

DISSERTATION

RECOVERING OUT LOUD: EVALUATIONS OF COWORKERS' REACTIONS TO
SOBERVERSARY DISCLOSURE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

RECOVERING OUT LOUD: EVALUATIONS OF COWORKERS' REACTIONS TO SOBERVERSARY DISCLOSURE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Soberversaries, anniversaries commemorating one's sobriety from substance misuse, have gained visibility on social media platforms, including LinkedIn, yet little is understood about how individuals manage this concealable stigmatized identity and how colleagues respond. This study investigated identity management strategies employed in LinkedIn soberversary posts and their impact on colleagues' impressions and behavioral intentions, considering the moderating role of workplace substance use norms. Drawing on identity management and impression management literatures, the present study employed a sequential qualitative-quantitative approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Qualitative content analysis identified seven identity management strategies, loosely aligning with Roberts' (2005) framework. These findings informed the development of vignettes tested in a between-subjects survey analyzed via structural equation modeling (SEM). Identity management strategies had no significant effects on impressions or behavioral intentions, nor did workplace substance use norms moderate these relationships. Indirect effects were also nonsignificant. However, authentic and archetypal impressions were associated with increased boosterism, and authentic impressions were associated with decreased ostracism. The study advances understanding of stigma management on professional platforms, highlighting narrative framing strategies for individuals in recovery.

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To Yampa Sandwich Co. — thank you for being my third place. So many paragraphs were written at your tables, fueled by ham and cheese sandwiches and the comforting hum of life happening around me.

To my former teachers, friends, and colleagues beyond the program — thank you for inspiring me, for cheering me on, and for reminding me I’m more than my dissertation and my academic accomplishments.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family. Like all families, we have our fair share of dysfunctionality (maybe more than our fair share), but we are unwavering in our love for one another. We forgive each other, fiercely defend one another, and cheer each other on.

To my parents, Brian and Stacey, and my siblings, Austin and Jenna – thank you for teaching me resilience and the importance of fighting the good fight, no matter what life throws our way.

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INTRODUCTION

Self-help addiction recovery programs (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous [AA]) encourage those in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD) to develop narratives that center on personal transformation (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013), yet we know little about how employees develop and manage such narratives in work-related contexts. Soberversaries (i.e., anniversaries of one's sobriety from substance misuse) have "[emerged] as a new holiday-esque milestone [with] a growing social media presence," and, like other mental-health social media movements (e.g., #postyourpoll, #EndTheStigma), have expanded to LinkedIn (Kingson, 2022, para. 1).

Although the concept of a soberversary is nothing new, sharing about one's soberversary via LinkedIn warrants attention, especially in light of the Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW) initiative. This initiative, now active in more than 30 states, aims to foster work environments that support recovery and remove barriers for individuals experiencing addiction (New Hampshire Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative, n.d.). A key element of a RFW is a culture that reduces stigma (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [NIOSH], 2023), which may be driven, at least in part, by support from recovery allies who strive to advocate for individuals in recovery, promote recovery-inclusive environments, and work to dismantle recovery stigma (The Ohio State University, 2021). Although recovery allyship is a newer phenomenon, peer support from individuals in recovery has long been recognized as a valuable part of treatment and recovery services (Reif et al., 2014). In recovery treatment and group contexts (e.g., AA), peers are typically individuals in long-term recovery, role modeling that recovery is the expectation, not the exception (Lynner, 2023; Reif et al., 2014). However, we know less about the potential influence of recovery allies at work (compared to treatment

contexts), who are not necessarily in recovery themselves, but seemingly integral to fostering a workplace culture that promotes recovery and reduces stigma.

Unfortunately, the workplace can often be a recovery-hostile environment with limited presence of recovery allies given normalized workplace substance use, such as drinking alcohol during or after work in situations that may include customer meetings, after-work happy hours, conference receptions, and life celebrations (Buvik, 2019). In a qualitative in-depth interview study with 24 Norwegian managers and employees, Buvik (2019) found that social drinking was perceived as important to transitioning from work to leisure time and strengthening group cohesion. Similarly, Silverman (2013) indicates that drinking in the U.S. workplace has become so normalized that “the keg is becoming the new water cooler” (para. 1). Given the normalization of workplace drinking, workplace substance use norms may influence coworkers’ predispositions to serve as recovery allies. Specifically, when workplace substance norms are strong, coworkers may stigmatize those who do not drink enough (Burns, 2021). Further, should substance use be perceived as a ritual that builds camaraderie, coworkers may perceive one’s recovery status as a threat to group cohesion (Buvik, 2019). To protect group cohesion, coworkers may socially exclude the person in recovery (Henle et al., 2023), which contrasts with the notion of being a recovery ally.

Goals of the Proposed Study

The purpose of the present study is to understand how employees manage their recovery identities on LinkedIn by investigating identity management strategies used in soberversary posts. Additionally, it examines the impact of these strategies on colleagues’ perceptions, exploring how these perceptions contribute to either social exclusion or support, taking into account the influence of workplace substance use norms.

This research broadens our understanding of stigma management to an underexplored concealed and stigmatized identity – recovery status – while also addressing the perspective of the stigmatizer (in this case, the coworker), a perspective often overlooked in stigma management studies (Dovidio et al., 2000; Lynch & Rodell, 2018). Similarly, it examines the motivations behind social exclusion, or ostracism, a neglected perspective in ostracism research (Henle et al., 2023). This study also addresses Earnshaw et al.'s (2021) call for future research clarifying how language used during disclosure influences relationship outcomes and contributes to the broader need for workplace mental health research (e.g., Follmer & Jones, 2018). Additionally, it explores how workplace substance use norms affect those who do not engage in workplace substance use, a historically overlooked group in workplace substance use literature (Frone, 2009).

Positionality Statement

As a researcher examining how employees manage their recovery identities, I recognize that my own experiences, values, and background shape my approach to this study. My interest in this topic is deeply personal, stemming from my younger brother's challenges with substance use disorder (SUD). Navigating the complexities of SUD alongside my family motivated me to learn more about recovery and to actively engage as a recovery ally.

To expand my knowledge and advocacy, I completed an internship with The Ohio State University's Collegiate Recovery Community in 2017, where I helped develop recovery ally training materials. During this time, I was also pursuing my Master's in Higher Education & Student Affairs and conducting a narrative inquiry study exploring the experiences of students in recovery. This research deepened my appreciation for the lived experiences of individuals in recovery and cultivated my interest in qualitative methodologies.

Upon beginning my PhD program in Industrial-Organizational Psychology, my focus shifted from supporting students to supporting employees in and seeking recovery. I became particularly interested in RFW initiatives, recognizing their potential to foster more inclusive and supportive work environments for people like my brother and those I met at Ohio State. My longstanding interest in identity management, which first emerged during my Master's program, also informed this study.

I acknowledge that I am not a person in recovery, and my interpretations are shaped by my academic training, professional experiences, and relationships with individuals in and seeking recovery. To mitigate potential bias, particularly during the qualitative coding process, I employed strategies such as reflexive memos and peer debriefing. Throughout the analysis, I remained mindful of how my perspective might differ from someone with lived experience in recovery. Alongside my research assistants, who also do not identify as individuals in recovery, we engaged in ongoing reflection about what stood out to us. Together, we triangulated our findings and did our best to continuously check our assumptions. This will be discussed in more detail in the Method section.

By maintaining transparency in the analytic process and acknowledging my positionality, I aim to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how individuals manage their recovery identities via LinkedIn soberversary posts. My goal is to amplify the voices of those in recovery while fostering a broader conversation about identity management, stigma, and professional inclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review begins with defining key concepts such as substance use disorder (SUD) and recovery. Thereafter, I delve into the theoretical frameworks that guided my research questions and hypotheses. I first discuss Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987), highlighting recovery as a social identity and examining the associated stigma. These theories then inform the subsequent exploration of identity and impression management, contextualizing how employees in recovery manage their identities, shape impressions, and the social consequences that result.

Substance Use Disorder

Defined by the Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), a substance use disorder (SUD) is a disease that results from recurrent misuse of alcohol or other drugs (AOD) characterized by a significant impairment in health and social function, and a failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home (American Psychological Association [APA], 2013). Substance use includes licit drugs (e.g., alcohol, prescription drugs) and illicit drugs (e.g., cocaine, opioids; McLellan, 2017). The “big five” indicators of a SUD include withdrawal symptoms, rule setting to limit use, sacrificing activities, role fulfillment failure (e.g., arriving late to work), and a craving or compulsion to use (APA, 2013). SUDs exist on a continuum from mild to severe, and while the majority of those who misuse AOD do not develop a SUD, it remains a pervasive public health issue (McLellan, 2017). The Surgeon General’s (2016) landmark report revealed that 20.8 million U.S. people, representing 7.8% of the population, met diagnostic criteria for a SUD (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services [HHS]). Additionally, a 2017 study found that approximately 75% of adults ages 18 to 64 with

SUDs are employed (Goplerud et al.), highlighting the prevalence of SUDs among the U.S. workforce.

Recovery

There are both abstinence (Betty Ford Consensus Panel, 2007) and non-abstinence (Witkiewitz et al., 2021) approaches to recovery. A common abstinence-focused approach (The Betty Ford Consensus Panel, 2007) describes recovery as a voluntarily maintained lifestyle and ongoing process of change characterized by sobriety, personal health (i.e., improvements in physical health, psychological health, independence, and spirituality), and citizenship (i.e., living with regard and respect for others). Although there is no universally accepted definition of stability in sobriety, certain benchmarks are often used: abstinence from AOD for at least one month but less than one year is early sobriety, abstinence for at least one year but less than five years is sustained sobriety, and abstinence for at least five years is stable sobriety (Betty Ford Consensus Panel, 2007). Scholars and practitioners alike recognize recovery as a process that includes periods of remission and recurrence of use (Brady & Sonne, 1999). In terms of incidence, approximately 9.1% of U.S. adults, totaling 22.35 million individuals, indicate they have overcome issues with AOD use, with just less than half of those adults self-identifying as being ‘in recovery’ (Kelly et al., 2017). Most individuals in recovery are working adults, and approximately 13.4 million or 9% of employees are in recovery from a SUD (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2018).

Recovery as a Social Identity

The three components of a lasting recovery include personal identity, social identity, and a sense of belonging and social support (Cleveland et al., 2010). Personal identity relates to those in recovery knowing who they are and having a clear sense of self (Cleveland et al., 2010).

Comparatively, social identity refers to “that part of an individual’s self-concept [deriving from knowledge of] membership in a social group with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). Social identities can be visible (e.g., race) or concealable (e.g., recovery status).

We can relate the three components of a lasting recovery to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which suggests that one’s self-concept relates to social identities that stem from a sense of belonging and emotional connection to a group. Oftentimes, people in recovery strive to develop and maintain a positive self-construct in association with their group membership, or recovery status (e.g., Buckingham et al., 2013). According to Watson (2014), a sense of belonging and social support are both necessary for a lasting recovery. In other words, those in recovery must develop relationships and social networks with people who are positive influences.

Similarly, Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987) posits that people internalize qualities of their group membership, which contributes to how people perceive themselves as individuals and how both their in-group and out-group members perceive them. Notably, people can become part of a group and the group part of the person (Abrams et al., 2004). By categorizing themselves within an in-group, group members tend to compare themselves against an out-group. Therefore, how people self-define is often against a backdrop of who they are not (Turner et al., 1987). Importantly, the recovery journey changes a person’s awareness, and individuals in recovery may begin to contrast the person they used to be with the person they have become. As such, individuals in recovery often identify with their recovery identity more than their addiction identity (Buckingham et al., 2013). Reconstructing identity in this way is referred to as identity preference change and allows individuals in recovery to make favorable

downward comparisons (Buckingham et al., 2013), psychologically distancing themselves from their previous addictive behaviors and social connections (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004). For this reason, value judgments are attached to the addiction identity and the recovery identity (Buckingham et al., 2013). Moreover, an addiction identity correlates with low self-efficacy, whereas a recovery identity relates to a more empowered and self-efficacious state of being (Buckingham et al., 2013).

People transitioning into recovery may engage in identity preference change through crafting narratives of self-redemption (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013). The concept of redemption is integral to recovery programs such as AA and is understood as a form of “shame management,” which “involves a social process of autobiographical reconstruction” to overcome stigmatization (Maruna & Ramsden, 2004, p. 130). Not only might self-redemption narratives convince others that one has rehabilitated (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013), but they may also help individuals internalize their recovery identities (Pasupathi & Rich, 2005).

Stigma Associated with SUDs and Recovery Status

Sharing one’s recovery status with others may be complex due to stigma, as SUDs are often viewed more negatively than other mental health issues (e.g., schizophrenia, severe depression), largely because individuals with SUDs are perceived to be more responsible for their behaviors (Schomerus et al., 2011). Research indicates that substance use is among the most highly stigmatized behaviors, with a World Health Organization study ranking drug use and alcoholism as the first and fourth most stigmatized conditions across 14 countries (Room et al., 2001). Those who engage in substance misuse are identified and labeled (for example, as “addicts” and “junkies”), and, in a workplace context, may be assumed to lack the skills or integrity needed for employment (Roche et al., 2019). These stereotypes may result in

discrimination in hiring, promotion, workplace policies, and general workplace interactions (Roche et al., 2019).

Despite this stigma, workplace AOD use is prevalent, occurring both in the workplace and in work-related social settings (Buvik, 2019). In fact, drinking alcohol after work can become a workplace ritual, serving as a way to invest in colleagues, strengthen group cohesion, and enhance sense of belonging (Buvik, 2019), core components of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Because workplace drinking is normalized, and even encouraged, “disclosing a current or past problem with alcohol carries a double stigma associated with drinking ‘too much’ (e.g., alcohol addiction), and ‘not drinking enough’ (e.g., moderation or sobriety)” (Burns, 2021, p. 226). For example, a New Zealand study found that university students who drank heavily were viewed more positively than moderate drinkers and abstainers who were labeled as “weirdos”, “killjoys”, and “Grandmas” (Roberston & Tustin, 2018). Similarly, a U.S. study found that abstaining students were considered “social deviants” and labeled as “losers, freaks, pussies, and nerds” (Herman-Kinney & Kinney, 2013, p. 71). In alignment with Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987), when permissive substance use norms exist, those who engage form the in-group and those who abstain form the out-group.

Both university campuses and workplaces are alcogenic environments showing similar patterns. For instance, one employee in a qualitative study remarked, “You’re rude if you don’t drink when someone offers a toast” (Sagvaag et al., 2019, p. 78). Another study indicated that not prioritizing alcohol was seen as not prioritizing workmates (Buvik, 2019). In other words, abstaining from alcohol breaches a “bonding ritual,” representing a “rejection of camaraderie and community” (Buvik, 2019, p. 4). Buvik (2019) also found that drinking with colleagues

helps form a collective identity, further demonstrating the connection between workplace substance use norms and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Compared to research on AOD use and addiction stigma, less research has considered stigma associated with recovery. Nonetheless, those in recovery, compared to those actively using, still experience stigma. In a recent study, Zurawel et al. (2024) discovered that those in recovery experience comparable levels of aversion and hostility, along with similarly stigmatizing labels (e.g., junkie), compared to those currently using substances. Moreover, akin to adverse outcomes experienced by those with SUDs, employers exhibit less willingness to hire, offer jobs, and promote individuals in recovery (Join Together, 2013).

Identity and Impression Management

Informed by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987), identity management, which focuses on how individuals manage their sense of identity and self-concept, falls under the broader scope of impression management, which considers how individuals present themselves to shape others' impressions (Metts & Grohskopf, 2003). Traditionally, identity management research has focused on disclosure (i.e., what individuals reveal about themselves to others; Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010) and identity management strategies (i.e., behavioral tactics employees use to manage the extent to which they manifest their identity at work; Follmer & Jones, 2022). The present study considers the act of posting a soberversary announcement on LinkedIn as a distinct disclosure event, delves into the specific identity management strategies deployed through these posts, and posits how these tactics influence colleagues' perceptions. Although some scholars label these tactics as impression management strategies (e.g., Roberts, 2005), others term them as identity management strategies (e.g., Clair et al., 2005). For consistency, this study adopts the term

“identity management (IM) strategies” to encompass all tactics used in soberversary posts, concentrating on their role in shaping colleagues’ impressions.

Identity Management

The Disclosure Process Model. The Disclosure Process Model (DPM; Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010) highlights five components of disclosing a concealable stigmatized identity: (1) antecedent goals, (2) the disclosure event, (3) mediating processes, (4) outcomes, and (5) a feedback loop. Individuals engage in self-disclosure when they believe doing so will help achieve a goal (Derlega & Grzelak, 1979). These goals have been dichotomized as approach goals (i.e., reasons to disclose) and avoidance goals (i.e., reasons to not disclose), where those with approach goals are more likely to disclose compared to those with avoidance goals (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Further, the type of goal influences when, where, and to whom the individual discloses, and the depth, breadth, and duration of the disclosure event (Omarzu, 2000). The disclosure event subsequently influences individual, dyadic, and social outcomes through the mediating processes of alleviation of inhibition, social support, and changes in social information (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Toth et al., 2022).

Empirical research has produced mixed findings regarding outcomes of disclosure, with some studies describing that disclosure can augment social support and reduce discrimination (Burns et al., 2009; Fox et al., 2018), while others describe that disclosure can increase discrimination (Bockting et al., 2009). Regardless, experienced outcomes generate a feedback loop to antecedent goals, influencing future motivations to disclose. For example, those who disclose and are met with negative reactions may develop more avoidance goals in the future, thereby representing the ongoing nature of the disclosure process. However, not disclosing one’s concealable stigmatized identity can elicit psychological distress, strained social interactions, and

an increased susceptibility to disease (Pachankis et al., 2008). As a result, individuals with concealable stigmatized identities must weigh the costs and benefits of disclosure vs. non-disclosure. Following the principles of the DPM, IM strategies used in soberversary posts (i.e., the disclosure event) should inform others' impressions and thereby influence social outcomes.

Identity Management Strategies. In addition to the disclosure process, identity management involves employees using behavioral tactics (i.e., IM strategies) to regulate the degree to which they express their identity at work (Follmer & Jones, 2022). Several typologies exist to classify such strategies. For example, Clair et al. (2005) identified passing and revealing strategies, which are predicted by individual differences (e.g., propensity towards risk-taking, disclosure motives). Passing strategies involve concealing, providing false information, and avoiding questions about one's identity. Comparatively, revealing strategies include dropping hints, normalizing, and highlighting differences about one's identity.

Roberts (2005) introduced another IM framework that includes what Lynch and Rodell (2018) referred to as "blending in" and "standing out" strategies. Blending in strategies include assimilating and decategorizing. Assimilating involves projecting characteristics of an identity more valued than a stigmatized identity, such as an employee with a stigmatized linguistic background adjusting their communication style to match the norms of the dominant culture. Decategorizing entails diverting attention away from a stigmatized identity and limiting self-presentations to professional qualities. As an illustration, a trans employee may engage in decategorizing by steering personal conversations back to their job (Budge et al., 2010; Lynch & Rodell, 2018).

Comparably, standing out strategies include integrating and confirming, where integrating involves discussing positive features of a stigma and confirming involves capitalizing

on a stigma's stereotypes to yield desired responses. An example of an integrating strategy is a neurodivergent employee describing how autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has shaped their unique perspective and problem-solving abilities, while an example of a confirming strategy is a physically disabled employee highlighting their perseverance in overcoming challenges to evoke sympathy from colleagues.

Online IM Strategies. Historically, the identity management literature has focused on face-to-face interactions, neglecting to consider how individuals with concealable stigmatized identities manage their identities online. In recognizing this gap in the literature, Sun et al. (2021) expanded Lynch and Rodell's (2018) "blending in" and "standing out" strategies to online environments. Specifically, Sun and colleagues investigated employees' IM strategies in social media platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Slack). Blending in strategies were reconceptualized as (1) repudiative strategies (i.e., denying certain characteristics associated with oneself, repairing one's online image, justifying oneself, and/or making compensatory self-presentations), (2) subtractive strategies (i.e., removing unwanted information via adjusting privacy settings and/or deleting content), and (3) identity masking (i.e., obscuring one's online identity and/or posting content anonymously). Standing out strategies were categorized using the following terms: (1) self-enhancement (i.e., presenting oneself in a positive and socially desirable manner), (2) self-verification (i.e., behaving in a manner that confirms one's positive and negative self-views), (3) linguistic style variability (i.e., adapting one's language to a specific audience), and (4) directedness (i.e., targeting a particular person).

Although Sun and colleagues' (2021) work is of great significance to the theoretical development and study of IM strategies, the investigation of employees' IM strategies on other platforms (e.g., LinkedIn) is limited. Nevertheless, McChesney and Foster (2023) took steps to

address this gap by conducting an experimental vignette study investigating hiring managers' reactions to applicants' LinkedIn posts disclosing anxiety and depression. This study was inspired by the increasing trend of users more frequently disclosing their mental health conditions on social media, including LinkedIn, as part of mental health social media movements such as #postyourpill, #OkaytoSay, #MentalHealthAwareness, and #EndTheStigma. Researchers found that when applicants posted about their anxiety and depression on LinkedIn, hiring managers evaluated applicants as less emotionally stable and conscientious. Through this study, McChesney and Foster (2023) answered calls to investigate first impressions in virtual settings (Swider et al., 2021). However, there remains a gap in understanding the *IM strategies* used when disclosing mental health conditions on LinkedIn.

Identity Management and Recovery. Although specific IM strategies for disclosing substance use and recovery status remain uncertain, research regarding disclosure conditions, goals, outcomes, and the general disclosure process has received some attention. With respect to conditions of disclosure, Roche et al. (2019) highlight that it is more acceptable to disclose legal drug use (e.g., alcohol) than illegal drug use (e.g., heroin), and to disclose past use rather than current use. Additionally, people in recovery generally experience greater comfort disclosing to family and friends, and less comfort disclosing to coworkers, first-time acquaintances, in public settings, and in the media (Earnshaw et al., 2019). Regardless of the disclosure recipient, those with more time in recovery feel more secure disclosing (Earnshaw et al., 2019).

Motivations behind disclosure also vary. In a qualitative study that examined reasons for disclosure or non-disclosure, Earnshaw et al. (2021) found that approach goals included seeking support, the intention to be honest, the desire to make amends, the aim to set an example, and the need to coordinate logistics (e.g., request employment accommodations). In support of this

notion, disclosing to friends and family may be motivated by support seeking, whereas disclosing in more public settings (e.g., the media) may be related to setting an example or otherwise sharing recovery support (Earnshaw et al., 2019). Comparatively, reasons against disclosure centered on a fear of stigmatization or mistreatment (Earnshaw et al., 2021). Concerns of stigmatization also arose in a comprehensive study regarding disclosure barriers, where 20% of participants stated a fear of being fired or experiencing workplace discrimination, 50% of participants cited concerns about employers' stigmatizing attitudes affecting future employment outcomes, and 25% reported actually experiencing adverse employment consequences (e.g., denied employment) following disclosure (Join Together, 2013). Such concerns may prompt those in recovery to conceal their identity, as illustrated in a qualitative study where non-drinking employees crafted socially acceptable explanations for not drinking (e.g., health reasons, designated driver; Romo et al., 2016). In general, these findings replicate approach and avoidance goals articulated in other populations with concealable stigmatized identities; however, the desire to make amends and the need to coordinate logistics were unique to individuals in recovery (Earnshaw et al., 2021).

Related to disclosure outcomes, benefits of disclosing one's recovery status included increased social support, which was associated with decreased substance use and improved retention in care (Dobkin et al., 2002). Comparatively, consequences of disclosure included mistreatment from others, which was associated with dropout from treatment and continued substance use (Earnshaw, 2020).

In terms of the disclosure process, one nuanced aspect for individuals in recovery may be "going public" with their recovery journey (Burns, 2021). Identifying as both a recovery researcher and person in recovery, Burns (2021) writes, "A final step in my disclosure journey

has been ‘going public’ through social media,” which was met with “direct messages from people who [were] ‘sober curious’” or were “inspired to give sobriety a try after learning about my story” (p. 232). Echoing the sentiments of McChesney and Foster (2023) who discuss the emergence of mental health movements and their associated hashtags, Burns (2021) advocates for “recovering out loud” to foster a recovery community and to demonstrate that living in secrecy is not necessary. Such sentiments have likely contributed to the trend of announcing soberversaries on social media platforms, including on LinkedIn. That said, the IM strategies employed in such contexts have yet to be investigated. Given Earnshaw et al.’s (2021) findings regarding motivations to set an example, and the importance of crafting self-redemption narratives (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013), we might expect individuals in recovery to use integrating strategies by highlighting their positive transformation. Further, research supports that individuals are more likely to employ integrating strategies when welcomed (Ely & Thomas, 2001), and movements to “recover out loud” may signal that the context welcomes integration.

Although previous research supports the idea that individuals may use integrating strategies via soberversary posts, it must be noted that the predominant IM strategies have been identified through comprehensive reviews of related literature (Follmer & Jones, 2022). Moreover, these reviews generally assume that individuals across concealable stigmatized identities employ the same strategies (Follmer & Jones, 2022; Lynch & Rodell, 2018). However, evidence indicates that the extent of stigma associated with different identities varies (Jones et al., 1984), suggesting that the strategies identified via comprehensive reviews may not be universally applicable (Follmer & Jones, 2022). To heed the call for grounding our understanding of IM strategies in stigmatized individuals’ lived experiences (Follmer & Jones, 2022), the present study employs qualitative content analysis of soberversary posts on LinkedIn

to answer the following research question:

Research Question 1: What IM strategies do LinkedIn users employ when making soberversary posts?

Impression Management

While identity management centers on the extent to which employees manifest their identities at work, impression management refers to the process by which individuals strive to control others' impressions (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Given individuals may engage in impression management to influence others' perceptions of group affiliations, Roberts (2005) introduced social identity-based impression management, defined as "the process of strategically influencing others' perceptions of one's own social identity in order to form a desired impression" (p. 694-695). As previously discussed, Roberts (2005) identified four IM strategies (i.e., decategorization, assimilation, integration, and confirmation), which individuals strategically employ to shape desired impressions.

Impression Formation Theory. Impression Formation Theory (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990) explains how individuals come to understand social identities, thereby forming impressions of others. Specifically, individuals engage in categorization by comparing an employee's characteristics with a group's typical characteristics. Categorization unfolds as colleagues experience social attraction toward archetypal employees (i.e., those with similar characteristics to the workgroup) and experience uncertainty and confusion towards those less archetypal (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Lynch & Rodell, 2018). Individuation focuses on determining the extent to which an employee's characteristics differentiate them as a distinct person and occurs alongside categorization when a person cannot be easily categorized, prompting colleagues to pay closer attention to perceive them better (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). Individuation involves assessing how

congruently an employee behaves with their true self, thereby fostering authentic impressions. Similar to archetypal impressions, authentic impressions generate social attraction and reduce uncertainty by signaling trustworthiness and transparency (Lynch & Rodell, 2018).

