# EFFECTS OF FEEDBACK SEEKING BEHAVIOR ON SUPERVISOR PERCEPTIONS: EXAMINING THE INTERACTION OF SEEKING FREQUENCY WITH SUPERVISOR IMPLICIT PERSON THEORY AND FEEDBACK ORIENTATION

by

**Jacob Schneider**

**A Thesis**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University*

*In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of*

**Master of Science**


Department of Psychology at IUPUI

Indianapolis, Indiana

May 2024

**THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL**

**STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

**Dr. Jane Williams, Chair**

Department of Psychology

**Dr. Margaret Stockdale**

Department of Psychology

**Dr. Veronica Derricks**

Department of Psychology

**Approved by:**

Dr. Stephen L. Boehm

*Dedicated to Alyssa, Mom, and Dad*

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank Dr. Jane Williams for her tremendous support, encouragement, and patience throughout my graduate school journey and through the completion of this project. I am forever grateful for the knowledge, advice, and feedback Dr. Williams has shared through the last few years. I am also grateful to Dr. Peggy Stockdale for her support as a committee member and for being an exceptional professor from whom I learned so much in the classroom and on the lab team. I would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Veronica Derricks for being willing to contribute her expertise to the committee and helping to drive this project to the finish line. I would also like to thank Dr. Christopher Porter for his support as a committee member in the early shaping of this project and for all the valuable advice and knowledge imparted through my graduate school experience. Finally, I would like to thank my fellow graduate students, my friends, and my family for all the advice, support, and motivation to help me complete this project.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF FIGURES

# ABSTRACT

Feedback seeking is an essential process for employees to improve performance and clarify expectations (Renn & Fedor, 2001; Ashford & Tsui, 199). Certain factors such as ego and image defense limit feedback seeking in the workplace due to avoidance of negative outcomes (Ashford & Cummings, 1983), however we know less about whether feedback seeking does lead to actual negative outcomes for the employee (Ashford, De Stobbeleir, & Nujella, 2016). The current study examines the existence of actual costs to the seeker for seeking more frequently and adds to the literature by examining whether supervisor individual differences are related to perceptions of seeking behavior, namely implicit person theory and feedback orientation. With a sample of 275 adult supervisors recruited from Mturk, the current study measured participants on these individual differences and assessed perceptions of a fictional employee who either sought feedback with high or low frequency. The employee was rated on a selection of performance potential outcomes related to promotability, expectations of future performance, willingness to mentor, and candidacy for career development opportunities. Findings suggest there is a cost associated with seeking feedback at a higher frequency which manifests as a decrease in perceptions of confidence in the employee. Additionally, this perception of lower confidence from seeking feedback could contribute to more significant downstream outcomes such as expectations of lower quality performance and lower likelihood of being promoted. By understanding more about individuals' perceptions of feedback seeking behavior, we may train supervisors how to be more receptive of different feedback seeking behavior. This could assist in fostering a performance improvement environment that ultimately improves organizational performance.

# INTRODUCTION

The desire for feedback fuels individuals to seek information on how they are performing a task, whether it be a class project, performance improvement at work, or simply improving a golf swing. And for good reason – seeking feedback has long been believed to improve performance (Payne & Hauty, 1955). Feedback is especially important for performance at work, where employees receive formal and informal assessments from many sources, including supervisors, peers and themselves (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979). Seeking feedback assists employees in their development and completion of goals (Renn & Fedor, 2001), which is a significant driver of performance. Research suggests when employees specifically seek criticism rather than affirmation, they receive a more accurate assessment of how others perceive their performance (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Individuals inherently desire feedback, but when they perceive costs related to seeking, they limit seeking behavior (Levy, Albright, Cawley, & Williams, 1995). Limited feedback seeking could result in lower performance for employees, which could in turn hurt individual and organizational outcomes.

Research on feedback seeking behavior has led to the identification of multiple motives that impact individuals' likelihood of seeking feedback. In short, depending upon the cost and/or value of feedback, different motives will be initiated. While individuals perceive there are costs to seeking, there is less work on how the feedback source perceives those who seek and whether these perceptions lead to negative outcomes (Ashford et al., 2016).

## Feedback Seeking Behavior

Conceptually, the act of seeking feedback can be defined as "conscious devotion of effort toward determining correctness and adequacy of behavior for attaining valued end states" (Ashford, 1986, p. 466). Feedback seeking behavior (FSB) is important to organizational processes due to its positive relationship with performance (Chapanis, 1964; Renn & Fedor, 2001). Ashford and Cummings' (1983) seminal work affirmed the importance of FSB as an organizational resource that provides employees with knowledge on how to improve their performance. To accomplish improvement, employees seek feedback to clarify responsibilities

and assess their own behavior (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Feedback seeking behavior can be directed towards multiple sources, including supervisors, peers and oneself (Ilgen, et al., 1979).

The method by which individuals seek this performance improvement knowledge can differ depending on the situation. FSB usually manifests in one of two ways: inquiry and monitoring. Inquiry feedback seeking requires a verbal request for information from a source, whereas monitoring feedback seeking requires observing information from the environment and making an inference about its meaning (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Seeking through inquiry is the more observable behavior given monitoring occurs with more subtlety as to avoid attention on the behavior. Research has examined both methods of feedback seeking as an outcome and has found differing results (e.g. Roberson, Deitch, Brief, & Block, 2003; Fedor, Rensvold, & Adams, 1992). A recent meta-analysis by Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, & Sackett (2015) concluded that although inquiry and monitoring are highly correlated, the two methods are unique, and inquiry specifically is the only method related to job performance. For this reason, the current study focused on the inquiry method of seeking. The seeking method in which individuals choose to engage is influenced by a variety of factors, including motives and perceived cost and value of seeking.

**Motives of Feedback Seeking Behavior**

Researchers have identified three motives associated with seeking behavior that are prevalent in the literature: instrumental, ego-defense and enhancement, and image defense and enhancement (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). The instrumental motive involves seeking information that will assist in accomplishing goals and understanding a new environment (Ashford, 1986; Morrison, 1993). In their review, Ashford, Blatt and VandeWalle (2003) mention that given the status of organizations as entities that reward and punish certain behaviors, obtaining information on their behavior and performance is critical for success. The instrumental motive drives employees to obtain specific, diagnostic feedback on how to perform. Empirical evidence supports this notion by showing that individuals who perceive feedback as having high diagnostic value will be more likely to increase their feedback seeking (Morrison & Cummings, 1992; Tuckey, Brewer, & Williamson, 2002). The comparison of perceived value and cost of seeking feedback is a significant determinant of whether individuals seek feedback (VandeWalle, Ganesan, Challagalla, & Brown, 2000). These varying perceptions can create

significant variance in the method and frequency of feedback seeking (e.g., Roberson et al., 2003; Levy et al., 1995; Holder, 1996).

Ego-defense and enhancement emerge as motives to protect self-views, especially when feedback could directly affect the ego (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). This motive can be fulfilled as an enhancement of ego when feedback is expected to be positive, motivating the individual to seek. Conversely, to avoid negative effects on the ego, individuals will avoid seeking altogether (Ashford & Cummings, 1983) or even ignore the feedback by discounting its value (Mussweiler, Gabriel, & Bodenhausen, 2000). In support of this, Northcraft and Ashford (1990) found that individuals who expected negative feedback about their low performance sought less feedback than those who had positive expectations about their performance. Individuals who perceive themselves as low performers may desire diagnostic feedback to fulfill their instrumental motive and improve their performance but may ultimately avoid seeking to protect their own self-image.

Individuals may also fear that feedback requests resulting in negative feedback will make them appear in a bad light due to the public nature of inquiry seeking (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). This image defense and enhancement is a powerful motivator for seekers, with research showing a decline in inquiry seeking when individuals attempt to suppress negative perceptions of their image (Tuckey, Brewer & Williamson, 2002). Image protection is a powerful motivator in a social setting such as a workplace. Ashford (1986) noted that as organizational tenure increased, feedback seeking decreased, which she viewed as evidence of a concern for one's image. Employees with more experience may need less feedback but may also be hesitant to seek feedback for fear of risking their image of credibility in the organization. Given the more public nature of direct inquiry compared to monitoring, Ashford and Northcroft (1992) showed that individuals revert to monitoring, the more discreet method of seeking, when they perceive high costs to seeking directly. Levy and colleagues (1995) further validated that the decision to seek may be influenced by the publicity of the seeking context, with individuals adjusting their seeking behavior to seek less in more public scenarios. This could be due to avoiding a cost to their image.

Holder (1996) specifically found that perceptions of social costs in organizational newcomers influenced direct and indirect seeking such that as perceived social costs increased, indirect seeking increased and direct seeking decreased. Williams, Miller, Steelman, and Levy

(1999) extended the framework presented by Levy and colleagues (1995) by examining the publicity context and its effect on the frequency of feedback. They found that direct feedback seeking became more frequent in situations where feedback sources were supportive and peers reacted positively to the seeking behavior (Williams et al., 1999). Similarly, the cost associated with experiences of stereotype threat, another type of perceived image cost, was found to positively predict monitoring (Roberson et al., 2003). In general, it seems the image-based motive has a significant effect on the frequency and method with which individuals seek.

Ultimately, individuals face dilemmas when making decisions about seeking when balancing each of these motives (Ashford et al., 2016). The evidence suggests that the desire to obtain diagnostic information competes with the desire to protect and enhance one's ego and image. Feedback seeking to guide performance is a value of feedback, however perceptions of seeking costs have been shown to create significant variance in the method and frequency of feedback (Roberson et al., 2003; Levy et al., 1995). What we know less about is whether these perceptions of costs and value become tangible cost and value when individuals seek. In other words, do others think more negatively about individuals who seek feedback? Are the social costs real?

Ashford and Northcraft (1992) explored this concept of actual cost to the seeker and found evidence that FSB does affect how supervisors view their employees. Specifically, for high performers who sought feedback instead of seeking information, supervisors generally had a more positive view of the employee in terms of characteristics and potential. Average performers were viewed more negatively for seeking feedback when compared to high performers. According to these results, average performing employees who desire to improve their work performance and seek higher amounts of feedback could face more negative evaluations from their supervisor. One possibility to explain this outcome is that certain feedback sources perceive motives behind the behavior and create the cost for the seeker by forming a more negative perception or evaluation of them. Similar to how feedback seekers have motives that predict seeking behavior, the perceived motive for the seeking behavior could be predictive of the reactions and opinions formed after a supervisor observes the behavior.

Lam, Huang, and Snape (2007) explored if perceptions of the intent behind seeking affected the quality of the supervisor-employee relationship by examining leader-member exchange (LMX). In their study, LMX quality increased when supervisors interpreted the

seeking as a means of performance enhancement, whereas LMX quality decreased when supervisors interpreted the seeking as a way for the employee to manage impressions rather than improve performance. These results highlight another potential cost for the seeker, in this instance stemming from perceptions of their seeking behavior. The source may think the seeker is inquiring to help their image, when in reality, the seeker's only intent is to receive performance-related information.

These results from previous research beg the question: are there different types of supervisors who would be more likely to attribute certain motives behind seeking behavior? Supervisors are an important feedback source to examine considering the amount of influence they hold over employees' standing and outlook in an organization (London, 2015). Understanding supervisor characteristics that may predict these negative outcomes from seeking behavior is a critical next step in the research. The focus of the current study is on furthering our understanding of what actual costs emerge from these perceptions of feedback seeking and on which individual differences may be most predictive of these downstream consequences.

## Implicit Person Theory and Goal Orientation

Implicit person theory (IPT) is an individual difference variable that refers to the belief individuals hold about the malleability of human attributes and traits. Dweck (1986) originally studied IPT of children and examined how it shaped the goals they set for themselves and the level at which they performed. She identified two main sets of beliefs: entity and incremental. Entity theorists believe that individuals have a fixed set of attributes that do not fluctuate and are considered low in IPT. Incremental theorists believe that individuals have malleable attributes that can change over time and are considered high in IPT. In this sense, a theorist is not one who theorizes but rather is an indication of a personal theory one holds that has been developed. IPT influences individuals from the subconscious without awareness of its effect on their attitudes and behaviors. Thus, IPT has broad implications as a significant factor in how individuals interpret social situations, judge others, and behave (Chiu, Hon, & Dweck, 1997; Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995).

