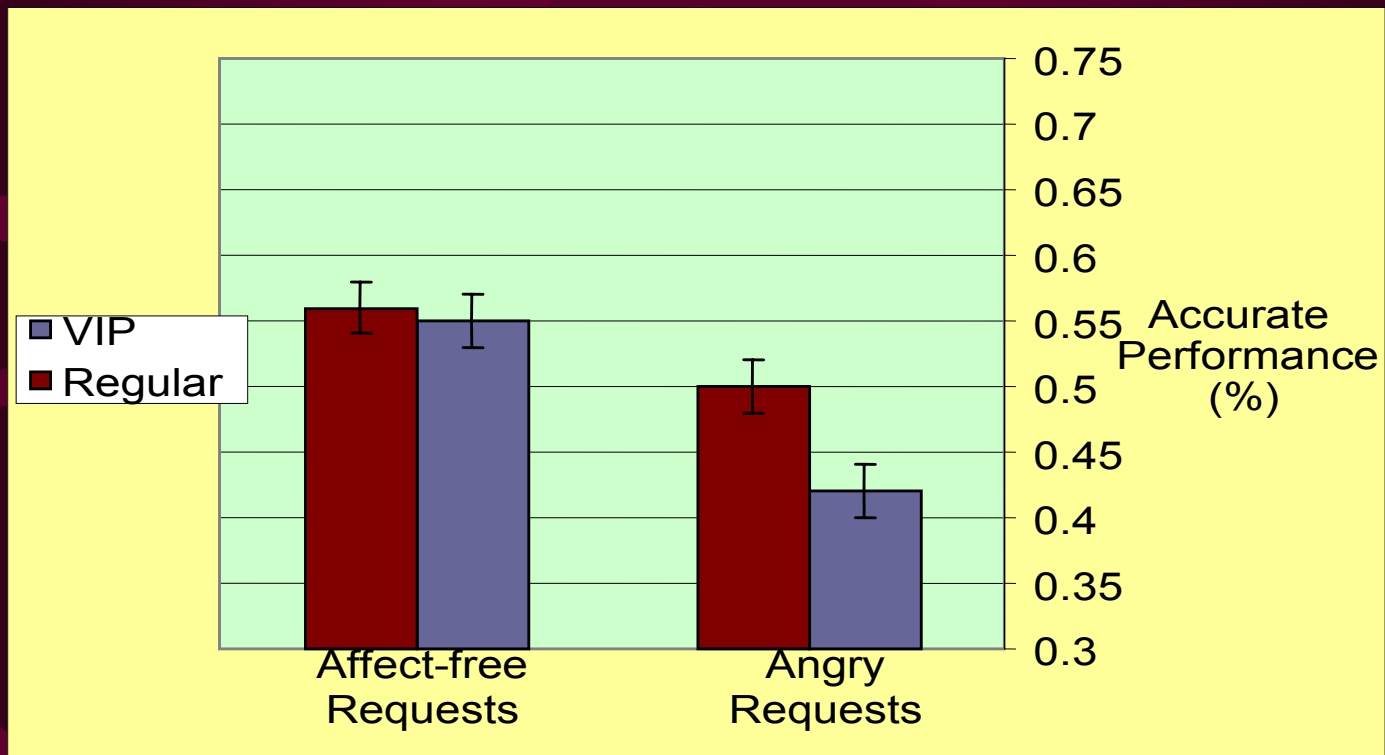


## Study 3:

# Is All Anger Created Equal?

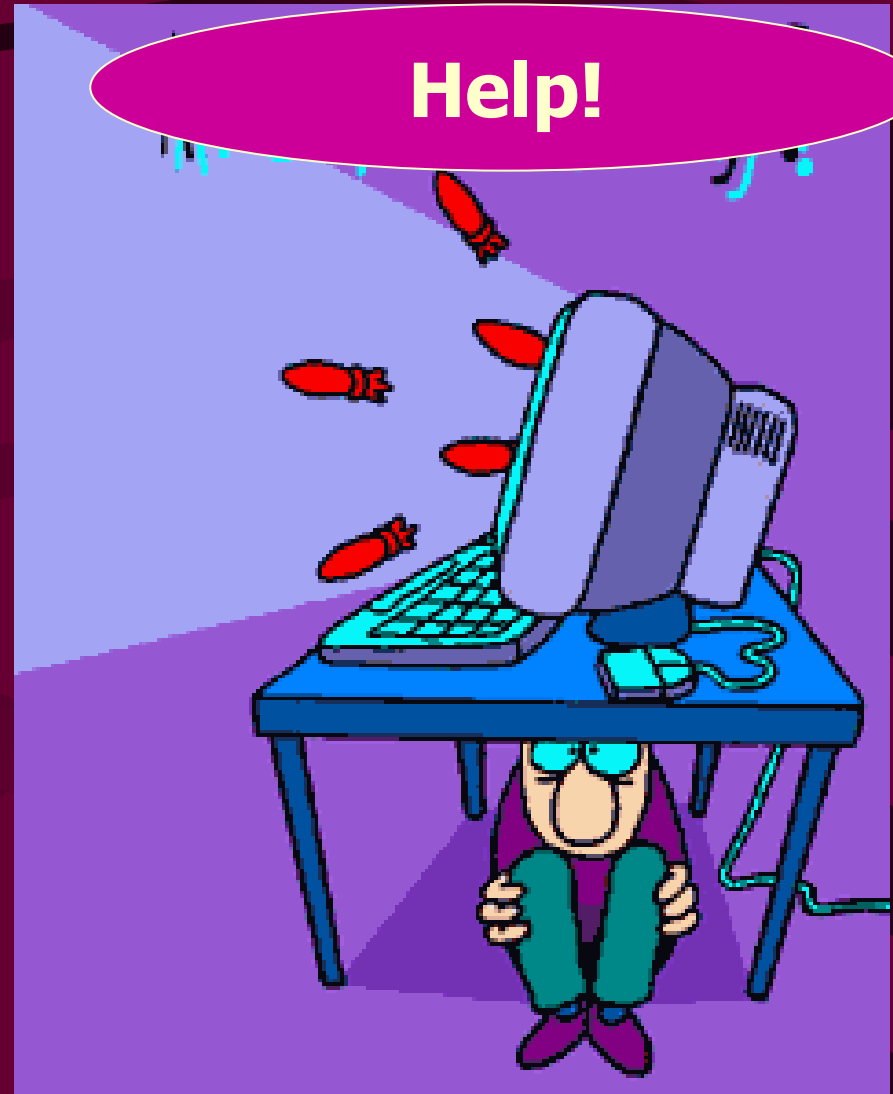
- Some customers are VIP's ...
- Payment significantly higher (\$1.00 for VIP handling)
- VIP's anger is more important, should lead to better treatment ...