Referencing Impression Formation Theory (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990), Lynch and Rodell (2018) tested the relationships between Roberts' (2005) social-identity management strategies and both archetypal and authentic impressions. They found that assimilating strategies positively predicted archetypal impressions, while decategorizing strategies negatively predicted them. Conversely, integrating strategies positively predicted authentic impressions, and confirming strategies negatively predicted authentic impressions. Although previous research supports the notion that IM strategies influence archetypal and authentic impressions, the IM strategies employed in LinkedIn soberversary posts have not been investigated. Consequently, the relationships between these IM strategies and archetypal and authentic impressions cannot yet be formally hypothesized. Thus, the second research question of the present study asks:

Research Question 2: How will IM strategies used in LinkedIn soberversary posts relate to colleagues' (a) archetypal and (b) authentic impressions?

The Relationship between Impressions and Behavioral Intentions. In addition to assessing the influence of IM strategies on colleagues' impressions, Lynch and Rodell (2018) examined the indirect relationship between IM strategies and subsequent treatment of the employee via colleague impressions. Specifically, the researchers hypothesized and tested relationships between archetypal and authentic impressions with boosterism and ostracism.

Boosterism. Referencing Moorman and Blakely's (1995) foundational work, Lynch and Rodell (2018) defined boosterism "as promoting the employee to others" (p. 1310), which manifests as endorsing and defending the employee when they are not present (Podsakoff et al.,

2000). Lynch and Rodell (2018) tested whether stronger archetypal and authentic impressions would positively predict boosterism. They argued that archetypal impressions foster social attraction and acceptance, leading colleagues to support those they view as fellow group members (Levine et al., 2005), manifesting as boosterism. Similarly, they contended that authentic impressions signal integrity, a basis for close relationships, which also yields boosterism. Lynch and Rodell (2018) found statistically significant direct effects for these relationships. The present study seeks to replicate their findings.

Hypothesis 1: Stronger archetypal impressions will be positively associated with colleagues' boosterism.

Hypothesis 2: Stronger authentic impressions will be positively associated with colleagues' boosterism.

Ostracism. Lynch and Rodell (2018) also tested whether weaker archetypal and authentic impressions would positively predict ostracism, which occurs “when an individual or group omits to take actions that engage another organizational member when it is socially appropriate to do so” (Robinson et al., 2013, p. 206). Employees who are ostracized may find that coworkers leave when they enter the room, ignore them, or exclude them from email communications (Henle et al. 2023). Lynch and Rodell (2018) argued that less archetypal employees generate uncertainty, and, according to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), colleagues are motivated to reduce this uncertainty. They explained that one means of reducing this uncertainty is to avoid unpredictable individuals, or ostracize them, to strengthen “the criteria of group membership” (p. 1310). Furthermore, Lynch & Rodell (2018) explained that less authentic employees may seem less reliable, perhaps due to colleagues' perceptions of behavior that is incongruent with their true selves. As a result of this less authentic impression, colleagues may

be wary and socially distance themselves. Although Lynch and Rodell (2018) found a statistically significant effect for the relationship between authentic impressions and ostracism, they did not observe a statistically significant direct effect between archetypal impressions and ostracism. Their sample size was 196, thus, a larger sample with more power to detect the effect may be needed to detect an effect should one exist. Accordingly, the present study seeks to retest these relationships.

Hypothesis 3: Stronger archetypal impressions will be negatively associated with colleagues' ostracism.

Hypothesis 4: Stronger authentic impressions will be negatively associated with colleagues' ostracism.

Examining Indirect Effects. Lynch and Rodell (2018), applying Roberts' (2005) classification of IM strategies, hypothesized indirect effects where colleagues' impressions would mediate the relationship between IM strategies and boosterism and ostracism. They discovered that assimilating had a positive indirect effect on colleagues' boosterism through impressions that the employee was archetypal. They also found that integrating had a negative indirect effect on colleagues' ostracism through impressions that the employee was authentic. Additionally, confirming showed a negative indirect effect on colleagues' boosterism and a positive indirect effect on colleagues' ostracism through impressions that the employee was authentic. However, given the specific IM strategies used in LinkedIn soberversary posts have not been investigated, I cannot yet hypothesize the indirect relationships between such strategies and the outcomes of boosterism and ostracism through archetypal and authentic impressions. For this reason, I am posing the following research questions:

Research Question 3: How will IM strategies relate to boosterism through archetypal and authentic impressions?

Research Question 4: How will IM strategies relate to ostracism through archetypal and authentic impressions?

The Influence of Workplace Substance Use Norms

Workplace substance use norms may shape how colleagues perceive IM strategies, particularly in terms of whether they view someone as fitting in or deviating from the group's ideal image, or archetype. In other words, these norms may influence colleagues' archetypal impressions. According to Ames and colleagues, workplace substance use norms include (1) descriptive norms (i.e., the extent to which employees use AOD or work while impaired at work) and (2) injunctive norms (i.e., the extent to which employees approve of using or working under the influence of AOD at work) (Ames & Grube, 1999; Ames & Janes, 1992). If a shared identity forms through workplace substance use, especially in a workgroup where AOD use is common and accepted, individuals in recovery may be perceived as less connected to the group and, accordingly, less archetypal. This is supported by findings that individuals who decline to drink are perceived as not prioritizing coworkers, breaching a bonding ritual, and otherwise rejecting community (Buvik, 2019). Therefore, depending on workplace substance use norms, the relationship between IM strategies and colleague impressions might differ. For this reason, the present study poses the following research question:

Research Question 5: How will IM strategies interact with workplace substance use norms in influencing colleagues' archetypal impressions?

Moreover, workplace substance use norms may indirectly influence whether individuals in recovery experience boosterism or ostracism based on colleagues' impressions. Henle et al.

(2023) expand on Williams' (1997) concept of the punitive motive behind ostracism, emphasizing that ostracizers punish unwanted behavior and exclude deviant group members with the intention of enhancing the greater good. In this way, ostracism serves as a “reminder to other group members of what constitutes acceptable behavior, which strengthens the group by reinforcing norms” (Henle et al., 2023, p. 1020). In workplaces with permissive substance use norms, those in recovery may be perceived as less archetypal and in violation of the norms, potentially driving ostracism.

Previous research provides evidence that those in recovery face social rejection. For example, Vilsaint et al. (2020) found that among individuals who disclosed their recovery status, 37% reported being treated less favorably, 37% were disrespected, 36% were avoided, and 30% were ignored. Similarly, Buvik (2019) found that those who abstained from drinking with colleagues after work were excluded, with reports of pregnant women feeling ostracized for not drinking alcohol during pregnancy. Buvik (2019) notes that post-work drinking creates “a boundary towards those outside the social group” (p. 5), indicating that those who do not participate miss out on social capital, including career-building opportunities.

Although previous research highlights that individuals in recovery often experience workplace ostracism, the mediating and moderating factors in this relationship have not been thoroughly explored. Additionally, our understanding of workplace substance use norms in Recovery Friendly Workplaces (RFWs) is limited. It is possible that RFWs, with their presumably non-permissive substance use norms, may foster environments where recovery is viewed as archetypal, potentially leading to increased boosterism. Although this study does not specifically consider RFW designation, the notion that non-permissive workplace substance use norms may moderate the relationship between IM strategies and impressions, potentially shifting

impressions in a more positive light and facilitating boosterism, stands. However, these relationships remain unexplored. Therefore, the final research question of the present study asks:

Research Question 6: Are the indirect effects of IM strategies on ostracism and boosterism through archetypal impressions conditioned upon workplace substance use norms?

Hypothesized Model Pre-Qualitative Content Analysis

The hypothesized model, developed prior to the qualitative content analysis, is depicted in Figure 1. Although three IM strategies are illustrated in the figure, the final number of strategies were determined after the qualitative content analysis.

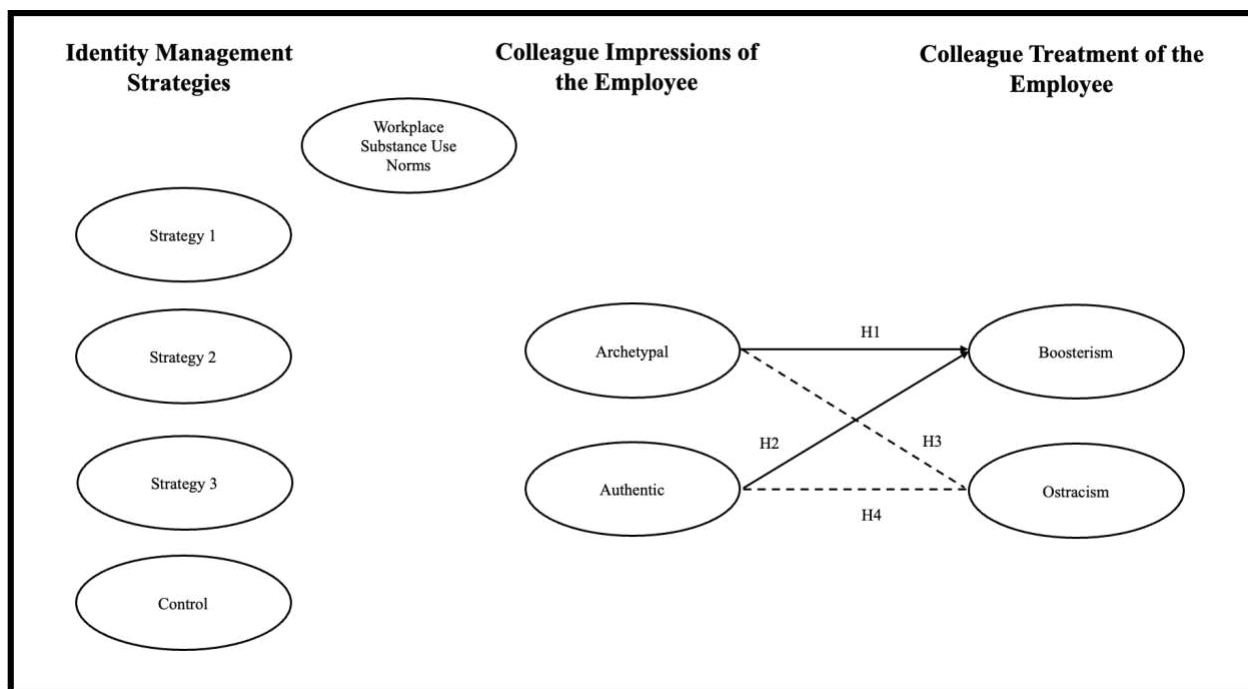


Figure 1

Hypothesized Model Pre-Qualitative Content Analysis

Note. H = hypothesis. Solid lines indicate predicted positive effects, and dashed lines indicate predicted negative effects.

METHOD

The present study employed a sequential qualitative-quantitative approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) to investigate IM strategies in LinkedIn soberversary posts and their effects on colleagues' impressions and behavioral intentions. Initially, qualitative content analysis was used to code IM strategies from existing LinkedIn soberversary posts. These identified strategies guided the creation of vignettes, aligning with the actual derived cases approach of vignette development (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Moreover, the identified strategies informed hypothesized paths between other variables, which were tested via a between-subjects survey where each participant viewed one of the experimental conditions (i.e., one of the vignettes that includes one IM strategy). The primary method of analysis for the quantitative study was structural equation modeling (SEM).

Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was used to code and draw conclusions regarding IM strategies employed in LinkedIn soberversary posts. Qualitative content analysis is “the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes and patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). The coding process followed Zhang and Wildemuth's (2009) steps for qualitative content analysis, which included preparing the data and defining the unit of analysis, developing categories and a coding scheme, testing the coding scheme and coding all text, assessing the coding consistency, and drawing conclusions from the coded data.

Preparing the Data and Defining the Unit of Analysis

Qualitative content analysis begins by preparing the data and defining the unit of analysis (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). In the present study, LinkedIn soberversary posts served as the unit of analysis. I identified LinkedIn soberversary posts by searching for terms including “sober,” “sobriety”, and “soberversary.” Specifically, I entered these terms into the LinkedIn search bar, filtered results to show only posts (not jobs or people), and sorted posts by the most recent entries. To minimize algorithmic bias tied to my own account, I confirmed with other LinkedIn users that sorting by “recent” instead of “top” posts yielded the same posts across LinkedIn accounts.

In the beginning of the data collection phase, I struggled to decide what qualifies as a soberversary post. I wanted to be mindful of making assumptions given my own positionality, acknowledging that I am not a person with an active SUD nor in recovery. At the outset of the study, I considered a soberversary to be an annual anniversary. However, upon reflecting and reading blogs from members of recovery communities (e.g., Kelley, 2023), I expanded my understanding to include posts that mentioned a sobriety date or the length of sobriety. This broader perspective acknowledges that individuals might celebrate specific milestones or focus on the daily commitment to sobriety rather than formal anniversaries. Accordingly, to be included for analysis, posts had to meet the following criteria: they were written in English by an individual (not an organization) based in the United States, focused on the length of their sobriety, and posted within the last week. A total of 57 posts met these criteria. Each post was copied into a spreadsheet, along with the date it was made, the date it was added to the spreadsheet, and the search term used. All posts were made between 10/9/24 and 10/16/24 and collected between 10/10/24 and 10/16/24.

Developing Categories and a Coding Scheme

After preparing the data, three undergraduate research assistants (URAs) and I read all posts several times through a process known as immersing ourselves in the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). This immersion provided a comprehensive understanding of the content. I then conducted a training seminar to familiarize URAs with IM strategies and qualitative content analysis. During the seminar, URAs reviewed my dissertation, we discussed IM strategies, and we explored the basic components of the phronetic iterative approach.

The phronetic iterative approach centers on three questions: (1) “What are the data telling me?”, (2) “What is it I want to know?”, and (3) “What is the relationship between what the data are telling me and what I want to know?” (Tracy, 2018, p. 62). In other words, this approach balances inductive coding, wherein codes flow directly from the data (Tafesse & Wien, 2017) and deductive coding, wherein codes stem from a pre-existing theoretical framework (Neuendorf, 2017). I chose this approach knowing it would allow us to use previous research (e.g., existing IM strategies) to guide interpretation while also identifying unique IM strategies used in LinkedIn soberversary posts that do not correspond with previous research.

Following Tracy’s (2018) recommendation, we selected approximately 20% of the data (i.e., 10 posts) “that best illustrate a maximum variation of meanings” (p. 65) to initiate our coding process (Tracy, 2013). To decide which 10 posts were the most maximally variant, URAs and I independently selected the 10 we felt demonstrated the most variation. We then selected the posts where our selections overlapped, which yielded 11 posts for our first review.

We began with descriptive primary cycle coding, independently analyzing the first post by identifying segments of text and labeling them with first-level codes that “summarize the basic ingredients” of the post (Tracey, 2018, p. 66). After independently coding each of the 11

posts, we discussed our findings to identify salient elements and reach consensus. Initially, we derived our codes inductively, as they did not align directly with Roberts' (2005) framework. To develop new codes, we used the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2014), which involves systematically comparing codes to ensure each is consistently applied and externally distinct from others (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As we identified codes, I took the lead in developing a codebook, which consisted of code names, definitions and rules for assigning codes, and examples (Weber, 1990). The first iteration of our codebook consisted of 93 codes derived from 11 of the most maximally variant posts.

Testing the Coding Scheme and Coding Remaining Posts

Next, we referenced the codebook to code an additional set of 20 posts, with two raters assigned to each post. Afterwards, rater pairs met to reach consensus and refine codes. Rater pairs then shared their findings with me, as the primary researcher. Together, we engaged in memo-writing to refine codes and identify new relationships between codes. Through this process, we identified 22 new codes for inclusion in the next iteration of the codebook. This second iteration consisted of 114 codes derived from 31 posts.

At this stage, we proceeded to test interrater reliability. Together we coded an additional set of 10 posts, again assigning two raters to each post. Rater pairs were arranged to ensure each individual worked with others an approximately equal number of times. For each post, raters marked codes as "0" if absent or "1" if present. I then calculated Cohen's kappa, which accounts for the possibility that raters may have agreed by chance (McHugh, 2012). Cohen's kappa "can range from -1 to +1 with 1 signaling perfect agreement and 0 indicating agreement no better than chance (McHugh, 2012). A value between .80-.90 is considered "strong" and above .90 is considered "almost perfect." Unfortunately, while raw agreement among raters was

approximately 92%, Cohen's kappa was only .60. Upon further investigation, I found that when one category (e.g., "Absent According to Both Raters") was rated more frequently than others (e.g., "Present According to Both Raters"; "Rater 1 Present, Rater 2 Absent"; "Rater 1 Absent, Rater 2 Present"), kappa can be artificially low despite high raw agreement. This is because kappa is sensitive to the distribution of ratings and adjusts downward. To address this, I calculated the prevalence-adjusted bias-adjusted kappa (PABAK; Byrt et al., 1993) which accounts for prevalence and bias in skewed distributions. The resulting PABAK was .85, indicating that rater agreement, when adjusted for prevalence, was much closer to the observed raw agreement.

Thereafter, rater pairs discussed any coding discrepancies until consensus was reached, adding three new codes and refining codes to clarify definitions and rules for application. This led to the third iteration of the codebook, which comprised 110 codes derived from 41 posts. At this point, there were 16 posts left to code, which were divided among the four raters to independently code. No new codes were identified in coding these last 16 posts. This declining trend in the emergence of new codes indicated that we had likely reached the point of saturation, defined as the "point in data collection and analysis when new information produces little or no change to the codebook" (Guest et al., 2006, p. 65). Importantly, reaching the point of saturation signified that we collected enough data to fully explore *Research Question 1: What IM strategies do LinkedIn users employ when making soberversary posts?*

Drawing Conclusions from the Coded Data

Next, as the primary researcher, I initiated secondary-cycle coding (Tracy, 2013) wherein I organized and synthesized codes. I also evaluated the frequency of descriptive codes and umbrella codes to understand recurring ideas. This led to the creation of an analytic outline

comprising a loose list of umbrella codes (Tracy, 2018). URAs and I reviewed this analytic outline and discussed which descriptive codes aligned with each umbrella code.

We also identified descriptive codes that fell outside the scope of IM strategies or could be consolidated due to redundancies. For example, we initially coded photos, hashtags, and text separately, resulting in multiple “personal growth” codes. We recognized that these could be collapsed into a single code, a pattern we observed across several instances of photos, hashtags, and text. There were also codes we categorized as “additional context,” meaning they did not align with a specific strategy but provided additional helpful contextual information. Examples of these codes included references to a substance, mention of a soberversary date, and the reason for the post. We also identified “case-by-case” codes, which were relevant to different IM strategies depending on the context. For example, the mental health code was sometimes associated with raising awareness, and at other times with expressing gratitude for well-being, acknowledging harm from substance misuse, or highlighting personal growth.

By the end of this process, we refined the codebook to 68 descriptive codes under seven umbrella codes, each representing an IM strategy. The final codebook, including the frequency of each descriptive code, is provided in Appendix A. See Table 1 for a summary of the seven IM strategies and their descriptions.

Table 1*Identity Management Strategies Used in LinkedIn Soberversary Posts*

Identity Management Strategy	Description of Identity Management Strategy	Example
Showcasing personal growth, transformation, and values	Emphasizing positive change and self-improvement through recovery.	<i>"I've grown into a completely different person by learning and applying the tools and skills needed to cope in healthy ways."</i>
Serving as a role model, offering supporting, and raising awareness	Providing encouragement and inspiration by demonstrating what is possible in recovery, offering direct support, and/or sharing information to enhance understanding and raise awareness of substance use disorder (SUD) and recovery.	<i>"I share all of this because I believe you can experience the same sort of transformation in your own life."</i>
Highlighting professional development and accomplishments	Linking recovery to academic and/or career success or highlighting professional development or accomplishments.	<i>"I've achieved milestones I once thought were out of reach—graduating from college, nearing the completion of my Master's program, and building a career that fulfills the very dream I had as a Tech on day one."</i>
Acknowledging support received and expressing gratitude	Highlighting appreciation for support systems, milestones, or the recovery journey.	<i>"I'm grateful for so much today, including my job, my team at work, my mom, my best friends, my cat, my apartment and my overall mental and physical well being."</i>
Invoking faith	Emphasizing the role of spirituality or faith in the recovery process, often in the context of expressing appreciation.	<i>"My faith has been a guiding light, leading me to new levels of strength and resilience."</i>
Acknowledging flaws and past harm	Taking accountability for harm caused.	<i>"Unfortunately, I still feel loads of regret for things I've caused in my past."</i>
Reframing recovery identity	Downplaying or reframing one's recovery status to minimize stigma or align it with a broader narrative.	<i>"I want the focus to be on who I am as a whole—and I can't do that if I celebrate a soberversary."</i>

Next, I compared the inductively derived IM strategies with existing frameworks, taking a more deductive approach. Clair et al. (2005) categorize IM strategies as either revealing or concealing, thus creating a binary – one either discloses an identity or withholds it. In contrast,

Lynch and Rodell (2018) describe strategies as blending in versus standing out. Initially, I equated blending in strategies with concealing and standing out strategies with revealing. However, as I analyzed the strategies in soberversary posts, I began to see that IM strategies are not necessarily opposites. Of note, sharing a soberversary post on LinkedIn is inherently a revealing strategy, yet the strategies used in such posts vary in how much they emphasize fitting in and distinguishing oneself. This led me to conceptualize IM strategies used in soberversary posts as existing along a ‘revealing’ continuum, varying in the extent to which they blend in and stand out. By adopting this perspective, I was able to map the seven strategies onto Roberts’ (2005) framework, which as aforementioned, includes integrating, assimilating, confirming, and decategorizing strategies (see Table 2).

Table 2

Relationship Between Identified Strategies and Roberts’ (2005) Framework

Frequency	Percentage	Identified Identity Management Strategy	Roberts (2005) Identity Management Strategy
49	85.96%	Showcasing personal growth, transformation, and values.	
44	77.19%	Serving as a role model, offering support, and raising awareness	Integrating (57; 100%)
20	35.09%	Highlighting professional development and accomplishments	
35	61.40%	Acknowledging support received and expressing gratitude	Assimilating (38; 66.67%)
16	28.07%	Invoking faith	
16	28.07%	Acknowledging flaws and past harm	Confirming (16; 28.07%)
15	26.32%	Reframing recovery identity	Decategorizing (15; 26.32%)

Integrating. The most common strategy, which was used in all 57 posts, was integrating, which involves emphasizing the positive aspects of a stigmatized identity. The qualitative coding

process yielded three distinct integrating strategies, highlighting important nuances within the integrating strategy itself. In the present study, each integrating strategy focused on the beneficial aspects associated with being in a person in recovery: showcasing personal growth, transformation, and values (Integrating Strategy A), positioning one's recovery identity to serve as a role model and offer support (Integrating Strategy B), or highlighting professional accomplishments (Integrating Strategy C). The most common integrating strategy, used in 86% of posts, was Integrating Strategy A, followed by Integrating Strategy B in 77% of posts. The prominence of these two integrating strategies is unsurprising given AA encourages individuals in recovery to share their stories with others experiencing addiction, offering wisdom, hope for transformation, and serving as a role model by letting others know they are not alone. Dunlop and Tracy (2013) further support this idea, having established a longitudinal relationship between crafting a self-redemption narrative and long-term behavioral change. This suggests that participation in behavioral change programs like AA may socialize individuals to use integrating strategies. Less frequently, individuals employed Integrating Strategy C, highlighting professional development and accomplishments. Despite LinkedIn's reputation as a professional platform, career-related achievements were far less common than themes of personal growth and transformation in sobriety posts. In fact, nine individuals acknowledged they do not typically share personal stories on LinkedIn, yet seven expressed they felt compelled to share their story to offer support and serve as a role model for others.

Assimilating. The second most frequently used IM strategy was assimilating, which appeared in two-thirds of posts. According to Lynch and Rodell (2018), assimilating is a 'blending in' strategy wherein employees project characteristics of a more socially valued group. Two distinct assimilating strategies emerged: acknowledging support received and expressing

gratitude (Assimilating Strategy A) and invoking faith (Assimilating Strategy B). Assimilating Strategy A appeared in 61% of posts, and Assimilating Strategy B was present in 28%. Notably, 81 % of individuals who invoked faith did so within the context of expressing gratitude. However, invoking faith occurred in only 37% of posts that expressed gratitude, indicating that while these strategies often co-occurred, they were not always used together.

Both assimilating strategies align with the original conceptualization (Roberts, 2005) because they project socially valued groups – fundamental human relationships (Assimilating Strategy A) and Christianity (Assimilating Strategy B). Expressing gratitude often involved references to supportive family and friends, reinforcing human connection. Roberts (2005) indicates that assimilating strategies “can counter stereotypes of deviance in exchange for emphasis on commonality” (p. 696). In this context, the stigma associated with SUD or recovery contrasts with the positive perception of receiving family and social support. Similarly, individuals who invoked faith frequently referenced “the Lord,” “Jesus”, and “God,” signaling an affiliation with Christianity, a widely accepted and practiced religion in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2025). Although today AA promotes itself as non-secular, its founding is deeply rooted in Christianity, as reflected in the Twelve Steps (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1989). This connection may help explain why assimilating may be more prevalent compared to other strategies, as individuals in recovery may be socialized by AA programs to adopt this IM strategy.

Confirming. Confirming, which was used in 28% of posts, involves openly associating with a stigma, but rather than reframing it positively (as seen in integrating), individuals capitalize on it to elicit a desired response, such as sympathy (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). In the present study, confirming manifested as individuals acknowledging past mistakes and the harm

caused by their substance misuse. This manifestation aligns with the Twelve Steps, which emphasize acknowledging wrongdoing and making amends (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1989). Additionally, compared to other IM strategies, the confirming strategy more strongly highlighted one's addiction identity by contrasting the person they used to be with the person they are now. This strategy enabled individuals to psychologically distance themselves from their previous addictive behaviors, demonstrating identity preference change (Buckingham et al., 2013) through favorable downward comparisons.

Decategorizing. The final strategy, decategorizing (26%), was the least prevalent and involved reframing one's recovery identity to minimize its salience. According to its original conceptualization, decategorizing involves removing references to social groups and limiting self-presentation to professional qualities (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). In soberversary posts, individuals did not necessarily restrict their narratives to professional qualities but tended to blend in more than stand out by downplaying their recovery identity, crafting counternarratives, and/or highlighting the social implications associated with substance misuse and recovery. For example, one individual introduced herself to her LinkedIn network with a list of "fun facts," embedding a brief mention of her three months of sobriety within the list. In other cases, individuals presented counternarratives, such as one person who described "unanniversarying," meaning they no longer celebrate their soberversary because they view themselves as more than just a person in recovery. Others referenced recovery-hostile environments, shifting the focus away from their personal experiences and toward societal issues. In each of these cases, individuals reduced information about their recovery status relative to other IM strategies, aligning with the essence of decategorizing, even if not mapping onto its theoretical definition perfectly.

Using Multiple Strategies. Existing literature on IM strategies (e.g., Clair et al., 2005; Roberts, 2005) categorized these strategies as distinct and mutually exclusive; however, findings from the present study indicate that individuals often use multiple strategies within a single disclosure event. On average, individuals employed 2.21 strategies per post; two-thirds of posts incorporated two IM strategies, 19% used three, and 5% employed all four. As aforementioned, integrating appeared in all 57 posts, making it the dominant strategy. In 9% of posts, integrating appeared by itself, but in the remaining 91%, it appeared with another IM strategy. The most frequent combination was integrating and assimilating (47%), reflecting how individuals often express gratitude for those who supported their personal growth and transformation. Table 3 provides further details on strategy combinations.

