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ABSTRACT

IMPRESSION CONSEQUENCES OF SEEKING JOB PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

By

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Feedback seeking is a critical behavior by which employees assess and develop their knowledge and skills to meet the demands of increasingly knowledge-driven, dynamic workplaces. However, employees are reluctant to seek feedback because of anticipated negative impression costs. This study examines whether three styles of feedback seeking actually carry impression costs. The conceptual model guiding the investigation centers on the process by which feedback requests influence feedback providers' impressions of seekers' characteristics. Providers' attributions concerning seekers' motivations are proposed to mediate the impression formation process. The effects of work context, seekers' and providers' gender, and providers' goal orientations and attitudes toward feedback seeking are considered. Finally, the consequences of impressions for job-related outcomes are examined. 279 undergraduates rated simulated employees. Results indicate that feedback seeking has positive impression consequences and request presentation matters. Feedback seeking influences impressions partly through attributions of motive. Impressions in turn influence job-related outcomes (performance evaluations, advancement potential, and project assignment). Individual characteristics of the feedback seeker and feedback provider influence the impression formation process, but work context does not. Implications and future directions for research are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Employee feedback is essential for optimal organizational performance. Feedback highlights the discrepancy between the organization's expectations of the employee and the employee's actual performance, producing motivation and direction for improvement. Despite its clear importance, however, the literature suggests that feedback exchange is not optimal in organizations (Larson, 1984), and that the most frequent source of feedback involves observations comparing the self with others (Herold & Parsons, 1985). Feedback is communicated far too infrequently and too late in most organizations. Without feedback, employees cannot easily determine when or how they could improve their performance. While minimal feedback exchange could be detrimental in any work environment, it is particularly problematic given the developing characteristics of today's organizations.

One potential solution to infrequent or inadequate feedback exchange is for employees to actively seek feedback about their work. Employee-initiated feedback seeking is becoming more and more critical for individual and organizational success. Employees who can assess and develop their own knowledge and skills are likely to be a valued commodity in increasingly knowledge-driven, adaptability-demanding workplaces. Feedback seeking is a critical behavior and skill for obtaining valuable information about work performance and areas for development.

However, employees are often reluctant to seek feedback about their performance because they believe it has social or performance evaluation costs (i.e., negative impressions). This study investigates whether feedback seeking actually carries these perceived costs, either in the impressions that feedback providers form of seekers, or in

the judgments and decisions providers make about employees who seek feedback.[1] An understanding of the actual costs of seeking feedback will allow organizations to encourage feedback seeking through interventions that either reduce actual costs or reassure employees that the costs they perceive are not real. These types of interventions might then result in employees being able to actively seek the feedback they desire to improve their performance, develop their skills, and obtain desirable job-related outcomes.

Before focusing on the impression consequences of feedback seeking, I will address some important background information supporting the importance of feedback seeking for both organizations and employees. Next, I will summarize research that reveals employees' assumptions about the negative costs of seeking feedback. Then, I will focus on the connection of feedback seeking and impressions, discuss the questions and research gaps this study attempts to address, and present the conceptual model and hypotheses that guide this investigation.

Organizational Benefits from Employee-Initiated Feedback Seeking in Organizations

Feedback is important for both organizations and employees because, under most conditions, it enhances employee performance and motivation (Ammons, 1956; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Mento, Steel, & Karren, 1987) and improves job satisfaction (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Hackman & Oldham, 1975). In fact, in their review and meta-analysis of research on the Job Characteristics Model, Fried and Ferris claimed that because job feedback was associated with all of the psychological and behavioral measures

[1] To remain consistent with the empirical investigation reported here and avoid theoretical complexity, I will limit my discussion to situations of *employees* asking their *supervisors* for feedback. For clarity, employees will be referred to throughout this manuscript as "feedback seekers," and supervisors as "feedback providers." Despite these generic terms, the hypotheses presented here are not presumed to

investigated, development of this job dimension could potentially benefit organizations more than any other job characteristic. Thus, interventions or events that increase the amount of feedback exchanged in organizations should generally enhance motivation, performance, and job satisfaction. For example, 360° feedback systems have become popular because they promote feedback exchange across multiple levels in the organization, provide more accurate and complete performance appraisals, and improve performance (Hazucha, Hezlett, & Schneider, 1993; London & Beatty, 1993). However, formal feedback systems require large resource commitments, and may provide feedback that is less than ideal because of the nature and timing of ratings.

In contrast, informal mechanisms such as employee-initiated feedback seeking may produce stronger benefits, and at much lower cost to the organization. By actively pursuing evaluative appraisals of their work, employees can share the responsibility for increasing feedback exchange in organizations.

Feedback seeking has been broadly defined as individuals' active attempts to gain information about how well they are meeting various goals, either through *monitoring* for evaluative information or proactively *inquiring* about performance (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). This study focuses on feedback inquiry, because it is for these direct requests for evaluation that concerns about social costs come into play. There are two main characteristics that distinguish feedback inquiry from other forms of social inquiry. First, it focuses on obtaining *evaluative* information. Second, it focuses on *work performance* issues (e.g., knowledge, skills, outcomes). These two elements together define feedback seeking. Thus, if an employee requests general evaluative information

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apply to situations in which supervisors ask their subordinates for feedback, or employees ask their peers for feedback.

(e.g., "Do you like me? Do you think I'm a good person?"), this is not feedback seeking because it focuses on evaluations that are not specifically related to work performance. Likewise, if an employee requests information concerning work performance requirements, this is not feedback seeking, because the purpose of the request is to get factual information concerning performance, not evaluative information. In this investigation, feedback seeking is a proactive question oriented toward obtaining an evaluative assessment of job performance.

Benefits for Employees Who Seek Feedback

Employees who actively seek feedback could benefit in a number of ways. First, organizational restructuring and job redesign have resulted in increased job autonomy, thus creating a need for employees to be more independent and proactive. For instance, many jobs are shifting away from central work locations (Howard, 1995; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). Employees who receive less direction and attention may need to seek feedback that previously would have resulted from close contact with their supervisor. Telecommuters and virtual teams, because they are deprived of easy access to incidental feedback exchanges that occur within organizations, may face particular challenges in determining how their performance is being evaluated. The ability for employees involved in these roles to seek feedback via phone or electronic communication may be crucial for their success.

Second, reductions in middle management have increased the competition for upper level positions, making it more important than ever for employees to develop skills that will make them attractive for these positions. By seeking feedback, employees can effectively "train" themselves in order to meet their career goals. It is especially

important for employees to become responsible for their own development since it is becoming more common for individuals to change jobs, and even careers, several times over their lifetimes. The old model, under which the organization could be expected to hire employees at entry level, train them as they progressed through the company, and retire them, no longer applies (Rousseau, 1990). Instead, employees must learn to take advantage of organizational resources in a less structured, more proactive, way. Organizations are increasingly expecting employees to take responsibility for their own training and career development (Hesketh, 1997).

Third, rapid changes in organizations and their external environments (e.g., technology, globalization) require employees to adapt to shifting demands, structures, and work processes (Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). Under these conditions, waiting for formal performance appraisals or for supervisors to provide feedback could be costly and inefficient. Feedback seeking could be an important means for employees to get timely information about how well they are meeting changing expectations. The same logic also applies as individuals change jobs and careers; feedback seeking could help employees to better align with the expectations of their new roles, and to do so more quickly.

More specifically, employees who seek feedback could potentially receive more helpful and timely evaluations of their performance. Research suggests that employee-initiated feedback seeking could improve the quantity, quality, and utility of feedback exchanged in organizations in several ways. First, employees who seek feedback will increase the amount of feedback exchanged within the organization. Frequent feedback has been associated with better attitudes, better performance, and higher levels of

aspiration (Cook, 1968). Furthermore, employees who seek feedback may be able to increase the exchange of particular kinds of feedback. Supervisors are reluctant to give negative feedback and often positively distort it (Fisher, 1979; Ilgen & Knowlton, 1980; Larson, 1986), even though accurate communication of negative feedback would highlight performance-goal discrepancies, thus motivating employees and providing information necessary for performance improvement (Campion & Lord, 1982; Carver & Scheier, 1982). It is not clear that direct feedback requests would eliminate supervisors' reluctance to provide negative feedback. However, supervisors who are not inclined to give negative feedback spontaneously or during formal performance reviews may be more likely to do so in response to a specific request from an employee.

Second, employees may be able to improve the informational value of the feedback they receive by specifically targeting particular elements of their jobs that are not included in their formal evaluations. For instance, employees may be interested in receiving feedback about their performance on a specific project, or about their interpersonal skills. Or they may be interested in feedback about a particular aspect of their performance on a project (e.g., feedback about how to improve the content of the technical report versus more global feedback about the overall success of the project). Liden and Mitchell (1985) found that subjects prefer specific feedback to nonspecific feedback. There is some evidence that tailored requests can influence the feedback received by focusing the feedback provider's attention on particular information (Gioia & Sims, 1986; Fiske & Taylor, 1984). By seeking feedback, employees can obtain information that is relevant to their personal needs and professional goals, and thus has a greater impact on their behavior.

Beyond influencing the frequency, amount, and informational value of feedback, employees who seek feedback may also improve its effectiveness. Feedback given immediately following a performance episode is effective for increasing motivation (Bandura, 1991; Locke, 1967; Locke & Bryan, 1969) and improving performance (Ammons, 1956; Ford, 1984), and probably more effective than feedback given after a delay. In many organizations, however, formal performance appraisals occur only annually. Employees could receive more timely and effective feedback by actively seeking evaluations of their work when the information is likely to be most helpful. Thus, feedback seeking could improve the impact of feedback simply by changing the timing of communication.

Feedback seeking could also improve the impact of feedback in ways more related to the feedback seeker than to the feedback message itself. Research on participative decision-making proposes that employees are more satisfied with (Cotton, Vollrath, Froggatt, Lengnick-Hall, & Jennings, 1988) and accepting of decisions they have made or influenced. For instance, there is some evidence that participation helps to predict goal acceptance. Kernan, Heimann, and Hanges (1991) found that subjects who collaborated with the experimenter to set a goal had higher goal acceptance, particularly when they could also choose a task strategy. It is reasonable to suppose that the effects of employees' proactively seeking feedback may be similar to those seen in participative goal-setting studies. Employees may be fundamentally more accepting of feedback when they request it. Their acceptance should, in turn, make them more likely to benefit from the feedback. Thus, employees' control of the feedback exchange through feedback seeking may improve feedback effectiveness. Furthermore, having influence on *specific*

aspects of the feedback exchange may increase employees' acceptance of and response to feedback. For instance, selecting the feedback provider may make employees more likely to respond to the feedback message. There is some research that supports the idea that the feedback provider's credibility, expertise, and trustworthiness are important for feedback acceptance (Albright & Levy, 1995; Fedor, Eder, & Buckley, 1989; Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979).

In summary, the research findings presented above suggest that feedback-seeking behaviors may have numerous benefits for organizations and employees. Active feedback seeking should increase the overall amount of feedback in organizations, promote feedback that is targeted at specific employee goals, improve the timing of feedback, and promote acceptance of and response to feedback. These outcomes should improve motivation and performance and increase job satisfaction. Organizations should therefore be interested in selecting employees who will be proactive feedback-seekers and in developing interventions that encourage employees to seek feedback. At the same time, employees should be interested in seeking feedback to improve their performance and increase their chances for earning desirable organizational rewards such as pay raises, promotions or challenging project assignments, which may further contribute to their job satisfaction.

Potential Costs Associated with Employee-Initiated Feedback Seeking

However, researchers have suggested that employees believe that seeking feedback carries prohibitive social costs. For example, Ashford (1993) suggested that individuals believe frequent feedback seeking will be judged negatively, particularly in organizational contexts where frequent feedback seeking is not normally sanctioned.

Levy, Albright, Cawley, and Williams (1995) suggested that organizational environments need to be geared toward reducing the perceived costs of seeking feedback. Some empirical evidence supports these contentions. In a field study of attitudes toward a 360° feedback system that required participants to ask others for evaluative information, the mean rating of perceived costs of feedback seeking was 2.11 on a 5-point Likert scale. Employees who perceived high costs were less willing to use the feedback system again in the future, regardless of their initial desire for feedback ($r = -.35$, $p < .01$; Funderburg & Levy ,1997). On the other hand, employees who felt that the organization encouraged feedback seeking had more favorable attitudes toward the system ($r = .32$, $p < .01$). Thus, organizations may need to take an active role in reducing perceived costs of feedback seeking to encourage employees to actively seek feedback.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impressions created by feedback seeking and the impact of these impressions on evaluations and decisions about the employee. Because feedback is so important in organizations, proactive feedback seeking is a simple, potentially powerful way to dramatically enhance the amount and quality of feedback exchanged daily. However, it appears that employees are reluctant to seek feedback for fear of negative impression consequences. The goal of this study is to evaluate the veracity of perceived social costs of feedback seeking. A better understanding of the true impression consequences of seeking feedback will complement research on employees' beliefs about these consequences. Understanding impressions created by feedback seeking in addition to what people expect those impressions to be will guide future research and have implications for organizational interventions

regarding feedback seeking. The next two sections outline what researchers have learned about feedback seeking and the specific questions this investigation tries to address.

Overview of Feedback-Seeking Research

Feedback seeking is clearly beneficial for both organizations and employees. Thus, researchers have devoted considerable attention to understanding these behaviors. The overview presented here is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to provide a backdrop for the present study. I present a summary of the early theoretical and empirical work on feedback-seeking behaviors in organizations, focusing mainly on the connection of feedback seeking to impressions.

The existing research on feedback-seeking behaviors began when Ashford and Cummings (1983) introduced the possibility that individuals could be active feedback seekers rather than just passive feedback recipients. They defined two major strategies of feedback-seeking behavior (monitoring and inquiry), and proposed a conceptual model to support hypotheses about why individuals seek feedback (motivators) and what prevents them from doing so (costs). Briefly, their model proposed that individuals seek feedback to reduce uncertainty about goal accomplishment, self-evaluate, and prioritize goals, and that individuals choose a feedback-seeking strategy based on consideration of effort, face loss, and inference costs.

Two major streams of research have arisen from their initial development of this area. The first focused on building empirical support for this model (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Morrison & Cummings, 1992; Morrison & Weldon, 1990) and on examining the potential moderating effects of individual differences such as tolerance for ambiguity (Ashford & Cummings, 1985), approval and achievement needs

(Klich & Feldman, 1992), external propensity (Fedor, Rensvold, & Adams, 1992), and goal orientation (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). These studies have begun to answer questions about individual differences related to people's willingness to actively seek feedback to gain valuable information, and to describe the circumstances under which they are likely to do so.

The second stream of research arose when researchers hypothesized that individuals seek feedback for reasons other than gaining valuable information, and began to investigate impression management as a motivator for feedback seeking. Impression management has been defined as "any behavior that alters or maintains a person's image in the eyes of another and that has as its purpose the attainment of some valued goal" (Villanova & Bernardin, 1989: 299). This second area of research is relevant to the current study because it argues that feedback seekers may attempt to use feedback seeking as a particular strategy for influencing supervisors. As with research suggesting that employees avoid seeking feedback because of the assumed social costs, this research on the potential of positive impressions as a motivator for feedback seeking has proceeded in the absence of information or research about the true impressions resulting from feedback seeking.

Northcraft and Ashford (1990) found that subjects requested less feedback when their requests and the feedback delivery were public than when the feedback exchange was private. This was particularly true when subjects had low expectations about their performance level and low self-esteem. Their results suggested that people consider the impressions that others might form when deciding whether or not to seek feedback. Ashford and Tsui (1991) found that managers seek feedback differently from different

feedback providers (their superiors, peers, and subordinates), and thus concluded that impression management motivations may play an important role in motivating feedback-seeking behaviors. Ashford and Northcraft (1992) found that individuals generally reduce feedback-seeking behaviors when the feedback request must be made publicly, particularly if it must be made in front of an evaluative audience. They also found that individuals seek feedback more frequently when social norms support feedback seeking but that the costs of having to seek feedback publicly still decrease frequency, thus further implicating impression management as relevant to feedback seeking.

Morrison and Bies (1991) captured the accumulating empirical evidence regarding the role of impression management motivations in feedback seeking by developing a theoretical model of how impression management affects (a) individuals' willingness to engage in feedback seeking and (b) the type of information they obtain. They proposed that individuals consider impressions conveyed by both the act of seeking feedback and the likely feedback message to determine whether, when, and from whom to seek feedback. Specifically, they hypothesized that individuals may seek feedback that has no informational value if the response will highlight good performance or if the inquiry will make them look good, and if the favorable impression is believed likely to be instrumental for achievement of valued goals. More recently, Levy, Albright, Cawley, and Williams (1995) tested a multiple-decision model of the feedback-seeking process. They asserted that the desire for information determines an individual's initial intent to seek feedback, and that ego-protective and impression management motives come into play when the individual modifies this intent and decides whether or not to follow through with it.

In summary, there has been substantial theoretical and empirical progress toward identifying factors that motivate individuals to seek feedback and specifying a model of the process by which employees make decisions about when and whom to ask for feedback. Impressions have played a central role in our understanding of these behaviors. This study attempts to further our understanding of the connections between impressions and feedback seeking by examining the impressions that can be created when employees seek feedback. The purpose of this investigation is to provide information that employees might be able to use to make more informed decisions about seeking feedback.