# Angry VIP and Regular Customers: VIP Anger is REALLY BAD



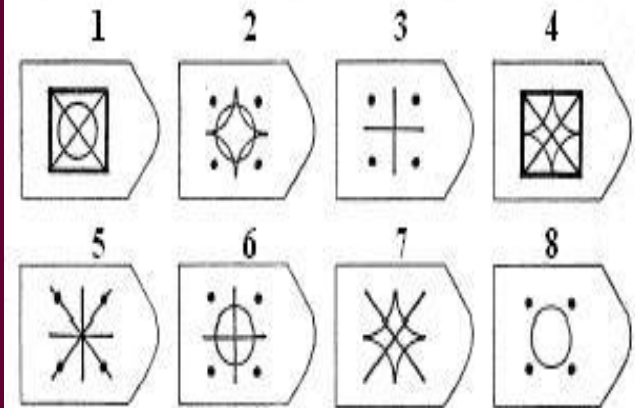
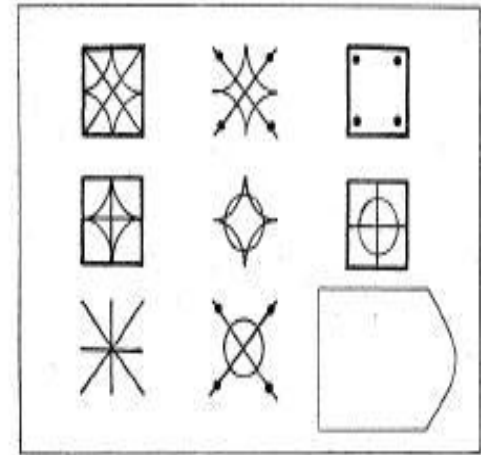
Study 4:  
How Long  
Does Effect  
of Customer  
Anger Last?

(What Happens After  
Handling Angry  
Customers?)