Table 3

Frequency of Identity Management Strategies Used in LinkedIn Soberversary Posts

Frequency	Strategy(ies)
27	Integrating + Assimilating
8	Integrating + Decategorizing
7	Integrating + Assimilating + Confirming
5	Integrating
3	Integrating + Confirming
3	Integrating + Confirming + Decategorizing
3	Integrating + Assimilating + Confirming + Decategorizing
1	Integrating + Assimilating + Decategorizing

By acknowledging the co-occurrence of multiple strategies, this study offers a more nuanced understanding of how individuals navigate disclosure and manage their identities in professional settings. While prior studies (e.g., Lynch & Rodell, 2018) have primarily examined verbal or behaviorally observed IM strategies, this study highlights how individuals on LinkedIn – particularly in the context of soberversary posts – construct written narratives to manage their identities. This suggests that narrative forms of managing and disclosing one’s identity, which

have received insufficient attention in organizational research (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), may be more multidimensional, and thus feature multiple strategies. Notably, McAdams (1999) defines identity as “the internalized and evolving story that results from a person’s selective appropriation of past, present, and future” (p. 486). The results of the qualitative analysis show that individuals take a narrative approach to identity management in their LinkedIn soberversary posts, allowing them to craft a story about their past, present, and future. Future research would benefit from exploring ‘identity as narrative’ (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) or the storytelling aspect of IM strategies to extend stigma management literature.

Ensuring Quality in the Qualitative Content Analysis

Recognizing the multidimensional nature of identity management in written narratives underscores the importance of a rigorous analytical approach. To ensure the credibility and depth of these findings, I applied Tracy’s (2010) eight criteria of quality in qualitative research. The first criterion is that the topic of the research is relevant, timely, and interesting, which I addressed in my literature review when discussing the backdrop of RFW legislation and the notion that IM strategies are assumed to be consistent across identities, regardless of the extent to which they are stigmatized. Though I was able to loosely map the inductively derived strategies onto Roberts’ (2005) framework, conducting a qualitative content analysis enabled the identification of nuances within strategies, and led to the major finding that strategies are not as distinct as existing literature has assumed.

The second criterion is rich rigor (Tracy, 2010). One component of rich rigor is ensuring there is sufficient data to support significant claims, which I have demonstrated through my report on data saturation. I also demonstrated rigor through the care and practice of my data collection and analysis procedures. Specifically, I collected soberversary posts in a manner that

eliminated algorithmic biases. I also engaged with my URAs in memo writing to continuously iterate on our codebook.

The third criterion is sincerity (Tracy, 2010), which relates to a researcher's honesty and transparency about how their own biases and goals influenced their methods. Our research team practiced self-reflexivity by interrogating our interpretations of the data, acknowledging that we are not individuals in recovery nor individuals with SUDs. We challenged each other during collaborative discussions. Additionally, I, as the primary researcher, reflected on my positionality, especially when it came to determining which soberversary posts were relevant for analyses. We also engaged in rigor via transparency, specifically through an audit trail wherein we documented each iteration of our codebook and why codes were refined.

The fourth criterion is credibility (Tracy, 2010). We addressed credibility by initially immersing ourselves in the data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content. We also practiced credibility through triangulation, consistently holding consensus conversations to converge on the same conclusion, specifically addressing when or when not to use codes.

The fifth criterion is resonance, which Tracy (2010) refers to as “research's ability to meaningfully reverberate and affect an audience” (p. 844). One way resonance is achieved is through naturalistic generalization, whereby readers draw connections between the research and their own experience (Stake & Trumbull, 1982). By transforming findings into vignettes, which I will discuss in the next section, I aimed to foster naturalistic generalization, offering participants and consumers of this research a vicarious experience of interacting with soberversary posts. Additionally, although the data is derived from individuals in recovery, I anticipate that my findings will resonate beyond my population, particularly to other individuals disclosing mental health diagnoses.

The sixth criterion is significant contribution (Tracy, 2010). This research is theoretically significant in that I identified simultaneous use of multiple IM strategies, a point that has been neglected in previous research regarding IM strategies. This research also has heuristic significance, meaning that it moves people to further explore these findings in the future. In particular, these findings may inspire researchers to consider identity as narrative, exploring the storytelling component of identity management.

The seventh criterion relates to ethics (Tracy, 2010). Procedural ethics were addressed as related to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and informed consent. Although deemed “Not Human Subject Research,” URAs and I discussed the importance of being respectful with LinkedIn data, acknowledging the inherent vulnerability that comes with individuals making soberversary posts on this platform.

The eighth criterion is meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2010), which relates to achieving the study’s stated purpose and appropriately connecting the literature reviewed with methods and findings. The intention to use a phronetic iterative approach allowed us to better situate the literature with the findings, despite the fact we initially engaged in inductive descriptive coding and the deductive aspect came to fruition during secondary cycle coding. However, staying connected to existing identity management frameworks and comparing findings with existing literature helped us to integrate the research question and yield conclusions that were meaningfully connected to both the literature and the data.

Using Qualitative Findings to Inform Initially Posed Research Questions

The qualitative content analysis was conducted to address *Research Question 1: What IM strategies do LinkedIn users employ when making soberversary posts?* My initial argument was that addressing this question would allow me to transform research questions into testable

hypotheses. In the following paragraphs, I outline the adjustments I made to my original research questions.

Direct and Indirect Relationships

Initially, I posed three separate research questions regarding how IM strategies will directly shape colleagues' impressions and indirectly shape colleagues' behavioral intentions. Given that the inductively derived strategies could be loosely mapped onto Roberts' (2005) framework, I replicated hypotheses tested in Lynch and Rodell (2018) between IM strategies, colleagues' impressions, and colleagues' behavioral intentions. Figure 2, sourced directly from Lynch and Rodell (2018), illustrates these hypotheses. For the sake of parsimony, I have consolidated the hypothesized direct relationships into the following mediation hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Assimilating is (a) positively associated with boosterism and (b) negatively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is archetypal.

Hypothesis 2: Decategorizing is (a) negatively associated with boosterism and (b) positively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is archetypal.

Hypothesis 3: Integrating is (a) positively associated with boosterism and (b) negatively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is authentic.

Hypothesis 4: Confirming is (a) negatively associated with boosterism and (b) positively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is authentic.

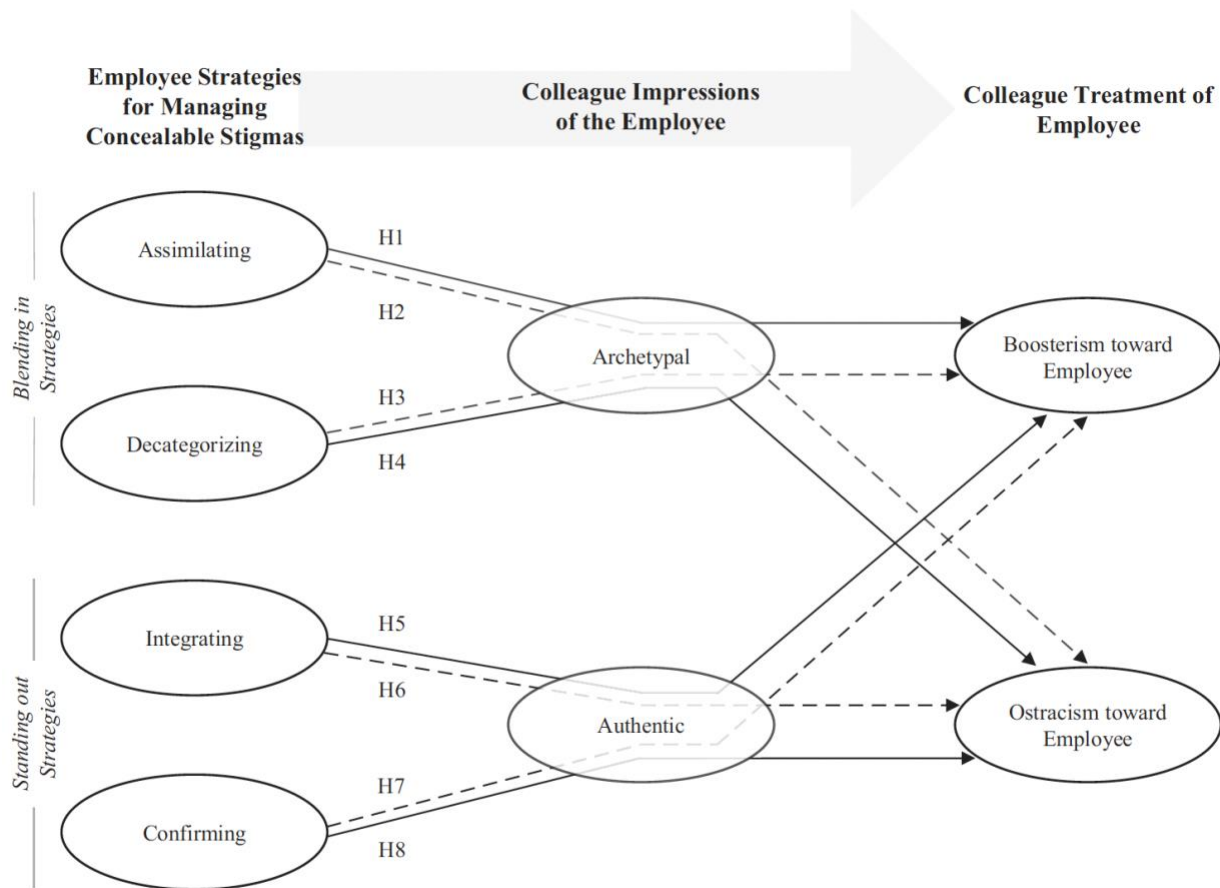


Figure 1. Conceptual model. H = hypothesis. All hypotheses are indirect effects. Solid lines indicate predicted positive indirect effects, and dashed lines indicate predicted negative indirect effects.

Figure 2

Conceptual Model Tested in Lynch and Rodell (2018)

Note. Figure sourced directly from Lynch and Rodell (2018).

As previously discussed, the qualitative content analysis revealed that individuals use an average of 2.21 strategies per post. To remain true to the data, I tested relationships using combined strategies as predictors. Because integrating was the dominant strategy and was combined with a second strategy 91% of the time, I focused on the following strategy combinations: Integrating + Assimilating, Integrating + Confirming, and Integrating + Decategorizing. However, because no prior research provides a theoretical basis for forming directional hypotheses regarding combination strategies, I shifted my focus toward exploring

how these combinations shape colleagues' impressions and indirectly influence behavioral intentions rather than posing formal hypotheses. Thus, I proposed the following revised research question:

Research Question 2: How will combined IM strategies relate to colleagues' behavioral intentions through colleagues' impressions?

The Moderating Role of Workplace Substance Use Norms

The final two initially posed research questions (i.e., *Research Questions 5* and *6*) considered how workplace substance use norms moderate the relationship between IM strategies and colleagues' impressions. Notably, in a workplace where substance use is common and widely accepted, someone who makes their sobriety salient may be viewed as less archetypal given their deviation from group norms (Buvik, 2019; Henle et al., 2023). Building on the identified IM strategies used in soberversary posts and drawing from the directional hypotheses tested in Lynch & Rodell (2018), I transformed *Research Question 5* into a hypothesis, informed by the strategies associated with archetypal impressions in *Hypotheses 1* through *4*.

Hypothesis 5: Workplace substance use norms will moderate the relationship between (a) assimilating and (b) decategorizing strategies and colleagues' archetypal impressions such that archetypal impressions will be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms.

I successfully transformed the original *Research Question 5* into testable hypotheses that examine archetypal impressions as such impressions are expected to be directly related to workplace norms. However, because no theoretical basis exists for the combined strategies, I posed the following research question related to archetypal impressions.

Research Question 3: How will combined IM strategies interact with workplace substance use norms in influencing colleagues' archetypal impressions?

Moderation of Indirect Effects

Originally, *Research Question 6* was posed to examine whether the indirect effects of IM strategies on ostracism and boosterism, through archetypal impressions, are conditioned upon workplace substance use norms. Given the theoretical foundation established for the interaction between strategies and archetypal impressions (Buvik, 2019; Henle et al., 2023; Lynch & Rodell, 2018) it follows that the indirect effect on ostracism should be stronger and the indirect effect on boosterism should be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms. Otherwise stated, in workplaces where substance use is common, and an employee uses a strategy associated with less archetypal impressions (i.e., decategorizing), ostracism is more likely. In contrast, when an employee uses a strategy that is positively associated with archetypal impressions (i.e., assimilating) in a workplace that has permissive substance use norms, boosterism should be less likely. Based on this rationale, I posed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: Workplace substance use norms will moderate the relationships between assimilating and decategorizing strategies on colleagues' behavioral intentions through archetypal impressions, such that (a) the indirect effects on ostracism will be stronger and (b) the indirect effects on boosterism will be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms.

Although this hypothesis can be specified for the individual strategies associated with archetypal impressions, I posed the following question for combined strategies:

Research Question 4: Are the indirect effects of combined IM strategies on ostracism and boosterism through archetypal impressions conditioned upon workplace substance use norms?

Hypothesized Model Post-Qualitative Content Analysis

The final hypothesized model is depicted in Figure 3. Refer to Table 4 for a summary of the transformation of research questions and hypotheses from pre- to post-qualitative content analysis.

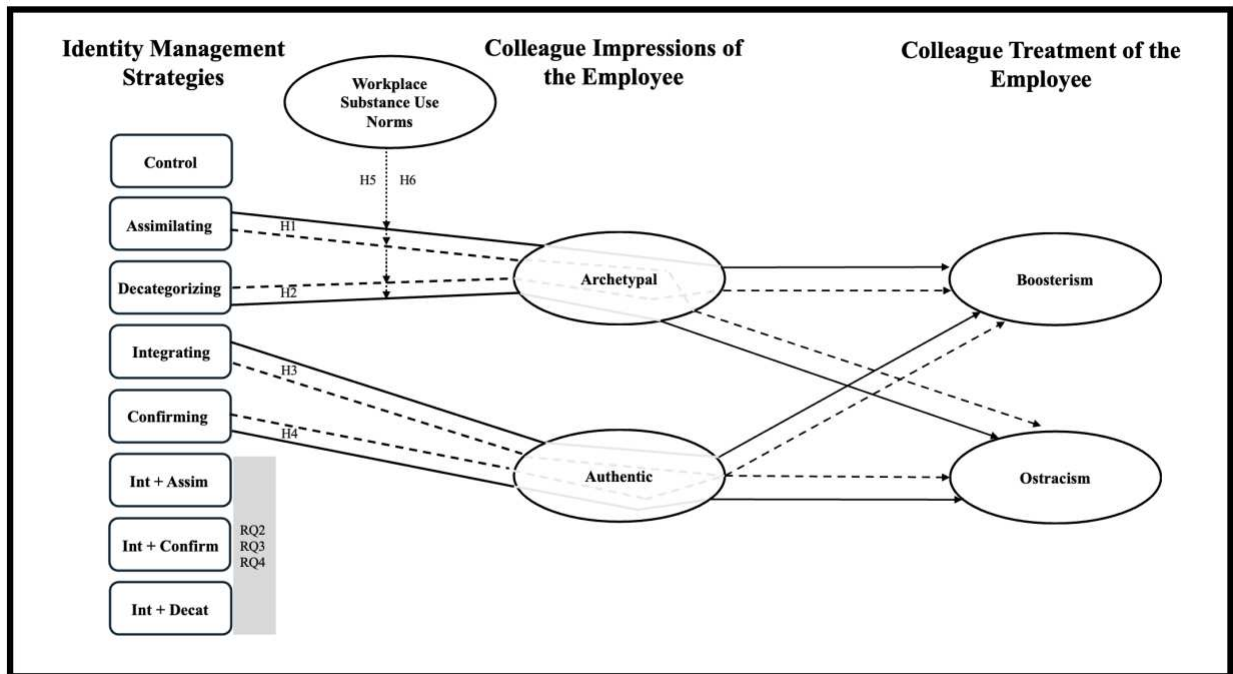


Figure 3

Hypothesized Model Post-Qualitative Content Analysis

Note. Solid lines indicate predicted positive indirect effects, and dashed lines indicate predicted negative indirect effects. The dotted line represents the predicted moderating role of workplace substance use norms. No lines appear for combined strategies, as their effects are explored through research questions. The gray box indicates that Research Questions 2–4 pertain to the combined strategies.

Table 4

Transformation of Hypotheses and Research Questions from Pre- to Post-Content Analysis

Pre-Qualitative Content Analysis	Post-Qualitative Content Analysis
Direct and Indirect Relationships	
<i>Hypothesis 1: Stronger archetypal impressions will positively influence colleagues' boosterism.</i>	<i>Hypothesis 1: Assimilating is (a) positively associated with boosterism and (b) negatively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is archetypal.</i>
<i>Hypothesis 2: Stronger authentic impressions will positively influence colleagues' boosterism.</i>	
<i>Hypothesis 3: Stronger archetypal impressions will negatively influence colleagues' ostracism.</i>	<i>Hypothesis 2: Decategorizing is (a) negatively associated with boosterism and (b) positively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is archetypal.</i>
<i>Hypothesis 4: Stronger authentic impressions will negatively influence colleagues' ostracism.</i>	<i>Hypothesis 3: Integrating is (a) positively associated with boosterism and (b) negatively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is authentic.</i>
<i>Research Question 3: How will IM strategies relate to boosterism through archetypal and authentic impressions?</i>	<i>Hypothesis 4: Confirming is (a) negatively associated with boosterism and (b) positively associated with ostracism through impressions that the employee is authentic.</i>
<i>Research Question 4: How will IM strategies relate to ostracism through archetypal and authentic impressions?</i>	<i>Research Question 2: How will combined IM strategies relate to colleagues' behavioral intentions through colleagues' impressions?</i>
Moderating Role of Workplace Substance Use Norms	
<i>Research Question 5: How will IM strategies interact with workplace substance use norms in influencing colleagues' archetypal impressions?</i>	<i>Hypothesis 5: Workplace substance use norms will moderate the relationship between (a) assimilating and (b) decategorizing strategies and colleagues' archetypal impressions such that archetypal impressions will be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms.</i>
	<i>Research Question 3: How will combined IM strategies interact with workplace substance use norms in influencing colleagues' archetypal impressions?</i>
Moderation of Indirect Effects	
<i>Research Question 6: Are the indirect effects of IM strategies on ostracism and boosterism through archetypal impressions conditioned upon workplace substance use norms?</i>	<i>Hypothesis 6: Workplace substance use norms will moderate the relationships between assimilating and decategorizing strategies on colleagues' behavioral intentions through archetypal impressions, such that (a) the indirect effects on ostracism will be stronger and (b) the indirect effects on boosterism will be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms.</i>
	<i>Research Question 4: Are the indirect effects of combined IM strategies on ostracism and boosterism through archetypal impressions conditioned upon workplace substance use norms?</i>

Vignette Development

To test hypotheses and explore research questions, I collaborated with two undergraduate research assistants (URAs) to develop vignettes that incorporated IM strategies into LinkedIn soberversary posts. We began by creating a control post: “Today makes my 1-year sober anniversary – 365 days since I stopped drinking alcohol.” This control was appropriate because all posts included in our qualitative content analysis were required to mention the length of sobriety. Additionally, through qualitative coding, we identified “additional context” codes unrelated to IM strategies but still informative – one of which was substance reference. Given most posts that mentioned a substance referred to alcohol, we incorporated alcohol into the control statement. To effectively serve as a control, this statement was included in all subsequent posts, with additional language appended to reflect each specific IM strategy.

Building on the control, we crafted individual vignettes for each isolated strategy: Integrating A, Integrating B, Integrating C, Assimilating, Confirming, and Decategorizing. To craft these vignettes, we referred to the definitions we derived and immersed ourselves in the posts to mimic actual soberversary post language. Our goal was to ensure that each post was mutually exclusive, providing clear conditions for our between-subjects survey. After establishing the individual posts, we crossed the content to create posts representing combined strategies. All combined posts retained as much of the same language as possible from the individual posts, making occasional stylistic adjustments to maintain a natural flow. In total, we drafted 16 posts, where each post (except the control) was about a paragraph in length. To enhance realism, I designed a LinkedIn Newsfeed background for each post. A LinkedIn Newsfeed is the dynamic, scrolling interface on LinkedIn where users view updates, posts, and activities shared by their connections. I developed a cover story instructing participants to

imagine logging into their LinkedIn account and scrolling through their Newsfeed when they came across a post by a new coworker, named “Taylor Smith” (a gender-neutral name), a “Consultant” at “ABC Company.” The cover story asked participants to imagine their company was called “ABC Company” and that “Consultant” represented a position at their actual organization. Blank profile icons were used for both the participant and the poster to minimize potential biases linked to appearance. A blurred LinkedIn ad followed the soberversary post; however, the ad was blurred to avoid introducing additional information, and the amount of blur varied based on the soberversary post length. Note that although actual LinkedIn soberversary posts included photos and links to blogs, we limited vignettes to written text only to maintain consistency across conditions and control for potential differences in how multimedia content might influence responses.

After drafting the vignettes, I sought content validity feedback from 11 subject matter experts (SMEs). One of the 11 SMEs was a URA who participated in the qualitative content analysis but did not help write the vignettes. The remaining SMEs were graduate students within the Department of Psychology at Colorado State University. Prior to rating the vignettes, SMEs read my dissertation proposal abstract, five of the most variant LinkedIn soberversary posts identified in the qualitative content analysis, and an overview of the identified strategies (including the combined strategies). Next, they rated the cover story, control, and vignettes on three dimensions of content validity: clarity, relevance, and realism. The response options ranged from 1 (i.e., unclear, not relevant, not realistic) to 3 (very clear, very relevant, very realistic). Additionally, I included open-ended questions to gather feedback from SMEs on how to enhance the clarity, relevance, and realism of the vignettes.

Thereafter, I calculated content validity ratios (CVRs) following Lawshe's (1975) formula, which measures agreement among SMEs. The CVR formula is: $CVR = (n_e - (N / 2)) / (N / 2)$, where n_e is the number of SMEs rating an item as "3" (very clear, very relevant, very realistic) and N is the total number of SMEs. CVR values range from -1 (perfect disagreement) to +1 (perfect agreement), with values above zero indicating that more than half of SMEs agree that an item is a "3". For a panel of 11 SMEs, Ayre and Scally (2014) suggest a critical exact CVR value of .636 or higher. Evaluations of clarity and relevance to IM strategies met this critical threshold; however, several components scored below .636 on the realism dimension: the cover story (.456), the control (.273), and the Confirming vignette (.456). Refer to Appendix B for full CVR results.

As informed by the CVRs and open-ended survey feedback, I conducted two cognitive interviews with SMEs who had not yet viewed the vignettes, using a verbal probing approach to gather insights into their perceptions (Ryan et al., 2012). Their feedback, in combination with the survey feedback, revealed that SMEs struggled to rate the realism of soberversary posts because they had not seen such posts on their own LinkedIn Newsfeeds. SMEs noted that the cover story's low realism was partly due to the blank profile icons, the control post was brief relative to other posts, and the Confirming post's ellipsis at the end created an "ominous tone." Additionally, SMEs suggested that the assimilating post – which combined Assimilating Strategy A (i.e., expressing gratitude) and Assimilating Strategy B (i.e., invoking faith) – should be split into separate posts. There was also mixed feedback regarding hashtags; while some SMEs expressed concerns that hashtags might inadvertently reveal information about a poster's age and preferred they be omitted, others argued that including hashtags would enhance the realism of the posts. Finally, one SME raised the possibility of ordering effects within combined IM

strategy vignettes. However, given there was no theoretical reason to expect order to influence participant responses, and because counterbalancing permutations would increase design complexity, no changes were made.

I made several adjustments based on SME feedback. First, I separated the original Assimilating post into the two distinct strategies – Assimilating Strategy A and B – and crossed them with the other strategies to create combined strategies. Including the control post, this produced a total of 20 posts. I also clarified the cover story instructions, removed the ellipsis from the Confirming posts, and changed the poster’s name from “Taylor Smith” to “Alex Smith” to avoid associations with Taylor Swift. Lastly, I removed hashtags from the posts. I weighed SME feedback, and given that hashtags were in 40% of posts, or less than half, decided to remain true to the majority of actual soberversary posts by removing hashtags. Moreover, hashtags were often relevant to raising awareness, but not relevant to all IM strategies. Thus, including them in every post would have diminished the between-subjects evaluation, so I decided to focus solely on post content. Refer to Appendix C for the finalized vignette materials.

After finalizing the content of the vignettes, I imported them into the Qualtrics survey platform alongside scales for variables specified in the Measures section. Prior to data collection, I piloted the full survey with graduate and undergraduate students from the Department of Psychology to identify any technical issues, making refinements as needed.

Target Sample Size

Before undertaking the qualitative content analysis, I performed an a priori power analysis to determine my target sample size. To achieve a minimum power of $\beta = .80$, the required sample size was estimated to be 325. This estimation was determined through an SEM power analysis using *pwrSEM* (Wang & Rhemtulla, 2021). Of note, I attempted to estimate

power for a full version of the pre-qualitative study model in Figure 1, but it appeared to be too complicated to run in *pwrSEM*. For this reason, I conducted a power analysis for the conditional indirect effect as it would appear in my model, using factor loadings of .70, effect sizes of .1 for unknown effect sizes, standardized regression effect sizes from Lynch and Rodell (2018) where applicable, and indirect effects sizes that correspond to the estimates in the model. Anticipating data cleaning and quality checks, I began the study assuming the target sample size would be a minimum of $N = 350$ (i.e., 25 more participants than what is necessary to be sufficiently powered).

After completing the qualitative content analysis, I identified eight conditions: (1) Control, (2) Integrating, (3) Assimilating, (4) Confirming, (5) Decategorizing, (6) Integrating + Assimilating, (7) Integrating + Confirming, and (8) Integrating + Decategorizing. With this new information, I considered power for the treatment effects among these eight conditions by treating the power analysis like an eight-group ANOVA to detect effects for colleague impressions. The analysis indicated that detecting small effects (.1) would require a sample size of 1,448, whereas detecting medium effects (.25) would require a sample size of 240. Given that obtaining a sample of 1,500 participants after attrition was impractical due to resource constraints, I opted to stick with my original sample size of 325 after data cleaning, acknowledging that this decision would likely limit detection of small effects.

Participants

Participants were required to meet specific criteria to be eligible: they had to be 18 years or older, reside in the United States, and self-report at least moderate proficiency in English. Additionally, participants were required to have worked at their organization for at least one year, work at least five days per week, and be employed on site as wage and salary workers who

interact daily with at least two coworkers. These criteria were essential for evaluating workplace substance use norms (Frone & Brown, 2019), as the measure involves observations of coworker intoxication across a 12-month period. To ensure the realism of vignettes, participants were also required to have an active LinkedIn account, be familiar with the LinkedIn Newsfeed feature, and have scrolled through their LinkedIn Newsfeed within the last year.