A Shift in Perspective

Three gaps in the accumulated research and theory on feedback seeking form the foundation for the current study. First, despite the fact that, by definition, feedback seeking (and impression management) involves at least two individuals, researchers have focused only on the feedback seeker, neglecting the *feedback provider*'s role in the exchange. Second, much of the research to date has taken a static perspective, ignoring the *processes* involved in feedback exchanges, particularly those occurring after the request. As noted above, some limited research has focused on the process by which the feedback seeker makes decisions about whether, when, and from whom to seek feedback. However, researchers have not examined the processes following the request, such as the impact of the request on the feedback exchange or the influence of sought feedback on the seeker's performance. Third, in contrast to all of the attention focused on the feedback seeker, virtually no attention has been given to the *feedback-seeking behaviors* themselves. While attention has been given to whether, when, or from whom people will

seek feedback, *how* people seek feedback has been left out of the picture, particularly with respect to verbal inquiry for feedback. Research looking at feedback inquiry has not looked specifically at how people verbalize their requests.

Each of these areas suggests a number of interesting research avenues that would complement existing research. Recognizing the feedback provider as an important member of the feedback exchange raises questions such as: What is the impact of feedback seeking on the provider's feedback response? and What is the impact of feedback seeking on the feedback provider's decisions about the seeker? Focusing on the *processes* involved in feedback seeking leads to questions about *how* these outcomes result from feedback seeking behaviors. For instance, do feedback requests activate particular memory or evaluation strategies? and How do feedback providers interpret feedback requests? Finally, examining the way in which feedback-seeking inquiries are communicated leads to questions such as: What are common types of feedback requests in work settings? What are the dimensions by which feedback requests can be differentiated? What characteristics of individuals and situations can then predict the way an employee will seek feedback? Do the feedback provider's impressions of the feedback seeker depend on certain characteristics of the feedback request?

The purpose of this study is to begin to address some of the questions in these three areas by exploring the effects of different types of feedback requests on the processes by which the feedback provider forms impressions of the feedback seeker. The impression formation process is hypothesized to be based on attributions of the seeker's motivation for seeking feedback. Impressions are expected to influence the feedback provider's judgments and decisions about the seeker. By focusing on the impressions the

feedback provider forms of the feedback seeker, this study spotlights part of the role of the feedback provider in the feedback-seeking exchange. In addition, the study proposes a process model of how these impressions are formed and go on to impact subsequent evaluations and decisions about the employee. Finally, this study addresses the influence of specific examples of feedback inquiries on impressions.

Although researchers have not addressed impression management with respect to feedback-seeking behaviors, research on impression management and performance appraisal ratings suggests that there may be important effects. Some feedback-seeking behaviors can be seen as a special case of impression management, and there is evidence that subordinate impression management behaviors impact supervisor performance ratings, presumably through the impressions they create (Ferris, Judge, Rowland, & Fitzgibbons, 1994; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Kacmar, 1991; Wayne & Liden, 1995). For example, in a lab study, Wayne and Kacmar (1991) found that subordinates (confederates) who engaged in impression management tactics tended to have more supportive, positive communications with their supervisors (subjects) and that they received higher performance ratings than subordinates who did not use impression management tactics. Wayne and Liden (1995) replicated this finding in a field setting, finding that impression management tactics increased performance ratings (mediated by similarity). In addition, a few studies have found that impression management tactics influence selection interview outcomes over and above the applicant's qualifications (Baron, 1986; Gilmore & Ferris, 1989; Kacmar, Delery, & Ferris, 1992). Given the connections between general impression management tactics

and job-related outcomes, it is likely that feedback-seeking behaviors influence impressions and have important consequences for job-related outcomes.

Unanswered Questions about the Costs Associated with Seeking Feedback

Despite the fact that researchers have not examined the *actual* impressions feedback providers form of feedback seekers, a considerable amount of theoretical, as well as some empirical, attention has been directed at the impact of *perceived* impression management costs and motivations on feedback-seeking behaviors. As described above, Morrison and Bies (1991) developed an elaborate theoretical model of the role of impression management concerns in individuals' decisions to seek feedback. According to their model, individuals consider potential implications of both the act of seeking and the expected content of the message, and may decide (a) not to seek feedback so they can avoid creating a negative impression, or (b) to seek feedback so they can take advantage of an opportunity to create a positive impression. Impression management concerns then guide decisions about when to ask for information (e.g., sooner after a favorable event than after an unfavorable event, and when the feedback provider is in a good mood), whom to ask (e.g., good performers ask feedback providers with high reward power and poor performers ask feedback providers with low reward power), and how to ask (e.g., phrase feedback requests in ways that focus the feedback provider's attention on favorable aspects of performance).

However, while there is some empirical evidence that impression management costs are important determinants of feedback-seeking behaviors (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Levy, Albright, Cawley, & Williams, 1995; Morrison & Cummings, 1992; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990), there is virtually no evidence that

feedback seekers will actually incur these costs by seeking feedback. In fact, the only empirical evidence available suggests just the opposite—that there are benefits to seeking feedback. To assist employees who are making feedback-seeking decisions, it is important for researchers to clarify the *true* costs (or benefits) of feedback seeking and suggest ways for employees to control costs or maximize benefits. This is particularly true in light of research suggesting that people are not very good at accurately perceiving the impressions they convey to others (DePaulo, Kenny, Hoover, Webb, & Oliver, 1987).

Ashford and Cummings (1983) speculated briefly about various inferences the feedback providers or observers might make regarding feedback-seeking behaviors, commenting that both the act and manner of feedback seeking could influence others' inferences about the seeker's confidence and verbal, interpersonal, or political skills. Their speculations included possibilities for both positive and negative impressions resulting from feedback-seeking behaviors. Only two studies have attempted to clarify the impact of feedback-seeking behaviors on impression formation. In a survey study, Ashford and Tsui (1991) found that observers (superiors, peers, and subordinates) gave lower effectiveness ratings for managers whom they perceived as being visibly interested in positive feedback, and higher effectiveness ratings for managers whom they perceived as being visibly interested in negative feedback. Ashford and Northcraft (1992) further examined impression formation and impression management involving feedback-seeking behaviors, and found that people interpret feedback seeking positively, though they paradoxically reduce feedback-seeking behaviors when others are present. This evidence suggests that individuals may act *as if* there are impression management costs associated with feedback seeking, even though such costs may not exist. Vancouver and Morrison

(1995) challenged Ashford and Northcraft's (1992) assumption that individuals believe that feedback-seeking behaviors incur costs, and suggested that seeking feedback from a powerful feedback provider carries potential *benefit* by drawing attention to high performance. However, they provided no empirical evidence to settle the argument. As with other research that has focused only on the feedback seeker, Vancouver and Morrison's hypotheses relate only to the seeker's beliefs about what the feedback provider's impressions will be, and not to the actual impressions formed.

Goals of This Study

The purpose of this study is to empirically evaluate the impressions feedback providers[2] form of feedback seekers and the process by which they do so. In addition, I will investigate how these impressions may impact outcomes for the feedback seeker. This study is both an extension of Ashford and Northcraft's (1992) research and an improvement of their methodology. Ashford and Northcraft examined general performance history, organizational tenure (socialization versus performance context), and the difference in organizational level between the seeker and the feedback provider. This study builds on their research primarily by focusing on the *process* by which feedback providers form impressions of feedback seekers, rather than just on the outcomes of their evaluations. The central measures in this investigation tap the feedback provider's impressions of the seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self esteem and the provider's attributions concerning why the seeker is requesting feedback. To try to deepen our understanding of this process, individual differences of the feedback

[2] Participants will not actually give feedback in the investigation reported here. However, because this discussion is intended to apply to real organizations, I will continue to refer to feedback "providers." Clearly, additional research should address the question of whether actually providing feedback in response to a request influences the attributions and impressions the feedback provider forms of the seeker.

provider and situational work contexts that are expected to influence interpretations of the feedback-seeking behaviors and impression formation are included.

In addition, this study uses a much richer presentation of feedback-seeking behaviors and specifically addresses potential differences among several distinct types of feedback requests, with the aim of contrasting their effects on impressions. While there has been some preliminary discussion concerning different approaches to seeking feedback (e.g., the phrasing, presentation, or timing of a request; Larson, 1989; Morrison & Bies, 1991), questions about the impact of various feedback-seeking behaviors on the feedback provider have been completely unexplored.[3] Ashford and Northcraft's presentation of feedback-seeking behavior was minimal—they stated only that "Bob asks you for some feedback about his presentation." The current study, though still presented through a written vignette paradigm, provides a more detailed description of the type of feedback sought and the presentation of the request. Further details about the operationalization of feedback-seeking behaviors in this study are presented in the next section.

In summary, this study investigates the following research questions: (a) Do feedback-seeking behaviors affect impressions and important job-related outcomes? If so, are these effects negative, as previous discussions of impression management costs suggest, or positive, as the limited evidence provided by Ashford and Northcraft (1992) suggests? (b) Are the effects of feedback-seeking behaviors on impression formation stable across workplace contexts (i.e., performance versus learning environments)? (c)

[3] A similar gap exists in the impression management literature. Gardner and Martinko (1988) called for research on audience responses to particular impression management behaviors. Bozeman and Kacmar (1997) also recently recognized a continuing need for research to illuminate the "black box" of the

Does the presentation of the feedback request differentially influence impression formation and job-related outcomes? If so, how do particular presentations of the requests influence impressions? (d) Do individual characteristics of either the feedback seeker or the feedback provider impact the process through which feedback-seeking behaviors are interpreted? The next section discusses how feedback-seeking behaviors are operationalized to answer these questions.

Operationalization of Feedback-Seeking Behaviors

Ashford and Cummings proposed that individuals seek feedback in two ways: by actively monitoring the environment for evaluations from others, and by directly asking others for verbal appraisals of their behaviors. Further, they adopted Herold and Greller's (1977) two dimensions of feedback: referent information, which focuses on identifying behaviors required for goal accomplishment, and appraisal information, which focuses on the individual's success in performing those behaviors. Feedback seeking researchers have, with some elaboration, adhered to this basic definition.

In empirical investigations, researchers have focused on measuring feedback-seeking behaviors in correlational surveys and as dependent variables in experiments manipulating motivators of these behaviors. Investigators have operationalized feedback-seeking behaviors in a variety of ways, many of which are at best ambiguous manifestations of the definition, and some of which do not appear to capture feedback-seeking behaviors at all. For instance, field researchers (e.g., Brett, Feldman, & Weingart, 1990; Klich & Feldman, 1992) have used survey questions that address conversations about jobs or performance, but fail to specify that the respondent

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cognitive processes used by targets of impression management behaviors, especially as these impact individuals in organizations.

necessarily initiated these conversations, or that the conversations actually included feedback. Thus, they have failed to rule out the possibility that feedback was delivered, not sought. In fact, Klich and Feldman's survey measured attitudes and preferences for feedback, not feedback seeking, and not actual occurrences of feedback exchange. Lab researchers have presented similarly problematic operationalizations, including subjects' counting the number of solutions they had generated (Morrison & Weldon, 1990), or making an appointment for an offered feedback meeting following task performance (Morrison & Cummings, 1992). It is questionable whether these operationalizations adequately represent feedback-seeking behaviors. The parallelism of counting solutions and asking someone for feedback is particularly suspect, since counting is a very low-cost, nonsocial way to obtain information about performance. Likewise, it is unclear whether subjects' decisions to take advantage of a clearly-defined feedback meeting may be generalized to spontaneous feedback-seeking behaviors in the workplace.

In this study, feedback-seeking behaviors are manipulated in written stimulus materials, and are operationalized as specific, spontaneous verbal inquiries for appraisal information. Further, several types of feedback requests are examined. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, impression management researchers have found that specific styles of upward influence differentially affected performance appraisals and salaries (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988) and that accounts and apologies following poor performance incidents differentially affected supervisors' attributions of responsibility and disciplinary responses (Wood & Mitchell, 1981). I believe this is likely to hold true for feedback seeking as well: Different types of requests may have different effects on job-related outcomes. In addition, Kacmar, Delery, and Ferris (1992) argued that

researchers ought to compare the relative effectiveness of multiple impression management techniques. The same need applies to research on feedback-seeking behaviors, and this study takes advantage of the opportunity to contrast the effectiveness of several types of behaviors.

Although previous conceptualizations of feedback-seeking behaviors suggest dimensions of feedback requests that are at least superficially distinct, and Morrison and Bies (1991) suggested that feedback-seeking behaviors can be distinguished by the way the requests are framed or presented, there is no developed typology for feedback-seeking behaviors to guide this investigation. The presentation styles selected for this investigation were derived from a review of examples provided in the feedback seeking literature and from dimensions suggested by research on the explanations organizations present to applicants regarding selection decisions. These particular styles are in no way meant to be exhaustive, nor are they necessarily mutually exclusive. The examples used in this study are a first attempt to identify presentations of feedback-seeking behaviors that may be differentially interpreted and evaluated by feedback providers. They were selected because they represent plausible feedback seeking requests that may be likely to influence feedback providers' impressions of feedback seekers and their evaluations of and decisions about employees who seek feedback.

This study considers three potential presentations of a feedback request hypothesized to influence the impressions the feedback provider forms of the feedback seeker: explanation, positive spin, and negative spin. A basic question underlies all feedback requests (e.g., "What did you think of my presentation this morning?"). Building onto this basic question, seekers may present an explanation for their request,

explicitly stating their motivations to improve their performance (e.g., "What did you think of my presentation this morning? I'd like to polish it up a bit before I present it to the Board next week."). Evidence from research on applicant reactions to the way an organization presents selection decisions suggests that explicit, purposeful attempts to present information in a particular way can impact perceptions of those receiving the information. Ployhart, Ryan, and Bennett (1999) examined the effects of the sensitivity with which organizations present explanations for selection decisions on applicant reactions. Sensitivity refers to the amount of consideration for the applicant evident in the phrasing of the explanation (e.g., attempts to express concern for the applicant or convey remorse for the decision). In two empirical studies examining the effects of various types of explanations on applicant reactions, Ployhart, Ryan, and Bennett found that the sensitivity of the explanation influenced applicant reactions to organizations.

Feedback seekers may add a positive "spin" to their basic question, presenting a positive self-evaluation along with their request for feedback (e.g., "I thought my presentation was well-received this morning. What did you think?"). The idea of positive spin echoes Ferris and Judge's (1991) discussion of two forms of general self-promotion behavior: entitlements (e.g., taking credit for positive events) and enhancements (e.g., exaggerating one's accomplishments). Finally, feedback seekers may add a negative "spin" to their request, indicating their dissatisfaction with their performance (e.g., "I wish I had done a better job on my presentation this morning. What did you think?"). These positive or negative self-evaluations, presented along with the feedback request, may influence feedback providers' impressions of the feedback seeker

by having a direct impact on impressions or by influencing the provider to interpret the seeker's performance in a particular way.

Given the lack of prior research examining specific features of feedback-seeking behaviors, it is not possible to speculate on all potentially relevant presentation styles in this study. There may be other important characteristics of how feedback requests are phrased. Additionally, presentation of the feedback request may not be the only dimension important in understanding providers' impressions of feedback seekers. For example, Ployhart, Ryan, and Bennett (1999) distinguished selection decision explanations along another dimension: information content. This dimension was used to describe the type and specificity of information provided in the explanation. Similarly, feedback requests could be classified according to the type of information being sought. For instance, seekers might ask for feedback regarding personal attributes (e.g., "Do you think I'm a good public speaker?"), or they might request feedback regarding a product or behavior (e.g., "What did you think of my presentation this morning?" or "What did you think of the way I handled that customer complaint?"). In addition, the type of feedback requested could be described as evaluative or formative. The examples just given evaluate past events. In contrast, employees could seek formative feedback about their potential (e.g., "Do you think I have what it takes to be promoted?") or about products or behaviors that haven't yet occurred (e.g., "I'm thinking of approaching the meeting this way, what do you think?"). However, limitations in the design of this study prevent examination of additional dimensions without requiring impractical sample sizes. Thus, I concentrate on potential differences among three styles of presentation (explanation, positive spin, and negative spin) that are likely to influence the impressions,

evaluations, and decision outcomes investigated here. If feedback seeking does result in impression consequences, it is more likely that these impressions result from the style of the presentation than from the particular type of information being sought or the timing of the request.

Conceptual Model

To complement existing research, this study examines the impression consequences of feedback seeking from a new perspective, focusing on the feedback provider, the specific phrasing of the request, and the process by which the provider interprets and reacts to the request. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model that guides this research. Central to the model are the impressions the feedback provider forms of the feedback seeker. Thus, the model focuses on the process by which feedback requests influence the feedback provider. I propose that supervisors' impressions of employees are shaped by subordinates' feedback-seeking behaviors. Further, I propose that the feedback provider's attributions of the seeker's motives act as a mediator between the feedback-seeking behaviors and impressions. Finally, the model asserts that job-related outcomes such as work assignments, performance appraisal ratings, and promotions depend on supervisors' impressions of employees.

By shifting the focus of research to include the feedback provider, and by examining to process by which he or she interprets and reacts to feedback requests, I hope to complement previous research regarding impressions created by feedback seeking. In addition, by including specific verbalizations of feedback inquiries, I hope to promote a more precise understanding of feedback inquiry. The main path in the conceptual model connects these specific forms of feedback inquiry to the feedback

provider by investigating the attributions he or she makes regarding the feedback seeker's motives, the impressions the feedback provider then forms of the seeker, and finally the evaluations and decisions the provider makes about the seeker.

