Supplementary Materials:

In Search of a Negativity Bias in Expectancy-Violation

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Supplementary Experiment S1

Experiments 1 and 2 reported in the main text suggest that positive and negative information produce equal expectancy-violations, regardless of the amount of target-specific information perceivers received about an individual. However, it is possible that participants in formed strong target-specific expectancies on the basis of what we considered a small amount of prior information. If this was the case, the lack of moderation by amount of information could simply be due to the fact that participants in the small amount of information condition used their target-specific expectancies as a reference of comparison for new information, rather than having to rely on their expectations regarding people in general. Supplementary Experiment S1 aimed to test this possibility by examining expectancy strength as a function of five versus twenty pieces of information.

Method. Participant recruitment followed the same procedures outlined in the main text. Of the 340 participants who initially began the study, 320 submitted requests for payment on MTurk. Five additional participants completed the study but did not submit for payment prior to the study's expiration. Thus, 325 participants completed all critical parts of the study and are included in the analyses (170 women, 152 men; $M_{age} = 37.32$, $SD_{age} = 12.00$; demographic data missing for 3 participants). Participants were randomly assigned to the four conditions of a 2 (Impression Valence: positive versus negative) × 2 (Amount of Information: small amount versus large amount) between-subjects design. Participants in the small amount condition received five statements about a target individual; participants in the large amount condition received 20 statements about a target individual. The valence of the statements was either positive or negative. In all conditions, each statement was presented below the targets picture for five seconds against a white background. Following the last statement, participants completed a

measure of expectancy strength which was comprised of 6 items presented in a random order (see Table 1).

Results. Participants' responses were coded such that higher numbers represent stronger positive expectancies. A composite score was then created by averaging responses to all six items (Cronbach's α = .98). Participants' composite expectancy score was then submitted to a 2 (Impression Valence: positive versus negative) × 2 (Amount of Information: small amount versus large amount) ANOVA. This analysis revealed a significant main effect of Impression Valence $F(1, 322) = 2281.16$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .88$. This main effect suggests that participants reported more positive expectancies after receiving positive information about the target ($M = 6.20$, $SD = 0.94$) than after receiving negative information about the target ($M = 1.57$, $SD = 0.82$). However, this main effect was not qualified by Amount of Information, $F(1, 322) = 1.68$, $p = .20$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, suggesting that participants formed equally strong expectancies after receiving either five or twenty pieces of information.

Supplementary Experiment S2

The results of Supplementary Experiment S1 suggest that participants formed equally strong expectancies on the basis of five and twenty pieces of information. Thus, it is possible that participants in both Prior Information conditions relied on their target-specific expectancies as a reference for evaluating new information. To rule out this possibility, we increased the discrepancy between the small and large amount of information conditions, such that participants in the small amount of information condition formed weaker target-specific expectancies. Supplementary Experiment S2 investigated whether a single piece of information leads to weaker expectancies than 20 pieces of target-specific information.

Method. Participant recruitment followed the same procedures outlined in the main text. Of the 338 participants who initially began the study, 320 submitted requests for payment on MTurk. Three additional participants completed the study but did not submit for payment prior to the study's expiration. Thus, 323 participants completed all critical parts of the study and are included in the analyses (180 women, 140 men; M_{age} = 36.14, SD_{age} = 11.55; demographic data missing for 3 participants). As in Supplementary Experiment S1, participants were randomly assigned to the four conditions of a 2 (Impression Valence: positive versus negative) × 2 (Amount of Information: small amount versus large amount) between-subjects design. The methods were identical to those in Supplementary Experiment S1, except that participants in the small amount of information condition received only a single piece of information.

Results. As in Supplementary Experiment S1, participants' responses were recoded such that higher numbers represented stronger positive expectancies and were averaged to form a single composite score (Cronbach's α = .97). This composite score was then submitted to a 2 (Impression Valence: positive versus negative) × 2 (Amount of Information: small amount versus large amount) ANOVA. The analysis revealed a significant main effect of Impression Valence $F(1, 319)$ = 625.32, p < .001, η_p^2 = .66, which was qualified by a significant interaction with Amount of Information, $F(1, 319)$ = 165.32, p < .001, η_p^2 = .34. To decompose this interaction, separate t-tests comparing the effect of Amount of Information at each level of Impression Valence. These comparisons revealed that participants formed stronger valence-congruent expectancies in both the positive condition, $t(155)$ = -7.95, p < .001, Hedges' g = 1.27, and in the negative condition, $t(164)$ = 10.69, p < .001, Hedges' g = -1.66.

Table 1

Items assessing expectancy strength, Supplementary Experiments 1 and 2

Item	Scale
1. How likely do you think it is that Bob will behave positively in the future?	1 (Extremely unlikely) to 7 (Extremely likely)
2. How likely do you think it is that Bob will behave negatively in the future?*	1 (Extremely unlikely) to 7 (Extremely likely)
3. How confident are you that Bob will behave positively in the future?	1 (Not at all confident) to 7 (Very confident)
4. How confident are you that Bob will behave negatively in the future?*	1 (Not at all confident) to 7 (Very confident)
5. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "I expect Bob to behave positively in the future."	1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree)
6. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "I expect Bob to behave negatively in the future."*	1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree)

Note. "*" indicates reverse scored item.