The final sample consisted of $N = 339$ participants. 50% identified as women and 65% identified as White. The mean age was 34.75, and the mean tenure at their current organization was 5.71 years. Additionally, 5% had been diagnosed with a SUD and were in recovery, 31% had a close connection to someone with a SUD, and 21% had a close connection to someone in recovery. See Table 5 for more information regarding overall sample composition, and Appendix D for participant demographics by condition.

Table 5*Sample Composition*

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Man	161	47%
Woman	169	50%
Non-binary	9	3%
Racial / ethnic identity		
Asian or Asian American	20	6%
Black or African American	39	12%
Latino/Hispanic	23	7%
Native American or Native Alaskan	3	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Native	2	1%
White	222	65%
Multiracial/Multiethnic	29	9%
Diagnosed with SUD		
Yes	18	5%
No	321	95%
Problem		
Yes	23	7%
No	306	90%
Unsure	10	3%
In Recovery		
Yes	18	5%
No	321	95%
Close with SUD		
Yes	105	31%
No	234	69%
Close in Recovery		
Yes	71	21%
No	268	79%
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age (in years)	34.75	10.33
Tenure (in years)	5.71	5.55
Days Worked Per Week	5.09	0.30

Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. *N* = 339 except for racial/ethnic identity [*N* = 338], where one participant indicated “Prefer not to say.”

Procedures

Data were collected between January 31, 2025 and February 7, 2025 using the online crowdsourcing platform, Prolific Academic. 1,662 participants provided informed consent. 344

participants met eligibility criteria based on the screener survey (see Appendix E) and were randomly assigned to one of the conditions using the randomization function in Qualtrics. This ensured a between-subjects design in which each participant viewed only one vignette. Qualtrics was configured to assign up to 45 participants per condition. For example, in the Integrating condition, participants were randomly presented with either Integrating Strategy A, B, or C, with roughly 14-15 participants per specific strategy. This same procedure was applied to the Assimilating and combined strategy conditions. Once assigned, participants received the cover story, reviewed the vignette, and completed measures assessing the variables of interest and demographic information. See Appendix F for latent measures and Appendix G for demographic questions.

To incentivize participation, participants received monetary compensation based on Prolific's payment principles. Participants were compensated at a rate of \$12.00 per hour, which is the rate Prolific encourages for better data quality (Prolific, 2024). The screener/eligibility survey was estimated to take no more than two minutes, costing approximately \$0.40 per participant. Eligible participants completed the full survey, which was estimated to take 15 minutes and resulted in a compensation of \$3.00, for a total possible compensation of \$3.40. Funding for this study was provided through the PEO Scholar Award I received in April 2024.

Measures

To evaluate colleagues' impressions of and behavioral intentions towards the author of the soberversary post, I adapted versions of the authentic impressions, archetypal impressions, ostracism, and boosterism measures used by Lynch and Rodell (2018) in their investigation of IM strategies. Of note, the items in these scales replaced the statement, "this individual" with "Alex Smith." Refer to Appendix H for further explanation of these adaptations. I also measured

workplace substance use norms as a key variable of interest, as well as a control measure and covariates.

Authentic Impressions

Authentic impressions were assessed using a six-item scale adapted from Kernis and Goldman's (2006) authenticity measure and Lee and Ashton's (2004) sincerity measure, as adapted by Lynch and Rodell (2018). Example items include, "I see this individual as being authentic in how they come across to others," and "I see this individual as presenting themselves to others as they truly are." Participants rated these items on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In Lynch and Rodell (2018), the coefficient alpha for this scale was .78.

Archetypal Impressions

To measure archetypal impressions, I used a five-item scale adapted by Lynch and Rodell (2018), which was based on Eisenberger et al.'s (2010) measure for supervisor organizational embodiment. Example items include, "This individual is just like the people at my organization," and "This individual is representative of the people at my organization." Participants rated these items on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In Lynch and Rodell (2018), the coefficient alpha for this scale was .90.

Boosterism

I measured boosterism via a four-item scale adapted by Lynch and Rodell (2018), initially developed by Moorman and Blakely (1995). An example item is, "I would defend this individual if others criticized them." Participants rated these items on a five-point Likert scale from never to always. In Lynch and Rodell (2018), the coefficient alpha for this scale was .91.

Ostracism

To assess ostracism, I used a six-item measure, adapted from Ferris et al. (2008). Example items include, “I would ignore this individual at work” and “I would refuse to talk to this individual at work.” Participants rated these items on a five-point Likert scale from never to always. In Lynch and Rodell (2018), the coefficient alpha for this scale was .94.

Workplace Substance Use Norms

I used Frone and Brown’s (2010) scale to measure workplace substance use norms related to alcohol and illicit drug use. Six items asked how frequently coworkers used alcohol or other drugs in the past year (i.e., descriptive norms), ranging from 0 (*never*) to 5 (*6 to 7 days a week*). In the original study, the internal consistency reliability was .85 for alcohol descriptive norms and .93 for illicit drug use descriptive norms. Four items measured participants’ perceptions of their closest friend at work’s approval of alcohol or drug use under different circumstances, with response options from 1 (*strongly disapprove*) to 4 (*strongly approve*). Unfortunately, due to an oversight, four items regarding other coworkers’ approval of alcohol or drug under different circumstances were excluded from the survey. Thus, there was an incomplete evaluation of injunctive norms. However, this issue isn’t critical for several reasons. First, descriptive and injunctive norms were not identified as distinctly separate or central to the theoretical arguments driving this study. Additionally, the approval of one’s closest friend at work is, according to Social Impact Theory (Latané, 1981), more influential than that of other coworkers because close colleagues tend to have a greater impact on day-to-day interactions and perceptions of acceptable behavior. Therefore, despite the incomplete assessment of injunctive norms, the remaining items are still expected to provide a sufficient evaluation of workplace substance use norms.

Control

Because the workplace substance use norms measure (Frone & Brown, 2010) includes 6 to 7 days a week as a response option, I controlled for weekend work by dummy coding. Specifically, I dummy coded 0 = *does not work on Saturdays or Sundays* and 1 = *works on Saturdays or Sundays*, replicating the approach in Frone and Brown (2010).

Covariates

Several covariates were measured to control for possible spurious relationships between the variables of interest.

Familiarity with Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Recovery. Using yes-no questions, I measured participants' experiences and familiarity with substance use and recovery. Specifically, I asked whether they were diagnosed with an SUD, thought they had a problem with substance misuse (which included an "unsure" response option), identified as a person in recovery, and had close connections with someone who has a SUD or is in recovery. These items were included because responses were expected to potentially impact impressions and behavioral intentions towards individuals in recovery.

Participants' Overall Substance Use. 14 items measured participants' overall substance use, as indicated in Frone and Brown (2010). First, overall alcohol was assessed with two items measuring the frequency of drinking alcohol and the frequency of drinking to intoxication during the past 12 months. For illicit drug use, participants indicated the frequency of using (marijuana or hashish, cocaine or crack, sedatives, tranquilizers, stimulants, and analgesics) in the past 12 months, focusing on nonmedical use. Nonmedical use was defined as use without a prescription or medical marijuana card, or more frequent use or in greater quantity than prescribed. Participants also reported how often they were impaired by each drug. All items were measured

on a six-point frequency response scale: (0) *never*, (1) *less than monthly*, (2) *1-3 days per month*, (3) *1-2 days per week*, (4) *3-5 days per week*, and (5) *6-7 days per week*.

Deviance Proneness. Replicating Frone and Brown (2010), I used a 12-item measure of deviance proneness to control for the tendency of individuals to “(a) self-select into jobs that might have more permissive substance use norms and (b) be more likely to use alcohol and illicit drugs” (p. 259). The measure consists of seven items assessing tolerance of deviance (Jessor et al., 1991) and five items assessing hostility toward rules (Hong & Faedda, 1996), with response options from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. In Frone and Brown (2010), the internal consistency reliability for this measure was .78.

Neuroticism. I measured neuroticism, which reflects an individual’s tendency towards negative emotional states (Barlow et al., 2014), as a covariate to better understand the effects of colleagues’ impressions and behavioral intentions while accounting for participants’ inherent emotional tendencies. Neuroticism was assessed using the four-item Mini-International Personality Item Pool (Mini-IPIP; Cooper et al., 2010), where participants rated statements on a five-point Likert scale regarding how well each statement describes them. An example item is, “Experience frequent mood swings.” The coefficient alpha for neuroticism in Lynch and Rodell (2018) was .75.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYTIC STRATEGY

Ensuring Data Quality

I took multiple proactive steps to ensure the quality of my data. To address and mitigate insufficient effort in responding (IER; Huang et al., 2012), I mentioned in the survey instructions that inattentive responses may impact compensation. I also integrated three attention checks into the survey, instructing participants to respond in a specific manner (i.e., Select “Strongly Agree”). At the conclusion of the survey, I asked participants directly about the extent to which they paid attention. During data cleaning procedures, I identified and excluded participants who missed two or all three attention checks ($N = 3$). In addition, I leveraged Qualtrics’ integrated features to manage responses flagged as bots. Because bot detection indicators are not foolproof (Griffin et al., 2022), I only excluded participants flagged by all four bot detection indicators ($N = 2$). Notably, participants who were flagged for less than four bot indicators did not miss any attention checks and were thus retained for analyses. Although I initially proposed conducting a t-test to compare participants flagged for IER with those unflagged, the analysis was not feasible due to the small number of flagged participants ($N = 5$), so they were excluded. Finally, I evaluated item frequencies to identify any patterns of missing data; however, following data cleaning procedures, there was no missing data. The final sample was $N = 339$.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

To assess the psychometric properties of all constructs, I conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs). Model fit for CFAs, as well as subsequent SEMs, was evaluated using Hu and Bentler’s (1999) recommended fit indices ($CFI \geq .95$, $TLI \geq .95$, $RMSEA \leq .06$, $SRMR \leq .08$), while acknowledging that CFI/TLI of $\geq .90$ is still widely considered acceptable in practice.

Given that fit indices might not meet acceptable cutoff criteria for idiosyncratic reasons (e.g., sample size, non-normality), it was important for me to consider fit indices holistically (Schermelleh-Engle et al., 2003). Among SRMR, CFI, or RMSEA indices, I allowed one index to signal misfit so long as the other two indices demonstrated acceptable fit. Additionally, I reported the chi-square test for transparency, but it has been previously demonstrated that chi-square signals misfit for large samples (Bearden et al. 1982).

Constructs that exhibited poor fit indices included authentic impressions, workplace substance use norms, participant substance use, and deviance proneness. To improve the authentic impressions measure, I dropped item 6 (“I see Alex Smith as willing to change themselves for others if the reward is desirable enough”) due to poor factor loading. Given that the qualitative study focused on alcohol, I adapted the workplace substance use scale to emphasize alcohol-only norms, which improved model fit. For participant substance use, I removed all items related to illicit drug use and I averaged the two alcohol-focused items ($r = .61$) rather than modeling them as a latent variable. Additionally, I removed deviance proneness items 9, 10, and 12, all related to rule breaking, due to poor factor loadings. See Table 6 for the psychometric properties of latent measures.

Table 6*Psychometric Properties of Measures*

Construct	χ^2	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	α
Authentic Impressions	15.223**	.987	.974	.078	.017	.82
Archetypal Impressions	17.637**	.992	.984	.086	.013	.95
Boosterism	27.797***	.964	.893	.195	.029	.88
Ostracism	191.045***	.918	.863	.244	.032	.95
Workplace Substance Use Norms	10.552	.995	.990	.341	.014	.73
Deviance Proneness	77.978***	.954	.939	.075	.037	.87
Neuroticism	50.832***	.939	.818	.268	.047	.88

Note. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$. *** indicates $p < .001$.

Model Evaluation

I prepared to test the hypothesized model depicted in Figure 3 via SEM, which enables simultaneous estimation of measurement models and structural relationships among variables. Prior to analysis, I dummy coded the IM strategies, using the control condition as the reference category to facilitate direct comparisons.

At first, I encountered convergence issues with a direct effects model in Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2017), prompting me to switch to lavaan in R Studio Version 2023.03.0+386. I began by estimating a correlated dimensions model to assess construct validity, where constructs of interest were in the same model. The model fit reasonably well ($\chi^2 [265] = 874.636, p < .001$,

$CFI = .903$, $TLI = .891$, $RMSEA = .082$, $SRMR = .063$). I also evaluated common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Specifically, I implemented the CFA-based unmeasured latent variable (UMLV) technique (Podsakoff et al., 2024) by adding a common latent factor that loads on all indicators to my correlated dimensions model. The model fit worsened when the common latent factor was included ($\chi^2 [300] = 6608.364$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .899$, $TLI = .884$, $RMSEA = .085$, $SRMR = .072$), suggesting that common method variance was not a major issue.

After establishing construct validity, I estimated a direct effects model between latent variables – first without covariates, then with them. Model fit without covariates was ($\chi^2 [277] = 758.314$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .917$, $TLI = .901$, $RMSEA = .072$, $SRMR = .063$). However, when including covariates, CFI and TLI worsened: ($\chi^2 [858] = 1753.199$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .890$, $TLI = .877$, $RMSEA = .055$, $SRMR = .055$). For this reason, I examined whether any covariates directly predicted mediators or outcomes. Certain covariates (i.e., deviance proneness, close connection to someone with a SUD, close connection to someone in recovery) were significant predictors, so I retained them while removing nonsignificant covariates for parsimony. The reduced covariate model demonstrated improved fit compared to the full covariate model ($\chi^2 [593] = 1267.540$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .905$, $TLI = .893$, $RMSEA = .058$, $SRMR = .053$) but still fit worse than the model without covariates. Given that the substantive conclusions were consistent across models, I elected to retain the model without covariates for subsequent analyses.

Next, I used the lavaan package to estimate the indirect effects using bootstrapping (10,000 samples) to test mediation hypotheses, assessing whether impressions explained the relationships between IM strategies and behavioral intentions. Model fit was identical to the direct effects model ($\chi^2 [277] = 758.314$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .917$, $TLI = .901$, $RMSEA = .072$, $SRMR = .063$).

I then tested a moderation model in lavaan to examine whether workplace substance use norms moderated the relationships between IM strategies and colleagues' impressions. Prior to running moderation models, I mean-centered workplace substance use norms. Then I attempted to use the product indicator approach (Cortina et al., 2021) to create latent interaction terms, but it failed – likely due to issues with model complexity or sample size. Instead, I created observed interaction terms (Cortina et al., 2021) and ran a moderated model with 10,000 bootstraps (of which six ran unsuccessfully). This model showed poor fit ($\chi^2 [608] = 1868.089, p < .001, CFI = .818, TLI = .798, RMSEA = .078, SRMR = .077$) and interaction terms were nonsignificant. Allowing workplace substance use norms to predict all mediators and outcomes had a negligible effect on fit indices but not to an acceptable level: ($\chi^2 [581] = 1826.762, p < .001, CFI = .820, TLI = .791, RMSEA = .080, SRMR = .077$). I also tested the interaction effect using Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2017) to estimate a latent variable interaction and arrived at the same conclusion that there were no significant effects.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

I calculated descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations, correlations; see Table 7) for all constructs. As expected, correlation coefficients demonstrated that authentic and archetypal impressions were positively associated with boosterism, and authentic impressions were negatively associated with ostracism. Unexpectedly, archetypal impressions were not significantly related to either ostracism or workplace substance use norms.

Table 7*Means, standard deviations, and correlations*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. Control			-.01	-.07	-.05	.01	.04	.00	-.06	.03	.01	.05	.01	.01	.00
2. Int			.02	.05	.03	-.09	.01	-.04	-.03	-.03	-.12*	-.13*	-.12*	-.11	-.13*
3. Assim			-.06	-.01	.00	-.03	-.08	-.04	.01	.06	.05	.05	.01	.04	.02
4. Confirm			-.05	.09	-.01	.16**	.01	-.08	.00	.01	.09	.08	.09	.11*	.11*
5. Decat			.06	-.06	.04	-.11*	-.02	.07	-.05	-.04	-.03	.05	.05	-.06	-.12*
6. IntAssim			-.02	.07	-.01	.02	-.08	.00	.07	-.01	-.03	-.04	-.03	.09	.07
7. IntConf			-.04	-.03	-.04	.07	-.02	.00	-.04	-.08	.09	-.01	.09	-.01	.09
8. IntDecat			.10	-.04	.05	-.03	.15**	.09	.10	.05	-.08	-.04	-.12*	-.07	-.06
9. Auth	4.20	0.68	1.00	.15**	.52**	-.48**	-.02	-.12*	-.03	-.06	.03	-.01	-.03	.03	.00
10. Arch	3.23	1.03	.15**	1.00	.43**	-.07	.00	-.27**	-.05	-.11*	-.07	-.03	-.09	.13*	.01
11. Boost	3.98	0.80	.52**	.43**	1.00	-.42**	.10	-.30**	-.15**	-.09	-.06	-.02	-.05	.04	-.09
12. Ost	1.61	0.77	-.48**	-.07	-.42**	1.00	.10	.08	.10	.00	.05	.01	.08	.06	.14*
13. Norms	1.32	0.53	-.02	.00	.10	.10	1.00	.15**	.18**	.21**	-.13*	-.16**	-.10	-.24**	-.16**
14. DevPr	2.30	0.82	-.12*	-.27**	-.30**	.08	.15**	1.00	.24**	.25**	-.04	-.07	-.03	-.07	-.08
15. Neur	2.32	1.05	-.03	-.05	-.15**	.10	.18**	.24**	1.00	.18**	-.06	-.06	.00	-.14**	-.02
16. Sub Use	2.09	1.02	-.06	-.11*	-.09	.00	.21**	.25**	.18**	1.00	.01	.04	-.01	-.16**	-.02
17. SUD	0.05	0.22	.03	-.07	-.06	.05	-.13*	-.04	-.06	.01	1.00	.48**	.77**	.30**	.27**
18. Problem	0.13	0.41	-.01	-.03	-.02	.01	-.16**	-.07	-.06	.04	.48**	1.00	.44**	.14**	.15**
19. Recover	0.05	0.22	-.03	-.09	-.05	.08	-.10	-.03	.00	-.01	.77**	.44**	1.00	.24**	.30**
20. CloSUD	0.31	0.46	.03	.13*	.04	.06	-.24**	-.07	-.14**	-.16**	.30**	.14**	.24**	1.00	.58**

21. CloRec	0.21	0.41	.00	.01	-.09	.14*	-.16**	-.08	-.02	-.02	.27**	.15**	.30**	.58**	1.00
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Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$. Int = Integrating, Assim = Assimilating, Confirm = Confirming, Decat = Decategorizing, IntAssim = Integrating + Assimilating, IntConf = Integrating + Confirming, IntDecat = Integrating + Decategorizing, Auth = Authentic Impressions, Arch = Archetypal Impressions, Boost = Boosterism, Ost = Ostracism, DevPr = Deviance Proneness, Neur = Neuroticism, Sub Use = Participant Substance Use, SUD = Diagnosed with SUD, Problem = Problem with Substance Misuse, Recovery = In Recovery from SUD, CloSUD = Close connection with someone with a SUD, CloRec = Close connection with someone in recovery.

I also conducted one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) to test whether the IM strategies (i.e., the experimental conditions) were associated with differences in the mediators (archetypal and authentic impressions) and dependent variables (boosterism and ostracism). There were no significant effects of condition except on ostracism, $F(7, 331) = 2.37, p = .022, \eta^2 = .03$. Post hoc Tukey's HSD tests indicated that participants in the Confirming condition ($M = 1.93, SD = 1.09$) reported significantly higher ostracism intentions than participants in the Integrating ($M = 1.41, SD = 0.62$) and Decategorizing ($M = 1.38, SD = 0.53$) conditions. See Table 8 for descriptive statistics of key variables by condition.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables by Condition

	Authentic Impressions			Archetypal Impressions		Boosterism		Ostracism	
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Control	44	4.19	0.67	3.04	0.94	3.88	0.76	1.62	0.85
2. Integrating	40	4.24	0.62	3.37	0.96	4.04	0.63	1.41⁴	0.62
3. Assimilating	42	4.10	0.71	3.20	1.05	3.98	0.68	1.54	0.51
4. Confirming	44	4.12	0.72	3.46	1.01	3.95	0.90	1.93^{2,5}	1.09
5. Decategorizing	41	4.31	0.68	3.08	1.03	4.07	0.82	1.38⁴	0.53
6. IntAssim	44	4.16	0.85	3.43	1.09	3.95	0.94	1.64	0.87
7. IntConfirm	44	4.13	0.63	3.15	1.12	3.89	0.87	1.74	0.75
8. IntDecat	40	4.39	0.52	3.12	1.05	4.08	0.78	1.54	0.62

Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Bold values indicate at least one significant mean difference between conditions, indicated by superscripts ($p < .05$). IntAssim = Integrating + Assimilating, IntConf = Integrating + Confirming, IntDecat = Integrating + Decategorizing.

Evaluation of Direct Effects

For the sake of parsimony, mediation hypotheses were posed rather than hypotheses regarding direct effects. Although not formally hypothesized, several direct relationships between colleague impressions and behavioral intentions emerged. Specifically, authentic impressions were positively associated with boosterism ($b = .60, SE = .08, p < .001$) and negatively associated with ostracism ($b = -.54, SE = .08, p < .001$). Comparatively, archetypal impressions were positively associated with boosterism ($b = .32, SE = .05, p < .001$) but did not significantly predict ostracism ($b = .00, SE = .05, p = .955$). See Table 9 for more information.

Table 9

Direct Effects

	Authentic Impressions		Archetypal Impressions		Boosterism		Ostracism	
<i>Variable</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>
<i>Direct Effects (Predictor to Mediator/Outcome)</i>								
Integrating	.14	.15	.28	.19	-.02	.12	-.14	.15
Assimilating	-.05	.15	.14	.20	.08	.13	-.10	.13
Confirming	.01	.16	.36	.19	-.04	.15	.32	.19
Decategorizing	.19	.15	.03	.19	.05	.15	-.13	.13
IntAssim	.03	.16	.34	.20	-.05	.14	.04	.15
IntConfirm	.08	.15	.09	.20	-.06	.15	.15	.14
IntDecat	.22	.14	.05	.20	.04	.15	.04	.13
<i>Direct Effects (Mediator to Outcome)</i>								
Authentic					.60***	.08	-.54***	.08
Archetypal					.32***	.05	.00	.05

Note. Estimates presented are unstandardized regression coefficients (b) alongside standard errors (SE). *** indicates $p < .001$. These results are from the indirect effects SEM. IntAssim = Integrating + Assimilating, IntConf = Integrating + Confirming, IntDecat = Integrating + Decategorizing.

Evaluation of Hypotheses and Research Questions

Mediation Results

Hypotheses 1 through *4* and *Research Question 2* examined mediation, testing whether IM strategies would be associated with behavioral intentions through impressions of the employee as either archetypal or authentic. Mediation was assessed using the indirect effects SEM.

Hypothesis 1 predicted an assimilating strategy would be (a) positively related to boosterism and (b) negatively related to ostracism through archetypal impressions. Although nonsignificant, the relationship between assimilating and boosterism via archetypal impressions followed the expected direction ($b = .04$, $SE = .06$, $p = .497$). In contrast, the indirect effect for ostracism was nonsignificant, as no detectable association emerged ($b = .00$, $SE = .01$, $p = .974$). Overall, *Hypothesis 1* was not supported.

Hypothesis 2 suggested that a decategorizing strategy would be (a) negatively associated with boosterism and (b) positively associated with ostracism through archetypal impressions. However, the indirect effects were both nonsignificant, with no meaningful relationships observed for boosterism ($b = .01$, $SE = .06$, $p = .894$) or ostracism ($b = .00$, $SE = .01$, $p = .994$). Thus, *Hypothesis 2* was not supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that an integrating strategy would be (a) positively associated with boosterism and (b) negatively associated with ostracism through authentic impressions. While the indirect effects were nonsignificant, they followed the hypothesized direction for both boosterism ($b = .09$, $SE = .09$, $p = .339$) and ostracism ($b = -.08$, $SE = .08$, $p = .357$). *Hypothesis 3* was not supported.

Hypothesis 4 proposed that a confirming strategy would be (a) negatively associated with boosterism and (b) positively associated with ostracism through authentic impressions. The indirect effects were nonsignificant for both boosterism ($b = .00$, $SE = .09$, $p = .966$) and ostracism ($b = .00$, $SE = .09$, $p = .967$). In sum, *Hypothesis 4* was not supported.

Research Question 2 examined whether combined IM strategies relate to behavioral intentions through colleagues' impressions. No significant indirect effects emerged (see Table 10).

Table 10

Mediation Results

Hypothesis / Research Question	Management Strategy	Mediator	Outcome	Indirect Effect	Finding
H1	Assimilating	Archetypal	Boosterism	.05 (.07)	H1 Not Supported
			Ostracism	.00 (.01)	
H2	Decategorizing	Archetypal	Boosterism	.01 (.06)	H2 Not Supported
			Ostracism	.00 (.01)	
H3	Integrating	Authentic	Boosterism	.09 (.09)	H3 Not Supported
			Ostracism	-.08 (.08)	
H4	Confirming	Authentic	Boosterism	.00 (.09)	H4 Not Supported
			Ostracism	.00 (.09)	
RQ2	IntAssim	Archetypal	Boosterism	.12 (.07)	RQ2 Remains Uncertain
			Ostracism	.00 (.02)	
		Authentic	Boosterism	.02 (.10)	
			Ostracism	-.02 (.09)	
	IntDecat	Archetypal	Boosterism	.02 (.06)	
			Ostracism	.00 (.01)	
		Authentic	Boosterism	.13 (.08)	
			Ostracism	-.12 (.08)	
	IntConfirm	Archetypal	Boosterism	.03 (.07)	
			Ostracism	.00 (.01)	
		Authentic	Boosterism	.05 (.09)	
			Ostracism	-.04 (.08)	

Note. Indirect effect estimates presented are unstandardized regression coefficients accompanied by standard errors in parentheses. IntAssim = Integrating + Assimilating, IntConf = Integrating + Confirming, IntDecat = Integrating + Decategorizing.

Moderation Results

Hypothesis 5 and *Research Question 3* examined moderation effects, testing whether workplace substance use norms interact with the relationship between IM strategies and colleagues' impressions. Moderation was assessed via a SEM with observed interaction terms included to assess whether the strength of relationships varied depending on the permissiveness of workplace substance use norms.

Hypothesis 5 advanced that workplace substance use norms would moderate the relationship between (a) assimilating and (b) decategorizing strategies and colleagues' archetypal impressions. Specifically, it was expected that archetypal impressions would be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms. Although in the hypothesized directions, the interaction term for assimilating ($b = -.05$, $SE = .52$, $p = .923$) and the interaction term for decategorizing ($b = -.54$, $SE = .38$, $p = .154$) were not statistically significant predictors of archetypal impressions. Thus, *Hypothesis 5* was not supported.

Research Question 3 examined how combined IM strategies interact with workplace substance use norms in influencing colleagues' archetypal impressions. The interaction terms for the combined strategies were not significant predictors of colleagues' impressions. See Table 11 for results.