Drawing from the same original work of Dweck (1986), goal orientation has been developed as a similar construct to IPT with regard to the goals individuals hold about achievement (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Two independent conceptualizations of goal

orientation exist as separate constructs: learning goal orientation and performance goal orientation (Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996; VandeWalle, 1996). A learning goal orientation involves working toward mastery and competence by learning new skills, whereas a performance goal orientation represents a desire to seek out positive assessments and avoid negative assessments to validate behavior (Dweck, 1999). A learning goal orientation is more aligned with an incremental theorist given the endorsement of malleable attributes that may improve through effort. Entity theorists align with performance goal orientation and tend to focus on seeking out positive judgments about their attributes since their belief is that attributes cannot be changed to a great degree.

Goal orientation has been linked to the perceived cost and value of feedback and the behavior itself across many studies. VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) presented a model of goal orientation and feedback seeking supported with research, that individual's goal orientation predicted the perceived cost and value of feedback and subsequent seeking behavior. In this paper and other studies, learning goal orientation was positively correlated with perceived value of feedback seeking (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al, 2000; Park, Schmidt, Scheu, & DeShon, 2007) and lower perceptions of cost (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al, 2000). Additionally, learning goal orientation predicts higher levels of subsequent feedback seeking behavior (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Conversely, performance goal orientation predicts higher cost perceptions and lower value perceptions (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; Vandewalle et al., 2000). Performance avoid goal orientation, which is characterized by high concern for avoiding negative evaluation, was shown to predict lower levels of feedback seeking behavior (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997).

Building on these findings, more recent studies have expanded to examine how the behavior itself is affected by goal orientation and perceived costs. Park and colleagues (2007) found that a learning goal orientation led to a preference for diagnostic and normative feedback, whereas a performance-avoid orientation led to preference for validating feedback or none at all. These outcomes were mediated by perceptions of cost and value of the feedback. Performance goal orientation also related to increased monitoring through an increase in cost perceptions (Teunissen et al., 2009). Learning goal orientation was positively related to both inquiry and monitoring (Teunissen et al., 2009; Cho, 2013), consistent with the notion that individuals with a high learning goal orientation have a strong desire for feedback to improve their skills and

attributes. The evidence suggests that the image-defense motive may be stronger in performance goal-oriented individuals compared to those with a learning goal orientation, as they perceived more costs to seeking and revert to subtle seeking methods. Given the similarities of IPT and goal orientation, we are likely to see a similar pattern of results for IPT, with entity theorists perceiving higher costs and protecting their image with their seeking choices and incremental theorists perceiving more value and fewer costs with seeking.

Related to the current study, researchers have begun to theorize and examine how supervisor IPT may predict how they perceive and engage with others. Empirically, IPT has been shown to predict how supervisors evaluate subordinate performance, with incremental theorists identifying both high and poor performance more accurately (Heslin, Latham, & VandeWalle, 2005). Additionally, inducing an incremental approach on entity theorists led to a change in perceptions of poorly performing employees. Supervisor IPT has been shown to predict subordinate perceptions of procedural justice in formal performance appraisals (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2009). Specifically, supervisors who were more incremental were perceived as more procedurally fair, further solidifying that supervisor IPT may impact subordinate outcomes. The evidence from these studies suggests that entity and incremental theorist supervisors perceive and evaluate employees differently.

Although implicit person theory has not been linked to cost and value perceptions of subordinate feedback seeking, the similarity between goal orientation and implicit person theory suggests that incremental and entity theorists may exhibit the same relationships with cost and value perceptions as learning and performance goal-oriented individuals, respectively. Thus, it is reasonable to consider that in certain situations, incremental theorists may exhibit increased levels of feedback seeking or feel less inhibition to seek compared to entity theorists. Devloo, Anseel, and Beuckelear (2011) found that IPT moderated the relationship between person-environment fit and feedback seeking behavior, such that incremental theorists sought greater amounts of feedback when demands exceeded abilities. This further supports the notion that IPT may predict feedback seeking behavior.

We know that the costs perceived by employees affect the frequency of seeking (Williams et al., 1999; Ashford et al., 2003). Within a feedback context, research has shown IPT to predict the quality of feedback given (Heyman & Dweck, 1998), with incremental theorists providing higher quality feedback. Incremental theorists are also more open to seeking feedback from

subordinates than entity theorists (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2005), an effect that was mediated by perceived cost and value. This evidence suggests that IPT may help explain why feedback processes vary between supervisors.

In the feedback literature, observers of feedback link feedback seeking with an enhanced view of personal characteristics and potential in the organization when an individual has a more positive past performance record (Ashford & Northcroft, 1992). Incremental supervisors may observe feedback seeking behavior as positive if their belief is that their performance can improve. Incremental supervisors, who are more likely to seek themselves (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2005) may view feedback seeking more positively as a pursuit of improvement. As such, they may view employees with an increased FSB frequency more positively, relative to entity supervisors.

Individuals adjust their seeking to protect their image and ego, but we do not know if a real threat to their image and ego exists in how they are perceived by their supervisor. The model presented by VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) suggested that goal orientation influences perceptions of seeking, which in turn affects the behavior itself. The inverse presents a model to follow for examining how supervisors may perceive subordinates who seek feedback. We propose that individual differences of the supervisor, such as IPT, affect perceptions of the employee (e.g. the seeker), just as individual differences of individuals have been shown to impact perceptions of the cost or value of FSB to their image (VandeWalle and Cummings, 1997).

Given past research findings that IPT predicts supervisors' evaluations of employee behavior and their own feedback seeking behavior, supervisor IPT may also predict how they perceive others seeking. If IPT differentially affects perceptions of employees, the findings of the current study could potentially contrast with the notion that the perceived costs influencing feedback seeking behavior are actualized costs. Given the relationship between goal orientation and perceived costs and value of seeking, implicit person theory is likely to exhibit the same pattern. Therefore, incremental and entity supervisors are likely to perceive the seeking behavior of individuals differently.

Only one study has examined IPT in the context of perceptions of feedback seeking behavior. de Stobbeleir, Ashford, and Luque (2010) explored the relationship between manager IPT, feedback frequency and evaluations of employees. The researchers adapted the vignette

approach of Ashford and Northcroft (1992) and manipulated performance history, but also manipulated feedback frequency of a fictional subordinate to be either frequent or infrequent. The results of de Stobbeleir and colleagues' (2010) study indicated that the interaction of feedback seeking frequency and performance history did not significantly predict perceptions of the seeking motive. IPT did not significantly predict perceptions of the seeking motive. However, there was a significant interaction between IPT and feedback seeking frequency such that the more entity oriented the manager was, the more they perceived an impression management motive for frequent seekers only. Incremental theorists did not rate frequent and infrequent differently on seeking motives. Perceptions of impression management motives were also found to mediate the relationship between the interaction effect of IPT and frequency and the confidence and competence ratings of employees. This result suggests that entity theorists may assign costs to employees through perceptions of their motive and subsequent evaluations.

While de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010) found interesting results with regard to entity theorists, there are a few noted limitations which can guide future research. The effect sizes found were not robust and many of the hypotheses regarding the motive attributions mediator were not supported, indicating a need to reassess the theoretical reasoning and attempt to replicate findings. While the motive perceptions, confidence and competence are all relevant costs, there could be other costs to explore associated with image, such as candidacy for career development, promotability in the organization, expectations for future performance and willingness to mentor. IPT may be more effective in predicting these types of outcomes given its link to evaluating performance (Heslin, Latham, & VandeWalle, 2005). In addition to IPT, other individual differences may also be effective in understanding how feedback seeking behavior predicts impressions and evaluations of the seeker. One such construct is feedback orientation.

## Feedback Orientation

Feedback orientation is a construct that assesses how receptive an individual is to the overall idea of feedback and may influence how individuals interpret and respond to others' feedback seeking. London and Smither (2002) defined feedback orientation as an "individual's overall receptivity to feedback, including comfort with feedback, tendency to seek feedback and process it mindfully, and the likelihood of acting on the feedback to guide behavior change and performance improvement (p. 82)." Feedback orientation is composed of several dimensions

adapted from London and Smither's (2002) original work: defensiveness, utility, accountability, social awareness, and feedback self-efficacy (Linderbaum & Levy, 2010). Defensiveness refers to how an individual may be inclined to react to feedback negatively and represents the affective nature of feedback. Utility refers to individuals' belief that feedback assists in achieving goals. Accountability is defined as the obligation one feels to act on feedback. Social awareness refers to how individuals use feedback to satisfy the views of others. Feedback self-efficacy is the competence one feels to interpret feedback and respond appropriately.

Empirical evidence suggests feedback orientation is indirectly linked to supervisor ratings of LMX and performance ratings (Dahling, Chau, O'Malley, 2012). Gregory and Levy (2012) found that employee feedback orientation predicts the quality of coaching relationship that individuals share with their supervisor. Feedback orientation of the supervisor is an important factor in the development of the feedback environment (Gabriel et al., 2014), functioning as a moderator between the feedback environment and outcomes such as employee competency and self-determination. Managers high in feedback orientation have also been found to be rated as better coaches (Steelman & Wolfeld, 2018), suggesting a relationship between manager feedback orientation and perceived coaching effectiveness.

Feedback orientation has generally been viewed as an indicator of an individual's feeling about feedback for themselves. Feedback orientation has a positive relationship with feedback inquiry and with how thoroughly feedback is processed and acted upon (Anseel et al., 2015; London & Smither, 2002; Dahling et al., 2012). However, it is also possible that feedback orientation could be an indicator of how the individual interprets the feedback behavior of others. Examining the dimensions of feedback orientation, the social awareness aspect of feedback orientation could indicate a social aspect that involves considering the FSB of others in comparison to the self (Linderbaum & Levy, 2010). Although social awareness is conceptualized as an awareness of how others view oneself, the process requires attending to the behavior of others, which could lead to the development of perceptions of others based on their behavior. Additionally, if individuals feel a lower utility of feedback for themselves, they may also hold the same attitude about the feedback seeking behavior of others. Although feedback orientation and perceived value and cost of feedback have not been measured together in a study, it seems reasonable to conclude that high FO individuals likely see more value and less cost in feedback seeking whereas low FO individuals likely see the opposite. Thus, feedback orientation may

predict similar outcomes as IPT, where low FO individuals assign a greater cost through evaluations of performance potential due to their own beliefs about value and cost of feedback.

Relevant to the current study, a supervisor with a high feedback orientation may perceive those who seek feedback more positively, even if they seek frequently. In contrast, a supervisor with low feedback orientation may view increased seeking frequency as more uncomfortable and view the employee more negatively in comparison to a low frequency seeker. Given the evidence that the feedback orientation construct involves processing feedback and acting on feedback behaviors, we predict that a supervisor's feedback orientation will have a relationship with evaluations of employees who seek varying amounts feedback.

## Employee Performance Potential

Although there may be many important outcomes of perceptions of feedback seeking, we are interested in those that could directly affect the employee in the form of negative evaluations. Previous research has examined confidence, competence, assessment of ability to perform, and potential for advancement as outcomes (Ashford and Northcroft, 1992; Lam et al., 2007; de Stobbeleir et al., 2010). Expanding on these outcome measures to examine other variables that may represent an actualized cost to an employee's image is important to understanding the consequences of seeking behavior.