A key consideration of this model is the notion that factors beyond the feedback-seeking behaviors themselves affect how these behaviors are perceived. Supplementing the main path in the conceptual model, several characteristics of the feedback provider are proposed to influence the impression formation process. The feedback provider's goal orientation and attitudes toward feedback seeking are hypothesized to affect his or her attributions regarding the feedback seeker's motives for requesting feedback. The feedback provider's gender moderates the link between attributions of motive and impressions. The model also implicates work context (performance versus training) and the seeker's gender as moderators of the relationship between feedback-seeking behaviors and attributions of motive.

The following section describes the components of the model and presents research hypotheses for this investigation. It begins with a focus on the impressions that are the central element of this study, traces back through the antecedent impression formation and attribution processes to the feedback-seeking behaviors expected to influence impressions, and then turns to the job-related outcomes expected to be influenced as a consequence of the impression formation process.

Impression Formation Process

Research evidence suggests that people spontaneously and subconsciously make trait inferences from actions, even while they are encoding the actions (Asch, 1946;

Winter & Uleman, 1984). Supervisors probably infer traits from their employees' behaviors, and there is evidence that nonperformance behaviors contribute to general impressions (Crant, 1996; Lance, Woehr, & Fisicaro, 1991; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Furthermore, cognitive theories of social judgment (Campion & Lord, 1982; Lord, 1985a; Lord & Hanges, 1987) suggest that feedback-seeking behaviors will be important for impression formation if (a) they help the feedback provider associate the target person with a social category (e.g., a prototypical good or poor performer), (b) they compete with a prior category assignment enough to cause the feedback provider to reevaluate his or her judgment of the seeker, or (c) the feedback provider has enough cognitive resources to evaluate specific behaviors and the feedback-seeking behaviors are salient.

In this study, I focus on impressions of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. These particular impressions are included for three reasons: first, because feedback providers might infer these characteristics from feedback-seeking behaviors and the motives they attribute to feedback seekers for these behaviors; second, because these impressions can reflect both positive and negative qualities that might be attributed to feedback seekers; and third, because these impressions are likely to be relevant to evaluations and decisions made in an organizational context. These three impressions, if they are degraded when employees seek feedback, represent potential social costs that would prevent employees from requesting feedback about their work performance. As with the feedback request presentation styles included in this investigation, this set of impressions is not meant to be exhaustive nor completely orthogonal. Other impressions (e.g., interpersonal or communication skills, extraversion, agreeableness) might also be influenced by feedback-seeking behaviors, and might influence evaluations and

decisions. However, the impressions included here capture three important qualities that allow evaluation of whether the social costs perceived to be associated with seeking feedback actually might occur in employment settings. In the sections below, I outline why each of these impressions was selected for inclusion in this investigation.

Intelligence. Impressions of intelligence may be affected because the act of seeking feedback specifically highlights things employees know or think about how they perform their jobs. The provider's view of the seeker's intelligence might be influenced positively or negatively through the act of asking for feedback. The content of the request highlights information or skills that the employee does not possess about the job. If the provider believes the seeker ought to know the information or skills already, the request for this particular feedback might lower impressions of intelligence. However, if the seeker asks for feedback about information or skills that he or she is not already expected to know, the feedback request may enhance impressions of intelligence because the seeker is aware of and filling gaps in his or her knowledge and skills. Thus, impressions of intelligence are included in this investigation because they are likely to be influenced by feedback seeking and could be influenced either positively or negatively. Finally, selection research has found strong, robust links between job performance and ability (Hunter & Hunter, 1984). To the extent that supervisors recognize this (or that the relationship between these constructs is due to the generally subjective nature of job performance ratings), impressions of intelligence should affect important job-related outcomes.

Conscientiousness. Impressions of conscientiousness might also be influenced by feedback seeking. Conscientious individuals are described as goal-directed, orderly,

committed, reliable, organized, productive, and hard working. Feedback seeking is a work behavior that can reveal the extent to which employees are focused on and attempting to meet personal or organizational goals, trying to learn about and understand their job, and working to improve their performance. Thus, feedback seeking should be related to the provider's impressions of the seeker's conscientiousness. Inferences about this characteristic are likely to be positively affected by feedback-seeking behaviors. Selection research has also found robust links between job performance and conscientiousness (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Employees who are viewed as conscientious are likely to be evaluated as good employees. Impressions of conscientiousness were included in this investigation because they are likely to be influenced by feedback seeking behaviors, have the potential to show positive affects (rather than negative costs) of seeking job performance feedback, and are likely to be related to outcomes that are important in organizational settings.

Self-esteem. Feedback seeking might also influence impressions of self-esteem. Self-esteem is a sense of personal worth and pride, favorable comparison to other people, and a positive self-attitude. Feedback seeking might lead the provider to make inferences of the seeker's self-esteem because of the implications of the self-evaluation involved in assessing a need for feedback, as well as the communication of those evaluations to another person (the provider). Seeking feedback may either enhance or detract from impressions of self-esteem. On the positive side, asking for feedback may be seen as a behavior that requires enough self-confidence to admit areas of weakness or a need for help. On the negative side, providers might infer a lack of self-assurance in employees who ask for feedback about their work (at least for some aspects of it). Thus, impressions

of self-esteem were included in this investigation because they are likely to be influenced by feedback seeking, and may be influenced either positively or negatively. In addition, impressions of self-esteem are likely to affect job-related outcomes, because impressions affect decisions and behavior towards others (Srull & Wyer, 1989). Employees who are viewed as having high self-esteem are more likely to be seen as capable of successfully completing challenging projects. They are also more likely to fit managers' implicit stereotypes of good leaders (Lord, 1985b; Lord, Foti, & DeVader, 1984; Lord, Foti, & Phillips, 1982), and thus receive higher ratings of advancement potential.

The model presented in this study proposes that the impressions described above will be influenced by the providers' interpretations of the seekers' motivations for requesting feedback. In other words, feedback-seeking behaviors are expected to influence impressions through the mediating process of attribution of motive. The following section elaborates this mediated link by discussing attribution theory as it relates to the impressions the feedback provider forms of the feedback seeker. Later, I will propose a framework of three potentially distinct styles of requesting feedback and discuss how these three types of requests might influence impressions through their effect on the provider's attributions of the seeker's motives for requesting feedback. Finally, I will discuss several factors hypothesized to influence the attribution process.

Effects of Attributions of Motive on Providers' Impressions of Feedback Seekers

I expect that feedback providers' impressions of feedback seekers will be influenced by the motivations they assign for the seeker's request. People do not simply observe behaviors; rather, they routinely assign causal explanations for events, behaviors, and outcomes that they are trying to understand. Attribution theory suggests that these

causal attributions influence impressions. There has been no research regarding attributions for feedback-seeking behaviors, but a number of researchers have investigated the effects of impression management attempts on impressions, and have implicated attributions of motive as an important mediator and moderator of this relationship (Baron, 1986; Eastman, 1994; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Kipnis & Vanderveer, 1971; Rao, Schmidt, & Murray, 1995; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Kacmar, 1991). Feedback seeking has been discussed as a type of impression management (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Morrison & Bies, 1991), so a similar model may hold for the relationship between feedback requests and impressions.

Generally, impression management studies have found that attributions about the reasons behind subordinates' behaviors affect supervisors' evaluations of and actions toward those subordinates. For example, Wood & Mitchell (1981) found that subordinate explanations and apologies following poor performance had important effects on supervisors' attributions and disciplinary actions. Gordon (1996) presented a meta-analytic review of research in industrial-organizational psychology and management that examined the impact of ingratiating strategies on specific judgments and evaluations. He concluded that ingratiating tactics have a relatively small but positive effect on judgments and evaluations and that this effect is moderated by a number of factors. Specifically, he concluded that low to moderate levels of transparency of the ingratiating tactic were associated with the most positive evaluations, whereas highly transparent tactics were associated with negative evaluations. This suggests that the perceiver's attributions of the cause for the behavior are important in determining how the behavior is evaluated.

This explanation was also offered by Eastman (1994), who found that attributions moderate the effect of employee behavior on supervisor ratings and decisions, and suggested that contradictory findings regarding the effects of ingratiating behaviors could be explained by the blatancy of the behaviors. These findings echo Baron's (1986) conclusions that impression management tactics have a curvilinear relationship with interviewer ratings: while single impression management tactics improved performance ratings, "too much" of this behavior was interpreted as overdone, insincere, or inconsistent with other applicant information. In summary, these studies suggest that people's impressions are influenced not only by specific objective behaviors but also by subjective interpretations of those behaviors: both the ingratiating behaviors and the attributions of motive for these behaviors had important effects.

It is likely that this perspective is relevant for understanding the effects of feedback-seeking behaviors as well. In other words, the interpretation of the feedback-seeking behavior is important in determining the provider's impressions. I believe that there are two major classes of attributions that could influence feedback providers' impressions of feedback seekers: attributions presuming performance improvement motivations and those presuming impression management motivations. While there is no empirical evidence to support this, it is likely that if the feedback provider believes that the feedback seeker is trying to improve his or her performance, the provider will form a more positive impression of the seeker. On the other hand, if the feedback provider believes the seeker is trying to manage an impression or to self-promote, the provider will be more likely to interpret this behavior negatively (Godfrey, Jones, & Lord, 1986). There is some consensus that attributions of impression management motivations lead to

negative outcomes. Porter, Allen, and Angle (1981) suggested that employees who use political influence tactics need to disguise their self-serving intentions to have a positive impact, and Judge and Bretz (1994) provided some empirical support for this notion. They found that self-promoting influence behaviors negatively predict career success, whereas ingratiating influence behaviors positively predict career success. To be successful, impression management tactics must appear credible and genuine as opposed to controlling or manipulative. This may apply to feedback requests as well.

It should also be noted that motivations for performance improvement and impression management are not presumed to be mutually exclusive; feedback providers may believe that seekers are trying to achieve both of these objectives (and seekers may actually be doing both). Generally, I expect that the feedback provider's attributions of motivations for the seeker's feedback request will determine the feedback provider's impressions of the seeker.

Hypothesis 1a: Feedback providers' attributions that the feedback seeker is asking for feedback to improve his or her performance will be positively related to impressions of the seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self esteem.

Hypothesis 1b: Feedback providers' attributions that the feedback seeker is asking for feedback to manage the provider's impression of him or her will be negatively related to impressions of the seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self esteem.

Effects of Feedback Provider's Gender on Impression Formation

In this study I examine the effects of the gender of both the feedback provider and the feedback seeker. I expect that both the provider's and the seeker's genders will play a

role in determining how feedback-seeking behaviors are evaluated. As depicted in the model (Figure 1), however, I expect them to come into play at different points in the process. I expect the provider's gender to moderate the relationship between attributions regarding the motivation of the feedback request and impressions, and I expect the seeker's gender to influence the attributions. The expected role of the provider's gender is discussed here; expectations regarding the influence of the seeker's gender will be discussed later.

I expect the feedback provider's gender to influence his or her impressions of the feedback seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem when the provider makes an attribution of impression management motives for the feedback request. Baron (1986) found that male "interviewers" reacted negatively to combinations of self-promotional tactics, whereas females rated the same targets positively. In addition, males demonstrated significantly lower recall of information presented by the applicant (confederate) when she used multiple self-presentation tactics (though these findings are somewhat limited by the fact that only female confederates were used). Rudman (1998) found that female raters reacted more favorably to male targets who tried to impression manage through self promotion than to female targets who did so, whereas men rated them similarly. Thus, it seems that in general, men are more critical of impression management tactics than are women.

In contrast, there is no evidence or theory to suggest that male and female feedback providers' impressions will differ when feedback seekers are believed to be seeking feedback to improve their performance. Thus, I do not expect the provider's

gender to moderate the relationship between attributions of performance improvement motives and impressions.

Hypothesis 2: When attributions of impression management motives for seeking feedback are high, female feedback providers will form more positive impressions of the feedback seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem than will male feedback providers.

Attribution of Motives

This investigation focuses on attributions of personal qualities inferred from feedback-seeking behaviors. As shown in the model presented in Figure 1, I expect attributions of motive for feedback seeking to be a mediator of the relationship between the feedback seeking behaviors and the feedback provider's impressions of the feedback seeker. I expect a number of factors to influence attributions of motive: presentation of the feedback request, work context (i.e., whether the request occurs under normal job performance conditions or in a training environment), the seeker's gender, and the provider's goal orientation and attitudes toward feedback seeking. I believe that all of these factors will have direct effects on attributions through social stereotypes and personal biases. Furthermore, I expect the seeker's gender and the work context to have moderating effects through the interaction of these stereotypes and biases with particular presentations of feedback requests. This section presents specific hypotheses and rationales for these proposed relationships.

While attributions of motive are clearly important in the impression formation process, it is unclear how people make attributions. There are two perspectives that could be relevant for understanding feedback providers' interpretations of feedback requests in

the workplace. First, some research suggests that supervisors actively seek information from employees when they are trying to make attributions. In a simulation study, experienced supervisors asked questions to lead their subordinates to provide explanations or justifications for their performance (Gioia & Sims, 1986). Thus, supervisors might ask employees to clarify their reasons for requesting feedback. They might do this not only to evaluate employees' requests, but also to attempt to tailor their feedback to suit their employees' needs. This perspective will not be incorporated into this investigation. In contrast to this active perspective, others have suggested that people make attributions on the basis of salient information available at the time (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990) or factors such as personal characteristics (e.g., gender) or the fit of their behavior with category prototypes and implicit theories (Lord & Smith, 1983). This implies that attributions made at the time of the feedback exchange are likely to be influenced by information presented by the feedback seeker (verbally or nonverbally), or by other characteristics of the seeker or the situation in which the exchange occurs. This second perspective is relevant to the current study.

As noted previously, the key attributions of interest in this investigation are those assigning motives of desire for performance improvement and desire for impression management. I expect feedback providers' attributions of feedback seekers' performance improvement or impression management motivations for feedback seeking to be influenced by a number of factors. Three of these are manipulated in this study: presentation of the feedback request, work context (performance versus training), and the seeker's gender. Furthermore, I expect that individual differences among feedback providers will influence the attributions they assign. Two individual differences are

measured in this study: goal orientation and attitudes toward feedback seeking. The following sections discuss the effects of each of these factors on the attributions the feedback provider makes for the feedback seeker's request.

Effects of Feedback Request Presentation on Attributions of Motive

As described previously, this study examines the effects of three different feedback request presentations on the feedback provider's impressions of the feedback seeker, mediated by the provider's attribution of motive for the request. In other words, the phrasing of the feedback request may give the feedback provider fairly explicit cues about how the request should be interpreted. Researchers have not examined feedback providers' reactions to different types of feedback requests, but some support for this hypothesized relationship can be drawn from evidence that the phrasing of selection decision explanations influences applicant reactions (Ployhart, Ryan, & Bennett, in press).

Specifically, I am interested in differences among impressions of feedback seekers who present various kinds of feedback requests (e.g., seekers who provide an explanation for their request or present their question with a positive or negative spin). The presentation of the feedback request may impact the feedback provider's impressions of the seeker because it impacts the feedback provider's attributions about why the seeker is requesting feedback (i.e., to improve performance, manage an impression, or both). The feedback provider's attribution of motive for feedback seeking is most likely not a straightforward process. For instance, the provider probably first evaluates the truthfulness of the seeker's presentation before making an attribution about the seeker's motivations (e.g., is the stated explanation for the feedback request honest?). This study

does not address factors such as perceived truthfulness that may influence the provider's attributions of motive for feedback seeking. Instead, it focuses more generally on how the different types of presentations are likely to be used (e.g., by employees who wish to improve their performance or employees who wish to manage an impression) and the attributions that are expected to result.

There is no research that is directly relevant to the hypotheses concerning the effects of feedback request presentations on attributions. The most reasonable literature from which to draw inferences is previous research investigating the effects of impression management on attributions and impressions. The paragraphs below outline my specific expectations for the types of attributions likely to result from each of the three feedback request presentations investigated in this study (explanation, positive spin, and negative spin), and review impression management studies that provide indirect support for these hypotheses.

First, I expect that attributions of motive will be greater for feedback seeking behaviors than for basic performance behaviors. Feedback requests should be salient to the feedback provider because they exceed basic performance requirements for the job, and require active processing and a response. This salience should activate attributional search and judgments to a greater extent than performance behaviors do.

I also expect differences in the attributions assigned to different feedback request presentations. There is some evidence that employees' explanations for events influence supervisors' attributions of causes for those events. Subordinates' impression management behaviors following poor performance incidents have been found to impact managers' attributions of responsibility and disciplinary responses (Wood & Mitchell,

1981). Subordinates who offered explanatory accounts emphasizing situational causes for their poor performance (compared to those who offered accounts emphasizing personal causes) were successful in lowering managers' attributions of personal responsibility for the incident and reducing disciplinary responses. Similarly, Crant and Bateman (1993) found that employees offering external causal accounts for poor performance were assigned less blame than employees offering internal causal accounts. Neither of these studies used a control group in which there was no account offered for the poor performance, but the results suggest that employees' explanations for events may have an influence on supervisors' attributions of cause.