Table 11

Interaction Effects on Archetypal Impressions

Interaction Term	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Integrating X Norms	-.24	.37	.521
Assimilating X Norms	-.05	.52	.923
Confirming X Norms	.08	.27	.782
Decategorizing X Norms	-.54	.38	.154
IntAssim X Norms	.01	.54	.989
IntConfirm X Norms	-.39	.53	.463
IntDecat X Norms	-.17	.30	.573

Note. Estimates presented are unstandardized regression coefficients (*b*) alongside standard errors (*SE*). IntAssim = Integrating + Assimilating, IntConf = Integrating + Confirming, IntDecat = Integrating + Decategorizing.

Moderated-Mediation Results

Moderation and mediation were examined separately using SEM, and neither the indirect effects nor the interaction terms were statistically significant. Given the absence of moderation effects, a formal test of moderated-mediation was not warranted.

Hypothesis 6 proposed that workplace substance use norms would moderate the relationships between assimilating and decategorizing strategies on colleagues' behavioral intentions through archetypal impressions, such that (a) the indirect effects on ostracism would be stronger and (b) the indirect effects on boosterism would be weaker in workplaces with permissive substance use norms. Since the requisite moderation effect was nonsignificant, *Hypothesis 6* was not supported.

Research Question 4 asked whether the indirect effects of combined IM strategies on ostracism and boosterism through archetypal impressions were conditioned upon workplace substance use norms. No significant indirect or moderated effects were observed.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to understand how employees manage their recovery identities by investigating IM strategies used in LinkedIn soberversary posts and their association with colleagues' impressions and behavioral intentions. Additionally, it explored whether workplace substance use norms influenced these relationships.

Qualitative content analysis identified seven IM strategies used in LinkedIn soberversary posts: (1) Highlighting professional development and accomplishments, (2) Serving as a role model, offering support, and raising awareness, (3) Showcasing personal growth, transformation, and values, (4) Acknowledging support received and expressing gratitude, (5) Invoking faith, (6) Acknowledging flaws and past harm, and (7) Reframing recovery identity. These strategies loosely mapped onto Roberts' (2005) identity management framework: Integrating, Assimilating, Confirming, and Decategorizing. The qualitative content analysis also revealed that, on average, LinkedIn users employed 2.21 IM strategies per post, with integrating appearing in all posts. For this reason, vignettes (in the form of LinkedIn posts) were created to isolate Roberts' (2005) strategies as well as represent common strategy combinations. Then, using a between-subjects survey methodology, participants were exposed to one of eight conditions, including a control condition, and responded to measures evaluating their impressions (i.e., archetypal, authentic) and behavioral intentions (i.e., boosterism, ostracism) toward the LinkedIn user.

SEM tested whether IM strategies were associated with behavioral intentions through colleague impressions. The mediation hypotheses mirrored those tested in Lynch and Rodell (2018), while a research question extended their model by examining the indirect effects of

combined strategies. None of the indirect effects were statistically significant, suggesting that colleague impressions did not mediate the relationships between IM strategies and behavioral intentions.

Despite the absence of significant indirect effects, this study replicated Lynch and Rodell (2018) in several ways. Specifically, it echoed their nonsignificant indirect effects between assimilating and ostracism through archetypal impressions, as well as their lack of support for decategorizing hypotheses. These parallels suggest that certain IM strategies may not be significantly associated with colleagues' behavioral intentions through colleagues' impressions.

Although several of Lynch and Rodell's (2018) hypotheses were not originally supported, retesting their model was warranted. Notably, the present study can be considered an incremental constructive replication, retaining core aspects of the original study while including at least one methodological improvement (Köhler & Cortina, 2021). Lynch and Rodell (2018) used a survey-based field study wherein participants, as focal employees, completed an initial survey about their IM strategies, and then their colleagues rated their general impressions of the focal employee. In this way, colleagues' impressions were not necessarily tied to focal employees' identities, and Lynch and Rodell (2018) did not evaluate whether participants were aware of the IM strategies focal employees used. In contrast, the present study manipulated strategies via experimental vignettes, capturing participants' immediate reactions to IM strategies. Moreover, while Lynch and Rodell (2018) examined a broad range of concealable stigmatized identities, this study focused specifically on recovery identity. Because stigmas vary by how detectable and stigmatized they are (Jones et al., 1984), limiting the focus to recovery identity was expected to remove confounding factors that may have contributed to measurement error in Lynch and Rodell (2018). Further, focusing on a specific identity meant that impressions were formed based

on strategies associated with recovery identity, whereas Lynch and Rodell (2018) focused on colleagues' general impressions of the focal employee, which may be influenced by other factors. Testing their framework in a different population and context (i.e., LinkedIn soberversary posts) was intended to assess generalizability and robustness of Lynch and Rodell's findings.

Additionally, the present study was designed to make a novel contribution over and above Lynch and Rodell (2018) by considering combined IM strategies and testing a moderation effect. Specifically, several hypotheses and research questions examined whether workplace substance use norms moderated the relationship between IM strategies and colleague impressions, and whether this relationship was conditioned upon permissiveness of norms. No significant effects emerged, indicating that workplace substance use norms did not alter colleagues' impressions formed by IM strategies.

Overall, these findings align with the results of one-way ANOVAs, which demonstrated no significant differences in archetypal or authentic impressions across IM strategies. The inability to differentiate conditions may be due to the nature of LinkedIn soberversary posts. Unlike prior work that frames identity management as a binary (e.g., revealing vs. concealing; Clair et al., 2005), all soberversary posts inherently involve disclosure. Roberts' (2005) framework categorizes strategies based on blending in versus standing out, which I interpreted as a continuum. Although IM strategies used in soberversary posts varied on this continuum, they still shared an overarching revealing quality, potentially reducing perceptual differences across conditions. Moreover, Lynch and Rodell (2018) suggest that when stigma is already salient, IM strategies may have less impact on shaping impressions. Their study examined concealable stigmatized identities that were not necessarily revealed, whereas LinkedIn soberversary posts

immediately signal recovery identity. These posts implicitly highlight past substance misuse, potentially reinforcing stigma salience rather than reducing it. Additionally, while SMEs provided validity evidence for the alignment between vignettes and their IM strategies, in an experimental setting, greater variation in stimuli may be necessary to emphasize contrast. Nonetheless, maintaining fidelity to real LinkedIn soberversary posts was a priority, and because these posts involved combined strategies, the post content likely contributed to reduced distinctiveness between conditions.

Although ANOVA results found no significant differences between IM strategies on impressions, there were significant differences on behavioral intentions. Specifically, participants in the confirming condition reported significantly higher ostracism intentions than participants in the integrating and decategorizing conditions. It was hypothesized that a confirming strategy would be positively associated with ostracism through archetypal impressions (Lynch & Rodell, 2018), and while the mediation pathway was not supported, the direct effect suggests that confirming is associated with greater ostracism intentions. Confirming involves capitalizing on stigma to elicit a response, such as sympathy (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). In this study, confirming was operationalized as acknowledging past mistakes and harm caused by substance misuse. Perhaps the higher ostracism intentions associated with confirming reflect discomfort with overt acknowledgement of past wrongdoing. Building on this, the confirming strategy more strongly highlighted a past addiction identity compared to the other IM strategies. Because the addiction identity may have been more salient, ostracism intentions may have been heightened, as addiction elicits stronger stigmatizing responses and social distancing than recovery status (McGinty et al., 2015).

Unexpectedly, one-way ANOVAs demonstrated that decategorizing and integrating had similar mean levels of ostracism, despite decategorizing being expected to be associated with higher levels of ostracism. A possible explanation is that decategorizing posts emphasized the social implications of stigma and recovery-hostile environments. By calling out stigma, these posts may have fostered a protective response from participants, reducing ostracism compared to expectations. Attribution theory (Weiner, 1995) supports this interpretation. Specifically, when individuals attribute a mental health issue to external, uncontrollable factors, they are less likely to assign personal blame, which reduces punitive responses like ostracism (Corrigan et al., 2003). In response to a decategorizing strategy, colleagues may have attributed recovery challenges to social inequities and recovery-hostile environments, thereby lessening ostracism intentions.

Despite the lack of significant indirect effects, several direct relationships between colleague impressions and behavioral intentions emerged, replicating direct effect findings in Lynch and Rodell (2018). Specifically, authentic impressions were positively associated with boosterism and negatively associated with ostracism. Comparatively, archetypal impressions were positively associated with boosterism but did not significantly predict ostracism. The direct effect between archetypal impressions and ostracism was also nonsignificant in Lynch and Rodell (2018), suggesting this direct link may be nonexistent or weaker than theoretically expected.

Henle et al. (2023) may offer insight into this unexpected pattern. Drawing on appraisal theory (Lazarus, 1991), they argue that ostracism stems from a threat appraisal process. First, a primary appraisal occurs when an individual notices a change in the environment and seeks to make meaning of it, determining whether it is a threat to the self or to the group. Thereafter, a

secondary appraisal follows when the individual assesses their ability to cope with what they noticed. Henle et al. (2023) proposed that employees appraise threats to their group or themselves, causing a discrete negative emotion toward the target, and then workplace ostracism is used as a form of coping to alleviate the distressing emotion stemming from the threat appraisal. In this framework, for ostracism to occur, an individual must perceive a threat, followed by a negative emotion. Simply appearing non-archetypal may not trigger such a threat appraisal. Thus, the assumption that non-archetypal targets elicit ostracism may be flawed. Perceived threat and negative emotion could be critical mediators in this relationship – variables not measured in either this study nor Lynch and Rodell’s. Without this appraisal, the link between archetypal impressions and ostracism may not materialize.

Limitations

Several limitations must be acknowledged. One primary limitation concerns the use of experimental vignettes. Although vignettes allowed for controlled manipulations of IM strategies, methodologically advancing the work of Lynch and Rodell (2018), they do not fully replicate real-world interactions (Erfanian et al., 2020). To mitigate this, vignettes were based on actual LinkedIn soberversary posts, and SMEs evaluated vignettes for content validity. Participants were also required to have a LinkedIn account and familiarity with the Newsfeed feature. Detailed instructions guided participants to imagine the scenario as they would encounter it on LinkedIn. Additionally, visual representations resembling LinkedIn’s Newsfeed format were employed to enhance immersion. Despite these efforts, full engagement with the vignettes remains uncertain. Relatedly, participants’ responses in hypothetical scenarios may not fully align with their actual behavior (Erfanian et al., 2020).

Another limitation concerns statistical power. The presence of eight experimental conditions diluted the ability to detect small effects within the sample size. Given resource constraints, the study was powered to detect medium to large effects rather than small effects. Although the final sample size ($N = 339$) was larger than Lynch and Rodell's (2018) ($N = 196$), distributing participants across multiple conditions reduced power for detecting subtle differences. A more focused design (e.g., isolating strategies rather than examining combinations) could have increased power but would not have accurately represented real-world soberversary posts.

Additionally, the inability to detect differences between IM strategies may stem from the nature of soberversary posts (as discussed above), sample size limitations, or weak manipulations. The control post was only a sentence, compared to isolated strategy posts that were two to three sentences, and the combined strategy posts that were a paragraph in length. To limit survey duration, posts were kept brief; however, this may have limited the information available for participants to form impressions. Notably, the mean archetypal impression score was 3.23 ($SD = 1.03$), with a median of 3.40, suggesting that participants were somewhat on the fence regarding how typical the poster (i.e., Alex Smith) was of other individuals in their organization. While posts were designed to isolate strategies as clearly as possible, providing additional context may have facilitated stronger participant impressions.

In addition to the brevity of stimuli, the study's cross-sectional design also presented a limitation, as neither temporal order nor causal relationships could be established (Maxwell & Cole, 2007). Future studies would benefit from a longitudinal or experimental design with time lags to assess temporal mediation.

Another limitation is that all measures about impressions and behavioral intentions were self-reported, which may have introduced self-report bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Participants may have been reluctant to admit ostracism intentions based on a brief vignette, particularly due to social desirability. Future studies might consider using behavioral observations of ostracism where possible, to capture actual behaviors and complement self-report data.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

Although the quantitative analyses did not yield the expected results, the theoretical contribution of the present study lies in its qualitative findings. This research broadens our understanding of stigma management to an underexplored, concealable and stigmatized identity – recovery status – by examining the actual IM strategies employed in LinkedIn soberversary posts. By grounding our understanding of IM strategies in real-life cases and lived experiences, it extends prior research (e.g., Roberts, 2005) that posited IM strategies as universally applicable.

The qualitative content analysis revealed that individuals typically use more than one IM strategy when posting about their soberversaries on LinkedIn. Previous research has focused on IM strategies used in isolation (Lynch & Rodell, 2018; Roberts, 2005); thus, the major contribution of this study is that IM strategies are being used in combination. It may be the case that written forms of identity disclosure and identity management, compared to verbal forms, permit the use of multiple IM strategies. Additionally, narrative forms of identity management (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), such as the redemptive storytelling (Dunlop & Tracy, 2010) observed in many integrating posts, may further enable individuals to blend multiple strategies within a single disclosure event.

This study also suggests that we may be limited by considering blending in and standing out strategies as either concealing or revealing (Clair et al., 2005), and that a continuum (as opposed to a binary) may be more appropriate. Notably, revealing strategies vary in the extent to which they blend in or stand out. The phronetic iterative approach (Tracy, 2010) enabled us to refer to existing frameworks (e.g., Clair et al., 2005; Roberts, 2005) while also inductively coding strategies from actual soberversary posts. This approach allowed for a more nuanced understanding of identity management as context-dependent and variable along a continuum. Moreover, this methodology responded to calls to ground our understanding of IM strategies in stigmatized individuals' lived experiences (Follmer & Jones, 2022).

Additionally, this study is among the first to explore how IM strategies are used in a social media context, specifically a professional networking platform. Norms surrounding the use of LinkedIn may encourage self-enhancement strategies (Sun et al., 2021), which could explain the high prevalence of integrating posts. By focusing on LinkedIn, the study centered “recovering out loud” (Burns, 2021), or IM strategies used in a public context. Because a final step in individuals' recovery journey may involve ‘going public’ through social media disclosure (Burns, 2021), this study offers insight into IM strategies that may emerge later in the disclosure process (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Moreover, the strategies observed here may mirror those used in broader social media mental health movements that encourage disclosure to fight stigma. Given that integrating strategies are more likely to be used in contexts that encourage disclosure (Ely & Thomas, 2001), we might notice integrating strategies used in other social media mental health movements. Thus, a key theoretical contribution is the recognition that certain contexts may be conducive to specific IM strategies.

Similarly, the findings suggest that certain identities (in this case – one’s identity as a person in recovery) may lend themselves to particular strategies or combinations. For example, integrating appeared in every soberversary post, possibly reflecting the influence of recovery programs that encourage individuals to construct redemption narratives (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013). These insights highlight the importance of considering how identity, context, and medium interact to shape identity management.

Practical Implications

Although no single IM strategy or combination stood out as influencing colleagues’ impressions or behavioral intentions, this study highlights important considerations for individuals in recovery, as well as for employers, HR professionals, and recovery programs. For individuals in recovery, these findings suggest the value of intentionally framing recovery disclosures based on one’s goals and desired responses (Earnshaw et al., 2021). Knowing that impressions shape behavioral intentions might encourage individuals in recovery to use strategies they feel are most authentic and align with how they hope to be perceived. Additionally, observing how others in recovery craft their soberversary posts may help individuals in recovery find words or the inspiration to craft their own.

For employers and HR professionals, especially those pursuing or holding Recovery Friendly Workplace designations, this study underscores the need to proactively consider what recovery disclosure entails in professional settings. Understanding how disclosure may be perceived and the behaviors it might elicit can inform training and policies that support inclusivity and reduce stigma. As Watson (2014) notes, belonging and social support are essential for sustained recovery, making allyship (i.e., boosterism) surrounding disclosure especially important. Moreover, because employers exhibit less willingness to hire, offer jobs,

and promote individuals in recovery (Join Together, 2013), enhancing boosterism intentions and reducing ostracism intentions may be a way to begin improving employment outcomes for this vulnerable population. One way to accomplish this may be to cultivate psychological safety and normalize recovery disclosure, thereby increasing the likelihood that IM strategies used to disclose recovery status are perceived as authentic and archetypal. By meeting individuals who disclose with support, employers and HR professionals may contribute to their employees' sustained recovery (Dobkin et al., 2002).

For recovery programs that encourage redemptive storytelling (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013), the findings raise questions about how to best guide individuals in shaping their narratives for different audiences. Because the confirming strategy, which included acknowledging past harm, was associated with greater ostracism intentions, it may be important to consider when and how such acknowledgements are shared, particularly in professional or public contexts. Encouraging individuals to be mindful of audience (e.g., family, friends, colleagues) and setting (e.g., in-person vs. online, personal vs. professional) can help ensure that their messages are received as intended and contribute to an internalized positive recovery identity (Pasupathi & Rich, 2005).

Future Directions

Future research would benefit from deeper exploration of organizational context and its influence on identity management, including colleagues' impressions and behavioral intentions. Presumably, workplaces vary in the extent to which they promote or discourage recovery disclosure. For instance, drug-free workplace policies may (un)knowingly pressure employees to conceal their recovery status (Connecticut Department of Public Health [CDPH], 2018), whereas RFWs may foster openness. Similarly, some organizations or industries may be perceived as more inclusive of individuals with stigmatized identities (Nishii, 2013), which can influence

where individuals choose to work and shape who is perceived as archetypal. Comparing IM strategies across organizational norms and different workplace designations – such as RFWs versus non-RFWs versus drug-free workplaces could offer valuable insights into contextual variation. Relatedly, it may be important to consider the context of LinkedIn, which primarily represents individuals in white-collar professions (Dolly, 2024). The professional norms and disclosure climates on LinkedIn may differ substantially from those in blue-collar industries or face-to-face workplace interactions, suggesting an avenue for future comparative research.

Moreover, given that disclosure is viewed as a process in the literature (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010), future studies might delve into specific recovery disclosure events and the nuanced factors influencing colleagues' impressions and behavioral intentions. This may be especially important for recovery identity because recovery itself is an ongoing process, characterized by periods of remission and recurrence of use (Brady & Sonne, 1999). Relatedly, individuals in recovery may shift how they relate to their identity over time, usually aligning with their recovery identity more than their addiction identity (Dunlop & Tracy, 2013). Future studies could examine how this identity preference change (Buckingham et al., 2013) impacts IM strategies. For example, subsequent research could explore whether IM strategies used early in one's recovery journey differ from IM strategies employed in long-term recovery. Further, longitudinal or daily diary studies could enhance our understanding of how recovery identity management evolves, how it informs disclosure decisions, and how the social consequences of disclosure events influence subsequent IM strategies. These relationships could be examined alongside substance use behaviors, as greater social support is associated with decreased substance use and improved retention in care (Dobkin et al., 2002), whereas negative social

consequences are associated with dropout from treatment and continued substance use (Earnshaw, 2020).

Another promising direction is to investigate the motivations behind soberversary posts and how they relate to IM strategies. Individuals may post for different reasons – self-celebration, advocacy, role modeling (Earnshaw et al., 2019; Earnshaw et al., 2021) – which could influence how they frame their identity and how much they care about others' perceptions. It may also be the case that people who disclose on LinkedIn are already far along in their recovery journey (Burns, 2021) and therefore less concerned with potential social consequences, having already established a strong support network. Thus, motivations for disclosure may evolve over time, further supporting the need for longitudinal research and daily diary studies.

Future research should also examine recovery-related individual differences and circumstances, particularly their impact on coworker reactions and social consequences. For instance, the type of substance disclosed may influence perceptions, with disclosure of drug misuse, which is more stigmatized than alcohol misuse (Room et al., 2001, potentially eliciting greater ostracism intentions. Organizational position may also shape impressions. Qualitative findings revealed that some soberversary posts came from entrepreneurs, who may have more authority within their organizations and experience fewer negative consequences for disclosure. Comparatively, they may also be more concerned with customer impressions. Exploring the role of power, status, and audience could reveal who has the privilege to disclose and under what conditions.

Other avenues for research could consider various mediating and moderating variables, as proposed by Henle et al. (2023) in their theoretical model of workplace ostracism. For instance, Henle and colleagues (2023) argued that the relationship between norm violations and ostracism

is mediated by perceived threat, which in turn elicits negative emotion and leads to ostracism as a coping strategy. Accordingly, future research might consider the role of perceived threat and negative emotion. Further, investigating how ostracizer group identity orientation (Henle et al., 2023) moderates the relationship between workplace substance use norm violations and ostracizer negative emotion could provide additional insights regarding why rejecting a drink from a colleague could be considered rude (Buvik, 2019). Future work could also consider how relational climate moderates the relationship between ostracizer negative emotion and ostracism (Henle et al., 2023). Notably, Henle et al. (2023) explain that when the workplace encourages respectful interactions, ostracism is less likely to result. Research in this area could clarify whether RFWs, which promote supportive and inclusive environments, mitigate ostracism compared to non-RFWs.

As previously noted, future research should also explore identity as narrative, or the storytelling component of identity management (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Social media platforms, may be conducive to narrative forms of identity management, making them important contexts for continued investigation. Additionally, soberversary posts often featured multimedia elements such as hashtags, photos, and links to blog, which may play a meaningful role in IM strategies and shaping others' impressions. Blogs, in particular, may be a useful medium for exploring narrative forms of identity management.

Lastly, given that IM strategies are often used in combination, future work could adopt different methodologies, such as a within-subjects design or a profile-based approach. For example, Bolino and Turnley (2003) used cluster analysis to identify different patterns, or profiles of identity management. Applying a similar method to recovery identity management

could illuminate which strategy combinations are most common, how they co-occur, and whether certain profiles are more effective in shaping impressions or behavioral responses.

Conclusion

This study investigated IM strategies used in LinkedIn soberversary posts and their impact on colleagues' impressions and behavioral intentions, considering the moderating role of workplace substance use norms. The finding that individuals often use IM strategies in combination challenges the prevailing assumption that IM strategies are used in isolation. This discovery may encourage IM scholars to reexamine how IM strategies operate in real-world contexts rather than relying solely on previous frameworks (e.g., Roberts, 2005).

Although many relationships among variables were nonsignificant, authentic and archetypal impressions were associated with increased boosterism, and authentic impressions were associated with decreased ostracism. This suggests that IM strategies could be tailored to enhance authentic and archetypal impressions to enhance allyship behaviors. Additionally, the confirming strategy was significantly related to ostracism intentions, suggesting that acknowledging flaws and making amends, a common practice in twelve-step programs (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1989), may unintentionally heighten colleagues' ostracism intentions. Thus, recovery programs and individuals in recovery might consider the context in which a confirming strategy is most appropriate, as doing so via a LinkedIn soberversary post may have unintended consequences. Moreover, organizations must proactively create climates that support disclosure, foster allyship, and reduce the likelihood of ostracism.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Qualitative Codebook

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
Showcasing personal growth, transformation, & values	32	Personal growth & accomplishment	The post reflects on personal development, progress, or achievement, often in the context of overcoming challenges, learning new skills, or reaching significant milestones.	Use when the post highlights individual improvements in skills, mindset, or behaviors as part of a broader journey; When the post highlights perseverance; If the message celebrates a specific (non-sobersiversary) milestone or achievement that reflects effort and growth. This includes mentions of weight loss. In such instances, code weight loss as this and "physical health."	Do not use when the achievement is tied to professional or business success. A sobersiversary on its own is not coded as a personal accomplishment for this purpose.	"I've grown into a completely different person by learning and applying the tools and skills needed to cope in healthy ways." AND "I've written a book about my journey called "It is Possible," hoping to reach and help people still trapped in the dark places I once lived."; #healing, #behavioralchange, #growth, #onedayatatime, #perseverance

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
	17	Road and journey metaphors	Individuals refer to their journey or recovery process as a "road" or path, often highlighting its challenges or progression.	Use code when the individual uses "road" or similar metaphors to describe their recovery or life journey.	Do not use code when the post doesn't use a "road" metaphor or similar language; When the focus is on recovery or progress without referencing a journey-like metaphor; When the individual describes someone else's "journey" instead of their own	"I made the decision to fight back and once I caught my footing on a very rocky road, I honored my decision to continue the fight each and everyday and never look back."
	16	Positive self-photo	Photo portrays the individual in a positive light, often smiling, happy, or engaging in activities that reflect self-confidence or well-being.	Use code when the photo depicts the individual in a moment of joy or confidence, emphasizing personal growth or happiness.	Do not use code when the photo shows neutral or negative emotions or the individual is not the main subject of the photo.	Post #15
	14	Improved health	The post reflects on experiencing positive physical	Use when an individual mentions feeling	Do not use if the focus is on mental or	"And I also started feeling great - sleeping

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			or mental health changes as a result of sobriety.	better physically or mentally since entering recovery.	physical health without reference to health-related improvements. In these cases, use mental or physical health instead.	like a demon, bouncing out of bed in the morning with a clear head, losing my beer belly flab without really trying."
	9	Change in understanding/realization	The post reflects on a shift in perspective or beliefs, or a broader realization.	Use when the post highlights a change in understanding or realization that previous beliefs were incorrect or incomplete. Also use when the individual mentions "self-discovery" or similar.	Do not use when the post doesn't mention a shift in understanding or reflect on previous misconceptions; When the post discusses learning or growth without reference to a significant change in perspective.	"I thought I knew about addiction, only to realize it was all a farce- the important thing is that I was willing to be open minded and learn new things."
	8	Relationship growth and/or restoration	Individuals describe the growth, improvement, or restoration of relationships with family,	Use code when the post reflects on repairing or strengthening relationships; When individuals	Do not use code when the post does not focus on relationships or their growth; When relationships are	"I have restored the titles of son, brother, and friend to their fullest."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			friends, or others.	discuss progress in reconnecting with loved ones or building better relationships.	mentioned but without reference to improvement or change.	
	8	Time reference photo	Photos include written or visual elements that reference the tracking of time, such as sobriety chips, countdowns, calendars, or other methods of keeping track of sobriety milestones.	Use code when the photo shows a written or visual representation of tracking time, particularly in the context of sobriety.	Do not use code when the photo does not have any reference to the passage of time or sobriety milestones.	Post #6
	7	Perseverance	Use this code when the person discusses overcoming challenges, hardships, or obstacles, either personal or professional.	The post focuses on triumph or perseverance through difficult situations.	The post doesn't clearly describe overcoming obstacles.	"I made it another day, another year, another decade."
	6	Family values	The post mentions family members or	Use when the post refers to specific family	Do not use when the post does not reference family	"I am a father to a wonderful daughter."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			relationships with family as part of their narrative.	members; When family is highlighted as a key part of the individual's life or journey.	or familial relationships.	
	6	Personal values/beliefs	Individuals express their core beliefs or values that guide their actions, mindset, or approach to life.	Use code when the post explicitly mentions personal beliefs or guiding principles framed as sharing beliefs instead of simply providing advice.	Do not use code when the post doesn't reflect or mention personal values or beliefs. Or when someone is providing advice and not explicitly mentioning their beliefs.	"And I will accomplish all of this and more as I believe: - Anything is possible for anyone -& it really is this simple ✨ -We are in control of our own life and create the reality around us ✍️"
	5	Freedom, peace, & cleansing	The post describes experiencing a sense of freedom or peace as part of their recovery or personal journey.	Use when the post explicitly mentions freedom, peace, or feeling cleansed. This includes washing away negativity.	Do not use when the post doesn't reference freedom, peace, or feeling cleansed.	"I have an amazing girlfriend, fantastic support system, and a new sense of freedom each day."
	4	Academic accomplishment	The post celebrates	Use when the individual	Do not use when the post focuses	"In Spring 2025, I'll graduate

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			achievements in education, such as degrees, certifications, or academic milestones.	discusses their academic journey or success.	on professional or personal achievements that are unrelated to education.	with my first degree, and in Fall 2025, I'll begin my bachelor's in Business Management."
	4	Doubt and helplessness	The post reflects on doubt or disbelief in their ability to overcome challenges or mentions feeling helpless.	Use when the post highlights feelings of doubt or uncertainty, especially in relation to their personal or professional journey. Or the individual mentions feeling helpless.	Do not use when the post does not address doubt or helplessness.	"Thinking back to where I was 10 years ago... I never would have envisioned this moment happening for me."
	4	Past self-comparison	The post directly compares current self to past self.	Use when the post includes direct comparisons between the person's past and present self with their change of behaviors or mindsets.	Do not use when the post doesn't involve a clear comparison between the past and present self.	"The guy on the left used drugs to numb his pain... Today, with over three years of sobriety, I've grown into a completely different person."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
	4	Unexpected transformation	The post expresses surprise, disbelief, or a sense of astonishment at how much their life has changed since entering recovery.	Use when someone expresses their surprises at how much their life has changed since recovery.	Do not use if the post describes a positive change without an element of surprise, or if the individual frames this change as expected.	"Thinking back to where I was 10-years ago, or during the worst part of my drinking problem, I never would have envisioned this moment happening for me."
	3	Addiction photo	Photo depicts themes of addiction, typically featuring individuals who appear to be struggling with substance use or showing visual signs of hardship associated with addiction. Such photos may include visible substances, paraphernalia, or settings that	Use code when the photo includes an individual who visually appears to be experiencing the effects of addiction, such as signs of physical hardship, emotional distress, or isolation. If the photo shows substances or paraphernalia associated with	Do not use code when the photo centers around recovery or positive transformation without visible references to substances or signs of struggle.	Post #36

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			imply the context of addiction.	addiction, such as bottles, needles, or other drug-related items, either in use or in the environment around the individual.		
	3	Denial	The post describes a period of denial or refusal to acknowledge a problem, especially in relation to addiction.	Use when the person reflects on a time when they were in denial about their issues.	Do not use when the post focuses on acceptance or recovery without mentioning denial.	"I kept thinking I had a problem, but I was also in denial and would do nothing about it."
	3	Goals	The post outlines future objectives, either personal or professional.	Use when the post explicitly mentions short-term or long-term goals the person is working toward.	Do not use when the post reflects on past achievements without mentioning future aspirations.	"I dream of starting my own web development company and building a family."
	3	Humility	The post makes light of their own flaws or mistakes in a	Use when the post includes statements that are self-critical but with a	Do not use when the post simply acknowledges flaws/imperfections, use the	"Certainly one thing is for sure, if I can do it, anyone can!"