# Participants Complete a Subsequent Unrelated Task (Raven Matrices)

- Ten (10) different matrices;
- 8 minutes;
- After completing task



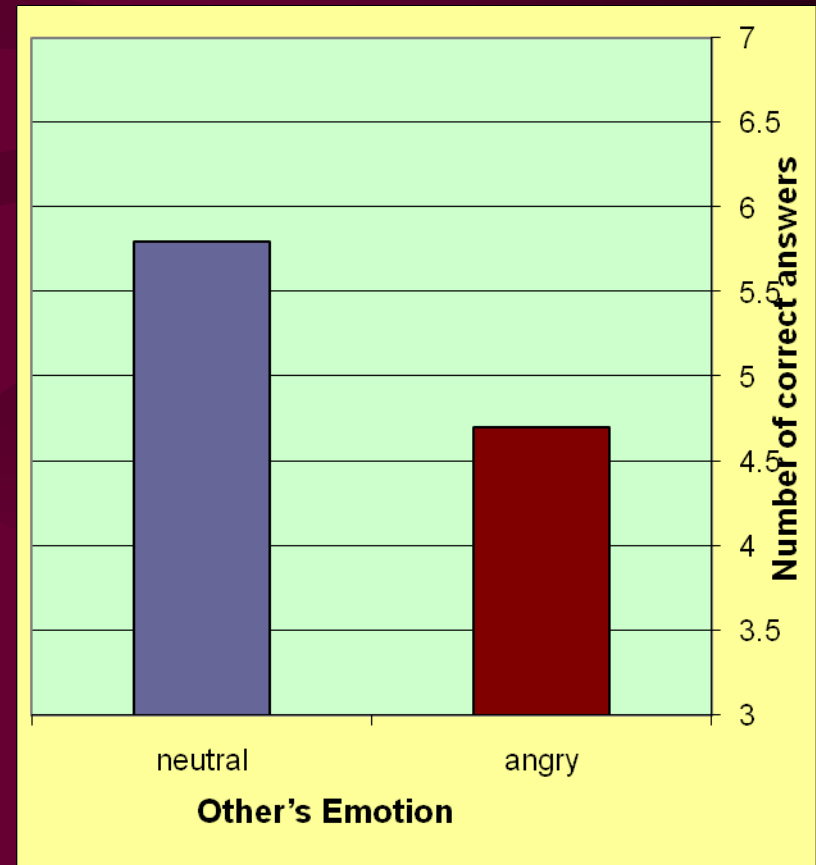
# Performance on Subsequent Task



Effects of customer anger lingers on

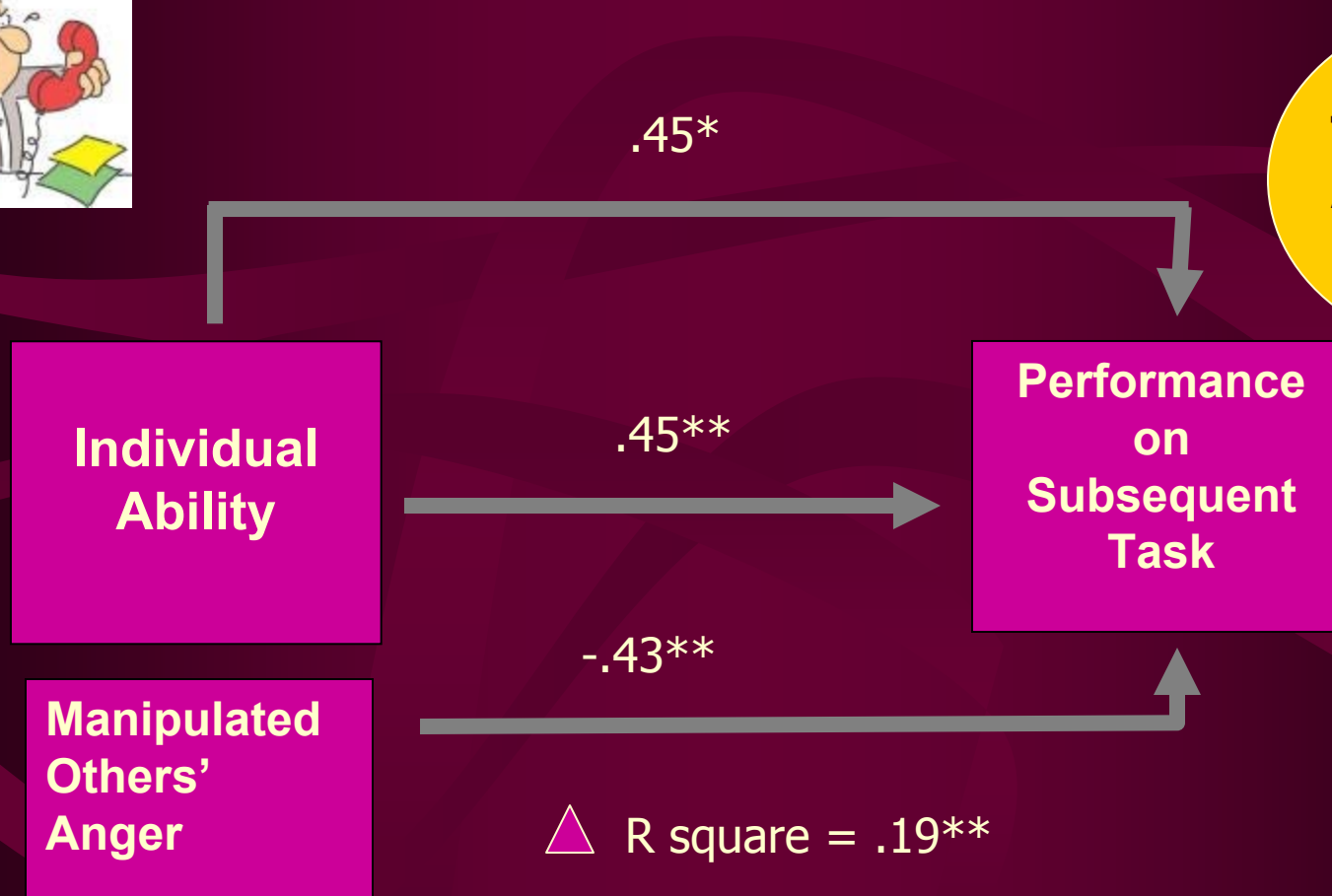
	N	M	SD
Anger Condition	20	4.7	1.65
Neutral Condition	21	5.8	1.53

$t = -2.22, p < .05$



## Study 5:

# Others' Anger and Individual Ability?



**Experiment  
Two Weeks  
After  
Initial Test**

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

**Maybe only with students?  
Different levels of others' anger?**

Study 6

Anger of Real Customers and Real  
Customer Service Employees

# Method

- Transcripts of calls
- How would described employee feel?