Additional constructs of interest include candidacy for career development, willingness to mentor the employee, and promotability. Particularly given that supervisors have power over an employee's outlook within the organization (London, 2015), we expect promotability of the subordinate could be affected by the interaction of IPT and FO, respectively, with feedback seeking frequency. Since individuals who differ on IPT and FO may tend to seek differently, they may not see similarities in competence between themselves and the employees, which may limit their willingness to take them on as a mentee (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008). Being passed up on mentorship because of feedback seeking propensity is a definite cost to the employee, as having a mentor has been linked to promotions (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008). Evaluations of future performance may also be affected given the established relationship between performance and feedback seeking (Renn & Fedor, 2001).

Assessments of the employee's candidacy for career development may also be affected by the negative perceptions. Individuals who seek more frequently could be passed up on

developing themselves professionally depending on their manager. Many of these outcomes are related to general assessments that can be made about an employee at work without a formal appraisal. We expect these outcomes to be highly correlated and grouped together as an assessment of overall performance potential of the employee as seen by the supervisor.

## Attributed Motives

Motive attributions were a potential mediator between FSB and employee evaluations of confidence explored by Lam and colleagues (2007) and de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010). This concept is rooted in the theory of differing motives for FSB as introduced by Ashford and Cummings (1983). Although de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010) found that entity theorists thought frequent seekers were managing their impression rather than enhancing performance, the study did not produce significant mediation results between FSB and confidence and competence outcome measures. The relationship between FSB, IPT and attributed motives were examined in the current study with a different set of outcomes. Regarding feedback orientation, image management is perhaps a less favorable motive for FSB for a supervisor who values the utility and accountability aspects of feedback seeking, which are evident in the feedback orientation construct. Alternatively, performance enhancement motives could be seen as positive to a supervisor who is highly feedback oriented. Differing attributions for the behavior may then influence the evaluation of an employee who exhibits behavior that does not align with their view of feedback. This relationship was tested in the current study as an explanation for why supervisors who differ in their implicit person theory and feedback orientation may evaluate employees' performance potential either more or less critically.

## Hypotheses

The work by de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010) suggested an interaction of IPT and feedback seeking on their feedback-related outcomes, albeit only for entity theorists in that study. In the context of the current study, the evaluation of performance potential was the intended outcome. Incremental managers will likely interpret higher frequency seeking as an attempt to continue learning and growing in a role and in expertise, which will be viewed as a positive for performance. The work by Heslin and VandeWalle (2009) support the notion that

entity theorists will likely view a behavior such as feedback seeking as a futile attempt to improve capabilities that are fixed, or even an attempt to enhance their image (Lam et al., 2007; de Stobbeleir et al., 2010). Thus, entity theorists may evaluate frequent seekers more negatively compared to infrequent seekers. See Figure 1 for the hypothesized moderation model.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant interaction between the feedback seeking condition and IPT on the employee outcomes. Specifically, we expect the relationship between IPT and the performance potential outcomes to be positive and higher in the high frequency seeking condition compared to the low frequency seeking condition.

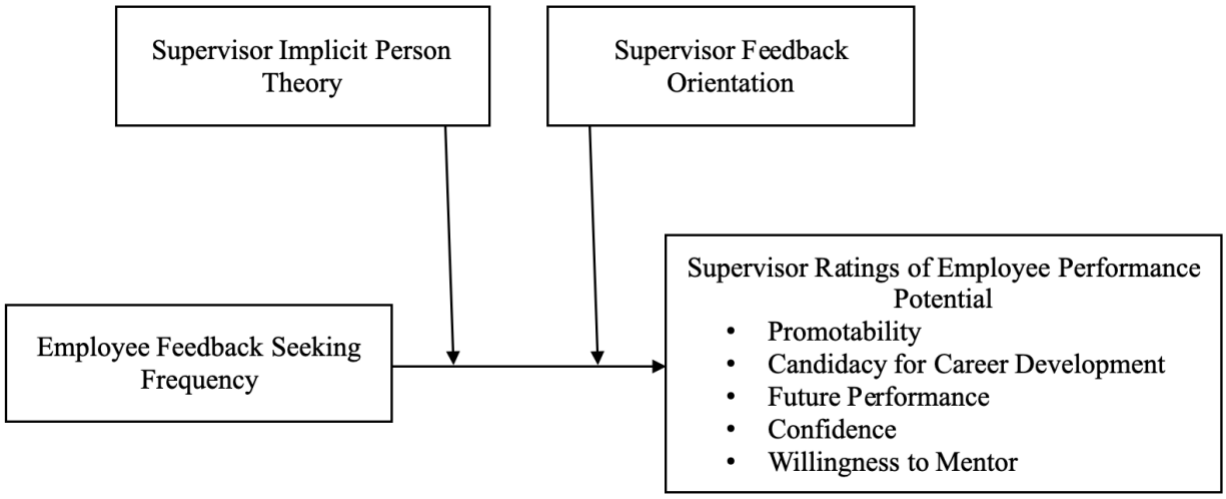


Figure 1. Hypothesized moderation model.

We expect feedback orientation to affect evaluations of performance potential in a similar way to IPT, albeit for a different reason. The mechanism for IPT and evaluation of performance potential image involves beliefs about individuals and an evaluation of how the observed feedback frequency aligns with those beliefs. The mechanism for feedback orientation is more affective and related to feelings and comfort level with the amount of feedback in the given scenario. Individuals low in feedback orientation may be more likely to view frequent seeking as more uncomfortable and costly to the seeker than infrequent seeking, resulting in a more negative evaluation of the employee. Individuals high in feedback orientation would likely

indicate a higher comfort level with feedback, suggesting a more positive view of frequent seekers compared to infrequent seekers.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant interaction between the feedback seeking condition and FO on the employee outcomes. Specifically, we expect the relationship between FO and the performance potential outcomes to be positive and higher in the high frequency seeking condition compared to the low frequency seeking condition.

# METHODS

## Participants

The current study utilized a sample of 300 participants recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk using CloudResearch, formerly TurkPrime. Participants were at least 18 years of age and resided in the United States. Participants were compensated $1.50 for their participation. Participants were required to be employed at least part-time in a supervisor role outside of their work on Mechanical Turk. The study stimulus materials requested that the participant put themselves in the role of a supervisor, which was intended to be an easier mental process if the participants are currently in a supervisor position. Recruiting participants who are supervisors also increases the chance that the participants have encountered similar situations before, which could allow for a more accurate recording of the actions they might take in similar situations. Past studies that have used a similar design approach to the current study (e.g. de Stobbeleir et al., 2010) have recruited samples of current or former MBA students, who are likely previously or currently employed as leaders in organizations. Their sample would thus be similar to the current study.

Participants who failed the manipulation check or failed both attention check items were removed from the analysis (N = 25). This resulted in a final sample of 275 participants that was 41% female, 77% White, 8% East Asian, 6% Black/African American, 5% Hispanic, and had an average of 8.8 years of supervising experience.

## Research Design

The independent variable, feedback seeking frequency, was manipulated such that there were two conditions: high frequency and low frequency. Participants were randomly assigned and evenly distributed to the two conditions. Participants were introduced to the experimental condition prior to the measure of any other variable. These parameters constitute an experimental design that isolates the effect of feedback seeking frequency on the outcomes. The study design included the moderators of IPT and FO on the relationship between the feedback frequency and evaluations of performance potential. The outcomes for the study were measured directly after

the participants were exposed to the frequency manipulation and the moderators for the study were assessed after the outcomes.

Estimating a small effect size, a power analysis was run using G*Power to estimate the necessary sample size for the study. The power analysis was computed using desired power of 0.95, effect size as small f2 = 0.1, and three predictors (IPT/FO, feedback frequency, and the interaction term), with G*Power estimating the sample size to be 176 participants. It is worth noting that de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010) included 319 participants in their design, but their study utilized a 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design as part of their moderated mediation model, which would require a greater number of participants.

## Measures

### Implicit Person Theory

IPT was measured using the eight-item scale developed by Levy and Dweck (1997). The measure is composed four entity items and four incremental items. Participants rated each item on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) scale. A sample incremental belief item is: "People can change even their most basic qualities." A sample entity belief item is: "The kind of person someone is, is something very basic about them and can't be changed very much." Ratings on entity belief items will be reverse scored, according to the procedure of Levy and colleagues (1998). This measure demonstrated high reliability ($\alpha$ = .97). See Appendix B for all measure items.

### Feedback Orientation

Feedback orientation was assessed using the 20-item Feedback Orientation Scale developed by Linderbaum and Levy (2010). This measure is comprehensive and captures the importance facets of how individuals receive and use feedback. Items were rated on 7-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Sample items include: "Using feedback, I am more aware of what people think of me" and "Feedback is critical for improving performance." The measure has been validated across multiple studies (Gregory & Levy, 2008; Linderbaum & Levy, 2010) and showed high reliability in the current study ($\alpha$ = .90).

### Attributed Motives

In replication of methods by de Stobbeleir et al. (2010), attributed motives were measured using a scale adapted from Lam et al. (2007). The measure was composed of six items related to performance enhancement attributions and eight items related to impression management. Participants rated each item on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale based on their perceptions of Robert's motivations. A sample performance enhancement attribution item is: "A desire to perform better." A sample impression management attribution item is: "A desire to influence how you see him." This measure exhibited strong reliability for both the performance enhancement ($\alpha$ = .85) and impression management ($\alpha$ = .94) subscales.

### Employee Performance Potential

Perceptions of the employee were assessed using multiple subscales from previous research and a few additional items developed specifically for the current study. These subscales include evaluations of promotability, candidacy for career development, future performance levels, confidence, and willingness to mentor. These outcomes represent a wide range of employee organizational outcomes. Similar patterns of results were expected for each outcome. Given the emergence of notable differences in data analysis, the outcome measures were analyzed and reported separately.

### Promotability

A promotability subscale was based on a three-item measure from Thacker and Wayne (1995). The items include: "I believe that this employee will have a successful career", "If I had to select a successor for my position, it would be this subordinate," and "I believe that this subordinate has high potential." The responses were rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale. This measure specifically captures perceptions of how this employee may advance in their career with the company, which represents an image cost or value that the employee may incur. The measure has shown evidence of reliability across multiple studies (e.g. Thacker & Wayne, 1995; Wayne et al., 1997) and again showed reliability in the current study ($\alpha$ = .81).

**Future Performance Level**

An evaluation of the employee's future performance level was completed using an adaptation of Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne, and Kraimer's (2001) four-item measure of team performance which draws attention to four components of job performance. The prompt in the survey read "Please rate the level of performance you expect from this employee in the future in each of the following areas." Participants rated the employee on future "quality of work", "getting work done efficiently", "flexibility in dealing with unexpected changes", and "overall performance" on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 7 (outstanding). Shaw and colleagues (2011) found the original measure of performance to be reliable, as did the current study ($\alpha$ = .90).

**Willingness to Mentor**

The willingness to mentor measure was adapted from a study by Moss-Racusin and colleagues (2012). The items were rated on a 1 (not at all likely) to 7 (very likely) scale, with higher scores exhibiting a greater willingness to mentor the employee. The original measure was intended for use in a faculty mentorship context, but the items were adapted to match the context of the current study. Participants will be prompted with, "After your encounter with Robert, how likely would you be to…" and will respond to three items: "Encourage Robert to stay in the organization if he ever considered leaving", "Encourage Robert to continue on your team if he was considering switching to a different team", and "Give Robert extra help if he was ever having trouble completing a difficult project." The reliability of the measure in the current study was sufficient ($\alpha$ = 0.73).

**Confidence**

The measure for confidence sampled two items from a scale developed by Ashford and Northcraft (1992). The two items used were "I suspect that Robert is insecure" and "I suspect that Robert is unconfident." Items were reverse coded for higher ratings to reflect more positive impressions of Robert's confidence. This measure showed strong reliability in the current study ($\alpha$ = .94).

### Candidacy for Career Development

The author developed two items for the measure of candidacy for career development. The items used were "This employee would be a strong candidate for career development" and "This employee should receive career guidance opportunities from the company." This measure showed sufficient reliability in the current study ($\alpha = .76$).