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			humorous or humble way.	lighthearted or humorous tone, or express that the individual is "nothing special." Code statements such as "If I can do it, anyone can" as both "humility" and "role model identity."	"Acknowledgement of flaws" code. If the tone is something other than lighthearted or humorous, use the "Acknowledgement of flaws" code.	
	3	Increased opportunities	The post reflects on how personal changes, such as sobriety, led to new opportunities in life or business.	Use when the post highlights how making positive changes created new opportunities	Do not use when the post does not mention opportunities as a result of change.	"The more I cut back, the more opportunities seemed to appear."
	3	Interconnected life difficulties	The post describes at least one personal life struggle that contributes to a challenging or complicated life narrative, beyond just sobriety, such as family dynamics,	Use when the post details interconnected life difficulties (e.g., teenage pregnancy, dealing with a partner's drug abuse, single parenthood, family incarceration,	Do not use when the post focuses exclusively on sobriety-related struggles without other life circumstances being discussed.	"Through teenage pregnancy, a boyfriend dealing and abusing drugs, single motherhood, incarcerated father..."; #HurricaneMilton

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			relationships, or societal issues, including a one-time dramatic event (e.g., hurricane).	homelessness); When the individual reflects on non-addiction-related challenges that compound their overall life journey.		
	2	Rock bottom	The lowest point in an individual's personal or professional life is often tied to addiction or hardship.	Use code when the post reflects on a particularly difficult time or life event that represents a turning point.	Do not use code when the post discusses general challenges without the sense of hitting "rock bottom."	"I had been battling years of Alcohol Addiction & Eating Disorders and had finally hit my rock bottom."
Serving as a role model, offering support, & raising awareness	19	Role model identity	Individuals position themselves as an example for others, particularly in their sobriety or personal growth journey.	Use code when the post emphasizes setting an example for others to follow. Code statements such as "If I can do it, anyone can" as both "role model identity" and "humility."	Do not use code when the post is more reflective without mentioning the idea of inspiring or modeling behavior for others.	"I share all of this because I believe you can experience the same sort of transformation in your own life."; #leadership, #inspiration

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
	17	Giving advice	The post includes direct suggestions, recommendations, or life lessons the person shares with others.	Use when the post provides actionable tips or insights intended to guide others.	Do not use when the post is reflective without any direct advice to others.	"My only advice is you can't change or escape your past, but it does not need to define your future."
	16	General addiction and recovery hashtags	Hashtag mentions/references addiction or recovery broadly.	Use code when the hashtag mentions references addiction or recovery broadly.	Do not use code when the hashtag is not specifically related to addiction, recovery, or sobriety. Use the "Non-alcoholic beverage" code when non-alcoholic beverages are mentioned via hashtags. Use "Soberversary date" when the sobriety anniversary is the hashtag.	#recovery, #addiction, #alcoholfree, #alcoholfreelifestyle, #boozefree, #noalcohol, #alcoholfreeliving, #hangoverfree, #nonalcoholic, #SoberLiving, #SnoozeonBooze
	14	Offering support	The post expresses a willingness to	Use when the post includes an invitation to	Do not use when the post is purely reflective	"Now, I only look back on my past to use it as

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			provide help or guidance to others.	others for support, whether it's a listening ear or resources.	and does not offer direct support to others.	a tool to help others."
	10	Fostering community & belonging	The post emphasizes feeling a part of a larger group or community, or experiencing a sense of shared understanding, inclusion, or mutual connection. The focus is on the emotional or relational benefits of group membership, such as solidarity, shared identity, or collective experiences, rather than on receiving tangible support or assistance from the group.	Use when the post describes a sense of belonging, shared identity, or group membership; The post highlights the value of being understood or not feeling alone due to the presence of others in a similar situation. The post may also tag groups of which they are members (e.g., Veteran organization, Planet Fitness).	Do not use when the focus is primarily on receiving tangible or emotional support from others use "Receiving support."; If the post describes general social interaction or relationships without emphasizing a sense of shared belonging or group identity	"Having others understand that they are not alone is a big deal."; #veteransupport; Tagged veteran organization and Planet Fitness

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
	9	Personal on LinkedIn	Individuals explicitly mention sharing personal information or stories on LinkedIn, especially when acknowledging the platform's professional focus or the uncommon nature of posting personal content.	Use code when the individual acknowledges that the content they share is personal and refers to LinkedIn as a platform where such content is typically unusual or out of the ordinary. The code mentions "long post" or "long post warning" as this.	Do not use code when the post shares personal details without mentioning LinkedIn's professional nature or without explicitly acknowledging the unusualness/vulnerability/uncommonness of sharing personal content on this platform.	"On a side note, I have never put anything 'personal' on LinkedIn but since this is 'my company' now, I figured why not."
	6	Informative resource (e.g., book, article)	The post shares a link to an article, book, or informational resource, intended to educate or inform others.	Use code when the post includes a link to an article, book, or similar resource shared to educate, inform, or provide perspective.	Do not use code if the post mentions general information or experiences without linking to or focusing on an external article; When the post is more focused on personal	https://lnkd.in/esNNenn8

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
					reflections or experiences (e.g., personal blog) rather than sharing an educational resource.	
	5	Talk to someone	Individuals encourage others to reach out and talk to someone (e.g., friends, family, professionals) if they are struggling.	Use code when the post includes a direct suggestion for readers to talk to someone or reach out to others if they need help. They might also say "speak to someone."	Do not use code when the post encourages reflection without explicit advice to seek support. If the individual invites reaching out to them, then it should be "connecting."	"If you think you have a problem, talk to someone. It doesn't have to be me. Talk to a family member, friend, counselor, health professional, or a helpline."
	4	Motivational photo	Photos feature a motivational message (about sobriety or in general), whether on clothing, signs, or any other visual format meant to inspire or promote recovery.	Use code when the photo includes motivational messaging, whether it's printed on a shirt, poster, or other visible surface.	Do not use code when the photo does not contain any clear motivational messaging.	Post #15

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
	4	Recognition day	Individuals reference a specific day of awareness or recognition (e.g., World Mental Health Day) as part of their reflection or narrative.	Use code when the post mentions a recognized day or event (e.g., World Mental Health Day) and links it to personal reflection or experiences.	Do not use code when the post doesn't reference a specific recognition day.	"Yesterday was World Mental Health Day which has me reflecting on my own journey with Mental Health."
	4	Reposted content	Post is a repost of someone else's content.	Use code when the post is explicitly identified as a repost or shared content from another user.	Do not use code when the content is original or doesn't acknowledge that it has been reposted.	Post #27
	3	Physical health	Individuals reference their physical health or physical health diagnoses.	Use code when an individual mentions the state of their physical health (e.g., body, fitness, weight loss, negative health outcomes) and/or physical health	Do not use code if there is more emphasis on mental or emotional well-being as opposed to physical.	"I saw that everything came together when I started with my physical body first."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				conditions. In such instances, code weight loss as this and "personal growth and accomplishment."		
	2	Fundraising	The post calls to raise funds for an organization, program, or cause, usually aimed at supporting addiction recovery, sobriety resources, or related community initiatives.	Use when the post explicitly asks for financial support or donations to a specific campaign, organization, or cause.	Do not use when the post mentions the organization or its work without directly soliciting donations or support.	"I'm fundraising on behalf of Herren Project, an organization that helps people get sober. I've included a link to my campaign. I'd love your support!"
	2	Non-alcoholic beverage	The post includes content related to non-alcoholic drinks or sober alternatives to alcoholic drinks.	Use when the post specifically mentions a non-alcoholic beverage (such as sprite or a non-alcoholic beer) or non-alcoholic	Do not use when the post does not mention non-alcoholic beverages.	"And as a big plus, there's been an explosion of non-alcoholic craft beers and drinks on the market over the last few years.";

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				beverage company.		#nonalcoholicdrink, #nonalcoholicbeer
	1	Community outreach organization website	The post includes a link to a community outreach organization, such as a nonprofit, recovery support service, or local outreach program focused on helping people.	Use code when the post directs users to a community-based organization providing support services, outreach, or recovery programs.	Do not use code if the website is not related to community outreach or there is no link included in the post.	redemptionalleyway.org
	1	Disability	The post recognizes SUD as a disability.	Use when the post explicitly refers to SUD/addiction as a disability.	Do not use when the post refers to non-SUD disabilities (e.g., physical, developmental) or disorders/diagnoses (e.g., anxiety).	"I talk about addiction on a workplace platform because this DISABILITY is one that plagues so many in secret."
	1	Spread the word	Individuals encourage readers to share the content with	Use code when the individual explicitly asks for reposts or	Do not use code when the post doesn't call for sharing or	"Repost this post and help someone see the

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			others or emphasize the importance of spreading a message.	encourages others to share the message.	dissemination of the message.	power of small changes."
	1	Substance facts	Individuals share objective facts about substances, including chemical properties, health impacts, dosage recommendation s, legal status, or common effects.	Use code when the individuals provide concrete details about substances, including chemical properties, health impacts, dosage recommendation s, legal status, or common effects.	Do not use code when the individuals share personal experiences, opinions, or emotional reactions to substances without objective or factual information.	"Alcohol is a class 1 carcinogen linked to several types of cancer, shrinks your brain, slows down brain functioning, stretches your heart muscle, disrupts your hormones, weakens your immune system, wreaks havoc on your sleep cycle, causes nerve damage, and further disrupts various functions within your body."
Highlighting professional development &	20	Professional identity/develop	Individuals relate to the pursuit of	Use code when the post discusses career	Do not use code when the post is solely focused	"I will be announcing our first acquisition

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
accomplishments		ment and/or business growth	growth, success, and excellence in professional and business contexts. Includes posts about career advancement, entrepreneurial efforts, the integration of personal and professional growth, maintaining high standards in work, and leveraging work experiences to achieve professional or business goals.	or professional growth, achievements, or milestones; The content highlights entrepreneurial activities or aspirations, including building or managing a business; There is a clear link between personal development and how it contributes to professional success or business growth; The post emphasizes high standards of performance, quality, or professionalism in the workplace; It mentions	on personal growth without any connection to professional or business outcomes; The focus is on workplace culture or team dynamics without an emphasis on individual or business growth	in the upcoming weeks which will have some very exciting changes for our wholesale and showroom partners."; #business, #realestate, #SoberSales

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				leveraging or reflecting on work experience as a tool for achieving professional or business goals.		
	2	Business promotion	The post promotes business ventures or services.	Use when the post promotes business ventures or services.	Do not use when the post mentions professional accomplishments in lieu of business promotion.	"Beyond Sober isn't just a program; it's your ticket to a life where YOU control the narrative. Where purpose is genuine, fulfilling, and free of self-inflicted chaos."
Acknowledging support received & expressing gratitude	24	Gratitude	The post expresses thankfulness or appreciation for others, for resources, for their sobriety journey, and/or for the opportunity to celebrate a soberversary.	Use when the post provides thankfulness of others, resources, or the sobriety journey; Mention of gratitude for support systems, programs, or the opportunity to	Do not use when there is no clear expression of gratitude or thankfulness; Focus on achievements or recovery without mentioning appreciation for	"I am grateful today to celebrate 34 years of continuous sobriety."; #gratitude, #grateful, #thankyou

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				celebrate a soberversary.	others or the process.	
	24	Receiving support	Individuals acknowledge the support they received from family or friends, from a recovery program, or from their coworkers/organization as related to their addiction/sobriety/recovery.	Use code when the individual emphasizes that their accomplishments are shared with others.	Do not use code when the post focuses on individual achievement without acknowledgment of external support. Use "Community and belonging" when the individual mentions receiving "community" support.	"With the help of...too many incredible people to count..."; #lifeprocessprogram
Invoking faith	16	Faith & spirituality	The post mentions the role of faith, spirituality, or religion in the person's recovery or life journey.	Use when faith or religious belief is a key element in the person's experience or story.	Do not use when the post focuses on secular elements of recovery without mention of faith.	"We are doing all that Jesus allows."
Acknowledging flaws & past harm	5	Escape	The post describes using substances or behaviors as a	Use when the post explicitly mentions escaping from	Do not use when the focus is solely on substance use	"I ran from substance to substance, 'escape' to

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			way to avoid or escape from emotional pain, reality, or personal problems.	emotions, situations, or life through substances or other actions. This includes self-medicating.	without mentioning escape or avoidance.	'escape, and from bar to bar.'
	4	Acknowledgment of flaws	The post openly admits imperfections or shortcomings.	Use when the post includes direct acknowledgment of flaws.	Do not use when the post focuses on achievements without discussing flaws or imperfections.	"I would say I've come a long way in someways and regressed in others however, of course, still not drinking."
	2	Apology	The post explicitly contains an apology wherein the individual acknowledges the harm or negative impact caused to others or to oneself (i.e., a self-apology).	Use when an explicit apology is made, either using the word "apology" (or some variation) or "I'm sorry."	Do not use when there is no explicit apology. Regret or acknowledgment of flaws is insufficient to warrant an "apology" code.	"Which brings me to the point of this message. It is to thank those who I've built a relationship with as I've tried to get healthy, and an apology to those who's bridges I have burnt while dealing with addiction, and the confusion

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
						and anger that accompanies it."
	1	Regret	Individuals express remorse or sadness over past actions or decisions, especially in the context of addiction or personal hardship.	Use code when the post contains a direct mention of regret for past behaviors or decisions.	Do not use code when the post focuses more on acceptance or growth without expressing regret.	"Unfortunately, I still feel loads of regret for things I've caused in my past."
Reframing recovery identity	6	Recovery hostile environment/substance norms	Individuals describe settings or situations where initiating/maintaining sobriety or recovery is challenging due to the prevalence of substances, cultural norms around drinking, or pressure to engage in substance-related activities.	Use code when the post highlights environments that make it difficult for individuals in recovery to remain sober, such as events centered around alcohol or substances; If the message describes the presence of substance use as a social or professional	Do not use code when the post discusses personal recovery challenges without referencing the influence of external environments or social norms; If the post talks about networking or professional events without linking them to the difficulty of	"At these big shows, the one thing that is not in short supply are networking events, and by association, drinks."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				expectation; When the post emphasizes the challenges of navigating spaces that are not supportive of sober living.	maintaining sobriety in such settings.	
	5	Stigma	Individuals express societal or social biases, judgments, or pressures related to substance misuse, addiction, and/or recovery, often highlighting negative stereotypes or reactions to individuals who choose not to drink or use substances.	Use code when the post describes negative judgments, stereotypes, or pressures faced by individuals who misuse substances or are in recovery.	Do not use code if the post revolves around self-imposed or internal feelings without any external judgment unless it explicitly stems from anticipated stigma.	"It's not often that you will hear someone question you for not doing a hard drug, but when you choose to refrain from alcohol, you often hear 'why?', 'come on', 'you're lame', or 'just have one drink!'."
	4	Counternarrative	The post challenges conventional narratives, particularly about sobriety,	Use when the post pushes back against traditional views or offers a new	Do not use when the post aligns with traditional or widely accepted narratives.	"I want the focus to be on who I am as a whole- and I can't do that if I celebrate a

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			recovery, or identity.	perspective on common beliefs.		soberversary."; #nondisease
	2	General post describing fun facts	The post shares general, lighthearted information about the person's life or interests, often unrelated to their professional or personal struggles.	Use when the post shares facts about the person's hobbies, interests, or fun background information.	Do not use when the post is serious or primarily focused on personal or professional milestones.	"I live in Florida, have been married to my husband for 4 years, and we have three cats."
	1	"Side note"	Individuals shift from a primary topic to a more personal or informal one, often signaling a pivot in tone or subject.	Use code when the individual explicitly acknowledges that they are deviating from their main point to share something unrelated.	Do not use code when the post maintains a consistent focus or topic throughout.	"On a side note, I have never put anything 'personal' on LinkedIn but since this is 'my company' now, I figured why not."
	1	Harm reduction	The post discusses cutting back on harmful behaviors (such as alcohol or drug use) rather	Use when the post reflects on reducing harmful behaviors without	Do not use when the post focuses on complete sobriety or abstinence.	"I stopped drinking excessively... No, I didn't quit entirely."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			than quitting entirely.	complete abstinence.		
	1	Holistic identity	The post discusses identity as more than just their sobriety or recovery, focusing on the whole self.	Use when the post emphasizes that the person's identity goes beyond their addiction or sobriety journey.	Do not use when the post focuses solely on the sobriety or recovery aspect of their identity. Do not use when both personal and professional identity are mentioned.	"I want the focus to be on who I am as a whole—and I can't do that if I celebrate a soberversary."; #identity
	1	Respect for personal choices	An expression of acceptance or understanding regarding individual lifestyle choices, emphasizing that one's personal decisions are not intended to judge or impose on others.	Use code when the post includes language that emphasizes the individual's choice while acknowledging that others may choose differently without judgment. When the post promotes inclusivity, it demonstrates that personal values or	Do not use code when the post is solely focused on the individual's journey or preferences without addressing respect or acceptance of others' choices; When the post includes criticism, moral judgment, or superiority regarding	"I realize that alcohol doesn't serve or help me. Maybe it does for you - this post is not about shaming my friends who drink."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				decisions are unique and not meant to impose on or evaluate others.	different choices, even subtly.	
Additional context	24	Reference to substance	Individuals mention using a substance or substances.	Use when a substance is mentioned in the post, whether the person is reflecting on their own consumption/use of the substance or sobriety from a substance.	Do not use when the post does not reference substances, neither in general, nor specifically.	"I spent a decade in addiction... I ran from substance to substance."
	24	Soberversary date	Individuals explicitly acknowledge or commemorate the calendar date marking the individual's anniversary of achieving sobriety.	Use code when the post specifically mentions or celebrates the calendar date of the sobriety anniversary (e.g., "Today marks 5 years since I got sober"). Alternatively, the post mentions that	Do not use code if the post mentions the length of sobriety (e.g., "I've been sober for 5 years") without reference to the anniversary date, use "Length of sobriety."	"The date 10/16 holds a lot of meaning for me. Today I celebrate my 10-year anniversary of my sobriety."; #sobrietyanniversary

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
				their sobriety anniversary is today, yesterday, or another specific date.		
	14	Celebratory excitement	The post explicitly expresses joy, excitement, or celebration in relation to a personal achievement, milestone, or special event.	Use when the post explicitly mentions feelings of joy or excitement, or explicitly mentions they are celebrating.	Do not use when the post does not specifically mention "excite" or any variation of that word, nor "celebrate" or any variation of that word; it is not enough to have an exciting tone	"I am very excited to finally announce my company [COMPANY NAME] is finally live and ready to launch!"
	8	Reason for post	Individuals explicitly state why they are sharing their story or making the post.	Use code when the post includes an explanation of why the author decided to share their story. Use this if someone says, "I share my story..." and "I hope this post..."	Do not use code when the post doesn't explicitly state a reason for sharing.	"I post this to make myself available if you have questions or want to connect."
	4	Emphasis on meaningfulness	The post highlights	Use when the individual	Do not use when the post	"The date 10/16 holds a lot of

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
			personal significance or places particular emphasis on meaningfulness.	reflects explicitly on the meaningfulness of the event or situation.	describes accomplishments or events without an emphasis on their deeper meaning or personal impact.	meaning for me. Today I celebrate my 10-year anniversary of my sobriety."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
<u>Case-by-case:</u> Serving as a role model & offering support is the IM strategy used in 14/16 of these instances. Post #5 is asking individuals to share about their behavioral change, which is more like raising awareness; #29 (paraphrased) is "comment below so I can get to know the community better", which doesn't neatly fit into any of the secondary codes/IM strategies.	16	Connecting	The post expresses a desire, intention, or invitation to connect with others personally or professionally.	Use when the post explicitly mentions networking, forming relationships, or connecting with their audience. Use this for "just follow along."	Do not use when the post is self-reflective without mention of connection with others.	"Looking forward to connecting with EVERYONE soon!"

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
<u>Case-by-case:</u> Posts #15, 25, 35, 36, 45, 47, 52, 54 are raising awareness; #48 is expressing gratitude for mental well-being; #20 and #28 acknowledge flaws/harm in using alcohol to numb depression and battling demons; #19, 23, 24, 49, and 55 are personal growth.	16	Mental health	The post references their mental state, mental health, and/or mental health disorders/diagnoses.	Use when a person mentions mental health, the state of their mental health, and/or mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, eating disorder, depression, suicidality). Use this when someone says "battling demons."	Do not use if there is more emphasis on physical health/well-being as opposed to mental.	"I was battling with daily suicidal ideations. I was crippled by trauma and anxiety so severe I could barely make it to 5pm without quieting the noise."; #mentalhealth, #mentalhealthawareness, #mentalhealthmatters, #suicideprevention, #suicideawareness, #depressionhelp, #depression, #anxiety, #sad, #suicide, #depressed, #mentalillness, #pain

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
<u>Case-by-case:</u> Post #9, 36, and 40 are more like substance facts/raising awareness; Remaining posts are acknowledging flaws/past harm.	16	Negative consequences of substance use	The post references adverse effects or outcomes directly resulting from substance use, including physical, emotional, social, or professional consequences.	Use when the content highlights specific negative outcomes from substance use, such as hangovers, memory loss, missed responsibilities, deteriorating health, or damaged relationships.	Do not use when the focus is on the substance use itself without mention of resulting negative consequences; When the post discusses personal growth or recovery without detailing past adverse outcomes of substance use.	"Alcohol had played a major part in hurting myself and those around me. It took something so precious and cracked it. Although at that point, it didn't break, it had done serious damage. Damage that was never worked through as it should have been." AND "But the truth is, I found it hard to temper myself. So what started out as networking, invariably ended up with extremely late nights or hard partying, hangovers and

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
						blurred memories."
<u>Case-by-case:</u> All but post #28 fit into this secondary code; #28 IS acceptance but does not focus on personal growth: "Life ain't always sunshine and rainbows, man."	13	Acceptance	The post expresses coming to terms with circumstances, whether it be past, present, or future. This also includes normalizing behaviors or thought processes.	Use when the post indicates a sense of resolution or understanding of their situation.	Do not use when the person is still grappling with regret or struggle without acceptance.	"It is what it is. All I can do is keep striving to do and be better."

Secondary Code	Count	Descriptive Code	Definition	When to Use	When Not to Use	Example
<u>Case-by-case:</u> Post #7 is a music video, and the individual mentioned creating this to express gratitude/apologize for harm caused; #10 is unclear; #12, 34, and 49 are blogs about the individuals' growth/transformation; #45 is a mental health awareness podcast.	6	Personal content (e.g., blog, podcast, music video)	The post includes a link to an individual's blog, podcast, music video, or other personally created content.	Use when the post includes a link to an individual's blog, podcast, music video, or other personally created content.	Do not use if a link to personal content is not featured in the post or if the post references personal content but does not include a link.	Link to blog post
<u>Case-by-case:</u> All posts with family photos incorporated both personal growth and gratitude, except post #46 which focused on personal growth.	4	Positive family photo	Photo shows the individual with their family, radiating positive emotions such as love, support, or togetherness.	Use code when the photo focuses on the family, highlighting supportive relationships and positive experiences with loved ones.	Do not use code when the photo focuses on the individual without featuring family or when the family dynamic shown is neutral or negative.	Post #19

Appendix B: Content Validity Ratios

Criterion	# of SMEs who Rated “3”	CVR	Criterion	# of SMEs who Rated “3”	CVR
Cover Story			Int A + Assim		
Clarity	11	1.00	Clarity	10	.818
Realism	8	.456	Relevance	11	1.00
			Realism	11	1.00
Control			Int A + Confirm		
Clarity	11	1.00	Clarity	11	1.00
Realism	7	.273	Relevance	11	1.00
			Realism	11	1.00
Integrating A			Int A + Decat		
Clarity	10	.818	Clarity	11	1.00
Relevance	11	1.00	Relevance	9	.636
Realism	10	.818	Realism	10	.818
Integrating B			Int B + Assim		
Clarity	11	1.00	Clarity	11	1.00
Relevance	11	1.00	Relevance	11	1.00
Realism	10	.818	Realism	11	1.00
Integrating C			Int B + Confirm		
Clarity	10	.818	Clarity	11	1.00
Relevance	10	.818	Relevance	10	.818
Realism	10	.818	Realism	11	1.00
Assimilating			Int B + Decat		
Clarity	11	1.00	Clarity	11	1.00
Relevance	11	1.00	Relevance	9	.636
Realism	9	.636	Realism	11	1.00
Confirming			Int C + Assim		
Clarity	11	1.00	Clarity	11	1.00
Relevance	11	1.00	Relevance	11	1.00
Realism	8	.456	Realism	10	.818
Decategorizing			Int C + Confirm		
Clarity	11	1.00	Clarity	11	1.00
Relevance	10	.818	Relevance	11	1.00
Realism	11	1.00	Realism	10	.818
			Int C + Decat		
			Clarity	11	1.00
			Relevance	10	.818
			Realism	11	1.00

Note. CVR represents content validity ratio.