These findings might generalize to the effects of feedback seekers' explanations on feedback providers' attributions of motives for the request. Just as poor performers are likely to give accounts that emphasize situational factors, feedback seekers are likely to offer explanations that emphasize their desire to improve their performance. These explanations may or may not be truthful: Employees who are seeking feedback to manage an impression (e.g., to appear conscientious) are likely to offer explanations that support this impression but mask their desire to create an impression. However, the research on accounts of poor performance suggests that the explanations will influence supervisors to make attributions of desire to improve performance. In contrast, attributions of impression management motives are unlikely when the seeker presents a performance improvement explanation for the request.

Some peripheral support for the hypotheses regarding feedback requests presented with positive or negative spins can be found in the literature investigating the effects of self-enhancement and self-criticism on impressions. Powers and Zuroff (1988) compared

subjects' performance evaluations and general impressions of task partners (confederates) who were self-enhancing, self-critical, or neutral. They found that self-enhancers (who made statements such as, "I think I'm doing pretty well") received the highest performance and competence ratings, but were seen as less desirable for future interaction than neutral or self-critical confederates. In contrast, self-critics (who made statements such as, "I'm not very good at these tasks") received lower ratings, but were rated as more desirable for future interactions (and were not rated differently from neutral confederates).

While their study does not address feedback seeking, attributions, or a supervisor-subordinate relationship, their findings suggest that self-enhancements (i.e., positive spin) are more likely than self-criticisms (i.e., negative spin) to be attributed as impression management attempts. In addition, these findings suggest that attributions for requests presented with a negative spin may be ambiguous. This makes intuitive sense. Consider an example of a request presented with a negative spin: "I wasn't happy with the organization of my presentation this morning. What did you think of it?" If the feedback provider believes that the feedback seeker is pointing out a discrepancy between actual and desired performance, the provider will likely attribute the request to performance improvement motives. On the other hand, if the feedback provider believes that the feedback seeker is trying to elicit a disconfirming, positive evaluation, the provider will attribute the request to impression management motives.

Further support for the hypotheses regarding feedback requests presented with positive spin can be inferred from a study by Holtgraves and Srull (1989). They found that targets who spontaneously self-promoted in conversations were less well liked and

perceived as more egotistical and less considerate than targets who made positive self-statements in response to direct questions or a conversational partner's positive self-statements. These findings suggest that a feedback request presented with a positive spin is likely to be viewed as an attempt by the feedback seeker to point out good performance to the feedback provider or to manipulate the provider to provide praise for the performance. Thus, the request is likely to be attributed to impression management motives and lead to negative impressions. The feedback provider is unlikely to attribute requests presented with a positive spin to a desire to improve performance.

Hypothesis 3a: Attributions of performance improvement motives and attributions of impression management motives will be higher for the three presentations of feedback requests (explanation, positive spin, and negative spin) than for the control condition.

Hypothesis 3b: Attributions of performance improvement motives will be highest for feedback requests presented with an explanation, followed by requests presented with a negative spin, and then requests presented with a positive spin.

Hypothesis 3c: Attributions of impression management motives will be highest for feedback requests presented with a positive spin, followed by requests presented with a negative spin, and then requests presented with an explanation.

Effects of Work Context on Attributions of Motive for Feedback Seeking

I expect the organizational context of the feedback exchange to play a role in the feedback provider's attributions of the seeker's motivation for requesting feedback. For

instance, feedback seeking is likely to be seen as more appropriate and natural in training and learning environments than in standard performance contexts. In training contexts, employees are unlikely to be able to perform perfectly, and part of the learning process involves assessing and reducing discrepancies between current performance and training goals. In contrast, employees performing their normal job duties may be expected to understand the evaluation standards. Thus, feedback providers may be more lenient in their evaluations of feedback seekers in a learning environment than in one in which employees are expected to "know the ropes."

Previous research suggests that prototypes and implicit theories may be responsible for these effects. For instance, Kinicki, Hom, Trost, and Wade (1995) found that student evaluations of professors are strongly correlated with the extent to which the professor (a) possesses traits included in a prototype of effective instructors (positive correlation) and (b) does not possess traits included in a prototype of ineffective instructors (negative correlation). Engle and Lord (1997; Lord & Maher, 1991; Lord & Smith, 1983) proposed that supervisors use implicit performance theories to form impressions of their subordinates. In other words, supervisors have a mental picture of what it means to be a good employee, and they evaluate subordinates in terms of how well they measure up to this picture. Supervisors' implicit theories may bias ratings of past behavior, affect behavioral expectations for employees, and even define appropriate behavior for employees (Lord, Foti, & DeVader, 1984).

While many facets of the ideal employee may be constant across organizational settings, some may vary depending on context. For instance, the ideal characteristics of a good trainee may differ from those of a good employee. Feedback seeking may be one

behavior that is evaluated differently in training and job settings. The nature of the differences between the stereotypes is unclear. Supervisors may have *quantitatively* higher expectations for feedback-seeking behaviors in training contexts than in typical job performance contexts. Or, they may interpret feedback-seeking behaviors in *qualitatively* different ways in the two contexts. Either way, behavior that is seen as inappropriate in the context will be likely to lead to undesirable attributions, while behavior that is seen as situationally appropriate will lead to positive attributions (Ferris, Judge, Rowland, & Fitzgibbons, 1984; Gardner & Martinko, 1988).

In the current study, I manipulate work context by presenting feedback seekers in training or performance environments. I believe that work context will affect the provider's attributions of motive for the seeker's request directly, as explained above. In addition, I believe that work context will moderate the relationship between feedback request presentation and the feedback provider's attributions of motives for the feedback request. In other words, I expect that there will be more ambiguity regarding the seeker's motives in job performance contexts than in training contexts; thus I expect the differences among attributions across feedback presentations to be greater in performance contexts than in training contexts.

Hypothesis 4a: Attributions of performance improvement motives for feedback requests will be higher in training contexts than in performance contexts.

Hypothesis 4b: Attributions of impression management motives for feedback requests will be higher in performance contexts than in training contexts.

Hypothesis 4c: Work context will moderate the relationship between feedback request presentation and attributions of motive for feedback seeking, such that

the differences in attributions of both performance improvement and impression management motives across the feedback request presentations will be greater in performance contexts than in training contexts.

Effects of Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Motive for Feedback Seeking

I expect the feedback seeker's gender to influence attributions made for the feedback request directly, as well as to interact with the feedback request presentation to affect attributions. Research on the role of gender in impression management and formation, as well as that on gender stereotypes, implicates the seeker's gender as a potentially important factor in understanding the feedback provider's attributions regarding the seeker's motives.

First, I expect that the seeker's gender will directly influence how his or her feedback-seeking behaviors are interpreted and evaluated. While there is no research investigating the relationship between gender and feedback-seeking behaviors, several studies have examined the role of gender in impression management or impression formation. Early on, Jones and Wortman (1973) suggested that physical attributes such as gender influence the impression formation process by bounding the impressions that will be accepted about an individual. More recently, Branscombe and Smith (1990) found that stereotypes about the target's gender influence impression formation as well as decisions about job candidates, possibly by shaping the criteria used to make the decision. Also, Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) found that subordinate gender moderated the relationship between specific styles of upward influence behavior and superiors' evaluations of employee performance. In their study, the rank ordering of targets exhibiting specific types of upward influence behaviors differed for men and women,

suggesting that raters react differently to the same types of upward influence behaviors depending on whether the target is male or female. To summarize, empirical evidence from impression management research supports hypotheses that the feedback seeker's gender may influence evaluations of feedback requests, but does not offer any guidance with respect to the direction of the effect.

Research and theory regarding gender stereotypes also supports the proposed influence of gender on evaluations of feedback-seeking behaviors in the workplace. First, stereotype research indicates that people automatically apply gender stereotypes and use them to interpret behavior (Taylor, Fiske, Etcoff, & Ruderman, 1978). Thus, supervisors are likely to filter feedback requests through these same automatic stereotypes. Furthermore, while some research (Terborg, 1977) has suggested that the influence of stereotypes can be virtually eliminated by providing individuating information about employees, Martell (1991) found that this was not the case when attentional demands were heightened in a laboratory study. When subjects gave ratings under time pressure, gender stereotypes played a role in their ratings. Supervisors working under time pressures and multiple attentional demands could also be expected to resort to stereotypes when evaluating employees. Recent work in social judgability theory (Yzerbyt, Leyens, & Corneille, 1998) echoes that people rely on stereotypes to draw conclusions about others, even when the individuating information they possess is actually irrelevant to their evaluations. All of this evidence implies that supervisors may use gender stereotypes to evaluate their employees' behaviors (e.g., feedback seeking).

Research suggests that people have particular stereotypes of males and females that could affect how feedback providers interpret employees' feedback requests. Men

are generally seen as more confident, less sensitive, more influential, more analytical, less warm, and somewhat more deserving of respect than are women (Taylor, Fiske, Etcoff, & Ruderman, 1978). If feedback requests are interpreted according to these stereotypes, the seeker's gender will play a role in determining the attributions assigned for the requests. However, because of the lack of empirical research or theoretical propositions about the nature of feedback providers' impressions of feedback-seeking behaviors, it is difficult to predict the direction of the effect of gender stereotypes on these attributions. For example, a key factor in making predictions based on gender is whether feedback-seeking behaviors are generally seen as bold and assertive or weak and lacking confidence. If feedback seeking is perceived as a strength, the stereotypes would suggest that women who seek feedback would be evaluated less favorably than men (Butler & Geis, 1990; Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Marecek, & Pascale, 1975; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Miller, Cooke, Tsang, & Morgan, 1992). In contrast, if feedback seeking is seen as a sign of insecurity, gender stereotypes would predict that men would be evaluated less favorably, while women might be given more latitude. As an extension of this, gender differences might also interact with the feedback request presentation to predict attributions of motive, creating larger differences in attributions across presentation styles for one gender than the other. Because of the lack of clear support in the literature regarding the nature of a potential gender effect, my hypotheses here are exploratory rather than directional.

Hypothesis 5a: Attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives for feedback seeking will be different for male and female seekers.

Hypothesis 5b: The seeker's gender will moderate the relationship between feedback request presentation and attributions of motive, such that differences in attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives across the feedback request presentations will be different for male and female seekers.

Effects of Individual Differences among Feedback Providers on Attributions of Motive for Feedback Seeking

Finally, individual characteristics of feedback providers may affect their attributions of motive for feedback-seeking behaviors. Research on egocentric biases (e.g., consensus bias) indicates that people generally overestimate the number of people who would act similarly to them in a given situation (Kulik, Sledge, & Mahler, 1986; Kulik & Taylor, 1980; Ross, Greene, & House, 1977) even when they have information besides their own behavior on which to base estimations (Krueger & Clement, 1994). While this research generally focuses only on whether people make dispositional or situational attributions for the actor's behavior, it suggests that people may also believe that others' motivations are similar to their own. Thus, feedback providers who seek and value feedback themselves are more likely expect others to seek feedback, and to believe that others do so for reasons similar to their own.

Two individual characteristics likely to tap feedback providers' personal habits and motives for seeking feedback are goal orientation and attitudes toward feedback seeking. The expected effects of these characteristics are discussed below.

Goal orientation. Goal orientation is an individual difference that describes a person's value for and tendency to pursue learning and performance goals in achievement

situations (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984). These orientations are virtually identical to the attributions for feedback seeking investigated in this study. The learning goal orientation continuum describes the extent to which the individual strives to acquire new skills or understand something new. The performance goal orientation continuum describes the extent to which the individual strives to be evaluated favorably (or to avoid being evaluated unfavorably). Individuals with high learning goal orientations are more likely to value and seek feedback than individuals with high performance goal orientations (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997).

I propose that individual goal orientations influence not only how people approach their own achievement situations, but also how they perceive others' behavior in achievement situations such as the workplace. The potential connections are clear: Supervisors with high learning goal orientations will be more likely to believe that employees are seeking feedback because they want to learn and improve (performance improvement attribution), whereas supervisors with high performance goal orientations will be more likely to believe that employees are seeking feedback because they want to look good (impression management attribution). Thus I believe that goal orientations of feedback providers will influence the attributions they make concerning the seeker's motives for requesting feedback.

Hypothesis 6: Feedback providers' mastery goal orientation will be positively related to attributions of the feedback seeker's desire to improve performance and negatively related to attributions of desire to manage an impression.

Hypothesis 7: Feedback providers' performance goal orientation will be positively related to attributions of the feedback seeker's desire to manage an

impression and negatively related to attributions of desire to improve performance.

Attitudes toward feedback seeking. Goal orientation focuses on general attitudes toward achievement and the value of feedback; thus I expect it to have implications for how feedback providers interpret feedback-seeking behaviors. However, Fisher (1980) advocated a match between the specificity of attitude and behavior measures in order to maximize observed correlations. Thus, I also include the feedback provider's specific attitudes toward feedback seeking, and expect that these will affect attributions of motive for feedback seeking. The extent to which supervisors value and engage in feedback seeking should impact how they interpret these behaviors. In other words, supervisors who seek feedback frequently and have positive attitudes toward feedback seeking may be more likely to attribute their employees' feedback-seeking behaviors to performance improvement motives; whereas supervisors who do not seek feedback and have less positive attitudes may be more likely to suspect that impression management motives are responsible for their employees' feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 8: Providers' positive attitudes toward feedback seeking will be positively related to attributions of performance improvement motives and negatively related to attributions of impression management motives.

Consequences of Impressions: Job-Related Outcomes

From an organization's perspective, feedback-seeking behaviors are only interesting and important to the extent that they have an impact on performance in the workplace. As noted previously, there is evidence that employee's nonperformance behaviors can influence supervisors' ratings and distribution of rewards (Ferris, Judge,

Rowland, & Fitzgibbons, 1994; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Kipnis & Vanderveer, 1971; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Kacmar, 1991; Wayne & Liden, 1995). For example, in a role-play study, Kipnis and Vanderveer (1971) found that ingratiating behaviors of average subordinates effectively led subjects (playing supervisors) to give performance ratings equivalent to those they gave superior performers, despite access to objective work output data. In addition, the subjects gave ingratiators more than their share of rewards and recommended these subordinates for promotion more often than superior performers. These findings suggest that feedback-seeking behaviors (when used as an impression management tactic) might have important influences on job-related outcomes such as performance ratings and project assignment. This is particularly feasible since individuals report that, regardless of their level of performance expectations, they would be likely to seek feedback from providers with high reward power (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Their feedback requests could therefore have meaningful impact on important decisions. The model tested in this study proposes that this impact occurs through the impressions that supervisors form of employees who request feedback.

Effects of Impressions on Job-Related Outcomes

Researchers have found that impressions play an important role in predicting job-related outcomes. Krzystofiak, Cardy, and Newman (1988), for example, found that the trait inferences (impressions) people make from behaviors have a significant effect on performance ratings above and beyond the actual behaviors on which these inferences are based. Supervisors' impressions of employees are critical because they influence (a) supervisors' relationships with employees, and (b) specific formal decisions the supervisor makes about the subordinate (e.g., performance appraisal ratings and

promotion decisions). Cognitive theories support both of these potential effects. In this section, I discuss the potential relationships between supervisors' impressions of feedback-seeking behaviors and job-related outcomes, with attention to cognitive theory and research that explain and support these relationships.

First, supervisors' global impressions of their subordinates can be expected to influence their daily interactions with those subordinates. People naturally form overall impressions of others as favorable or unfavorable, and these impressions affect their everyday decisions and behavior toward those others (Srull & Wyer, 1989). Thus, impressions can influence both day-to-day interactions and longer-term relationships between people. There is some evidence that these influences occur. Wayne & Ferris (1990) found that supervisor-focused impression management tactics (e.g., doing favors for the supervisor, praising the supervisor's accomplishments) influenced supervisors' liking for subordinates, which in turn influenced the quality of their relationship. Feedback-seeking behaviors, especially when used to flatter the supervisor, may have similar effects. These behaviors could potentially have subtle but important influence on the overall relationship between the supervisor and employee (feedback seeker) as well as the important daily decisions the supervisor makes about the employee (e.g., whether to assign challenging projects to the employee, or how closely to supervise him or her). The same could also hold true for the employee's interactions with the trainer in an on-the-job training context. Although the influence of impressions on supervisor-employee relationships is probably vital for both organizations and employees, the influence of impressions on supervisor decisions is the focus of this study.

Impressions based on feedback-seeking behaviors could influence supervisors' judgments about their employees (e.g., training evaluations, performance appraisals, pay increases, promotion decisions). When an individual needs to make formal decisions about a target person, he or she must gather or remember information about that person, evaluate it, and form a judgment (Hastie & Park, 1986). Cognitive theory suggests that general impressions are the foundations for many of the decisions and judgments people make. Fiske (1982; 1988; Fiske, Neuberg, Beattie, & Milberg, 1987; Fiske & Pavelchak, 1986) has proposed that perceivers automatically try to assign individuals to a social category. If they can do so successfully, they store information about the individual that relates to that category; if not, they store specific pieces of information about the individual. She further proposes that, when making judgments, perceivers first rely on the category information and use specific information only when category information is unavailable or insufficient. Similarly, others have argued that perceivers will evaluate specific information about an individual only in the face of information that is inconsistent with the assigned category (Feldman, 1981; Srull & Wyer, 1989), when they are not too busy to do so (Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988), or when they are very concerned about accuracy. The influence of general impressions (rather than specific behavioral instances) on performance appraisal ratings in organizations is particularly likely given the memory demands associated with the fact that formal evaluations occur infrequently (e.g., annually) in many organizations (Murphy & Balzer, 1986), and given the global rating instruments that are typically used (Feldman, 1981). Thus, it is important to consider general impressions as a potential link between feedback-seeking behaviors and job-related outcomes.