### Demographics

Several items requested responses to give information on the demographics of the participants. These items included gender, age, race/ethnicity, years of supervisory experience, number of employees currently supervising, and time spent evaluating employee performance.

### Manipulation Check

There was a manipulation check at the conclusion of the study to ensure the condition was salient. Participants were presented with the question, "How frequently does the employee you read about, Robert, ask questions of his supervisor?" Two possible responses to this question will be direct quotes from the vignettes (i.e "only on rare occasions" and "on a frequent basis") and two other responses were "He never asks questions" and "I did not read about Robert."

## Procedure

Participants completed this study online using a survey link from the Qualtrics survey software, which provides a secure method of data collection. After reading the study information sheet and consenting to participation, participants completed measures of implicit person theory and feedback orientation. Afterwards, participants were informed that they would be imagining themselves in a workplace scenario where they are a supervisor and today is a typical day. Participants were then presented with a vignette describing an employee. The vignette partially resembled that of de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010).

The vignette described the participant's role as a supervisor with immediate co-workers and several subordinates. The participant is described as sitting at their desk when one of their subordinates, Robert, comes to their office. Robert is described as a satisfactory performer who was in a meeting with the participant yesterday. One topic of the meeting was Robert's project,

which he presented to the group. Robert asks if there is time to talk and asks the participant to comment on his presentation. The difference between conditions was signaled by two phrases in the vignette. Robert was described as having a history of asking questions "only on rare occasions" or "on a frequent basis." A second signal at the end of the vignette will state Robert is asking questions as he has done "only a few times before" or "many times before." Participants were randomly assigned and evenly distributed by Qualtrics to view one of the two feedback frequency conditions. (See Appendix A for a full transcript of each vignette.)

After reading the vignette, participants completed the performance potential outcome items. Participants first evaluated Robert's performance potential by completing items on Robert's promotability, candidacy for career development, future performance level, confidence, and willingness of the participant to be a mentor to Robert. Then, participants completed the demographic items. After completing all measures, participants completed a manipulation check question to ensure the salience of the manipulation. Two attention check items were included in the measures to ensure participant attention to the task and measures (e.g., "Select strongly agree for this item.") Upon completion of these measures, the participants were provided with an information sheet with details about the study and contact information if they had any questions about their participation. Participants were thanked for their participation and compensated accordingly.

# RESULTS

## Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliability estimates can be found in Table 1. As anticipated, IPT was positively related to FO. IPT also related positively to both confidence and candidacy for career development. Feedback orientation was significantly related to all outcomes except for confidence. Notably, the measure for performance enhancement attributions related significantly and positively to all five outcome measures. Impression management attributions only related to perceptions of confidence. IPT related negatively to impression management attributions. Feedback orientation was positively related to performance enhancement attributions. All performance potential outcome variables were significantly and positively correlated.

For the demographics variables included in Table 2, number of employees the participants currently supervised related positively to ratings of future performance. Gender related positively (coded Male=1, Female=2) to performance enhancement attributions, willingness to mentor, and promotability ratings. Time the participant spends evaluating their employees' performance related positively to feedback orientation and impression management attributions.

Table 1. Correlations and Pearson's Reliability Estimates

| *Variables* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. IPT | *.97* | | | | | | | | |
| 2. FO | .24** | *.90* | | | | | | | |
| 3. PEA | .01 | .39** | *.85* | | | | | | |
| 4. IMA | -.16** | .10 | .19** | *.94* | | | | | |
| 5. Future Performance | .10 | .22** | .29** | .10 | *.90* | | | | |
| 6. Mentorship | .04 | .30** | .49** | .11 | .51** | *.73* | | | |
| 7. Promotability | .06 | .23** | .39** | .09 | .66** | .61** | *.81* | | |
| 8. Confidence | .15* | .11 | .18** | -.17** | .35** | .31** | .40* | *.94* | |
| 9. CCD | .15* | .29** | .33** | .04 | .50** | .51** | .58** | .25** | *.76* |

Cronbach's alpha values are listed on the diagonal. PEA = Performance Enhancement Attributions, IMA = Impression Management Attributions, CCD = Candidacy for Career Development. * indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$

Table 2. Correlations with Demographic Variables

| *Variables* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Experience | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Employees | .12 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Gender | .00 | .02 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Evaluation Time | -.01 | .23** | -.03 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. IPT | -.08 | -.02 | .03 | .04 | | | | | | | | |
| 6. FO | .07 | .04 | .02 | .17** | .24** | | | | | | | |
| 7. PEA | .08 | .10 | .16** | .04 | .01 | .39** | | | | | | |
| 8. IMA | -.02 | .06 | .07 | .23** | -.16** | .10 | .19** | | | | | |
| 9. Future Performance | -.02 | .13* | .10 | .04 | .10 | .22** | .29** | .10 | | | | |
| 10. Mentorship | .09 | .10 | .15* | -.02 | .04 | .30** | .49** | .11 | .51** | | | |
| 11. Promotability | -.09 | .06 | .19** | .03 | .06 | .23** | .39** | .09 | .66** | .61** | | |
| 12. Confidence | .04 | -.05 | -.01 | -.05 | .15* | .11 | .18** | -.17** | .35** | .31** | .40* | |
| 13. CCD | .10 | .10 | .06 | .02 | .15* | .29** | .33** | .04 | .50** | .51** | .58** | .25** |

Cronbach's alpha values are listed on the diagonal. Experience = number of years of experience as a supervisor, Employees = number of employees the participant supervises, Evaluation Time = time spent evaluating employee performance. PEA = Performance Enhancement Attributions, IMA = Impression Management Attributions, CCD = Candidacy for Career Development. * indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$

Table 3. Correlations by Condition

| *Variables* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. IPT | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. FO | .16 | | | | | | | | |
| 3. PEA | -.09 | .31** | | | | | | | |
| 4. IMA | -.19* | .01 | .22** | | | | | | |
| 5. Future Performance | .14 | .20* | .23** | -.04 | | | | | |
| 6. Mentorship | .03 | .23** | .52** | .01 | .36** | | | | |
| 7. Promotability | .06 | .14 | .34** | -.01 | .52** | .46** | | | |
| 8. Confidence | .25** | .10 | .11 | -.20* | .29** | .24** | .35* | | |
| 9. CCD | .16* | .23** | .24** | -.03 | .54** | .38** | .56** | .25** | |
| 1. IPT | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. FO | .31** | | | | | | | | |
| 3. PEA | .11 | .48** | | | | | | | |
| 4. IMA | -.12 | .20* | .15 | | | | | | |
| 5. Future Performance | .06 | .24** | .36** | .22 | | | | | |
| 6. Mentorship | .04 | .36** | .46** | .20* | .64** | | | | |
| 7. Promotability | .07 | .30** | .44** | .17 | .76** | .72** | | | |
| 8. Confidence | .02 | .11 | .26** | -.13 | .44** | .40** | .47** | | |
| 9. CCD | .14 | .34** | .42** | .11 | .48** | .63** | .60** | .26** | |

The top half of the table features the high frequency seeking condition and the bottom half of the table features the low frequency seeking condition. Cronbach's alpha values are listed on the diagonal. PEA = Performance Enhancement Attributions, IMA = Impression Management Attributions, CCD = Candidacy for Career Development. * indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$

Means and standard deviations for all the study variables can be found in Table 4. No significant differences between conditions were found for IPT or FO, indicating there was no effect of condition on participant responses to these items. Confidence was rated significantly different between conditions ($t(273) = 2.118$, $p = .03$), with participants in the high frequency seeking condition rating the employee in the vignette as less confident. No other significant differences were found between conditions.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics by Condition

| *Variables* | Low frequency seeking *M* (SD) | High frequency seeking *M* (SD) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. IPT | 4.09 (1.25) | 4.02 (1.25) |
| 2. FO | 4.23 (.521) | 4.19 (.462) |
| 3. PEA | 4.19 (.604) | 4.19 (.650) |
| 4. IMA | 3.42 (.899) | 3.55 (.867) |
| 5. Future Performance | 5.84 (.875) | 5.87 (.736) |
| 6. Mentorship | 6.04 (.905) | 5.96 (.813) |
| 7. Promotability | 5.59 (.974) | 5.60 (.770) |
| 8. Confidence | 5.07 (1.41)* | 4.68 (1.59)* |
| 9. CCD | 5.84 (.882) | 5.82 (.775) |
| *N*-size | 133 | 142 |

Significantly different means where $p < .05$ are denoted by * as determined by independent samples t-test.

## Hypothesis Testing

To test the hypotheses, regression analysis was performed to identify significant interactions of condition and the individual difference variables on the performance potential outcomes. Although all the performance potential outcomes were correlated positively, each outcome was tested individually given the contextual differences between each construct and the differences in correlation patterns with IPT and FO respectively.

### IPT and Performance Potential Outcomes

There was no significant effect of supervisor IPT on the ratings of future performance, willingness to mentor or promotability outcomes. Additionally, no significant interaction between IPT and feedback seeking condition were found for any of those outcomes. The

relationship between IPT and candidacy for career development approached significance ($b$ = .152, SE = .057, $p$ = .079) but the interaction term with feedback seeking was not significant. See Tables 5 for full regression results for IPT.

Table 5. Regression results for IPT and performance potential outcomes.

| *Outcome* | *Predictor* | *B* | *SE* | *b* | *t* | *Sig.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Future Performance | Constant | 5.672 | .239 | | 23.745 | <.001 |
| | Condition | -.141 | .330 | -.088 | -.427 | .670 |
| | IPT | .042 | .056 | .064 | .743 | .458 |
| | Condition × IPT | .042 | .078 | .114 | .537 | .592 |
| Willingness to Mentor | Constant | 5.916 | .256 | | 23.146 | <.001 |
| | Condition | -.041 | .353 | -.024 | -.116 | .908 |
| | IPT | .029 | .060 | .042 | .488 | .626 |
| | Condition × IPT | -.007 | .083 | -.018 | -.082 | .935 |
| Promotability | Constant | 5.377 | .260 | | 20.689 | <.001 |
| | Condition | .084 | .359 | .048 | .233 | .816 |
| | IPT | .053 | .061 | .076 | .873 | .383 |
| | Condition × IPT | -.019 | .085 | -.049 | -.229 | .819 |
| Confidence | Constant | 4.962 | .440 | | 11.274 | <.001 |
| | Condition | -1.541 | .609 | -.509 | -2.531 | .012 |
| | IPT | .026 | .103 | .021 | .250 | .803 |
| | Condition × IPT | .288 | .144 | .419 | 2.008 | .046 |
| Candidacy for Career Development | Constant | 5.430 | .244 | | 22.270 | <.001 |
| | Condition | -.017 | .337 | -.010 | -.050 | .960 |
| | IPT | .101 | .057 | .152 | 1.766 | .079 |
| | Condition × IPT | .001 | .079 | .002 | .007 | .994 |

IPT models for all performance potential outcome measures.

Feedback seeking had a significant negative relationship with confidence ratings such that those in the frequent seeking group perceived Robert as less confident ($b$ = -.509, SE = .609, $p$ = .012). No other significant relationships between feedback seeking frequency and performance potential outcomes were found. The feedback seeking × IPT interaction term had a significant relationship with confidence ($b$ = .419, SE = .144, $p$ = .046) such that participants with lower IPT exhibited a greater difference in ratings of confidence between conditions compared to those with higher IPT. Using PROCESS Model 1 (Hayes, 2018), the interaction was

probed at one standard deviation above and below the mean of IPT, which is consistent with previous research on IPT (de Stobbeleir et al., 2010). The results showed a significant difference in confidence ratings between low and high frequency seeking conditions at one standard deviation below the mean of IPT (-.73, 95% CI [-1.23, -.23]). There was no significant difference in confidence ratings between conditions at one standard deviation above the mean on IPT. This result supports Hypothesis 1 for the confidence rating outcome. The interaction is graphed in Figure 2.