# Customer Emotion

<b>Angry</b>	<b>Affect-Free</b>
<p><u>Employee:</u> Perhaps the problem occurs when you are in an area with no reception?</p>	
<p><u>Customer</u> What?! Do you want me to figure out when exactly it happens? I should waste my time because of your bad quality phones, your lousy technicians and every time a new problem pops up?</p>	<p><u>Customer</u> I also thought about this. But I think it happens all the time, even when I am in areas that usually do not suffer from reception problems. Just anywhere I happen to be.</p>

# DV's

## **Manipulation check - Customer Anger (Alpha=0.95)**

The customer was angry during the call.

The customer was nervous during the call.

## **Employee Exhaustion (Alpha=0.88)**

Eric felt drained after the conversation with this customer.

This conversation caused Eric a feeling of frustration.

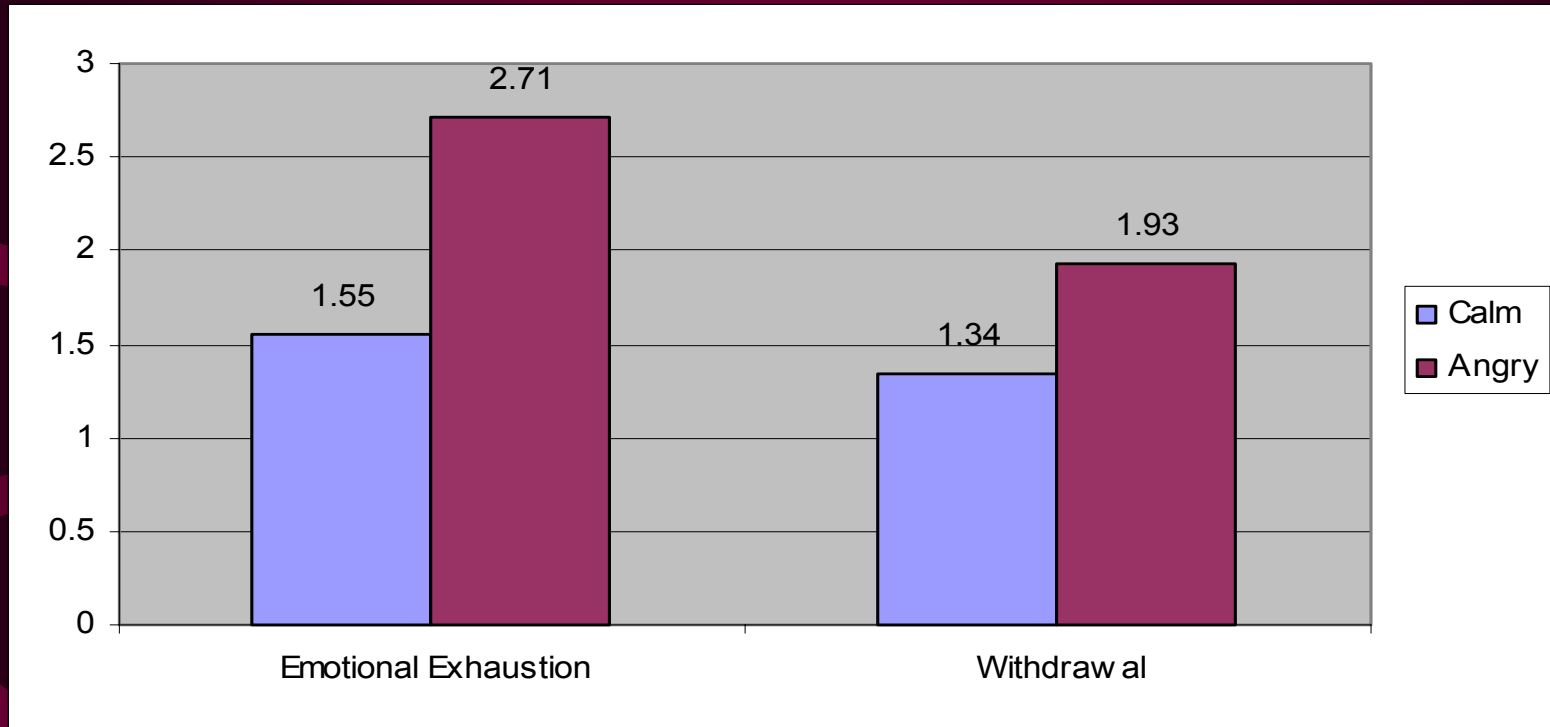
Eric felt frustration from the conversation with this customer.