Hypothesis 9: Supervisors' impressions of feedback seekers' intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem will be positively related to job-related outcomes such as assignment to challenging projects, performance appraisal ratings, and promotions.

Overview of the Empirical Investigation

This introduction has described the components of my conceptual model and presented research hypotheses for this investigation. To test these hypotheses, I conducted a laboratory study in which participants evaluated the feedback requests of several employees. Based on the conceptual model and hypotheses presented above, the purpose of this study is to answer a number of questions:

1. Do employees' feedback requests impact job-related outcomes such as work assignments, performance appraisal ratings, and promotions?
2. Are these job-related outcomes dependent upon supervisors' impressions of employees' intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem?
3. Do the feedback provider's attributions of the seeker's motives to improve performance and/or manage an impression explain the impression formation process?
4. Do characteristics of the presentation of feedback requests (i.e., explanations, and positive or negative spins) influence the provider's attributions of the seeker's motives for requesting feedback?
5. Are providers' attributions influenced by whether the feedback request is made in a training or performance context?

6. Does the feedback seeker's gender influence the attributions made by feedback providers?
7. Does the feedback provider's gender influence the impressions he or she makes on the basis of the attributions?
8. Does the feedback provider's goal orientation influence attributions of motive for feedback seeking?
9. Do the feedback provider's attitudes toward feedback seeking influence his or her attributions of the seeker's motives for requesting feedback?

METHOD

Overview

Participants in this investigation were in the role of supervisor (feedback provider). They were presented with written stimulus materials depicting employees who were seeking feedback from them, and asked to (a) rate the employees' motivations for seeking feedback, (b) form impressions of the employees' intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem, (c) rate how well they liked the employee, and (d) make decisions about job-related outcomes for the employees.

Power Analysis and Participants

The power analysis indicated that to achieve 80% power with $\alpha = .05$, would require an overall sample of 52 participants to find large effects and 128 participants to find medium effects (Cohen, 1992). For small effects, it was determined that a sample of 786 participants would be required (refer to Appendix A for details concerning sample sizes required for the analyses described later in this manuscript). Because there was no previous literature to suggest likely effect sizes, and the sample required to detect small effects was not feasible, data collection was targeted to obtain data for at least 128 participants in each of the two between-person conditions. 281 undergraduates at a large midwestern university participated and received credit in partial fulfillment of course requirements.

Demographic items are included in Appendix B. Participants were predominantly female (74%), and 90% of the participants were 21 years old or younger. Participants' work experience was varied, consisting mostly of short, part-time jobs. Over half of the participants reported that they currently held at least a part-time job. About 25% of the

participants reported that they had held a full-time job for at least one year; almost 30% had never held a full time job. Nearly half of the participants had held between 3 and 5 jobs. 53% had held at least one job where they had supervisory or management positions over other employees, and 25% had given performance ratings for employees similar to the ones they were asked to give in this experiment.

Design

This study was conducted with a 2 (context: performance vs. training) x 2 (feedback seeker's gender) x 4 (control condition and presentation of feedback request: positive spin vs. negative spin vs. explanation) incomplete blocks design. The incomplete blocks design was used because it allowed some of the factors to be tested within-person to increase statistical power without overloading participants with redundant stimulus materials. Context was a between-persons factor; all other factors were manipulated within-person.

Within each of the two context conditions, there were eight unique combinations of the levels of gender and presentation of feedback request. These unique combinations were divided into six blocks of four combinations, such that each participant responded to four of the eight unique combinations (Binet, Leslie, Weiner, & Anderson, 1955; Dean & Voss, 1999). Thus, participants were randomly assigned to (a) one of the two context conditions, and (b) one of six blocks of four combinations of gender and feedback request style within that condition. Appendix C presents a list of the factor combinations that defined each block. Each block included one example of each of the four feedback request presentation conditions: a control scenario, in which no feedback seeking occurred, plus one scenario for each of the three feedback request presentations

(explanation, positive spin, and negative spin). Two of the scenarios in each block presented female employees, and two presented male employees.

To minimize the potential influence of effects created by the order of presentation of multiple log entries to each participant, two precautionary steps were taken. First, random assignment was used to determine the order of the log entries within each block. The six blocks were randomly ordered the same way in each context condition, and then a random number generator was used to assign the order of the four log entries within each block. Second, participants were instructed repeatedly that they should rate only one log entry at a time, clearing previous log entries from their minds and avoiding comparisons.

The employees presented were police officers. This job was chosen primarily because the perceived costs of seeking feedback are likely to be high in male-dominated and stereotyped occupations. In addition, the police job provided rich enough material to create multiple instances of performance and feedback seeking along a number of performance dimensions. Furthermore, the participants in this investigation were expected to have a general understanding of the police officer job, and therefore be able to respond to stimuli about this job better than they might be able to for a job with which they were less familiar.

Pilot Testing

Two pilot studies were conducted in preparation for testing the hypotheses of this investigation. First, a pilot study was conducted to evaluate the stimulus materials. A second pilot study was then conducted to provide preliminary support for the

effectiveness of the stimulus materials in influencing ratings. Both of these pilot studies are described here.

Pilot 1: Development of Stimulus Materials. Because within-person manipulations were used in the investigation, identical behaviors could not be presented in the log entries for all officers. To equalize performance level across the log entries, fourteen undergraduates provided performance effectiveness ratings for a set of behavior statements that formed the basic skeleton for the log entries. First, behavior statements were derived from a task analysis from an actual police department. Participants read the job description and expectations materials prepared for the main investigation, and then rated fourteen behavior statements in each of the four performance dimensions included in the investigation (working as a team player, responding to emergencies, conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests, and handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts). Participants were instructed to imagine an officer doing each behavior and to rate the behavior in terms of the level of job performance it represented. Ratings were made on a 5-point likert scale where 5 = "Outstanding Performance," 3 = "Fully Acceptable Performance," and 1 = "Unsatisfactory Performance." Appendix D contains materials for Pilot Study 1.

Based on these ratings, seven behaviors were selected from each performance dimension to create the log entries, four for the behavior statements and three for the content of feedback requests. Items were selected and assigned to log entries such that within-log entry means were nearly identical (means ranged from 3.25 to 3.32), individual item ratings were matched as closely as possible across log entries, item standard deviations were similar across log entries, and variety in item content was high

to avoid within-person redundancy. Construction of the log entries from these behavior statements is described below.

Pilot 2: Test of Manipulation Strength. A second pilot study was conducted to test the manipulation strength of the feedback requests on ratings of impressions. Nineteen undergraduates participated in this investigation. The procedure was almost identical to that of the full experiment (described below). For the pilot test, each participant completed attribution, impression, and liking[4] ratings for four male officers representing each of the four feedback request styles. Ten of these participants also completed the job-related outcome measures and open-ended questions about their attributions concerning the feedback-seeker's motivation, their reasons for recommending or not recommending the officer for promotion, and their confidence in the officer. In addition, all participants completed three open-ended responses to questions about the experiment. These questions inquired about participants' thoughts regarding the purpose of the study and hypotheses, the role they were asked to play in the investigation, and any difficulties they had following the experiment procedure or suggestions for improvement of the materials. Materials for Pilot Study 2 are presented in Appendix E.

Data from Pilot 2 were analyzed to evaluate the model presented in Figure 1. Results confirmed that the feedback request style manipulation successfully produced differences in ratings of the officers; feedback request style had a significant effect on

[4] Because liking is such as overarching evaluation of the target person, there was some concern that the extent to which the participant (feedback provider) liked or disliked the feedback seeker might drive the rest of the ratings and decisions he or she made about the feedback seeker. Thus, a measure of liking for the feedback seeker was included as an impression measure both in the second pilot test and in the main investigation. However, no substantive hypotheses were included for this variable because it was not considered to be a critical impression.

attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives. Results for the link between attributions and impressions were also encouraging; performance improvement attributions were significantly related to impressions of conscientiousness, and impression management motives were significantly related to ratings of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. No inferential tests were conducted for job-related outcomes because of the small sample size, but correlations suggested that there was also a link between impressions and job-related outcomes. Liking was moderately correlated with performance improvement attributions and outcome ratings, but to a lesser degree than the other impressions, so it did not appear to be the sole driver of the ratings.

Overall, the results of Pilot 2 indicated that the manipulation was strong enough to produce effects on impressions as well as antecedents and consequences of impressions. In addition, the open-ended responses indicated that participants responded differently to the officers representing different feedback-seeking styles, that they did not guess the specific purpose of the investigation, and that they understood their role as lieutenant to the officers they rated. Participants reported no major difficulties following the experimental procedure; a few minor changes to the materials were made in response to their suggestions.

Procedure and Stimulus Materials for the Main Investigation

Experimental sessions ranged in size from 1 to 37 participants. The experimenter told participants that the purpose of the experiment was to investigate how people form impressions of employees and rate their performance, and requested their consent to participate (see Appendix F). Then, each participant received a packet for his or her assigned context and block. Appendix G contains the materials given to participants for

both the performance and training contexts (each participant received only one of these sets of instructions); packet contents are described in the following paragraphs.

Instructions in the packet asked participants to imagine that they were police lieutenants. Participants in the performance condition were asked to imagine that they were conducting annual performance reviews for four police officers. Participants in the training condition were asked to imagine that they were trainers in the police academy and were evaluating four trainees. Several introductory pages provided a general overview of the basic duties involved in the police officer job, as well as specific information about performance expectations in four categories (working as a team player, responding to emergencies, conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests, and handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts). This information was identical for the performance and training context conditions.

The feedback-seeking stimulus materials followed these background materials. Each participant's packet presented the four factor combinations (of gender and feedback request presentation) included in the participant's assigned block. Feedback-seeking behaviors were presented in written log entries. Each log entry presented behaviors and questions asked by one (male or female) police officer. Each log entry had two sections: the first listed behavioral statements of performance incidents, the second listed police officers' requests for feedback from the lieutenant (role-played by the participants).

One of the four log entries was a control scenario. This log entry consisted only of behavioral statements; the section listing requests for feedback indicated that the officer had not asked any questions. The other three log entries also contained behavioral statements, plus four feedback requests reflecting a single level of the presentation factor

(e.g., all four questions were presented with an explanation). Multiple feedback requests were presented for each officer to strengthen the manipulation and to suggest a pattern of social interaction rather than a single discrete episode of feedback seeking (Bozeman & Kacmar, 1997). The questions were balanced across the four performance dimensions described in the introductory materials. Specific content for the behavior statements and questions was selected based on results of Pilot Study 1, described above. Within each log entry, order of the performance dimensions for behavior statements and feedback requests was varied.

The goal of this study is to evaluate the impressions people form of employees who ask for feedback. Following each log entry, participants completed attribution of motive, impression formation, performance evaluation, job-related outcome, and liking[5] measures for that officer (all measures are described below and included in Appendix H). Participants were instructed to imagine being asked each question as they read a log entry, form a mental impression of the police officer, and then complete ratings for that officer. There is evidence that impression formation instructions result in deeper processing of stimulus information than memory instructions in similar types of tasks (Hilton & Darley, 1991). Research participants who are instructed to form an impression of a target person are more likely to spontaneously code behaviors as traits (Wyer & Gordon, 1982), store information in a more integrated fashion (Srull, 1983), and remember more behavioral statements (Srull, 1981; Wyer, Bodenhausen, & Srull, 1984) than participants who are given instructions to remember specific behaviors. Foti and Lord (1987) argue that trait-based information processing is a more accurate

representation of observers' goals in employment settings. Supervisors are likely to be more concerned about classifying or evaluating employees and predicting their future behavior than accurately recalling observed behaviors. Using impression formation instructions in laboratory investigations helps to activate similar goals in research participants.

To encourage participants to reflect on their ratings, I asked participants to respond to three open-ended questions for each officer. These questions asked participants to reflect on and justify their ratings of the officers (see Appendix I). Zajonc (1960) found that perceivers who are told that they will have to tell someone else about a person form more unified and organized impressions than those whose only goal is to receive information about a person. Further, Tetlock (1985; 1983; Tetlock & Kim, 1987) found that telling perceivers that they should be prepared to justify their impressions leads them to form more complex and accurate impressions and to be less susceptible to social perception biases such as the fundamental attribution error and the primacy effect. Mero and Motowidlo (1995) also found that raters were more accurate in their ratings when they were made to feel accountable by having to justify their evaluations.

After they had completed ratings for all four officers in their assigned block, participants returned their packets to the experimenter and completed demographic and individual difference measures. These questionnaires are included in Appendix B. Finally, the experimenter responded to any questions and debriefed participants about the experiment. The debriefing form is included in Appendix J.

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[5] As mentioned previously, liking was measured to rule out the possibility that it would act as a general impression that could account for the relationship between feedback-seeking style and job-related outcomes.

Outcome Measures

Participants were asked to respond to seven outcome measures. These measures are described below. Instructions and questions are included in Appendix H.

Impressions

Following each log entry, participants responded to four scales of items concerning their impressions of the police officer. These scales focused on impressions of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem, and on whether they liked the officer. Responses for all of these scales were given on a 5-point likert scale (1 = "Strongly Disagree," 3 = "Neutral," 5 = "Strongly Agree"). An eight-item scale was created to measure impressions of intelligence. Impressions of conscientiousness were assessed with the twelve-item scale from the NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1989). Impressions of self-esteem were measured with six items developed by Rosenberg, Schooler, & Schoenbach (1989). Liking was measured with five items developed for this investigation.

Antecedents of Impressions: Attributions of Motive

Attribution of motive for feedback seeking. For each police officer, participants were asked to respond to an open-ended question: "Why do you think this officer is asking you these questions?" The open-ended question was included because attributions are proposed as an antecedent of impressions in this study. It was intended to encourage participants to think about the officer's motives and to allow participants to express particular motives or combinations of motives that might not be captured by the response options included in the scale of items described below.

After responding to the open-ended attribution question, participants were asked to rate the extent to which they felt that each of sixteen possible motivations were responsible for the officer's questions. The items in this scale were developed for this investigation. The format for the scale was adopted from an attribution for performance scale used by Gioia and Sims (1986). Eight of the attributions were associated with performance improvement motivations; eight represented impression management motivations. Responses were given on a 5-point likert scale (1 = "Highly Unlikely Motivation," 3 = "Neutral," 5 = "Highly Likely Motivation").

Consequences of Impressions: Job-Related Outcomes

After completing the attribution and impression measures, participants were asked to provide three types of ratings for each feedback-seeker: performance appraisal, advancement potential, and project assignment.

Performance appraisal. Four items referred to performance on the four dimensions addressed by the feedback requests (working as a team player, responding to emergencies, conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests, and handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts). These items were presented as 5-point behaviorally-anchored rating scales developed from police officer evaluation materials. Eight performance appraisal items referring to the seeker's general performance level were compiled from measures used by Wayne and Liden (1995) and Martell (1991). Ratings for these items were given on 5-point likert scales with a variety of verbal anchors (see Appendix H for details).

Advancement potential. The advancement potential scale included four items concerning whether the officer would be a good candidate for promotion within the

police department. One of these was an open-ended item asking participants to describe why they would or would not recommend the officer for promotion.

Project assignment. The third job-related outcome scale consisted of six items that asked participants to assign additional work to the feedback-seeker. One of these was an open-ended item that asked participants why they would or would not assign a challenging project to this officer.

Individual Difference Measures

After completing all scenarios and ratings, participants completed a final set of two individual difference scales. These measures were completed last to avoid focusing participants' attention specifically on feedback seeking and on themselves. The scales are described below; questions are included in Appendix B.

Goal Orientation

Goal orientation was assessed using twelve items developed by Button, Mathieu, & Zajac (1996). Responses were given on a 5-point likert scale where 1 = "Strongly Disagree," 3 = "Neutral," and 5 = "Strongly Agree."

Attitudes toward Feedback Seeking

Attitudes toward feedback seeking were assessed with nine questions regarding how frequently participants seek feedback from superiors in educational and work environments and their perceptions of risk in feedback seeking. This scale was compiled from items presented by Ashford (1986). Responses were given on a 5-point likert scale where 1 = "Strongly Disagree," 3 = "Neutral," and 5 = "Strongly Agree."

Manipulation Checks

Participants completed two scales measuring their attention and involvement in the experiment (scale items are included in Appendix B). First, a three-item knowledge test measured recognition of information presented in the background materials participant read at the beginning of the experiment regarding the expectations for police officers. Over half of the participants answered all three items correctly; 33% missed one item. Second, participants answered four questions about their confidence in their ratings ($\alpha = .83$). On a 5-point scale, the mean confidence rating was 3.7 (s.d. = 0.7), indicating that participants felt confident in their ratings of the officers.

RESULTS

Four sets of analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses relating feedback-seeking behaviors to attributions of motive, impression formation, and job-related outcomes. The analyses are summarized in Appendix K and described below.