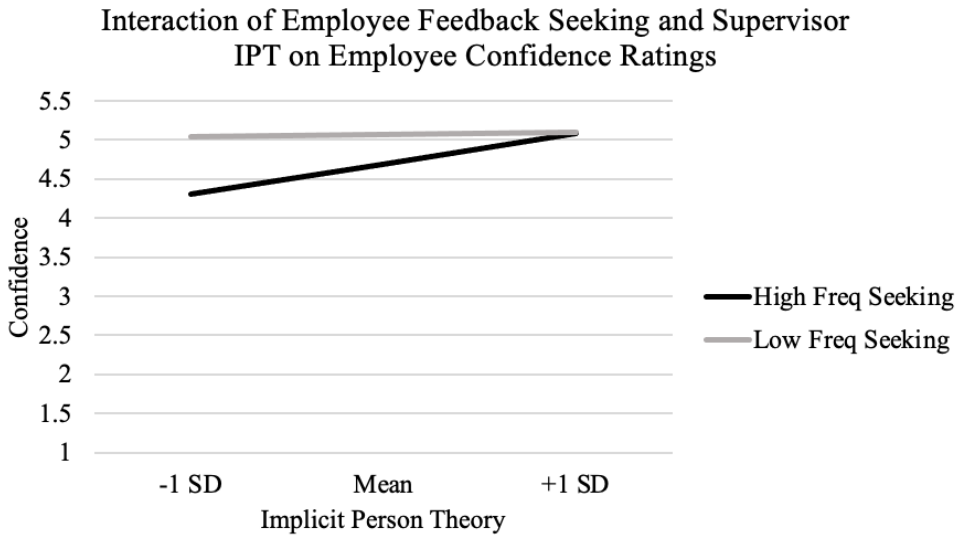


Figure 2. Interaction of employee feedback seeking and supervisor IPT on ratings of employee confidence.

**Feedback Orientation and Performance Potential Outcomes**

Supervisor feedback orientation significantly predicted future performance ($b$ = .246, SE = .132, $p$ = .002), willingness to mentor ($b$ = .357, SE = .137, $p$ < .001), promotability ($b$ = .317, SE = .142, $p$ < .001), and candidacy for career development ($b$ = .343, SE = .133, $p$ < .001). See Table 6 for full regression results for feedback orientation. Feedback orientation did not predict confidence ratings. No significant interactions between feedback orientation and feedback seeking frequency were found. These results do not support Hypothesis 2.

Table 6. Regression results for FO and performance potential outcomes.

| *Outcome* | *Predictor* | *B* | *SE* | *b* | *t* | *Sig.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Future Performance | Constant | 4.136 | .562 | | 7.362 | <.001 |
| | Condition | .388 | .826 | .241 | .469 | .639 |
| | FO | .403 | .132 | .246 | 3.058 | .002 |
| | Condition × FO | -.083 | .195 | -.218 | -.424 | .672 |
| Willingness to Mentor | Constant | 3.394 | .585 | | 5.805 | <.001 |
| | Condition | .899 | .860 | .525 | 1.046 | .297 |
| | FO | .624 | .137 | .357 | 4.551 | <.001 |
| | Condition × FO | -.225 | .203 | -.557 | -1.108 | .269 |
| Promotability | Constant | 3.213 | .606 | | 5.306 | <.001 |
| | Condition | 1.439 | .890 | .826 | 1.616 | .107 |
| | FO | .562 | .142 | .317 | 3.961 | <.001 |
| | Condition × FO | -.337 | .210 | -.820 | -1.604 | .110 |
| Confidence | Constant | 3.776 | 1.070 | | 3.530 | <.001 |
| | Condition | -.560 | 1.573 | -.185 | -.356 | .722 |
| | FO | .305 | .251 | .099 | 1.216 | .225 |
| | Condition × FO | .045 | .371 | .063 | .121 | .904 |
| Candidacy for Career Development | Constant | 3.396 | .566 | | 6.003 | <.001 |
| | Condition | .817 | .832 | .494 | .982 | .327 |
| | FO | .578 | .133 | .343 | 4.356 | <.001 |
| | Condition × FO | -.194 | .196 | -.498 | -.989 | .324 |

FO models for all performance potential outcome measures.

The hypotheses anticipated a significant relationship between the interaction terms for both IPT and FO with condition and the performance potential outcomes. The only outcome that presented results consistent with hypotheses was the interaction between condition and IPT on confidence evaluations.

## Exploratory Analyses

As noted above, the IPT and condition interaction significantly predicted confidence and confidence was correlated to all the other outcome variables. Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether confidence would mediate the relationship between the interaction term and the outcomes. These analyses were exploratory as mediation was not

hypothesized. Using PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2018), mediation through confidence was tested with each of the remaining original outcome measures. Significant indirect effects through confidence were found in all the remaining performance potential outcomes: promotability (-.088, 95% CI [-.1848 to -.0044]), future performance (-.0716, 95% CI [-.1519 to -.0038]), willingness to mentor (-.066, 95% CI [-.1404 to -.0032]), and candidacy for career development (-.052, 95% CI [-.1157 to -.0024]). For each outcome measure, seeking more feedback made the employee seem less confidence and therefore decreased evaluations of performance potential. See Figures 3-6 for complete PROCESS results. Additionally, probing the indirect effect at one standard deviation below the mean of IPT strengthened the indirect effect for each of the performance potential outcomes: promotability (-.173, 95% CI [-.3204 to -.0419]), future performance (-.1408, 95% CI [-.2652 to -.0322]), willingness to mentor (-.1298, 95% CI [-.2467 to -.0301]), and candidacy for career development (-.1015, 95% CI [-.2041 to -.0209]). There were no significant indirect effects found at one standard deviation above the mean of IPT.

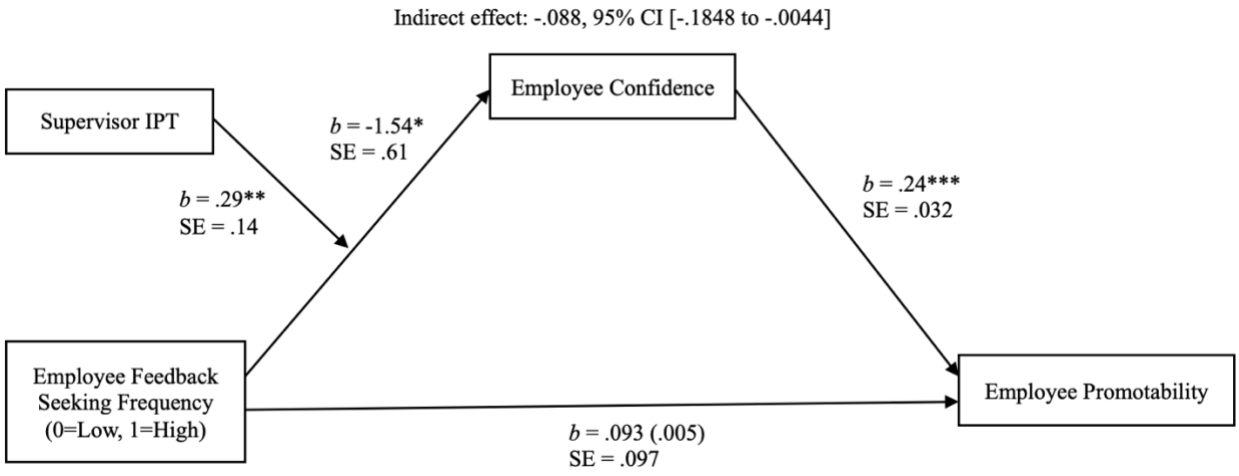


Figure 3. PROCESS Model 7 results for promotability.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

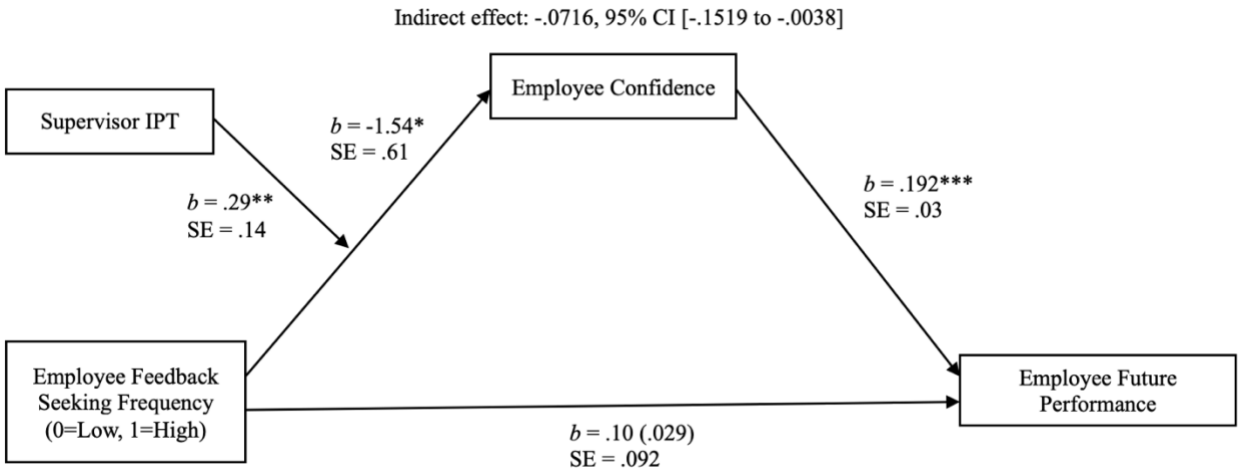


Figure 4. PROCESS Model 7 results for future performance.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

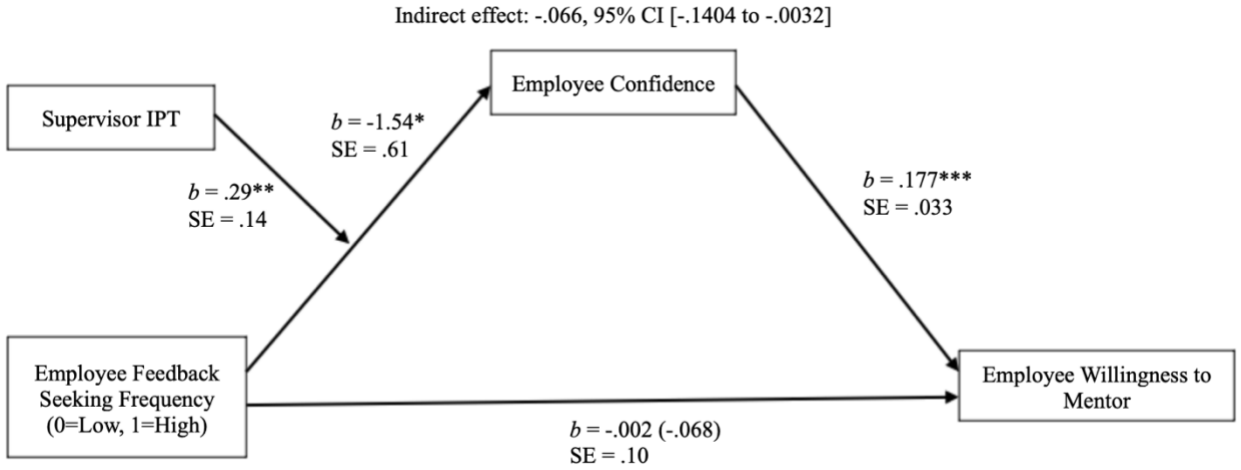


Figure 5. PROCESS Model 7 results for willingness to mentor.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