## **Employee Withdrawal (Alpha=0.89)**

Eric asked to take a day off the next day.

This event would increase Eric's need to take a day off.

# The Effects of Anger

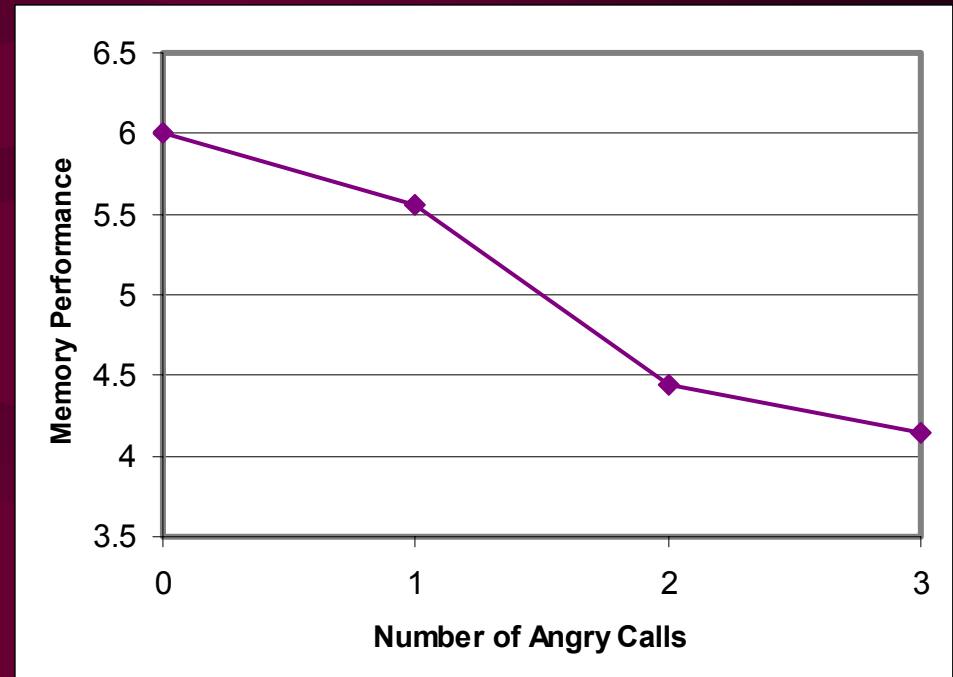


All differences significant ( $p < .001$ )

# Number of Angry Calls Influences Detail of Recall

Mean Number of items recalled

	N	M	SD
0 angry calls	36	6.00	1.17
1 angry call	36	5.56	1.40
2 angry calls	36	4.44	1.44
3 angry calls	36	4.14	1.29



$(F(3,140)=15.94, p<.000)$

# Conclusions

- 1. People (customers) assume that anger is rewarded.**
- 2. Customer anger influences ...**
  - ... employee affect and exhaustion**
  - ... employee task performance**
  - ... employee performance of unrelated task**
- 3. Customer anger influences ...**
  - ... employee affect and exhaustion.**
  - ... memory of episode**



**"Are there any questions?"**