Missing Data

Of the 281 participants who completed the experiment, two participants did not follow instructions; their data are not included in the analyses.[6] The remaining 279 participants each rated four log entries, generating 1116 log entry (officer) ratings. Observations were evenly distributed across all between and within-person cells in the experimental design. For the first questionnaire, approximately 3% (of 1116 sets of ratings) were missing the final questionnaire item, and 1.5% were missing the final questionnaire scale. The small amount of missing data is not expected to affect analyses.

Questionnaire Scale Quality

Prior to data analysis, I evaluated the quality of the questionnaire data. Internal consistency reliabilities (alphas) for all individual difference and outcome measures are presented on the diagonal of Table 1. Reliabilities for all scales were acceptable, ranging from .80 to .97. Thus, all hypotheses were tested using scale data.

Principal components factor analysis with an oblique rotation of all outcome measures indicated that for the most part questionnaire items loaded on the expected factor. There was some overlap among scales defined in this investigation; two items measuring impressions of conscientiousness loaded on the factor dominated by attribution ratings, two items intended to measure attributions of impression management

[6] One participant answered only a subset of the questions for each police officer. Another participant indicated that he was rating officers that were not included in his log entry booklet.

loaded on the self-esteem factor, and one self-esteem item loaded with the impressions of intelligence items. However, all of these items had fairly high loadings on their intended factor as well. Inter-factor correlations ranged from .12 to .58 ($\bar{r} = .36$). Separate factor analyses for each subset of outcome measures (attributions, impressions, and outcomes) provided reasonable support for the distinction of the scales defined within each set. Thus, intended scale structure was preserved for the analyses.

Factor analysis of the individual difference items extracted factors representing mastery goal orientation, performance goal orientation, attitudes toward feedback seeking, and confidence in ratings. Items regarding attitudes toward feedback seeking loaded on two distinct factors. Items 1-4 (see Appendix B) represented comfort with and frequency of feedback seeking. Items 5-9 focused on perceived negative consequences of seeking feedback. Because these two factors were highly correlated (r = .48) and had cross-loading ranging from -.24 to .31, and because the alpha reliability for the full scale was .81, these items were treated as a single scale for the analyses reported here.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents overall means and correlations for all individual difference and outcome measures included in the investigation, across context conditions and log entries. Measures of impressions, attributions, and job-related outcomes were generally highly correlated both within and across stage of outcome. Impression ratings correlated with each other and with attribution and outcome ratings. Attribution and outcome ratings also correlated highly within each group and with each other. These patterns of correlations suggest that there are some strong relationships within the data, but the

overall correlations do not present a clean picture concerning whether these relationships support the model tested in this investigation.

Hypothesis Tests for Antecedents of Impressions

For all statistical tests reported below, $\alpha = .05$ was used as the criterion for judging statistical significance.

Effects of Attributions of Motive on Impression Formation

Hypothesis 1 stated that supervisors' attributions about why the employee is seeking feedback would be related to supervisors' impressions of the employee. Hypothesis 1a proposed that attributions of performance improvement motives would be positively related to impressions of the feedback seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. Hypothesis 1b proposed that attributions of impression management motives would be negatively related to impressions of the feedback seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. These hypotheses were tested using repeated measures multiple regression with time-varying covariates (Timm, 1975). Each participant rated four log entries; thus, both the attribution and outcome ratings were repeated within-person. The regressions reported in this section examined the effects of the two attribution scales on each of the four impression ratings.[7]

There are two things to take into consideration in examining these results. First, because R^2 measures are not available in the Mixed Procedure in SAS, it is not clear how much variance in each impression measure is accounted for by the attributions. Second, I did not use multivariate analyses to examine the effects of attributions on the entire set of impression ratings, because of the complexity of the experimental design. As shown in

[7] Liking is evaluated as an impression for all analyses.

Table 1, the impression ratings were correlated fairly highly with each other ($\bar{r} = .51$). Thus, to the extent that the attributions predict variance that is shared among the four impression measures, it is incorrect to conclude that attribution ratings independently affect the three specific impressions. The effect of the attributions may be on a combined, general impression.

Table 2 presents regression weights and statistical significance tests for these analyses. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were only partially supported, with some results that contradicted the hypothesized relationships. Relevant to Hypothesis 1a, attributions of performance improvement motives were (unexpectedly) somewhat negatively related to impressions of intelligence. However, the small beta weight and comparatively large p-value relative to others in this study make it questionable whether there is much of a practical relationship between attributions of performance improvement and impressions of intelligence. Also in contrast to the hypothesis, attributions of performance improvement motives were unrelated to impressions of conscientiousness, and negatively correlated with impressions of self-esteem. Attributions of performance improvement motives for seeking feedback were positively correlated with ratings of liking.

In conclusion, when supervisors believe employees are motivated by a desire to improve performance, there seems to be little impact on impressions of intelligence or conscientiousness. Counter to the predicted relationship, supervisors may think less highly of the self-esteem of employees whom they believe to be motivated by a desire to improve performance, perhaps reasoning that employees who wish to improve are not confident in their current performance levels. However, supervisors may be inclined to like employees to whom they attribute interest in improving performance.

Contrary to the expectations presented in Hypothesis 1b, that attributions of impression management motives would be negatively related to impressions, the results of this investigation indicated predominantly positive relationships. Attributions of impression management motives were positively related to impressions of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem, and were unrelated to liking. Apparently, when supervisors believe their employees are motivated by a desire to look good, they also think the employee has high self-esteem, intelligence, and conscientiousness. Liking for the employee was not related to whether or not the supervisor believed the employee was trying to create a good impression.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that the supervisor's gender would moderate the relationship between attributions and impressions, such that the relationship between attributions of impression management motives and impressions would be more positive for female supervisors than for male supervisors. This hypothesis was tested by evaluating the interaction of participant gender and attributions of impression management for each impression scale (intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem). In addition, an exploratory analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a significant interaction between participant gender and attributions of performance improvement motives.

Hypothesis 2 received only limited support from these analyses. Supervisor gender had a statistically significant main effect on ratings of intelligence and liking after controlling for the effects of both performance improvement and impression management attributions. Female raters gave significantly lower ratings of intelligence and liking than male raters. Relevant to the predictions made in Hypothesis 2, only one interaction was

statistically significant. In support of this hypothesis, the relationship between attributions of impression management motives and ratings of impressions of self-esteem was stronger for female raters than for male raters (Figure 2). No relationships were predicted with respect to interactions between attributions of performance improvement motives and supervisor gender. Results of the exploratory analyses conducted to examine potential relationships found no statistically significant interaction effects for supervisor gender and attributions of performance improvement motives. In conclusion, the feedback provider's gender may play a small role in influencing impressions of intelligence of feedback seekers or the degree to which they are liked. Also, the strength of the relationship between beliefs that the seeker is trying to manage an impression and impressions of self-esteem may be stronger for women than for men.

Effects of Feedback-Seeking on Attributions of Motive

The hypotheses involving the effects of feedback-seeking behaviors were tested using incomplete blocks analysis of variance (ANOVA; Winer, Brown, & Michels, 1991). Separate analyses were performed for performance improvement and impression management attribution outcomes. The incomplete blocks design used in this study allowed some of the factors to be tested within-participant to increase statistical power without overloading participants with redundant stimulus materials. However, the tests of interaction effects of feedback request presentations with work context and gender have less power than the tests of main effects.

Hypotheses 3 through 5 predicted that attribution of motive ratings would be affected by feedback-seeking behaviors. Specifically, Hypothesis 3 predicted differences driven by the occurrence of feedback seeking (vs. the control condition, in which

feedback seeking did not occur), as well as the presentation style of the feedback request (explanation, positive spin, and negative spin). Hypotheses 4 and 5 predicted that the work context (performance vs. training) and employee gender, respectively, would have direct effects on attribution ratings, and moderating effects on the relationship between feedback request presentation and attribution ratings. Hypothesis 3 was tested with the within-person F-tests for the feedback request presentation effect on each type of attribution. Hypotheses 4 and 5 were tested with the between-persons F-tests for the work context and gender main effects, and the F-tests for the interactions between feedback request presentation and work context seeker's gender. Planned comparisons were conducted to test specific hypotheses regarding differences between particular styles of feedback seeking.

Table 3 presents F-statistics for the incomplete blocks analysis for attributions of performance improvement motives; Table 4 presents F-statistics for the analysis for attributions of impression management motives. These models provided good explanatory power for both attributions when compared with baseline model accounting only for unmeasured individual differences. For performance improvement motives, the model including effects of feedback-seeking style, feedback seeker's gender, and work context accounted for significantly more variance than the baseline model ($R^2_{baseline} = .11$, $R^2 = .79$; $\Delta R^2 = .68$, $\Delta F = 894.74$, $p < .0001$). The same was true for attributions of impression management motives ($R^2_{baseline} = .15$, $R^2 = .77$; $\Delta R^2 = .62$, $\Delta F = 746.99$, $p < .0001$). Results of the overall tests confirmed that the feedback request style and feedback seeker's gender had significant main effects on both types of attribution ratings. In addition, there was a significant interaction between these two factors, thus lending

support for Hypotheses 3 and 5. In contrast, neither the main effect for work context on attributions nor the interaction effect for work context and feedback-seeking style were statistically significant; Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Because the significant interaction between feedback request presentation and feedback seeker gender could impact the interpretation of main effects involving either of these factors, the results relevant to the interaction of gender and style will be presented first. Furthermore, because of a significant (unhypothesized) three-way interaction among context, gender, and feedback-seeking style for attributions of impression management motives, the interaction between gender and feedback seeking style will be examined separately for the performance and training contexts for impression management attributions.

Hypothesis 5b predicted that the feedback seeker's gender would moderate the relationship between feedback request presentation and attribution of motive, such that differences in attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives across the feedback request presentations would be different for male and female seekers. This hypothesis was supported for both types of attribution ratings, and in both work contexts for attributions of impression management motives. While the overall ranking of attribution ratings for men and women is the same across feedback seeking styles (and in both work contexts), in some cases there are bigger differences for men than for women or vice versa. Group means for attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives are presented in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. Specific interaction effects are described below.

Attributions of performance improvement motives. Ratings for attributions of performance improvement motives are depicted in Figure 3. In several cases, participants in the investigation did not attribute the same level of desire to improve performance to men and women using the same feedback-seeking style. The difference in ratings between feedback requests presented with a positive spin and the control condition, in which no feedback requests were made, was greater for male feedback seekers than for female feedback seekers ($t = -3.61$, $p < .001$; Figure 4). Similarly, the difference between negative spin and control was greater for male feedback seekers than for female feedback seekers ($t = -2.94$, $p < .01$; Figure 5). Note that the mean ratings for male and female officers in the control condition were not significantly different ($F = 3.48$; $p = .06$). Women and men who used an explanation for their request were rated virtually identically for attributions of desire to improve performance. However, the difference between ratings given for the explanation and positive spin conditions was greater for female than for male feedback seekers ($t = -2.21$, $p < .05$; Figure 6).

Attributions of impression management motives. As noted previously, there was a significant interaction effect among work context, seeker gender, and feedback-seeking style. Thus, the effects of seeker gender and feedback-seeking style on attributions of impression management motives are considered separately for performance and training contexts. Figures 7a & 7b present ratings of attributions of impression management motives for men and women using the various feedback-seeking styles in each context. In each context, attributions of desire to manage an impression were different for men and women using the same feedback-seeking style. However, the relationships were different in the performance and training contexts, predominantly because of different

ratings of attributions for the control condition in the two contexts (male performers were rated higher than females in the performance context ($F = 8.88$, $p < .01$); in the training context, male and female performers were not rated differently ($F = 0.69$, *n.s.*)). Thus, in this section I will describe the interactions of feedback-seeker gender and style separately for the two work contexts.

There were more significant interactions between gender and feedback-seeking style in the performance context than in the training context. In the performance context, the difference between ratings of attributions of desire to create a good impression was significantly greater for female feedback seekers than for male seekers for comparisons of the control condition with the explanation condition ($t = 2.20$, $p < .05$) and with the positive spin condition ($t = 2.42$, $p < .05$). Similarly, for comparisons between the negative spin condition and both the explanation and positive spin conditions, the differences in ratings were greater for females than for males ($t = -2.25$, $p < .05$; $t = -2.48$, $p < .05$, respectively). This means that male officers were rated more equivalently with respect to whether they were trying to manage an impression, regardless of whether or how they sought feedback; there were greater differences in attribution ratings for women depending on whether or how they sought feedback. Female officers who did not seek feedback or who provided a negative self-evaluation were less likely than their male counterparts to be seen as trying to manage impressions. In contrast, male and female officers who sought feedback with an explanation or positive spin were rated equivalently with respect to impression management motives.

In the training context, there were fewer differences. Here, male and female feedback seekers were rated differently only in the negative spin condition, where male

seekers were assigned stronger attributions of impression management motives than female seekers ($F = 11.33$, $p < .001$). Thus, the difference in ratings of impression management motives between the control and negative spin conditions was greater for men than for women ($t = -2.84$, $p < .01$). The opposite was true for differences in ratings between the positive and negative spin conditions; the difference in ratings of attributions of impression management motives was greater for female seekers than for male seekers ($t = -2.37$, $p < .05$). In conclusion, in a training context, male and female performers who did not seek feedback were not rated differently, but female seekers could present a negative self-evaluation along with their feedback request with less chance of being seen as trying to make a good impression than male seekers.

The analyses presented above basically reflect the results of the fact that in the training condition male and female controls were rated equivalently, but in the performance condition, they were not. Otherwise, the pattern of attribution ratings is nearly identical. In both contexts, male seekers who used a negative spin received higher ratings of impression management motives than female seekers using the same feedback-seeking style.

Main Effects of Feedback Seeking Style on Attributions of Motive

As noted above, feedback request style had a significant main effect on both types of attribution ratings. Hypothesis 3 predicted differences in attribution of motive ratings for the control condition and the three different presentations of feedback requests (explanation, positive spin, and negative spin). Specifically, I hypothesized (3a) that all three presentations of feedback requests would produce higher ratings for both attributions of performance improvement motives and attributions of impression

management motives. This hypothesis was supported for both attributions of performance improvement motives and attributions of impression management motives. Group means and results of planned comparisons for attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives are presented in the marginal means on the right sides of Tables 5 and 6, respectively. All three types of feedback seeking elicited significantly higher ratings of attributions of motive than the control condition (Figures 3, 7a, and 7b).

Attributions of performance improvement motives. Furthermore, I hypothesized that there would be differences in attribution ratings among the three kinds of feedback request presentations. Hypothesis 3b predicted that ratings of performance improvement motivations would be highest for feedback requests presented with an explanation, followed by requests presented with a negative spin, and then requests presented with a positive spin. This hypothesis was supported by the data. All of the feedback-seeking styles were significantly different from one another, and ratings of attributions of performance improvement were ranked in the order predicted (see Table 5 and Figure 3).

Attributions of impression management motives. Hypothesis 3c predicted that ratings of impression management motivations would be highest for feedback requests presented with a positive spin, followed by requests presented with a negative spin, and then requests presented with an explanation. This hypothesis was partially supported. All of the feedback seeking styles were significantly different from one another, but ratings of attributions of impression management motives were not ranked in the exact order predicted (Table 6 and Figures 7a and 7b). As predicted, ratings were highest for feedback requests presented with a positive spin. Requests presented with an explanation

received the second highest ratings for attributions of impression management, and requests presented with a negative spin were rated significantly lower on this dimension.

Main Effects of Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Motive

I predicted a non-directional, direct effect of the feedback seeker's gender on attributions of motive. Hypothesis 5a predicted that attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives would be different for male and female seekers. This hypothesis was supported for both types of attributions; male feedback seekers were attributed with significantly stronger motives than female feedback seekers (see lower marginal means in Tables 5 and 6 and Figures 3, 7a, and 7b).

Effects of Individual Differences on Attributions

Effects of the individual difference measures were tested using repeated measures multiple regression separately for attributions of performance improvement motives and attributions of impression management motives, with learning and performance goal orientations and attitudes toward feedback seeking all included in the model. Table 7 presents regression weights for these analyses.[8]

Goal orientation. The hypotheses for goal orientation predicted that feedback providers with a high learning goal orientation would give higher ratings of attributions for performance improvement motives for feedback seeking and lower ratings of attributions for impression management motives (Hypothesis 6); whereas feedback providers with a high performance goal orientation would give higher ratings of attributions for impression management motives and lower ratings for performance improvement motives (Hypothesis 7).

[8] Because the mixed procedure in SAS was used for these analyses, no R^2 measure is available.

Hypothesis 6, regarding the effects of mastery goal orientation, was not supported. Participants' mastery goal orientation was not related to attributions of performance improvement motives. Contrary to the prediction, participants' mastery goal orientation had a statistically significant, positive relationship with attributions of impression management motives.

Hypothesis 7, regarding the effects of performance goal orientation, received partial support. Contrary to expectation, performance goal orientation was positively associated with attributions of performance improvement motives. In line with my prediction, performance goal orientation was also positively associated with attributions of impression management motives. Apparently, participants with higher performance goal orientation gave stronger ratings for both types of attributions.

Attitudes toward feedback seeking. Hypothesis 8 predicted that providers' positive attitudes toward feedback seeking would be positively related to attributions of performance improvement motives and negatively related to attributions of impression management motives. Hypothesis 8 was not supported. Attitudes toward feedback seeking were not related to attributions.