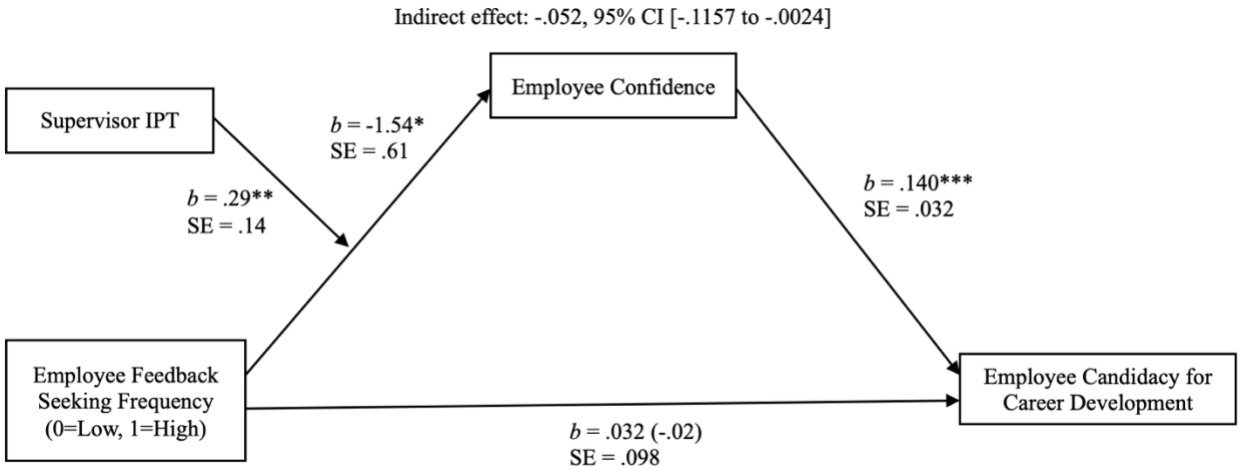


Figure 6. PROCESS results on candidacy for career development.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

To replicate the findings of de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010), the mediating effects of performance enhancement and impression management attributions were tested. Using PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2018), performance enhancement and impression management attributions were tested as mediators for the observed relationship between IPT and confidence ratings. A significant relationship was found between performance enhancement attributions and confidence ratings ($b$ = .42, SE = .14, $p$ = .0033), with participants who attributed the behavior to performance enhancement rating the employee higher in confidence. A significant direct effect was found between condition and confidence ratings controlling for performance enhancement attributions ($b$ = -.39, SE = .18, $p$ = .031). No significant indirect relationship was found through performance enhancement attributions. See Figure 7 for PROCESS results. A significant relationship was found between impression management attributions and confidence ratings ($b$ = -.28, SE = .10, $p$ = .0063), with participants who attributed the behavior to impression enhancement rating the employee lower in confidence. No other significant effects were found in this model. See Figure 8 for PROCESS results.

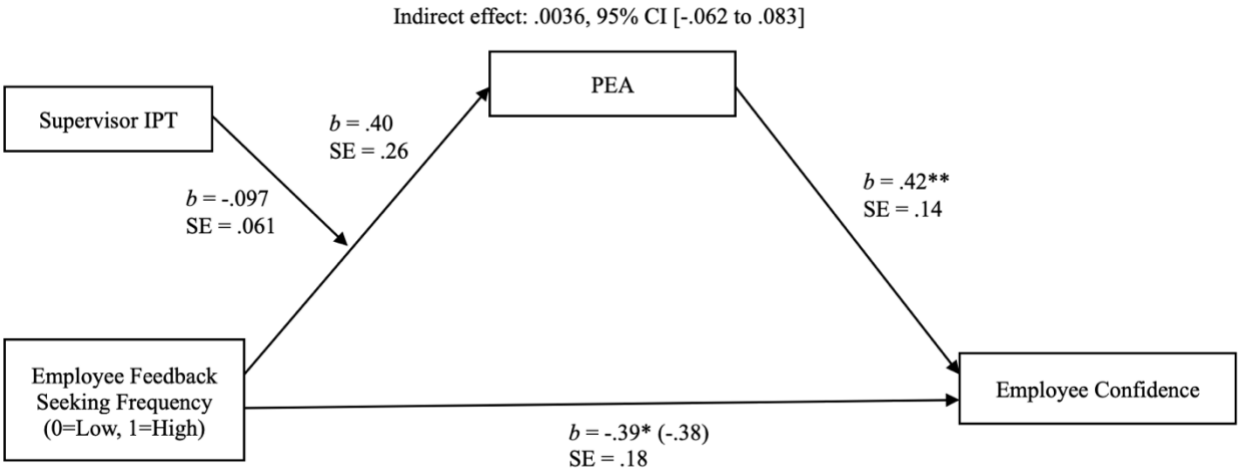


Figure 7. PROCESS results for PEA mediation on confidence.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

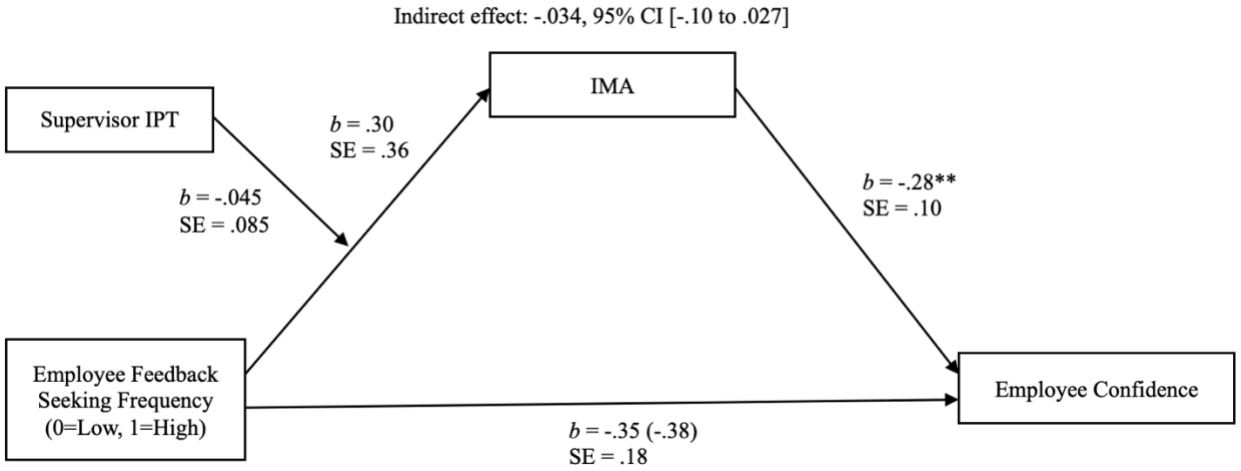


Figure 8. PROCESS results for IMA mediation on confidence.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

# DISCUSSION

Feedback seeking behavior is an essential process for employees to improve their performance, set and complete goals, and clarify their role and responsibilities (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Renn & Fedor, 2001, Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Despite these positive outcomes associated with FSB, there is ample evidence that factors such as image defense and enhancement costs limit the amount of employee FSB (Tuckey, Brewer & Williamson, 2002). The current study sought to investigate whether supervisors do enact costs on employees who engage in feedback seeking. In particular, the study examined how supervisor individual differences play a role in the development of such views.

## IPT

Previous research suggests that supervisors who are incremental theorists with high IPT are more likely to engage in feedback seeking behavior due to their belief that traits are malleable and obtaining feedback contributes to personal improvement (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2005). Entity theorists with low IPT are more likely to view feedback as risky to public image due to their belief that traits are fixed. Given this evidence, entity theorists were expected to enact a cost on the high frequency seeker due to their beliefs and image defense tendencies, while the same cost would not manifest when high frequency seeking was observed by an incremental theorist.

IPT was significantly correlated with perception of confidence and candidacy for career development such that more incremental entity participants viewed Robert generally more confident and a better candidate for career development, regardless of feedback seeking behavior. The relationship with candidacy for career development aligns with the original work of Dweck (1986) suggesting more incremental individuals view attributes as malleable, in this case likelihood to develop in their career over time. The relationship with confidence may be more involved in perceived confidence from simply approaching the manager to request feedback, regardless of historical frequency of seeking.

The significant relationship between IPT and confidence provides evidence that there is a cost to employees who seek feedback at a higher rate, especially from a certain type of

supervisor. The cost manifested as a decrease in perceptions of confidence in the employee. Specifically, more entity-oriented supervisor participants found the employee who sought more feedback as being less confident. This aligns with evidence from IPT and goal orientation literature that entity theorists may have higher perceptions of cost of feedback seeking behavior (Dweck, 1999; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; Vandewalle et al., 2000). The inherent fear in entity theorists that seeking feedback will decrease the value of their image or confidence to others (Ashford & Cummings, 1982) seems to be a driver for how they perceive the confidence of others when they seek feedback in turn. Entity theorists fear that seeking feedback unveils a lack of performance or confidence, and therefore view others who seek in the same light. The other outcomes tested related to ratings of future performance, career development prospects, willingness to mentor, and promotability did not elicit the same pattern of cost to the employee as no significant interaction effects were found.

With the evidence of a significant interaction between IPT and FSB on confidence, exploratory analysis discovered that confidence may facilitate a significant indirect relationship between IPT, FSB and the performance potential outcomes. In mediation models for all four performance potential outcomes besides confidence, confidence mediated significant indirect effects indicating a cost to seeking on all outcomes for those in the high frequency seeking condition. Perceptions of confidence seem to be one of the key mechanisms through which additional costs to high frequency seekers are manifested. If a manager views an employee as less confident for seeking feedback, it could have more downstream implications on their ability to advance in their career.

### Feedback Orientation

Feedback orientation represents the receptiveness one holds to feedback and given the social awareness and feedback utility dimensions of the construct, may influence how individuals interpret and respond to others' feedback seeking. Being socially aware of how one's own feedback seeking is used and perceived in the work environment indicates a potential to make judgements on how others seek as well. With high feedback-oriented individual placing a higher value on making feedback inquiries and thoroughly processing feedback (Anseel et al., 2015; London & Smither, 2002; Dahling et al., 2012), the expectation is that those individuals

also associate less cost and more value with seeking as opposed to those lower in feedback orientation.

Counter to hypotheses, feedback orientation did not produce a similar pattern of interaction results on confidence or any of the other performance potential outcomes compared to IPT. Feedback orientation and IPT are positively correlated, but the dimensions that compose the FO construct were perhaps too distant from the outcomes measured. Items for the feedback orientation ask for the participants own behaviors around feedback defensiveness, utility, accountability, social awareness, and feedback self-efficacy. In contrast, the IPT measure items specifically reference thinking broadly about others rather than specifically referencing the self.

There were significant, positive relationships between feedback orientation and ratings of future performance, career development prospects, willingness to mentor, and promotability, indicating the existence of a link between one's own seeking behaviors and how one views others in the lens of performance potential. We know from previous evidence that managers higher in feedback orientation are considered better coaches (Steelman & Wolfeld, 2018), and the current study lends support to that notion. Managers higher in feedback orientation showing more positive perceptions of the measured performance potential signals suggests they have a positive view of how employees can grow and develop. This relationship between feedback orientation and the measured outcomes of the current study does not appear to be affected by the frequency of seeking. These highly feedback-oriented managers may be inherently inclined to support employees in their performance development regardless of the employees' feedback seeking behavior.

The differences in relationship between the other study variables and IPT and feedback orientation, respectively, is also of note. As expected, incremental theorists seem to be more oriented towards feedback given the significant positive correlation. However, while feedback orientation related to all the performance potential outcomes except for confidence perceptions, IPT only correlated significantly with confidence perceptions and candidacy for career development. Given higher orientation to feedback may make the supervisor a more effective coach (Steelman & Wolfeld, 2018), participants high in feedback orientation may be more innately positive about the performance potential of any given employee. These results also support the idea that IPT and feedback orientation, while correlated, are indeed separate constructs and potentially associated with different outcomes.

## Attributions of FSB

Although the analyses performed on the attributions of FSB were exploratory and not based on hypotheses, a few indicators of relationships between variables appeared that could point to new directions. Performance enhancement attributions related significantly to all five outcome measures, which lends credibility to the outcome measures being related to performance. The negative relationship between impression management attributions and perceptions of confidence observed in the current study was also observed by de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010). Attributing seeking behavior to impression management may contribute in part to a lack of apparent confidence the employee has in pursuing and achieving high performance. After further analysis on this relationship, it appears that attributions for why an individual is seeking feedback may not be the significant driver of perceived confidence of the seeker.