Appendix C: Vignette Materials

Please read the following instructions.

As a LinkedIn user, we would like to get your reaction to a specific type of post. Your role will be to consider the scenario and then evaluate a post made by a hypothetical LinkedIn user, whom you may assume is one of your connections. Please go to the next page to read the scenario.

Scenario: Imagine you have just logged into your LinkedIn account and are scrolling through your Newsfeed. As you scroll, you come across a post by a new coworker (for our purposes, let's say their name is Alex Smith). Alex joined your company, "ABC Company", one month ago, and their position is listed as "Consultant." (You should assume that "Consultant" reflects a real position at your own organization. Also, Alex's profile photo contains a blank icon as a placeholder for the purpose of this research, but you should assume that their real profile would have one). Given this scenario, please carefully read Alex's post below.

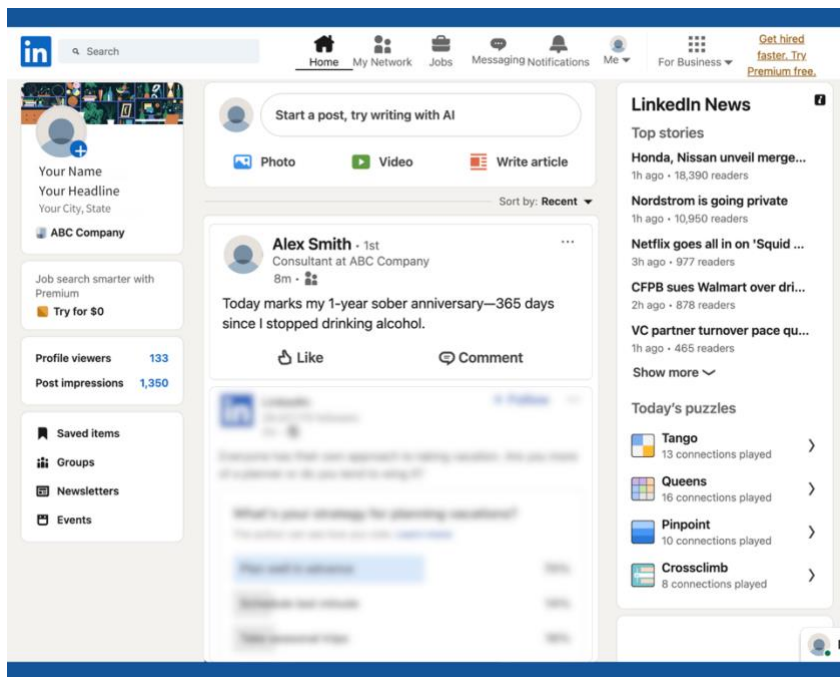


Figure C1

Control Vignette

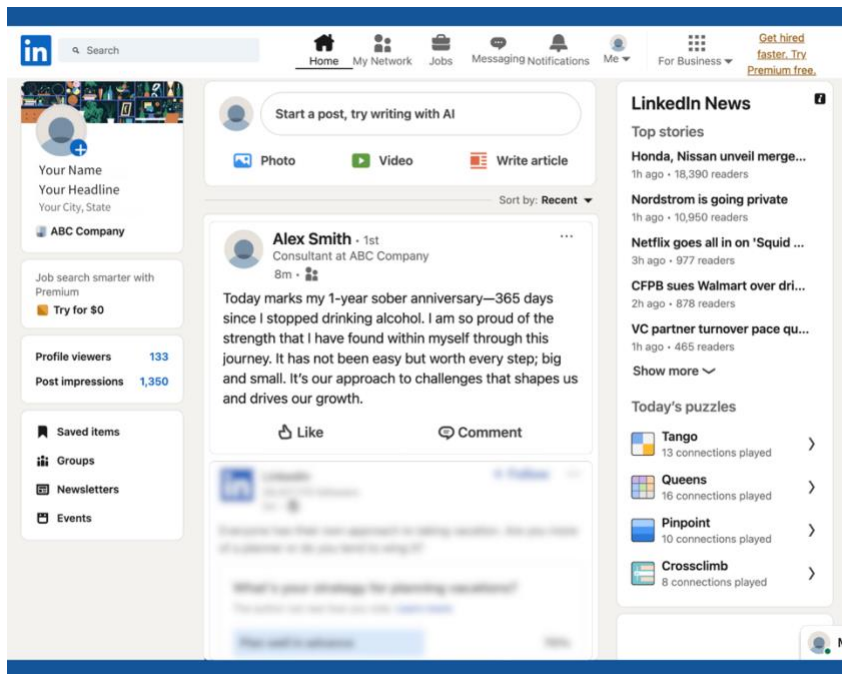


Figure C2

Integrating A Vignette

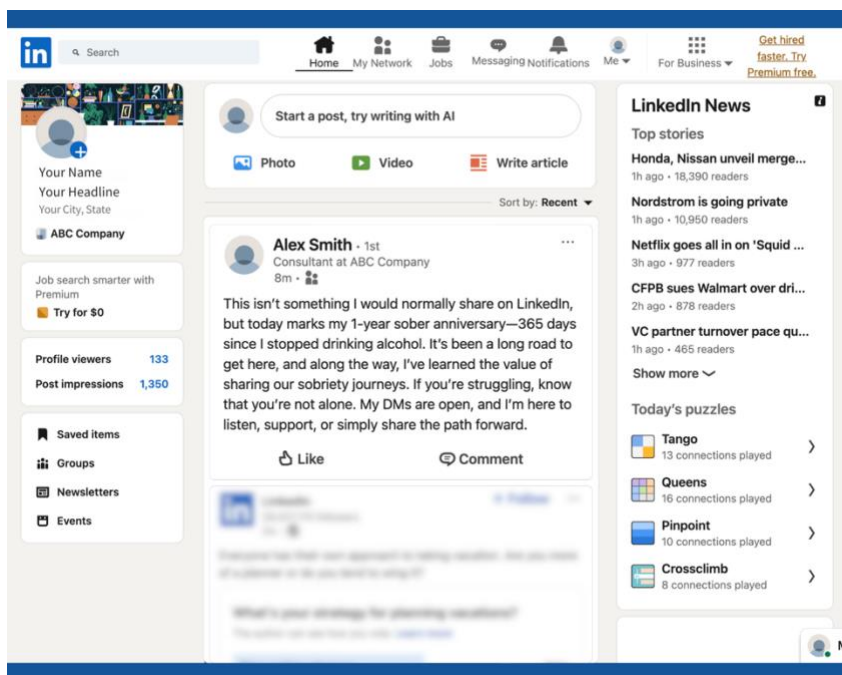


Figure C3

Integrating B Vignette

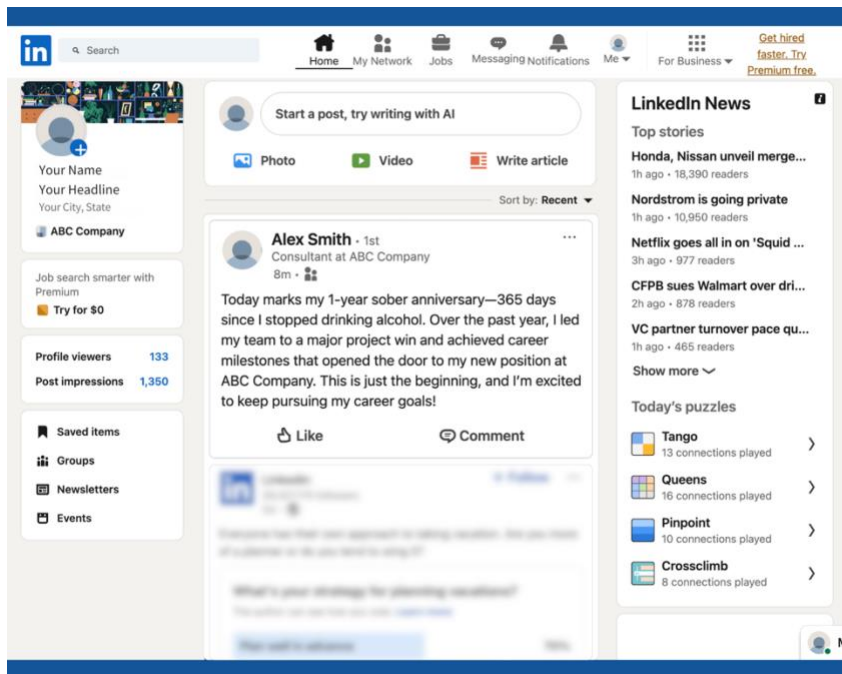


Figure C4

Integrating C Vignette

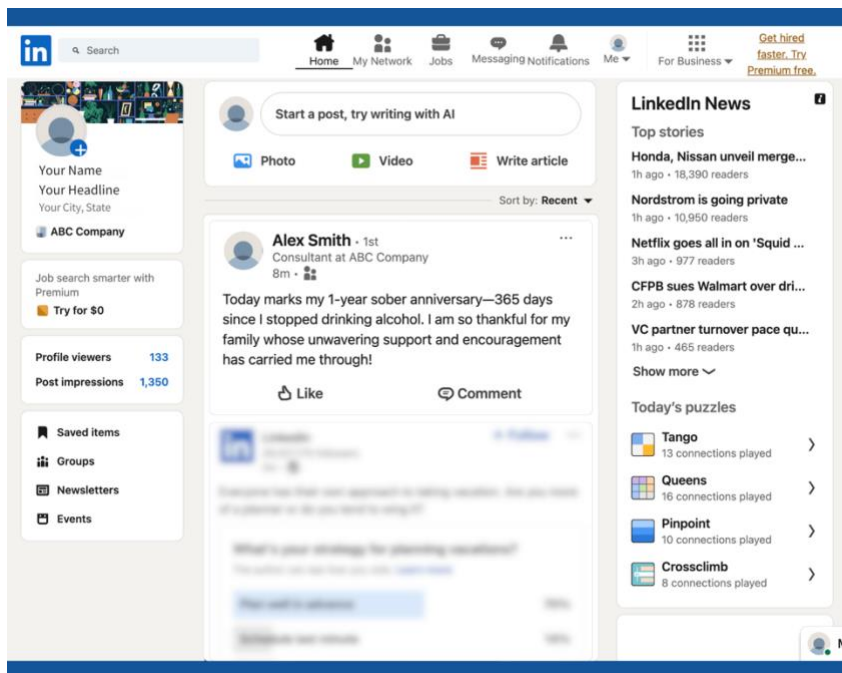


Figure C5

Assimilating A Vignette

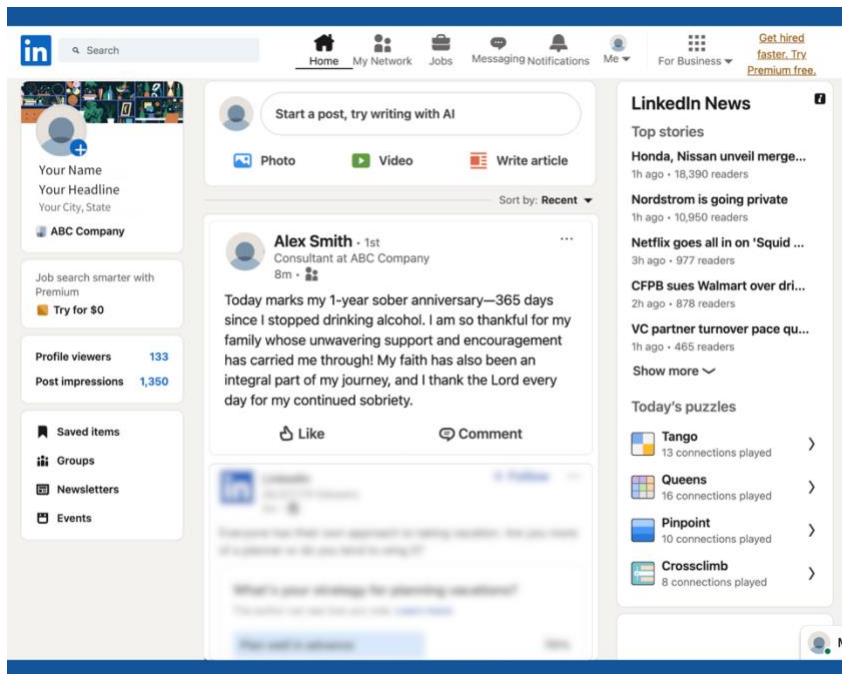


Figure C6

Assimilating B Vignette

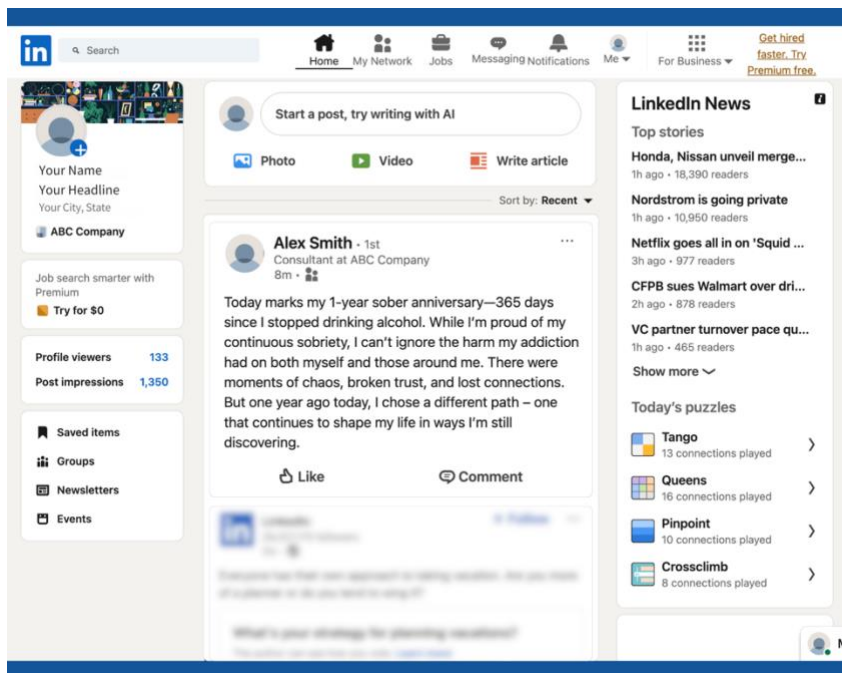


Figure C7

Confirming Vignette

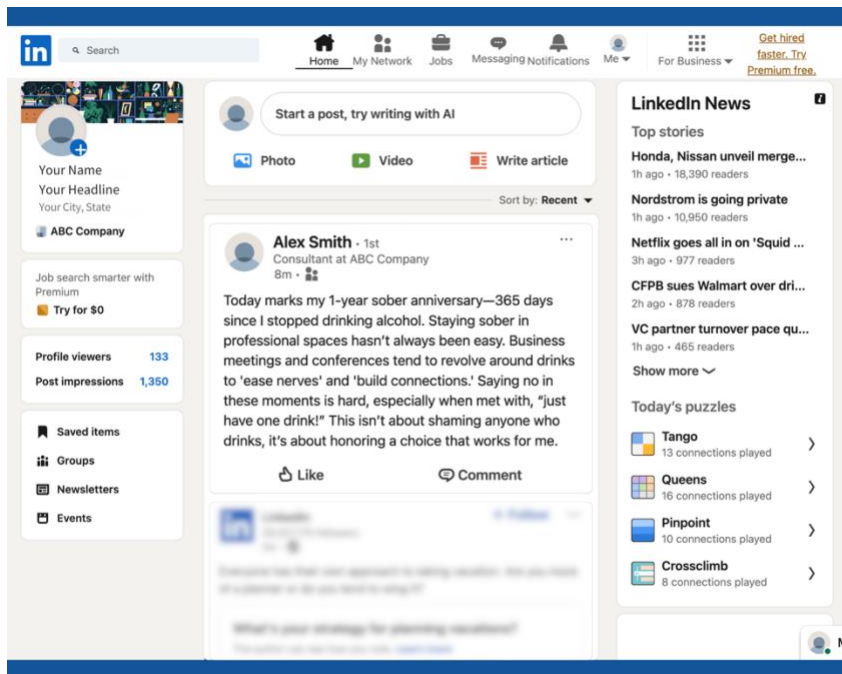


Figure C8

Decategorizing Vignette

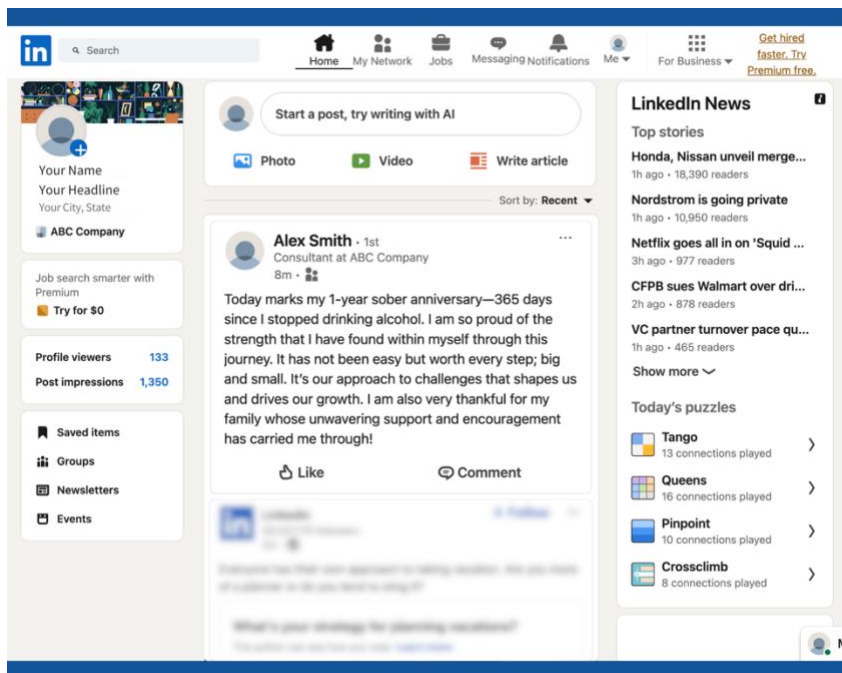


Figure C9

Integrating A + Assimilating A Vignette

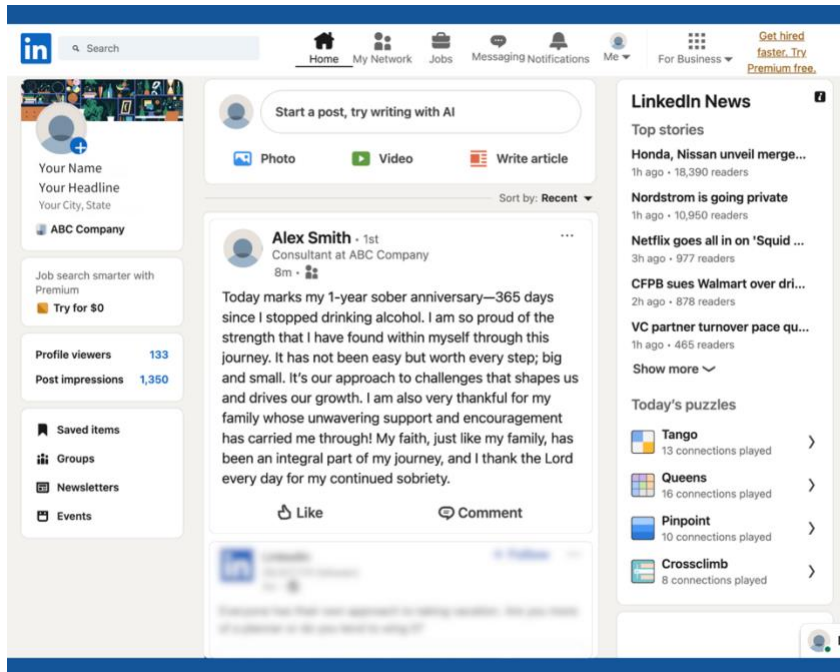


Figure C10

Integrating A + Assimilating B Vignette

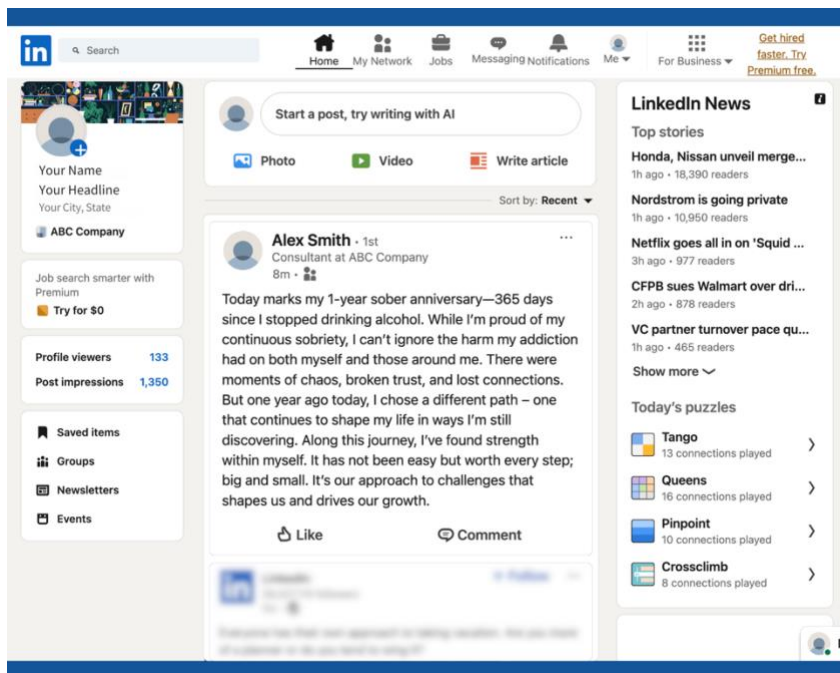


Figure C11

Integrating A + Confirming Vignette

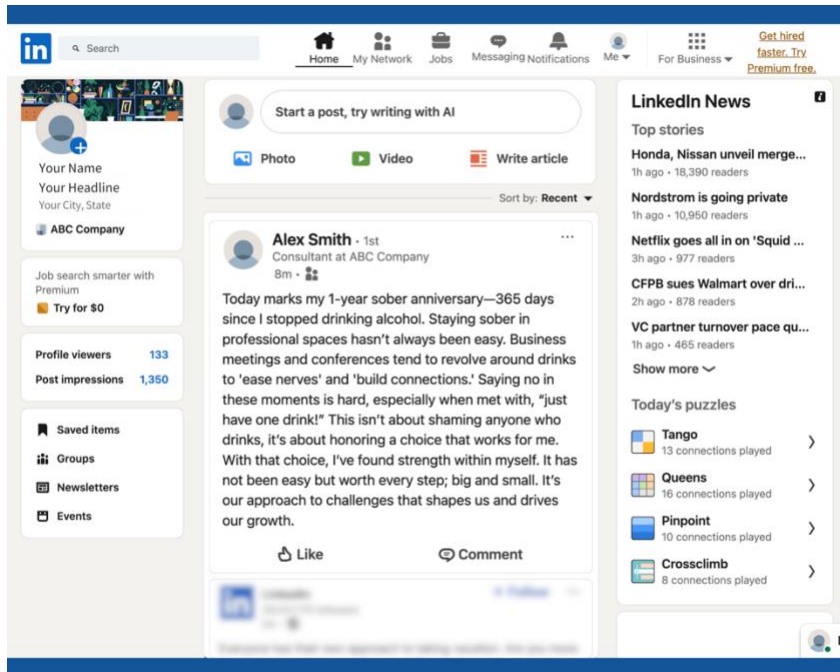


Figure C12

Integrating A + Decategorizing Vignette

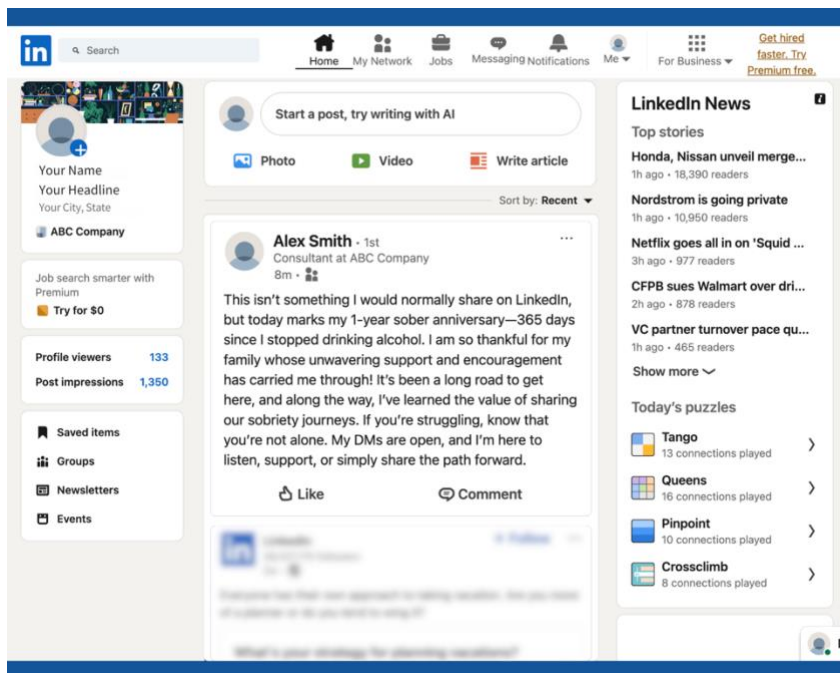


Figure C13

Integrating B + Assimilating A Vignette

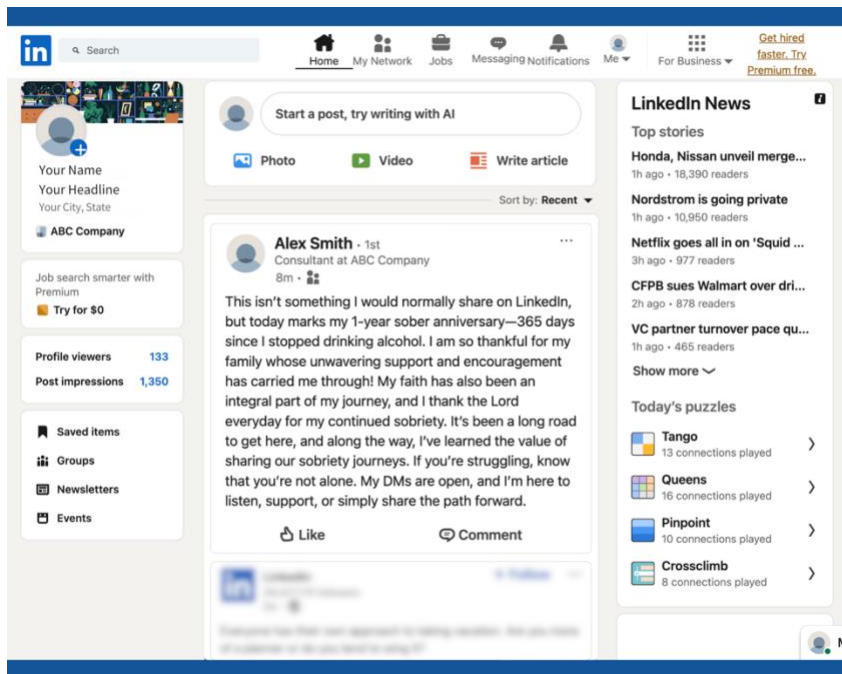


Figure C14

Integrating B + Assimilating B Vignette

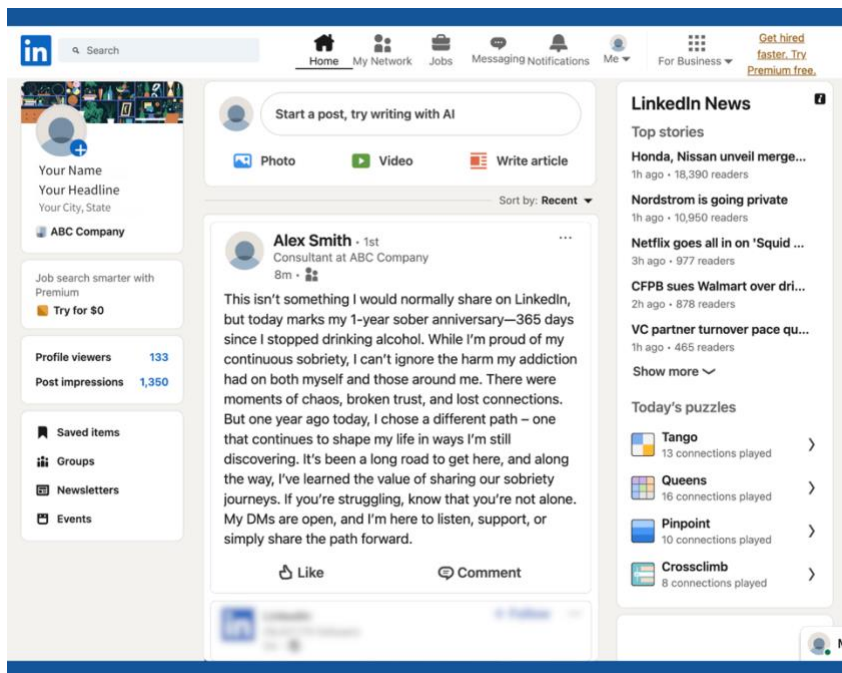


Figure C15

Integrating B + Confirming Vignette

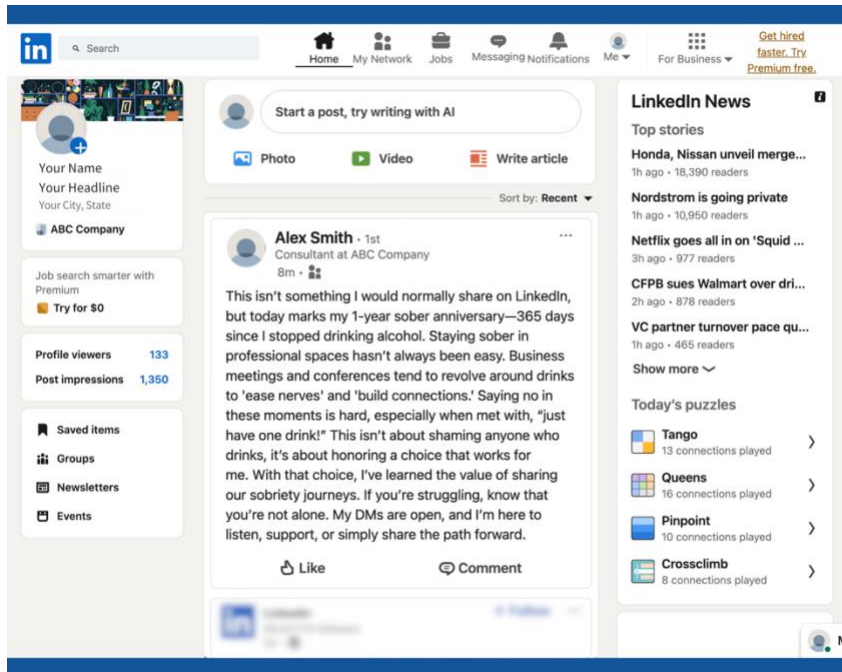


Figure C16

Integrating B + Decategorizing Vignette

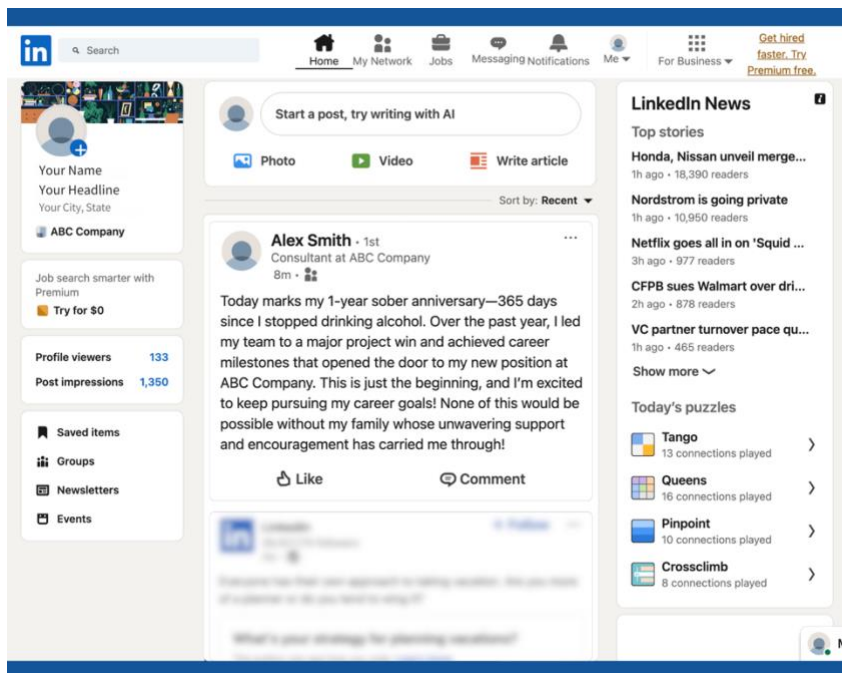


Figure C17

Integrating C + Assimilating A Vignette

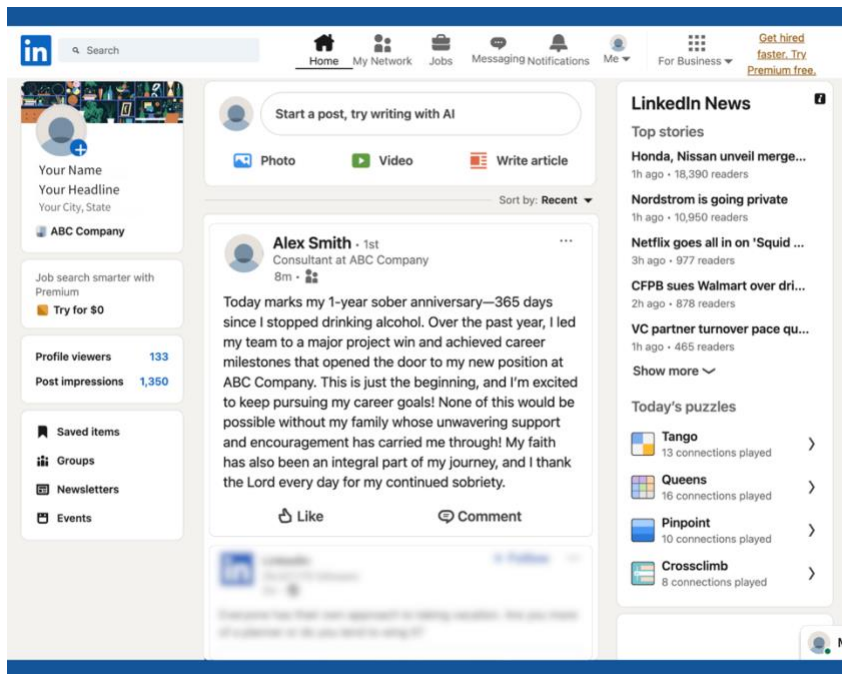


Figure C18

Integrating C + Assimilating B Vignette

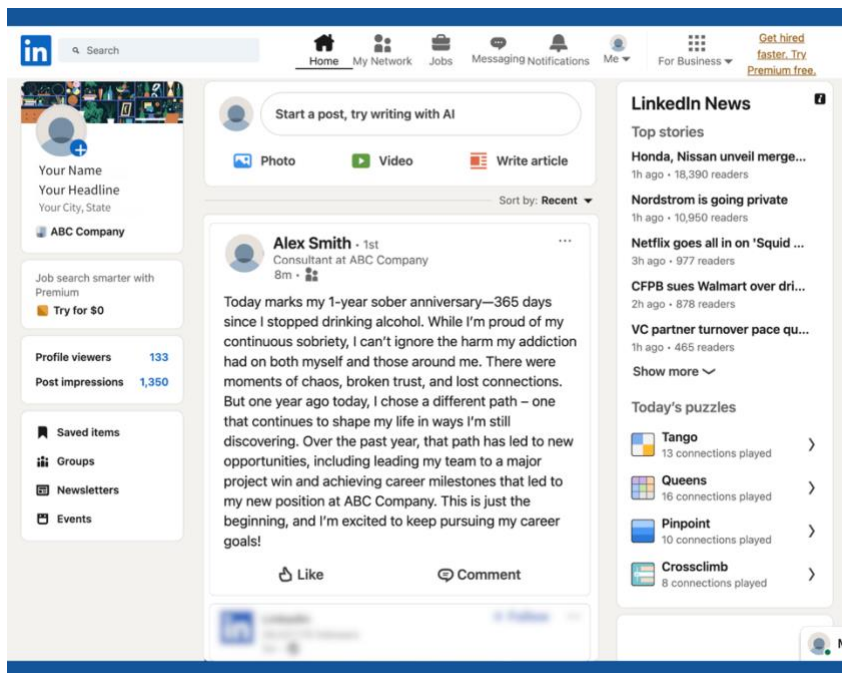


Figure C19

Integrating C + Confirming Vignette

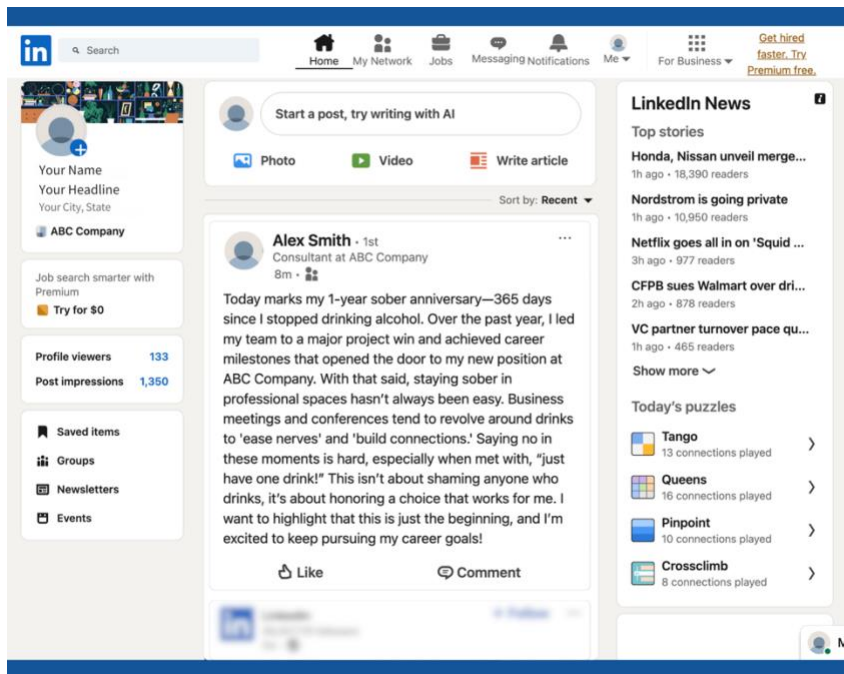


Figure C20

Integrating C + Decategorizing Vignette

Appendix D: Participant Demographics by Condition

	<i>N</i>								<i>%</i>							
	Cont	I	A	C	D	IA	IC	ID	Cont	I	A	C	D	IA	IC	ID
<i>N</i> by Condition.	44	40	42	44	41	44	44	40	13%	12%	12%	13%	12%	13%	13%	12%
% of Sample																
Gender																
Man	19	20	21	27	20	18	22	14	43%	50%	50%	61%	49%	41%	50%	35%
Woman	25	20	21	16	20	21	20	26	57%	50%	50%	36%	49%	48%	45%	65%
Non-binary	0	0	0	1	1	5	2	0	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	11%	5%	0%
Racial/ethnic identity																
Asian/Asian American	3	0	3	1	2	4	3	4	7%	0%	7%	2%	5%	9%	7%	10%
Black/Af. American	3	7	1	8	5	3	9	3	7%	18%	2%	18%	13%	7%	20%	8%
Latino/Hispanic	3	4	4	3	2	2	2	3	7%	10%	10%	7%	5%	5%	5%	8%
Nat. Am. or Nat. Alas.	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%
Nat. Haw./Oth. Pac. Is.	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%
White	32	25	28	29	27	32	24	25	73%	63%	67%	66%	68%	73%	55%	63%
Multiracial/ethnic	3	3	6	3	2	2	6	4	7%	8%	14%	7%	5%	5%	14%	10%
Diagnosed with SUD																
Yes	2	5	1	0	3	3	0	4	5%	13%	2%	0%	7%	7%	0%	10%
No	42	35	41	44	38	41	44	36	95%	88%	98%	100%	93%	93%	100%	90%
Problem w/ Substance Misuse																
Yes	1	6	2	1	1	4	3	5	2%	15%	5%	2%	2%	9%	7%	13%
No	42	34	38	41	39	39	40	33	95%	85%	90%	93%	95%	89%	91%	83%
Unsure	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	2%	0%	5%	5%	2%	2%	2%	5%
In Recovery																
Yes	2	5	2	0	1	3	0	5	5%	13%	5%	0%	2%	7%	0%	13%
No	42	35	40	44	40	41	44	35	95%	88%	95%	100%	98%	93%	100%	87%
Close with SUD																
Yes	13	18	11	8	16	9	14	16	30%	45%	26%	18%	39%	20%	32%	40%
No	31	22	31	36	25	35	30	24	70%	55%	74%	82%	61%	80%	68%	60%
Close in Recovery																
Yes	9	14	8	4	14	6	5	11	20%	35%	19%	9%	34%	14%	11%	28%
No	35	26	34	40	27	38	39	29	80%	65%	81%	91%	66%	86%	89%	73%
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>														
Age (in Years)	33.98	35.40	35.71	33.93	35.76	34.41	34.66	34.33	10.12	10.00	11.62	9.87	9.62	9.77	11.16	11.00
Tenure (in Years)	5.43	6.30	6.01	5.89	4.94	4.93	6.41	5.76	5.60	5.11	5.17	5.86	4.85	4.96	6.63	6.15

Days Work per Week	5.05	5.10	5.10	5.14	5.10	5.10	5.10	5.05	0.21	0.30	0.30	0.41	0.37	0.29	0.29	0.22
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Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. *N* = 339 except for racial/ethnic identity [*N* = 338], where one participant indicated “Prefer not to say.” Close with SUD and Close in Recovery represent a close connection with someone diagnosed with a SUD or someone in recovery, respectively. Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix E: Eligibility Survey

What is your age?

Do you currently live in the United States?

Yes

No

How would you rate your proficiency with reading the English language?

I do not know how to read English

A little proficient

Moderately proficient

Very proficient

I am a native English reader/speaker

Are you currently employed outside of Prolific?

Yes

No

Are you paid wages or a salary for your work (as opposed to being self-employed or paid in other ways)?

Yes

No

What is your work arrangement?

On-site

Hybrid (i.e., both on-site and remote)

Fully remote

How many years have you been working for your current employer/organization? If you have been with your current employer for less than 1 year, please answer 0.

On average, how many days per week do you work?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

On average, how many coworkers do you interact with during each of your workdays?

0-1

2-5

6-10

More than 10

Do you have a personal LinkedIn account?

Yes

No

Are you familiar with the LinkedIn Newsfeed feature (i.e., the section where you see updates, posts, and articles shared by your connections?)

Yes

No

When was the last time you scrolled your LinkedIn Newsfeed?

Within the last week

Within the last month

It's been several months

It's been more than 6 months but less than a year

It's been years

Appendix F: Latent Measures

Authentic Impressions (Adapted from Lynch & Rodell, 2018, which they adapted from Lee & Ashton, 2004 and Kernis & Goldman, 2006)

Instructions: Please rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

1. I see Alex Smith as being authentic in how they come across to others.
2. I see Alex Smith as presenting themselves to others as they truly are.
3. I see Alex Smith as being genuine in their interactions with others.
4. I see Alex Smith as coming across to others as who they really are.
5. I see Alex Smith as acting like a different person in different situations (R).
6. I see Alex Smith as willing to change themselves for others if the reward is desirable enough (R).

Archetypal Impressions (Adapted from Lynch & Rodell, 2018, which they adapted from Eisenberger et al., 2010)

Instructions: Please rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

1. Alex Smith is characteristic of the people at this organization.
2. Alex Smith is representative of the people at this organization.
3. Alex Smith is typical of the people at this organization.
4. Alex Smith is just like the people at this organization.
5. Alex Smith is similar to the people at this organization.

Boosterism (Adapted from Lynch & Rodell, 2018, which they adapted from Moorman & Blakely, 1995)

Instructions: Please rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

1. I would defend Alex Smith if others criticized them.
2. I would encourage others to see the positive qualities in Alex Smith.
3. I would show pride when talking about Alex Smith to others.
4. I would actively promote Alex Smith to others.

Ostracism (Adapted from Lynch & Rodell, 2018, which they adapted from Ferris et al., 2008)

Instructions: Please rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

1. I would ignore Alex Smith **at work**.
2. I would ignore Alex Smith **outside of work**.
3. I would avoid Alex Smith **at work**.
4. I would avoid Alex Smith **outside of work**.
5. I would refuse to talk to Alex Smith **at work**.
6. I would refuse to talk to Alex Smith **outside of work**.

Workplace Substance Use Norms (Frone & Brown, 2010)

Descriptive Norms

Instructions: Please indicate how often during the past 12 months the coworkers you typically interact or work with each day did each of the following.

Response Options: 0 (never), 1 (1-2 days), 2 (3-5 days), 3 (1-2 days a month), 4 (1-2 days a week), 5 (6-7 days a week)

1. Used alcohol before starting their work shift.
2. Used marijuana or other drugs before starting their work shift.
3. Used alcohol during the workday, including lunch and other breaks.
4. Used marijuana or other drugs during the workday, including lunch and other breaks.
5. Attended work high on or under the influence of alcohol.
6. Attended work high or under the influence of marijuana or other drugs.

Injunctive Norms

Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which your closest friend at work would approve or disapprove of the following behaviors.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disapprove) to 4 (strongly approve)