Hypothesis Tests for Consequences of Impressions

Effects of Impressions on Job-Related Outcomes

Hypothesis 9 stated that supervisors' impressions of their employees' intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem would be positively related to job-related outcomes affecting the employees (performance appraisal, advancement potential, and project assignment). This hypothesis was tested using repeated measures multiple regression with time-varying covariates (Timm, 1975). Each participant rated four log entries; thus,

both the impression and outcome ratings were repeated within-person. The regressions reported in this section examined the effects of the impression and liking[9] ratings on each of the job-related outcomes.

Overall, the analyses provided strong support for Hypothesis 9. Table 8 reports the regression weights and statistical significance tests for these analyses. With one exception, ratings of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem were positively related to ratings of general performance, the four performance dimensions represented by the behaviors and questions in the log entries, advancement potential, and project assignment. Each impression was significantly related to each outcome rating even when all impressions were entered simultaneously in the regressions to take into account the effect of liking, as well as the overlapping effects of the three core impressions. Liking was positively associated with the outcome ratings, but the other impressions each accounted for additional variance in the job-related outcomes.

The same caveats described for Hypothesis 1 and 2 concerning the lack of R^2 statistic and multivariate analysis apply here. It is unclear how much variance in each outcome measure is accounted for by the impressions, or whether the effects of impressions are specific to a particular job-related outcome or to a combined, undifferentiable set of evaluations and decisions about the employee. As shown in Table 1, the outcome ratings were correlated highly with each other $(\bar{r} = .77)$. Thus, to the extent that the impressions predict variance that is shared among the four outcome measures, it is incorrect to conclude that impression ratings independently affect the particular specific outcomes.

[9] Again, liking is included as an impression for these analyses.

However, the impressions did not seem to have the same patterns of effects across outcome ratings, suggesting that there may be some specific effects of impressions on the various outcomes. Comparisons of beta weight sizes can be made only tentatively, however, because the regression weights available for this analysis are unstandardized. Their sizes depend upon the scaling of the relevant independent and dependent variables. All of the variables included were measured on a 5-point scale. As shown in Table 1, the variances of each of the impressions and outcomes are not the same; however, it is not known whether they are different enough to seriously impact interpretations based on the beta weight sizes. In the next paragraph, I take a middle-ground approach by making some tentative suggestions concerning the relative strengths of beta weights within sets where the variance of either the independent or dependent variable is constant across the comparisons. This includes tentative statements about differing effects of the four impressions on a single outcome, and statements about differing effects of an impression across the four outcomes. I do not compare beta weights for different impressions across different outcomes. Again, these suggestions should be interpreted with caution—more as exploratory suggestions for future research than conclusions derived from the present investigation.

Looking within each outcome and summarizing the patterns of beta weights, it appears that ratings of intelligence and conscientiousness may be more strongly related to the outcome ratings than ratings of self-esteem or liking (see Table 8). Examining the pattern of beta weights for each impression, some additional suggestions can be made. Ratings of intelligence may be more strongly related to assignment to challenging projects than to the other outcomes. Ratings of conscientiousness may be more strongly

related to ratings of general performance and advancement potential than to more specific performance ratings or to project assignment. Impressions of self-esteem are potentially more related to advancement potential and project assignment than to evaluations. Similarly, liking may be more relevant for predicting advancement potential and project assignment than for predicting performance evaluations.

The conclusion from these analyses is that supervisors' impressions of employees could impact their performance ratings and the decisions they make about employees. Thus, factors that affect impressions could influence supervisor ratings and decisions.

Additional Analyses Testing the Proposed Model

To follow up on the analyses evaluating the hypotheses presented in this investigation, additional analyses were conducted to test impressions as a mediator of the relationship between feedback-seeking style and job-related outcomes. Attributions of motive for feedback seeking were dropped from these analyses because they did not have strong, consistent relationships with impressions. Tests of mediation require four component analyses: (1) demonstration of significant relationships between the independent variables and the mediators, (2) demonstration of significant relationships between the mediators and the dependent variables, (3) demonstration of a significant relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables, and (4) demonstration that these relationships between the independent and dependent variables disappear when the mediator is included in the model. These four analyses will be described briefly below. Because the focus of these analyses is on testing the mediation model proposed in this study, details regarding specific contrasts that are significantly different are not reported here.

First, incomplete blocks ANOVAs were conducted to test the direct effects of the three manipulations (feedback seeking style, feedback seeker's gender, and work context) on impressions. Each model predicted a substantial proportion of variance in the impression, and predicted significantly more variance than the baseline model predicting the impression only from unmeasured individual differences (for impressions of intelligence $R^2_{baseline} = .29$, $R^2 = .40$; $\Delta R^2 = .11$, $\Delta F = 55$; conscientiousness $R^2_{baseline} = .27$, $R^2 = .48$; $\Delta R^2 = .21$, $\Delta F = 105$; self-esteem $R^2_{baseline} = .09$, $R^2 = .69$; $\Delta R^2 = .60$, $\Delta F = 600$; liking $R^2_{baseline} = .25$, $R^2 = .44$; $\Delta R^2 = .19$, $\Delta F = 95$; for all impressions, $p < .0001$). Table 9 presents F-statistics; Figure 8 presents group means.

Across all impressions, there was a significant main effect for feedback seeking style; ratings for all three feedback-seeking styles and the control condition were significantly different from each other ($p < .05$). In addition, the interaction between feedback seeking style and officer gender was statistically significant for impressions of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. This interaction was not significant for liking. The interaction between feedback seeking style and work context was statistically significant only for impressions of conscientiousness. In conclusion, the independent variables are significantly related to the proposed mediator. Thus, the first requirement for demonstration of mediation was satisfied.

Second, mediation analysis requires demonstration of a significant relationship between the mediator and the outcome variables. The relationship between impressions and job-related outcomes has been described in detail previously (see Table 2). Although there is no R^2 measure available for these analyses, the regression weights relating the

impressions to the outcome measures were all statistically significant. This satisfies the second requirement for demonstration of mediation.

The third requirement is demonstration of a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The relationship between feedback seeking style, feedback seeker's gender, and work context and job-related outcomes was tested using incomplete blocks ANOVAs. Each model predicted a substantial proportion of variance in the outcome, and predicted significantly more variance than the baseline model predicting the outcome only from unmeasured individual differences (for general performance $R^2_{baseline} = .24$, $R^2 = .42$; $\Delta R^2 = .18$, $\Delta F = 90$; performance dimensions $R^2_{baseline} = .31$, $R^2 = .42$; $\Delta R^2 = .11$, $\Delta F = 55$; advancement potential $R^2_{baseline} = .19$, $R^2 = .44$; $\Delta R^2 = .25$, $\Delta F = 125$; project assignment $R^2_{baseline} = .18$, $R^2 = .32$; $\Delta R^2 = .14$, $\Delta F = 70$; for all outcomes, $p < .0001$). Table 10 presents F-statistics; Figure 9 presents group means.

Across all outcomes, there was a significant main effect for feedback seeking style; with only two exceptions, ratings for all three feedback-seeking styles and the control condition were significantly different from each other ($p < .05$). In addition, the interaction between feedback seeking style and officer gender was statistically significant for general performance, performance dimensions, and advancement potential. This interaction was not significant for project assignment. The interaction between feedback seeking style and work context was statistically significant only for performance dimensions. In conclusion, the independent variables are significantly related to the dependent variables, thus satisfying the third requirement for demonstration of mediation.

Finally, mediation analysis must show that the independent variables are not significantly related to the dependent variables when the mediator is included in the model. The effect of feedback seeking style, feedback seeker's gender, and work context on job-related outcomes was tested using incomplete blocks ANOVAs controlling for impression ratings. Each model predicted a substantial proportion of variance in the outcome, and predicted significantly more variance than the baseline model predicting the outcome only from the independent variables (for general performance $R^2 = .86$, $\Delta F = 863$; performance dimensions $R^2 = .75$, $\Delta F = 363$; advancement potential $R^2 = .82$, $\Delta F = 585$; project assignment $R^2 = .74$, $\Delta F = 447$; for all outcomes, $p < .0001$). Table 11 presents F-statistics; Figure 10 presents group means. Across all outcomes, there was a significant main effect for feedback seeking style, but not all feedback-seeking styles were significantly different from each other and the control condition. There were no significant main effects for gender or work context, nor were there any significant interactions. This analysis indicates that when impressions are included in the model, the relationship between the independent variables and the job-related outcome measures does not entirely disappear. Thus, the fourth requirement for demonstration of mediation is not completely satisfied.

In conclusion, there was evidence to support impressions as a partial mediator between feedback-seeking style, seeker gender, and work context and job-related outcome ratings. Although some of the effects of the independent variables on the outcome ratings disappeared when impressions were controlled for, the differences among feedback-seeking styles were not completely accounted for by impressions. In addition to the path from feedback-seeking style through impressions to outcomes, these

analyses supported a direct effect between feedback-seeking style and job-related outcome ratings.

Effects of Individual Differences on Impressions

Because I dropped attributions from the model, I tested the effects of individual differences on impressions. These effects were tested using repeated measures multiple regression separately for each impression (intelligence, conscientiousness, self-esteem, and liking), with learning and performance goal orientations and attitudes toward feedback seeking all included in the model. Table 12 presents regression weights for these analyses.[10]

Interestingly, the pattern of relationships that emerged for the effects of individual differences on impressions was different from the one reported earlier regarding the effects of individual differences on attributions. Participants' mastery goal orientation was not related to impressions. Performance goal orientation was significantly related only to impressions of intelligence. Individuals with higher performance goal orientation thought the officers were more intelligent. Attitudes toward feedback seeking, in contrast, were significantly positively related to all four impressions. Individuals with more positive attitudes toward feedback seeking thought the officers were smarter, more conscientious, and had higher self-esteem. In addition, they liked the officers more. Thus individual differences continued to play a small role in the model after attributions of motive were removed. These results suggest that individual characteristics of the feedback provider may come into play in different ways at different times in the impression formation process.

[10] Because the mixed procedure in SAS was used for these analyses, no R^2 measure is available.

To summarize, many, but not all, of the hypotheses in this investigation were supported or partly supported. In addition, the mediation analyses supported impressions as a partial mediator of the relationship between feedback seeking behaviors and job-related evaluations and decisions. In the next section, I integrate and evaluate these findings and present implications for future research and practice.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the actual impression consequences that might face employees who seek feedback about their job performance. To address this issue, a conceptual model focusing on the process by which the feedback provider forms impressions of employees who seek feedback was created and tested. The basic process proposed in the model was that supervisors' impressions of employees who seek feedback would be influenced by the feedback providers' attributions regarding whether the seeker wishes to improve his or her performance or manage impressions. Factors proposed to influence the impression formation process included the style of the feedback seeker's presentation of the request (explanation, positive spin, negative spin), the organizational context in which the request occurred (performance or training), and the seeker's gender. In addition, the provider's gender, individual preferences for goal pursuit (mastery or performance goal orientation), and attitudes toward feedback seeking were expected to play a role in the impression formation process. Finally, the model proposed that as a result of this impression formation process, the supervisor's evaluations of and decisions about the employee who sought feedback would be affected.

Summary of Findings

Results generally supported the model. Feedback seeking did influence impressions and job-related outcomes, though evidence supporting the role of attributions of motive in the impression formation process was weak. Individual characteristics of the feedback seeker and feedback provider influenced the impression formation process, but the work context in which the feedback request occurred did not. The study centered around nine main questions. Evidence suggesting answers to these questions is

summarized below. Suggestions for further research to support or better explicate the answers suggested by this investigation are provided throughout this summary. Then, limitations of the study and its findings are presented along with research suggestions that could address these limitations and help provide a clearer and more complete picture of the consequences of feedback seeking. Finally, implications of the findings for employees and organizations are presented, along with additional research questions that would clarify recommendations regarding the most appropriate and beneficial uses of feedback seeking in organizations.

1. *Do employees' feedback requests impact job-related outcomes such as work assignments, performance appraisal ratings, and promotions?*

Yes. The evidence from this investigation suggests that feedback requests can positively impact job-related outcomes. In general, feedback seekers received higher evaluation ratings and better project and promotion decision outcomes than employees who did not seek feedback. This was true even though employee performance level was controlled. Among the three feedback seeking styles, providing an explanation for the request and including a positive self-evaluation had the most positive outcomes. Outcomes resulting when requests were framed with a negative self-evaluation were less consistently positive.

This finding is interesting in light of previous theory and research indicating that people avoid seeking feedback because they believe there are negative social costs (Ashford, 1993; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Funderburg & Levy, 1997; Levy, Albright, Cawley, & Williams, 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990). The positive impression consequences found here support research that has characterized

feedback seeking as an impression management tactic with potential positive consequences (Morrison & Bies, 1991; Levy, Albright, Cawley, & Williams, 1995). Apparently, seeking feedback can lead others to produce positive evaluations and make favorable decisions. In addition, the way the request is phrased can make a difference. The fact that people do not seem to expect these positive impressions (as revealed by their attitudes and reluctance to seek feedback) suggests that there may be a critical disconnect between the presumed and actual impression consequences of feedback seeking.

2. *Are these job-related outcomes dependent upon supervisors' impressions of employees' intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem?*

Yes and no. Impression ratings predicted subjective outcome ratings. This suggests that impressions may be an important part of outcome evaluations and decisions. Moreover, each of the three main impressions significantly affected job-related outcomes when the participant's liking for the seeker was controlled. Thus, the impact of the impressions was not dominated by a global liking impression. However, the mediation effect of impressions was only partial. There are two possible explanations for the presence of partial rather than full mediation. One is that impressions not measured in this study could be acting to complete the link between feedback seeking behaviors and outcomes. As mentioned previously, impressions of interpersonal or communication skills, extraversion, or agreeableness are some possibilities. Additional research could test the effects of a broader set of impressions on supervisors' evaluations of and decisions about employees who seek feedback.

The other possible explanation for lack of full mediation is that impressions may not be fully responsible for the outcomes studied. While it seems unlikely that feedback requests could have a direct, unprocessed effect on outcomes, other processes might mediate the link. For example, evaluations of the feedback request itself may operate in tandem with impressions to mediate the impact of feedback seeking behaviors on outcomes. Additional research could examine other processes that might explain the "black box" connecting feedback seeking behaviors to outcomes.

3. *Do the feedback provider's attributions of the seeker's motives to improve performance and/or manage an impression explain the impression formation process?*

Not entirely. While attribution ratings were somewhat predictive of impression ratings, they did not tell the whole story. There was a direct effect of feedback seeking on impressions that could not be explained by attributions. There are several possible explanations for this.

One potential explanation is that feedback-seeking behaviors may simply have a direct influence on impressions that is not dependent on the feedback providers' assumptions about why the seeker is requesting feedback. For instance, irrespective of whether the seeker appears to be genuinely motivated to improve his or her performance, trying to look good, or both, some feedback requests might reflect intelligent thought and conscientious effort on the part of the employee. This explanation suggests that the model proposed in this investigation should include a direct link between feedback seeking and impressions.

Supporting a direct link between feedback seeking and impressions is research suggesting that people do not always bother making attributions of others' motives (Kelley, 1973; Mitchell & Wood, 1980; Wong & Weiner, 1981). Attributions may be an important part of the impression formation process only under certain conditions. Two potential determinants of their importance are whether the feedback request stands out in the organization and for the employee, and the seeker's performance level.

Kelley (1973) proposed that managers make three basic comparisons when evaluating an employee's behavior: consistency (i.e., has the employee sought feedback before?), distinctiveness (i.e., has the employee sought feedback from other feedback providers?), and consensus (i.e., do other employees in the organization seek feedback?). If the seeker's feedback request is not unusual in any of these comparisons, the feedback provider is unlikely to be motivated to form particular attributions about why the seeker is requesting feedback. However, if the request stands out on at least one of these comparisons, the feedback provider's attention will be aroused, and he or she will be more likely to interpret the behavior. Some evidence suggests that if the feedback-seeking behavior is conspicuous (e.g., because employees in the organization, and this employee in particular, do not normally seek feedback), the manager is more likely to attribute it to impression management (Schlenker & Leary, 1982).

In addition, research suggests that an employee's poor performance can motivate managers to make attributions (Mitchell, Green, & Wood, 1981; Mitchell & Wood, 1980; Wong & Weiner, 1981). Managers may not be as attentive to the behaviors of high or average performing employees as they are to those of low performers. More complexly, an interaction between the feedback seeking style and performance may influence the

role of attributions. For instance, when the seeker presents a self-evaluation along with the request for feedback (e.g., as a positive or negative spin), the match between the self-evaluation and the supervisor's evaluation of the work for which feedback is sought might influence whether or not attributional search and assignment occurs. When the self-evaluation does not match the supervisor's evaluation, attributions may play a greater role. When an explanation for the request is presented, the perceived truthfulness of the explanation may impact how strongly attributions come into play. If the explanation is accepted at face value, attributions may be weaker than when the explanation is suspect and attributional search occurs to detect the true motivation.

Thus, attributions of motivation for feedback-seeking behaviors may be more strongly implicated in the impression formation process when the feedback request is unusual or when the seeker's performance is low or very high. Neither of these factors was examined in this investigation. Participants did not receive any information regarding the frequency of feedback seeking in the organization, nor whether the instances they observed were representative of the individual's typical behavior. Performance level of the employees was controlled so that all employees were slightly above average. Thus, attributions may have played a stronger role if the feedback-seeking behaviors were presented as unusual or if the employees were poor or very good performers. Future research could examine the impact of the feedback seeker's performance level and the consistency of the behavior for that individual on the assignment of attributions of motive, and their importance in the impression formation process.