The additional analysis on performance enhancement and impression management attributions as mediators for IPT × FSB and confidence sought to replicate the findings of significant mediation through impression management attributions by de Stobbeleir and colleagues (2010). This pattern of results was not replicated in the current study. However, the current study did provide some evidence to answer the earlier question: are there different types of supervisors who would be more likely to attribute certain motives behind seeking behavior? The significant negative correlation between IPT and impression management attributions supports the notion that entity theorists may be naturally more likely view seeking behavior as a way to manage one's image. The significant positive relationship between feedback orientation and performance enhancement attributions is also of note. A supervisor who is more open to feedback and can see the utility of feedback seems to associate seeking behavior more with a desire for the employee to improve performance. This supports the idea that feedback orientation as a construct may represent perceptions of others as well as orientation of the self around feedback.

## Theoretical Implications

The current study expands on the work of Lam and colleagues (2007) and de Stobbeleier and colleagues (2010) to further examine how feedback frequency affects perceptions. For

feedback orientation research, the current study provides evidence that feedback orientation may predict how individuals perceive the behavior of others rather than only predicting one's own feedback-related behavior. The evidence that feedback orientation positively correlated with performance potential outcomes corroborated previous work that high FO managers are considered better coaches.

This study provided an additional perspective on manipulating feedback seeking frequency, which has rarely been examined as an independent variable. The current study also explored new outcomes reflecting perceptions of employee image at work, such as promotability and willingness to mentor, which have important implications as cost and value in the workplace.

## Practical Implications

The current study demonstrates a potential cost for employees who seek feedback frequently in the workplace. Supervisors who are entity theorists may have a flawed view of their employees purely due to how they view the nature of individuals. With this evidence, a practical application of this research would be to encourage organizations to evaluate manager IPT to help train them on how to respond to frequent requests for feedback without generating a negative perception of the seeker. Organizations can use this study and past literature on FO and IPT to develop training to increase receptivity to feedback requests in organizations. There is evidence that training can induce incremental IPT to increase an entity theorist's willingness to coach a poor performing employee (Heslin, VandeWalle, & Latham, 2006). Additionally, organizations could measure feedback orientation of managers to determine who may be best suited to assist in the development of early career talent. This research also supports the need to foster an organizational culture that places value on learning, development, and communication to facilitate a more open flow of feedback and seeking behavior, regardless of supervisor and employee traits.

## Limitations

The generalizability of the study is limited by the hypothetical design, meaning similar results may not be seen in an organizational setting. The lack of significant differences in ratings of all performance potential measures aside from confidence could be a symptom of making

hypothetical evaluations on limited information. Anticipating more downstream outcomes such as a mentorship and future job performance may have been difficult for the participants based solely on the information provided in the vignette.

The feedback seeking manipulation in the vignette may also have been weakened by how Robert's actions were described. The first phrase manipulated in the vignette alludes to the frequency at which Robert comes to the supervisor for questions, but not all questions an employee asks their supervisor are considered feedback seeking behaviors. This aspect of the vignette may have decreased the salience of feedback seeking as the behavior of interest from Robert.

Additionally, evaluations and perceptions are made constantly in organizations and could change from day to day. The current study only examined evaluations at one timepoint and therefore may have missed the broader context of a more complicated supervisor-employee relationship. The current study saw significant differences in the promotability, willingness to mentor and candidacy for career development constructs, but these findings may be more meaningful if measured over time in a real supervisor-employee dyad. The current study did not intentionally measure the constructs for mediation effects, which limits our ability to draw accurate conclusions from those tests.

## Future Directions

Many opportunities lie in manipulating variables such as level of experience as additional moderators in the theoretical model. In the current study, Robert was presented as being an employee with a history of average performance, suggesting he had been with the company for long enough to make that assessment. However, if Robert was described as a newly hired employee seeking a higher volume of feedback, it's possible the average entity theorist might not consider him lower in confidence for seeking more feedback. On the other side of the IPT spectrum, an incremental theorist supervisor may see a newcomer who does not seek feedback frequently as particularly confident. Additional moderators such as trust, inquiry content, and performance history could be examined similarly as contextual variables contributing to the views supervisors hold of their employees when they seek feedback.

One could also replicate this research design in the workplace without manipulating feedback seeking frequency, to assess whether we see similar relationships between constructs in

a real-world setting. Other individual differences can be investigated to further test the interaction of individual differences and feedback seeking frequency. Mediating mechanisms of the relationship between feedback seeking frequency and cost to performance potential outcomes can also be explored to understand the mechanism behind the increased seeking causing more negative perceptions. Exploring mediators will also allow us to investigate where the moderators function in the mechanism. Collecting data in a way where mediation can be appropriately tested would be a next step of this research. It is possible the findings from de Stobbeleier and colleagues (2010) regarding mediation of IPT × FSB on confidence by performance enhancement and impression management attributions could be replicated and built upon with the inclusion of feedback orientation if the proper methods were used.

Examining the point at which seeking more frequently elicits negative responses from supervisors is another avenue to explore. In the current study, the two conditions were simply seeking rarely and seeking frequently, with no significant difference in how entity and incremental theorists viewed the employee in the low seeking condition. It's possible there is a tipping point for entity supervisors at which an increase in seeking frequency begins to elicit a negative response. A more detailed assessment of supervisor-employee dyads with feedback behavior exhibited at multiple timepoints would likely be required to investigate this concept further.

Future research could also take the study a step further and examine if these observed actual costs of seeking more frequently results in an actual decrease in future seeking. This research would require observation of supervisor-employee dyads over time from and could follow the feedback relationship from the beginning of the subordinate's employment.

## Conclusion

Given the importance of feedback seeking in organizations, the current study examined how actual costs to seeking may inadvertently punish employees for feedback seeking behavior, which is often used to improve job performance. This research found evidence of actual costs when supervisors have an entity view of individuals and interact with employees who are trying to improve their performance by seeking more frequently. The image defense inhibitors to feedback seeking behavior experienced by some managers seems to lead to perceptions of lower confidence and thus lower propensity to develop performance over time simply due to how

frequently feedback is sought. These findings indicate a need to train managers and people leaders on proper responses to feedback requests and the value of feedback to employees.

# APPENDIX A. MEASURES

**Implicit Person Theory (IPT)**

Levy & Dweck (1997): Rated on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*) scale.

Incremental items:

1. People can change even their most basic qualities.
2. Everyone, no matter who they are, can significantly change their basic characteristics.
3. People can substantially change the kind of person they are.
4. No matter what kind of a person someone is, they can always change very much.

Entity items:

1. The kind of person someone is, is something very basic about them and can't be changed very much.
2. People can do things differently, but the important parts of who they are can't really be changed.
3. Everyone is a certain kind of person, and there is not much that they can do to really change that.
4. As much as I hate to admit it, you can't teach an old dog new tricks. People can't really change their deepest attributes.

**Feedback Orientation (FO)**

Linderbaum & Levy (2010): Rated on 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

Utility

1. Feedback contributes to my success at work.
2. To develop my skills at work, I rely on feedback.
3. Feedback is critical for improving performance.
4. Feedback from supervisors can help me advance in a company.
5. I find that feedback is critical for reaching my goals.

Accountability

1. It is my responsibility to apply feedback to improve my performance.
2. I hold myself accountable to respond to feedback appropriately.
3. I don't feel a sense of closure until I respond to feedback.

4. If my supervisor gives me feedback, it is my responsibility to respond to it.
5. I feel obligated to make changes based on feedback.

Social Awareness

1. I try to be aware of what other people think of me.
2. Using feedback, I am more aware of what people think of me.
3. Feedback helps me manage the impression I make on others.
4. Feedback lets me know how I am perceived by others.
5. I rely on feedback to help me make a good impression.

Feedback Self-Efficacy

1. I feel self-assured when dealing with feedback.
2. Compared to others, I am more competent at handling feedback.
3. I believe that I have the ability to deal with feedback effectively.
4. I feel confident when responding to both positive and negative feedback.
5. I know that I can handle the feedback that I receive.

**Attributed Motives**

Adapted from Lam et al. (2007): Rated on 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

Performance Enhancement Attributions

To what extent do you perceive Robert's behavior is motivated by the following:

1. A desire to discover what his responsibilities are.
2. A desire to discover exactly what is expected of him.
3. A desire to perform better.
4. A desire to learn.
5. A desire to understand better what you want from him.
6. A desire to strengthen your working relationship.

Impression Management Attributions

To what extent do you perceive Robert's behavior is motivated by the following:

1. A desire to enhance his image (i.e., to make you believe that he is a helpful employee.)
2. A desire to build-up for a later exchange.
3. A desire to show-off his expertise.
4. A desire to look good.

5. A desire to influence how you see him.
6. A desire to capture your attention on him.
7. A desire to obtain recognition or other organizational rewards.
8. A desire to create an impression.

**Future Performance Level**

Adapted from Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne, and Kraimer's (2001): Rated on 1 (very poor) to 7 (outstanding) scale.

Please rate the level of performance you expect from Robert in the future in each of the following areas:

1. Quality of work
2. Getting work done efficiently
3. Flexibility in dealing with unexpected changes
4. Overall performance

**Willingness to Mentor**

Adapted from Moss-Racusin et al. (2012): Rated on 1 (not at all likely) to 7 (very likely) scale.

If you encountered this employee at your own organization, how likely would you be to:

1. Encourage Robert to stay in your business unit if they were considering leaving?
2. Encourage Robert to continue to pursue a leadership role if they were considering changing career paths?
3. Give Robert extra help if he was having trouble mastering a difficult concept?

**Promotability**

Thacker and Wayne (1995): Rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale.

1. I believe that Robert will have a successful career.
2. If I had to select a successor for my position, it would be Robert.
3. I believe that Robert has high potential.

**Confidence**

Ashford and Northcraft (1992): Rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale.

1. I suspect that Robert is insecure.
2. I suspect that Robert lacks confidence.

**Candidacy for Career Development**

Rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale.

1. Robert would be a strong candidate for career development.
2. Robert should receive career guidance opportunities from the company.

**Demographic Items**

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your race/ethnicity?
4. How long have you been a supervisor?
5. How many employees do you currently supervise?
6. How much of your time is spent evaluating the performance of your employees?

# APPENDIX B. MATERIALS

**Low Frequency Seeking Condition**

"Today is a day like any other. You work for a large organization. You have several immediate co-workers, you report to a single superior, and you have a small staff reporting to you. You are sitting comfortably at your desk working on final preparations for your year-end area review when you hear a knock on your office door. You look up to find Robert, one of your subordinates, standing in the doorway. Robert has a history of satisfactory performance. He generally does well at his job and always meets required deadlines. Robert has also shown some interest in becoming a leader in the organization once he gains more experience. Robert comes to you for questions *only on rare occasions.*

You and Robert were involved in an important staff meeting yesterday. The meeting was long and covered a variety of topics. One of the topics of the meeting was a project that Robert is working on. Robert gave a prepared presentation that lasted about 15 min, and then he spent about 5 min answering questions about the project. Robert asks if you are free for a few minutes. After the two of you exchange greetings, Robert asks you, as he has done *only a few times before,* to give your thoughts on his presentation."

**High Frequency Seeking Condition**

"Today is a day like any other. You work for a large organization. You have several immediate co-workers, you report to a single superior, and you have a small staff reporting to you. You are sitting comfortably at your desk working on final preparations for your year-end area review when you hear a knock on your office door. You look up to find Robert, one of your subordinates, standing in the doorway. Robert has a history of satisfactory performance. He generally does well at his job and always meets required deadlines. Robert has also shown some interest in becoming a leader in the organization once he gains more experience. Robert comes to you for questions *on a frequent basis.*

You and Robert were involved in an important staff meeting yesterday. The meeting was long and covered a variety of topics. One of the topics of the meeting was a project that Robert is working on. Robert gave a prepared presentation that lasted about 15 min, and then he spent about 5 min answering questions about the project. Robert asks if you are free for a few minutes.

