

Abstract

Newcomers' socialization is one of the most essential issues for employees. Based on cognitive information-processing theory, the study tests a longitudinal model, which examines how leaders' initial impressions of newcomers' competence and ingratiation influence leader-member exchange (LMX) and the development of LMX during the first four months after employees entering organizations. Using 159 leader-newcomer dyads over four-time points, the results showed that at the early stage, leaders' perceived newcomers' competence was positively associated with LMX while leaders' perceived newcomers' ingratiation was negatively associated with LMX. Over time, leaders' self-enhancement tendency strengthened the positive relationship between leaders' perceived newcomers' competence and the change of LMX (e.g., trajectory), as well as weakened the negative relationship between leaders' perceived newcomers' ingratiation and the change of LMX. In addition, controlling for initial LMX, LMX trajectory had positive impact on newcomers' outcomes, including task performance, mentoring, and promotability. Theoretical contributions and future research directions are discussed.