# Negativity decontaminating: Communication media affordances for emotion regulation strategies

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## Abstract

Abstract  
A challenging part of many occupations is dealing with negative emotions from customers, coworkers and other communication partners on a daily basis. This paper describes a case-based, inductive study of information technology (IT) help-desk workers within a Fortune 500 energy company and the communication media and emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) they employ for dealing with negative emotions from communication partners. Using the technology affordance perspective as the theoretical lens to understand the role of communication media, the present study is the first of its kind to document empirically how employees and management can leverage communication media to ease the strain of emotion regulation upon members and the IT help-desk group—an original concept we label negativity decontaminating. Here, individuals' technologically enabled ERSs are metaphorically likened to the techniques used by medical workers to avoid contamination from viruses. This negativity decontaminating potential includes several media affordances existing at two levels: a group level affordance (negativity filtering) and individual level affordances (negativity isolating, negativity barriering, and negativity containing). Moreover, the tech-organizational contexts at the case organization gave rise to a set of conditions that affected the exercising and actualization of media's negativity decontaminating potential.

# Knowledge management technology as a stage for strategic self-presentation: Implications for knowledge sharing in organizations

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## Abstract

Abstract  
This article explores why it is often difficult for organizations to capture, store, and share employees' individually held expertise. Drawing on studies of the social construction of expertise and theories of transactive memory systems and self-presentation in computer-mediated environments, we argue that knowledge management technologies are not simple containers for the storage of expertise, but that they are stages upon which individuals enact performances of expertise. Through a longitudinal study of the work of IT technicians we show that users of a knowledge management technology strategically craft their own information entries to position themselves as experts vis-à-vis their coworkers. The data suggest that proactive self-presentations enacted by a few actors early on may spur reactive behaviors of strategic self-presentation across the organization. We explore implications of these findings for theories of transactive memory systems and technology use in organizations.