After the two of you exchange greetings, Robert asks you, as he has done *many times before*, to give your thoughts on his presentation."

# REFERENCES


Anseel, F., Beatty, A. S., Shen, W., Lievens, F., & Sackett, P. R. (2015). How are we doing after 30 years? A meta-analytic review of the antecedents and outcomes of feedback-seeking behavior. *Journal of Management, 41*(1), 318-348.

Ashford, S. J. (1986). Feedback-Seeking in Individual Adaptation: A Resource Perspective. *Academy of Management Journal, 29*(3), 465–487. doi: 10.5465/256219

Ashford, S. J. (1993). The feedback environment: An exploratory study of cue use. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 14*(3), 201–224. doi: 10.1002/job.4030140302

Ashford, S. J., Blatt, R., & VandeWalle, D. (2003). Reflections on the Looking Glass: A Review of Research on Feedback-Seeking Behavior in Organizations. *Journal of Management, 29*(6), 773–799. doi: 10.1016/s0149-2063_03_00079-5

Ashford, S. J., & Cummings, L. (1983). Feedback as an individual resource: Personal strategies of creating information. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 32*(3), 370–398. doi: 10.1016/0030-5073(83)90156-3

Ashford, S. J., De Stobbeleir, K., & Nujella, M. (2016). To seek or not to seek: Is that the only question? Recent developments in feedback-seeking literature. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 3*, 213-239.

Ashford, S. J., & Northcraft, G. B. (1992). Conveying more (or less) than we realize: The role of impression-management in feedback-seeking. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 53*(3), 310–334. doi: 10.1016/0749-5978(92)90068-i

Ashford, S. J., & Tsui, A. S. (1991). Self-regulation for Managerial Effectiveness: The Role of Active Feedback Seeking. *Academy of Management Journal, 34*(2), 251–280. doi: 10.5465/256442

Button, S. B., Mathieu, J. E., & Zajac, D. M. (1996). Goal orientation in organizational research: A conceptual and empirical foundation. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes, 67*(1), 26-48.

Chapanis, A. (1964). Knowledge of performance as an incentive in repetitive, monotonous tasks. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 48*(4), 263.

Chiu, C.-Y., Hong, Y.-Y., & Dweck, C. S. (1997). Lay dispositionism and implicit theories of personality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*(1), 19–30. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.73.1.19

Cho, J. (2013). Cross-level effects of team task interdependence on the relationship between learning goal orientation and feedback-seeking behaviors. *Communication Research Reports, 30*(3), 230-241.

Dahling, J. J., Chau, S. L., & O'Malley, A. (2012). Correlates and consequences of feedback orientation in organizations. *Journal of Management*, *38*(2), 531–546. doi: 10.1177/0149206310375467

De Stobbeleir, K. E. M., Ashford, S. J., & Luque, M. F. S. D. (2010). Proactivity with image in mind: How employee and manager characteristics affect evaluations of proactive behaviours. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *83*(2), 347–369. doi: 10.1348/096317909x479529

Devloo, T., Anseel, F., & De Beuckelaer, A. (2011). Do managers use feedback seeking as a strategy to regulate demands–abilities misfit? The moderating role of implicit person theory. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *26*(4), 453-465.

Dweck, C. S. (1986). Motivational processes affecting learning. *American Psychologist, 41*(10), 1040–1048. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.41.10.1040

Dweck, C. S., Chiu, C.-Y., & Hong, Y.-Y. (1995). Implicit Theories and Their Role in Judgments and Reactions: A Word From Two Perspectives. *Psychological Inquiry, 6*(4), 267–285. doi: 10.1207/s15327965pli0604_1

Dweck, C. S., & Leggett, E. L. (1988). A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality. *Psychological Review*, *95*(2), 256–273. doi: 10.1037//0033-295x.95.2.256

Fedor, D. B., Rensvold, R. B., & Adams, S. M. (1992). An investigation of factors expected to affect feedback seeking: A longitudinal field study. *Personnel Psychology, 45*(4), 779-802.

Feldman, J. M. (1981). Beyond attribution theory: Cognitive processes in performance appraisal. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 66*(2), 127.

Gabriel, A. S., Frantz, N. B., Levy, P. E., & Hilliard, A. W. (2014). The supervisor feedback environment is empowering, but not all the time: Feedback orientation as a critical moderator. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 87*(3), 487–506. doi: 10.1111/joop.12060

Gregory, J. B., & Levy, P. E. (2012). Employee feedback orientation: implications for effective coaching relationships. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 5*(2), 86–99. doi: 10.1080/17521882.2012.691888

Greller, M. M., & Parsons, C. K. (1992). Feedback and Feedback Inconsistency as Sources of Strain and Self-Evaluation. *Human Relations, 45*(6), 601–620. doi: 10.1177/001872679204500604

Hayes, A. F. (2018). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: a regression-based approach.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Herold, D. M., & Parsons, C. K. (1985). Assessing the feedback environment in work organizations: Development of the job feedback survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 70*(2), 290–305. doi: 10.1037//0021-9010.70.2.290

Heslin, P. A., Latham, G. P., & Vandewalle, D. (2005). The Effect of Implicit Person Theory on Performance Appraisals. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*(5), 842–856. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.90.5.842

Heslin, P. A., & Vandewalle, D. (2009). Performance Appraisal Procedural Justice: The Role of a Manager's Implicit Person Theory. *Journal of Management, 37*(6), 1694–1718. doi: 10.1177/0149206309342895

Heslin, P. A., & VandeWalle, D. (2005). Self-regulation derailed: Implicit person theories and feedback-seeking. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Los Angeles, CA.*

Heslin, P. A., Vandewalle, D. O. N., & Latham, G. P. (2006). Keen to help? Managers' implicit person theories and their subsequent employee coaching. *Personnel psychology, 59*(4), 871-902.

Heyman, G. D., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Childrens Thinking about Traits: Implications for Judgments of the Self and Others. *Child Development, 69*(2), 391. doi: 10.2307/1132173

Holder, T. (1996). Women in Nontraditional Occupations: Information-Seeking During Organizational Entry. *Journal of Business Communication, 33*(1), 9–26. doi: 10.1177/002194369603300104

Ilgen, D. R., Fisher, C. D., & Taylor, M. S. (1979). Consequences of individual feedback on behavior in organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 64*(4), 349–371. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.64.4.349

Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., & Judge, T. A. (2008). A quantitative review of mentoring research: Test of a model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 72*(3), 269-283.

Lam, W., Huang, X., & Snape, E. D. (2007). Feedback-seeking behavior and leader-member exchange: Do supervisor-attributed motives matter?. *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(2), 348-363.

Levy, P. E., Albright, M. D., Cawley, B. D., & Williams, J. R. (1995). Situational and Individual Determinants of Feedback Seeking: A Closer Look at the Process. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 62*(1), 23–37. doi: 10.1006/obhd.1995.1028

Levy, S. R., & Dweck, C. S. (1997). Implicit theory measures: Reliability and validity data for adults and children. *Unpublished manuscript*, Columbia University, NY.

Levy, S. R., Stroessner, S. J., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Stereotype formation and endorsement: The role of implicit theories. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 1421–1436.

Linderbaum, B. A., & Levy, P. E. (2010). The development and validation of the Feedback Orientation Scale (FOS). *Journal of Management*, *36*(6), 1372-1405.

London, M. (2015). *The power of feedback: giving, seeking, and using feedback for performance improvement.* New York: Routledge.

London, M., & Smither, J. W. (2002). Feedback orientation, feedback culture, and the longitudinal performance management process. *Human Resource Management Review, 12*(1), 81–100. doi: 10.1016/s1053-4822(01)00043-2

Moss-Racusin, C. A., Dovidio, J. F., Brescoll, V. L., Graham, M. J., & Handelsman, J. (2012). Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students. *Proceedings of the national academy of sciences, 109*(41), 16474-16479.

Morrison, E. W. (1993). Longitudinal study of the effects of information seeking on newcomer socialization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*(2), 173–183. doi: 10.1037//0021-9010.78.2.173

Morrison, E. W., & Cummings, L. L. (1992). The impact of feedback diagnosticity and performance expectations on feedback seeking behavior. *Human Performance, 5*(4), 251-264.

Mussweiler, T., Gabriel, S., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (2000). Shifting social identities as a strategy for deflecting threatening social comparisons. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*(3), 398–409. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.79.3.398

Northcraft, G. B., & Ashford, S. J. (1990). The preservation of self in everyday life: The effects of performance expectations and feedback context on feedback inquiry. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 47*(1), 42-64.

Park, G., Schmidt, A. M., Scheu, C., & DeShon, R. P. (2007). A process model of goal orientation and feedback seeking. *Human Performance, 20*(2), 119-145.

Payne, R. B., & Hauty, G. T. (1955). Effect of psychological feedback upon work decrement. Journal of Experimental Psychology, 50(6), 343–351. doi: 10.1037/h0045068

Renn, R. W., & Fedor, D. B. (2001). Development and field test of a feedback seeking, self-efficacy, and goal setting model of work performance. *Journal of Management, 27*(5), 563–583. doi: 10.1177/014920630102700504

Roberson, L., Deitch, E. A., Brief, A. P., & Block, C. J. (2003). Stereotype threat and feedback seeking in the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 62*(1), 176–188. doi: 10.1016/s0001-8791(02)00056-8

Shaw, J. D., Zhu, J., Duffy, M. K., Scott, K. L., Shih, H. A., & Susanto, E. (2011). A contingency model of conflict and team effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*(2), 391.

Sparrowe, R. T., Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., & Kraimer, M. L. (2001). Social networks and the performance of individuals and groups. *Academy of management journal, 44*(2), 316-325.

Steelman, L. A., Levy, P. E., & Snell, A. F. (2004). The Feedback Environment Scale: Construct Definition, Measurement, and Validation. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 64*(1), 165–184. doi: 10.1177/0013164403258440

Steelman, L. A., & Wolfeld, L. (2018). The manager as coach: The role of feedback orientation. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 33*(1), 41-53.

Teunissen, P. W., Stapel, D. A., van der Vleuten, C., Scherpbier, A., Boor, K., & Scheele, F. (2009). Who wants feedback? An investigation of the variables influencing residents' feedback-seeking behavior in relation to night shifts. *Academic Medicine, 84*(7), 910-917.

Thacker, R. A., & Wayne, S. J. (1995). An examination of the relationship between upward influence tactics and assessments of promotability. *Journal of Management, 21*(4), 739-756.

Tuckey, M., Brewer, N., & Williamson, P. (2002). The influence of motives and goal orientation on feedback seeking. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 75*(2), 195–216. doi: 10.1348/09631790260098677

VandeWalle, D., & Cummings, L. L. (1997). A test of the influence of goal orientation on the feedback-seeking process. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 82*(3), 390–400. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.82.3.390

VandeWalle, D., Ganesan, S., Challagalla, G. N., & Brown, S. P. (2000). An integrated model of feedback-seeking behavior: Disposition, context, and cognition. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*(6), 996–1003. doi: 10.1037//0021-9010.85.6.996

Wayne, S. J., Liden, R. C., Graf, I. K., & Ferris, G. R. (1997). The role of upward influence tactics in human resource decisions. *Personnel Psychology, 50*(4), 979-1006.

Whitaker, B. G., Dahling, J. J., & Levy, P. (2007). The Development of a Feedback Environment and Role Clarity Model of Job Performance. *Journal of Management, 33*(4), 570–591. doi: 10.1177/0149206306297581

Williams, J. R., Miller, C. E., Steelman, L. A., & Levy, P. E. (1999). Increasing feedback seeking in public contexts: It takes two (or more) to tango. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 84*(6), 969–976. doi: 10.1037//0021-9010.84.6.969