7. Drinking alcohol during the workday.
8. Using marijuana or other drugs during the workday.
9. Coming to work high or under the influence of alcohol.
10. Coming to work high or under the influence of marijuana or other drugs.

Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which your other coworkers would approve or disapprove of the following behaviors.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disapprove) to 4 (strongly approve)

11. Drinking alcohol during the workday.
12. Using marijuana or other drugs during the workday.
13. Coming to work under the influence of alcohol.

14. Coming to work high or under the influence of marijuana or other drugs.

Participant Substance Use (Adapted from Frone & Brown, 2010)

Instructions: Please indicate your substance use behaviors during the past 12 months, focusing on nonmedical use. Nonmedical use is defined as use without a prescription or medical marijuana card, or more frequent use or in greater quantity than prescribed.

Response Options: 0 (never), 1 (less than monthly), 2 (1-3 days per month), 3 (1-2 days per week), 4 (3-5 days per week), 5 (6-7 days per week)

1. How often did you drink alcohol during the past 12 months?
2. How often did you drink alcohol to intoxication over the past 12 months?
3. How often did you use marijuana or hashish for non-medical purposes during the past 12 months?
4. How often were you impaired by marijuana or hashish during the past 12 months?
5. How often did you use sedatives for non-medical purposes during the past 12 months?
6. How often did you use tranquilizers for non-medical purposes during the past 12 months?
7. How often were you impaired by sedatives during the past 12 months?
8. How often were you impaired by tranquilizers during the past 12 months?
9. How often did you use stimulants for non-medical purposes during the past 12 months?
10. How often were you impaired by stimulants during the past 12 months?
11. How often did you use analgesics for non-medical purposes during the past 12 months?
12. How often were you impaired by analgesics during the past 12 months?
13. How often did you use cocaine or crack during the past 12 months?
14. How often were you impaired by cocaine or crack during the past 12 months?

Deviance Proneness (Hong & Faedda, 1996; Jessor et al., 1991)

Instructions: Please rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

1. It's okay to bend the rules if you don't get caught.
2. Breaking the law is sometimes justified.
3. People should be allowed to do whatever they want as long as they don't hurt anyone.
4. It's not a problem if someone takes a small item from their workplace for personal use.
5. Lying is acceptable if it helps avoid serious trouble.
6. It's okay to ignore a rule if it doesn't make sense.
7. Cheating on a test is not a big deal if it helps you pass.
8. I get frustrated when I have to follow rules that I think are pointless.
9. I often feel like breaking rules just to see what will happen.
10. I believe most rules are made to be broken.
11. Rules make life unnecessarily complicated.
12. I feel confined by rules and regulations.

Neuroticism (Mini-International Personality Item [Mini-IPIP], Cooper et al., 2010)

Instructions: Please indicate how accurately each of the following statements describes you.

Response Options: 1 (very inaccurate) to 5 (very accurate)

1. I often feel blue.
2. I am often down in the dumps.
3. I have frequent mood swings.
4. I panic easily.

Appendix G: Demographic Items

Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply.

Asian or Asian American

Black or African American

Latino/Hispanic

Middle Eastern/North African or Arab Origin

Native American or Native Alaskan

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Native

White

A race/ethnicity not listed above: _____

Prefer not to say

Which of the following best describes you? Select all that apply.

Agender

Gender Queer / Fluid / Non-binary / Non-conforming

Man

Trans/Transgender

Two-spirit

Woman

A gender not listed above: _____

Prefer not to say

Have you been diagnosed with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?

Yes

No

Do you think you may have a problem with misusing alcohol and other drugs?

Yes

No

Unsure

Are you in recovery from a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?

Yes

No

Does someone you consider close to you have a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) or a problem with misusing alcohol or other drugs?

Yes

No

Is someone you consider close to you a person in recovery from a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?

Yes

No

Appendix H: Explanations for Adapted Scales

NOTE: Below I include the scales as used in Lynch and Rodell (2018). Additionally, I provide an explanation for how I adapted each scale for the purposes of the present study.

Authentic Impressions (Lynch & Rodell, 2018 as adapted from Lee & Ashton, 2004 and Kernis & Goldman, 2006)

Instructions: Please answer the following questions about your colleague, **(pipe text name of employee)**.

When I think about (NAME)'s actions over the **past four weeks**, I see (NAME) as...

1. Being authentic in how they come across to others
2. Presenting themselves to others as they truly are.
3. Being genuine in their interactions with others.
4. Coming across to others as who they truly are.
5. Acting like a different person in different situations (R).
6. Willing to change themselves for others if the reward is desirable enough (R).

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

My adaptation: I adapted this scale by changing the instructions to, "Rate your extent of agreement with the following statements." Further, because this is a hypothetical scenario and participants did not observe the LinkedIn user's actions over the past week, I could not ask questions specifically about actions. Instead, my items were worded to ask about perceptions. For example, "I see Alex Smith as being authentic in how they come across to others."

Archetypal Impressions (Lynch & Rodell, 2018 as adapted from Eisenberger et al., 2010)

Instructions: Please answer the following questions about your colleague, **(pipe text name of employee)**.

Over the past four weeks, **(pipe text name of employee)**, has been...

1. Characteristic of the people at this organization.
2. Representative of the people at this organization.
3. Typical of the people at this organization.
4. Just like the people at this organization.
5. Similar to the people at this organization.

Response Options: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

My adaptation: I adapted this scale by changing the instructions to, "Evaluate Alex Smith as if they are a member of your work organization." Further, because this is a hypothetical scenario and participants did not observe the LinkedIn user's actions over the past week, I could not ask questions specifically about actions. Instead, my items were worded to ask about perceptions.

For example, “Alex Smith is characteristic of the people at my organization.” I also adapted the item stem to end with “at my organization” instead of “at this organization” to emphasize that the participant should be considering the individual in the vignette as related to their specific workplace.

Boosterism (Lynch & Rodell, 2018 as adapted from Moorman & Blakely, 1995)

Instructions: Please indicate the extent you have intentionally engaged in the listed behaviors directed at your colleague, {Name}, over the past 4 weeks.

1. Defended {Name} if other employees criticize him/her.
2. Encouraged others to see the positive qualities of {Name}.
3. Defended {Name} when outsiders criticize him/her.
4. Showed pride when talking about {Name} to others.
5. Actively promoted {Name} to others.

Response Options: 1 (never) to 5 (always).

My adaptation: I adapted this scale by changing the instructions to, “Rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.” Further, I changed the item stem to “I would defend, encourage, etc. Alex Smith” to measure behavioral intentions as opposed to actions previously taken. Additionally, I changed the response scale from a frequency scale to an agreement scale to assess the likelihood that the participant believed they would engage in these behaviors. Finally, because items 1 and 3 were similar, I dropped item 3 to eliminate redundancy.

Ostracism (Lynch & Rodell, 2018 as adapted from Ferris et al., 2008)

Instructions: Please indicate the extent you have intentionally engaged in the listed behaviors directed at your colleague, {Name}, over the past 4 weeks.

1. Ignored {Name} at work.
2. Left the area when {Name} entered.
3. Allowed {Name}'s greetings to go unanswered at work.
4. Allowed {Name} to sit alone in a crowded lunchroom at work.
5. Avoided {Name} at work.
6. Shut {Name} out of the conversation.
7. Refused to talk to {Name} at work.

Response Options: 1 (never) to 5 (always).

My adaptation: I adapted this scale by changing the instructions to, “Rate your extent of agreement with the following statements.” Further, I changed the item stem to “I would ignore, refuse to talk to, etc. Alex Smith” to measure behavioral intentions as opposed to actions previously taken. Additionally, I changed the response scale from a frequency scale to an agreement scale to assess the likelihood that the participant believed they would engage in these behaviors. I also dropped items 2, 3, 4 and 6 because these were specific contextual examples

that may not relate to the participant and reduce the sense of realism. Based on my literature review which explored ostracism in relation to abstaining from after-work drinking, I duplicated and modified items 1, 5, and 7 by adding “outside of work” to the end of each item stem.