Another possible explanation for why attributions did not play a larger role in the impression formation process might be that this investigation missed other important types of attributions. Perhaps attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives do not adequately capture the attributions people assign to feedback seeking behaviors. For instance, supervisors might believe that employees seek feedback to show respect for the provider's opinion (either genuinely or in a falsely ingratiating manner). Research on explanations for poor performance suggests that it is not just the causal account that is important. The adequacy of reasoning in support of the account and the sincerity of communication are also implicated as important determinants of subordinates' reactions to boss' explanations for refusing a request (Bies & Shapiro, 1988). A more comprehensive set of potential attributions of motivation for feedback seeking might better explain how impressions are formed from feedback-seeking behaviors. Future research could address this possibility.

4. *Do characteristics of the presentation of feedback requests (i.e., explanations, and positive or negative spins) influence the provider's attributions of the seeker's motives for requesting feedback?*

Yes. Attributions differed according to the style of feedback seeking employed. An explanation was associated with high attributions of both performance improvement and impression management motives. Positive spin also led to both attributions, but with the balance tipped toward impression management attributions. Negative spin resulted most strongly in performance improvement attributions, with more neutral ratings of impression management attributions.

An even more striking result of this investigation was the effect of feedback seeking style on impressions and outcomes. The three styles of feedback seeking examined here resulted in clearly more positive impressions and outcomes than those resulting for employees who did not seek feedback. In addition, there were clear differences among the three styles of feedback seeking, indicating that certain styles might be better than others, at least with respect to impressions and outcomes. In general, impressions were more favorable for those who sought feedback than for those who did not. However, employees who requested feedback with a negative spin were sometimes rated more negatively than those who did not seek feedback. Requests framed with an explanation or positive spin, in contrast, led to impression ratings that were equivalent to or greater than those given to employees who did not seek feedback. Similar results were found concerning the effects of feedback seeking on outcomes. Feedback seekers generally received more positive outcomes than nonseekers, with a few exceptions for seekers who used a negative spin. Employees who sought feedback using an explanation or positive spin consistently received better outcomes than the nonseekers.

Future research could follow up on these results in two ways. First, there may be other components of the feedback seeking exchange that affect impressions and outcomes. For instance, the timing of the request might have an effect on the resulting impression or outcome. Requests made shortly before a performance appraisal might be more likely to be attended to by the supervisor because he or she is preparing for the evaluation. A second area for further research would be to determine whether the favorable effects of certain styles of feedback seeking also extend to other outcomes such as the feedback that is provided in response to the request or how well the feedback is

accepted and applied to improve performance. A more comprehensive understanding of the multiple consequences of various styles of feedback seeking is an important piece to add before we can make solid recommendations about how employees should seek feedback. In isolation, this study only suggests that feedback seeking may have positive impression consequences; it does not speak to other consequences.

5. *Are providers' attributions influenced by whether the feedback request is made in a training or performance context?*

No. Overall, whether the feedback seeking instances occurred in performance or training contexts was irrelevant to providers' attributions of motives for the requests. Work context also did not affect impressions or job-related outcomes.

There are at least three possible explanations for the lack of a context effect. First, it is possible that in real employment settings, people do not differentiate employee behaviors that occur on-the-job from those that occur during training events. If this is true, the results of this investigation may simply be an accurate reflection of the fact that work context is irrelevant for these kinds of judgments. This would be in line with the fundamental attribution error (Heider, 1958), which states that people tend to ascribe others' behavior to internal causes rather than situational influences. Thus, supervisors would be more likely to focus on employees' dispositions to explain specific behaviors than on the context in which the behaviors occur.

Alternately, it is possible that in real employment settings, context might have an effect on impressions, but this effect was undetected in this investigation. There are two potential reasons for this. First, this aspect of the experimental manipulation may not have been strong enough to influence participants. While the context information was

reinforced repeatedly in the manipulation materials, it was only a small portion of the information participants were asked to process. Participants may have been more focused on other elements of the materials and failed to notice the context information. Second, even if they noticed the context information, this manipulation may not have been real enough to mimic the impact it might have for supervisors who are actually in work settings. Supervisors in organizations may be susceptible to organizational setting and culture influences that could not be replicated in this study.

More important than a general context effect might be a more specific context effect deriving from the organization's culture regarding feedback exchange, or even more specific comparisons to other employees in the seeker's immediate environment (e.g., work group). Supervisors' impressions of subordinates are influenced by not only the subordinate's own behavior, but also the contrast between that person's behavior and the behavior of proximal others (Kipnis & Vanderveer, 1971). Because the feedback seekers in this study were presented independently, this theory could not be evaluated here. However, these social comparisons may play a role in supervisors' impressions of feedback seekers in real organizations, so this influence deserves investigation in future research.

6. *Does the feedback seeker's gender influence the attributions made by feedback providers?*

Yes. Attributions of both performance improvement and impression management motives were greater for male seekers than for female seekers. This effect is particularly striking since feedback seeker gender was a within-participant manipulation and the behavioral statements and feedback requests were identical between participants.

However, this finding should be interpreted with caution since the job used in this investigation (police officer) has a strong male stereotype. It is not clear that the same would be true in a more gender-neutral job.

None of the data collected in this investigation suggests an explanation for why males were rated with stronger attributions. One potential explanation suggested by attribution theory is that feedback seeking was perceived as more out of character for males, thus stimulating participants to engage in greater attributional search or to conclude stronger motivations. Future research could examine gender expectations regarding feedback seeking, and general impressions of whether feedback seeking is seen as a more masculine or more feminine behavior. To better clarify the results of this investigation, such research should consider the potential influence of various types of gender-dominated and gender-balanced jobs.

7. *Does the feedback provider's gender influence the impressions he or she makes on the basis of the attributions?*

Partly. Female raters gave lower ratings of intelligence and liking than male raters. In addition, female raters gave lower ratings of self-esteem than male raters when they believed that impression management motives were a highly unlikely motivation for the request, whereas female and male raters' self-esteem ratings did not differ when attributions of impression management motives were high. There were no differences between male and female raters for conscientiousness ratings. As stated above, these results should be interpreted cautiously because of the male-dominated job used in this investigation. In addition, the sample used in this investigation was predominantly

female (only 73 males participated). The combination of a male-dominated occupation and female-dominated sample limits the generalizability of these results.

These findings contradict previous findings that female raters tended to give more positive ratings (Baron, 1986). None of the data collected in this investigation suggest an explanation for why the differences found might exist. Future research could examine why ratings given by male providers tended to be higher.

8. *Does the feedback provider's goal orientation influence attributions of motive for feedback seeking?*

Yes. However, the relationships found in this investigation were not as predicted and are difficult to explain. Raters with high mastery goal orientation (i.e., those who value challenge and learning opportunities) were inclined to believe that employees were seeking feedback to manage an impression. This was contrary to the expectation that these raters would be inclined to believe the employees were seeking feedback in order to learn and improve their performance. Raters with high performance goal orientation (i.e., those who are concerned with repeating past successes and proving their abilities) gave high ratings for both performance improvement and impression management attributions. It was not predicted that they would give high ratings of performance improvement motives.

Follow-up analyses did not find a significant interaction effect between mastery and performance goal orientation for either performance improvement or impression management attributions ($t = 0.61$, *n.s.*; $t = 1.07$, *n.s.*). In addition, when only feedback seekers were included in the analyses, there were no changes in the significant positive relationships between goal orientation and attributions of motive.

The findings for mastery goal orientation are particularly difficult to explain given the significant positive correlation with feedback seeking attitudes. From this correlation, it appears that individuals with high mastery goal orientation may seek feedback more frequently and perceive lower negative consequences for feedback seeking than those with low mastery goal orientation. However, the association between mastery goal orientation, personal feedback seeking, and positive attitudes toward feedback seeking does not seem to carry over to influence assumptions about why others seek feedback.

It is possible that the relationships found were not as expected because raters generally do not consider their own motivations for seeking feedback when making attributions about others' motivations. Perhaps the tendency to project personal motives onto others is an individual difference, such that for some people goal orientation is more likely to impact attributions of motivations for others' behavior. This type of moderating individual difference would not have been captured in the current study. Future research could investigate the sources of raters' attributional judgments and the extent to which they are influenced by individual differences in general, as well as particular characteristics such as goal orientation.

It is also possible that participants did not identify with the particular request presentations used in this investigation. Participants might have a characteristic style of seeking feedback or some idea of how they would ask for feedback that does not map onto one used in this study. This lack of similarity might have prevented participants from projecting their personal motivations onto the officers presented in this study, though they might do so when presented with feedback requests more similar to their own. Future research could explore the most common styles of feedback seeking or the

influence of similarity with respect to feedback seeking style on tendency to make attributional judgments that reflect personal motivations for seeking feedback.

9. *Do the feedback provider's attitudes toward feedback seeking influence his or her attributions of the seeker's motives for requesting feedback?*

No. Attitudes toward feedback seeking were not related to the attributions assigned for these behaviors. There are several possible explanations for why this hypothesis was not supported. First, feedback-seeking behaviors may be strong enough on their own to lead to attributions of motive, without prompting comparisons to the self for information to support the attribution. Second, even if people are prompted to think about their attitudes toward feedback seeking, they may not hold strong enough attitudes about feedback seeking as a specific behavior to influence their interpretation of motives for feedback requests. If the literature is correct in suggesting that feedback seeking is infrequent, people may not have enough personal instances of feedback seeking from which to draw a clear picture of their own motivations, let alone attribute these to other seekers. Although, on average, attitudes toward feedback seeking were fairly positive (see Table 1), there is no evidence to suggest that these attitudes are reliable over time and strong enough to affect attributions of motive. In addition, perhaps if the scale included other elements of attitudes about feedback seeking (other than frequency of seeking feedback and perceptions of negative costs of feedback seeking), a stronger relationship would be found. For instance, the feedback seeker's beliefs about the positive results of seeking feedback might be more relevant to the attributions they make concerning others' motivations for seeking feedback.

Interestingly, attitudes toward feedback seeking were related to impressions. More positive attitudes toward feedback seeking were associated with more positive impressions of the seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. Participants with more positive attitudes also liked feedback seekers more. Thus, although they do not affect attributions of motive for feedback seeking, attitudes appear to influence the impressions that are formed of feedback seekers. This may be because people with more positive attitudes toward feedback seeking perceive feedback seekers as more similar to themselves and thus have more positive impressions of them. Future research could more fully explore other aspects of attitudes toward feedback seeking or raters' perceptions of similarity to feedback seekers, and how these impact impressions of feedback seekers.

Future Research Needs

To summarize, the results of this investigation generally supported the proposed model of the impression formation process that follows feedback-seeking behaviors. Employees' feedback requests did impact supervisors' evaluations and decisions. The impact of feedback seeking occurred partly through an impression formation process that was somewhat illuminated through consideration of attributions of motivation for the feedback request. The way employees sought feedback mattered, as did their gender. In addition, the feedback provider's gender, goal orientation, and attitudes toward feedback seeking played a role in determining his or her responses. Embedding the request in a performance or training context had no effect on impressions or outcomes.

This study was an initial attempt to clarify the impressions formed in response to feedback-seeking behaviors. Specifically, it attempted to do this by addressing three limitations of previous research on feedback seeking. First, it focused on the feedback

provider as an important participant in the feedback exchange. Second, it focused on the process through which the provider reacts and responds to requests for feedback. Third, it examined the impact of multiple styles of feedback seeking. In taking this approach, this study was successful in beginning to answer some important questions regarding the impression consequences of feedback seeking. However, there remains a great deal of room for additional research on the feedback seeking process, the provider's role in this process, and the feedback seeking styles that are worthy of investigation. This section summarizes the suggestions noted above and offers additional suggestions for future research.

Researchers could clarify the results of the present investigation by taking into consideration several potential influences on the impressions resulting from feedback seeking that were not included in this investigation. Most importantly, research could focus on additional factors influencing the impression formation process, since the attributions included in this investigation did not play a big role in explaining that process. Additional attributions could be considered as potential mediators of the impression formation process, or other mechanisms that might explain how feedback providers form impressions of feedback seekers could be explored. Additional impressions that might affect job-related outcomes could also be considered.

To clarify the broader effects of feedback seeking, the impression consequences of feedback requests using styles or content other than those presented here could be explored. To clarify the gender effects, the effects of feedback seeking in female-dominated or gender-balanced jobs should be examined. Unusualness of the feedback request within the organizational or workgroup context or feedback culture, or for the

particular seeker or provider could be examined. Timing of the request with respect to either the target performance or performance appraisals could be investigated.

The seeker's performance level might also be explored as a potential influence on the impressions formed by the feedback provider. Wong & Weiner (1981) suggested that prior performance levels might impact attributions about present performance. More pointedly, employees' past feedback-seeking behaviors, as well as their performance following past feedback exchanges might influence the supervisor's interpretation of subsequent feedback requests. In addition, the content of the feedback message that is provided in response to the request could have an impact on impressions and outcome ratings. For instance, providing positive feedback may enhance the feedback provider's recall of the positive aspects of the event being evaluated, thus overriding any negative reaction to the request for feedback. Investigating these factors could shed better light on how feedback seeking and the resulting impressions fit into the relationship between the employee and the supervisor.

The results of this study suggested that individual differences of the feedback provider may come into play in different ways at different points in the impression formation process. A deeper understanding of their role could be achieved by investigating the strength and consistency of attitudes toward feedback seeking, or perhaps other elements of these attitudes that would have more impact on assumptions about others' behavior. The possibility that some individuals are more likely to attribute personal motives onto seekers than are others might also be considered. The role of individual differences of the feedback *seeker* in determining feedback seeking styles, impressions, and outcomes could also be considered. The effects of feedback seeking in

the context of relationships other than between employees requesting feedback from a supervisor could be considered (e.g., for supervisors seeking feedback from subordinates or employees seeking feedback from peers). Finally, other outcomes of feedback requests, such as quality of feedback responses and their impact on future performance, also deserve attention to paint a more complete picture of the consequences of feedback seeking.

Outside of the laboratory, research on the impression consequences of feedback seeking could benefit from some preliminary qualitative research addressing how people naturally seek feedback in their work environments and how supervisors react to those requests. Such research could be undertaken either through observation or self-reports of employees and supervisors. This type of data would allow evaluation of whether the feedback seeking styles used in this investigation are representative, as well as whether the impression consequences discovered here also apply in a field setting. Further, responses from supervisors might clarify the process by which supervisors from impressions of feedback seekers. They might also surface other important impressions and outcomes worthy of investigation.

Study Limitations

As noted in the review of results above, several limitations of this investigation constrain the conclusions that can or should be drawn based on these findings. This study attempted to capture some elements of a complex social interaction between two people in a laboratory investigation. The limitations of this design are fivefold, as the study is restricted by the laboratory setting, the use of written vignettes as stimulus materials, the use of a sample of undergraduate students asked to imagine themselves as supervisors,

the repeated measures design, and the focus on the police job. Each of these is discussed below.

Laboratory setting. First, the laboratory setting has some disadvantages relevant to the model being tested in this investigation. By removing feedback seeking from the organizational context in which it would naturally occur, several potentially important elements are lost that cannot be represented in the laboratory. For instance, the laboratory setting cannot take into account the fact that in a real organization, feedback seeking behaviors are one of many stimuli on which supervisors can base their impressions of employees. In particular, the performance for which the employee is asking for feedback is likely to be part of the stimulus set. Although this study did include several performance statements indicating that the feedback seeker was a good employee, specific information about the seeker's performance on the tasks targeted for feedback was not available to raters.

Furthermore, because there is a history of interactions between supervisors and employees in organizations, supervisors are likely to have pre-existing impressions of employees. These pre-existing impressions might influence the way supervisors interpret employees' feedback seeking motivations. Or, they might be strong enough that isolated feedback seeking incidents have little impact on altering impressions, evaluations, or decisions. This study presented feedback providers with multiple feedback requests for each seeker. However, it could not truly model feedback-seeking behaviors in the context of an ongoing relationship between the supervisor and the employee. Supervisors' attributions and impressions presumably evolve dynamically over time; they do not occur as independent responses to single interactions. It is likely that employees'

past feedback-seeking behaviors, as well as their performance following past feedback exchanges, influence the supervisor's interpretation of subsequent feedback requests. Therefore, the findings presented here might miss important elements of prior impressions that interact with the feedback request to determine the supervisor's new impressions. Or, the results of this study might overstate the impact that specific instances of feedback seeking might have on impressions.

On the other hand, this study might provide a good preliminary analysis of the cumulative impact of multiple instances of feedback seeking. In this study, employees requested feedback four times, each time using the same style. Employees in organizations may also be likely to have a characteristic style of seeking feedback, which may have a similar effect over time to that demonstrated here. Additional research should test how much feedback seeking stands out in the stimulus set and whether single and multiple instances have the same effect.

Another limitation of the laboratory is that people are usually engaged in social interaction while they are forming impressions, and thus have other demands on their attention (Gilbert & Krull, 1988; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988). In organizations, supervisors form impressions while many other activities compete for their attention, rather than being specifically instructed to focus on and evaluate feedback-seeking behaviors. In this investigation, however, participants' only task was to read the information presented about the feedback seekers and form impressions of them.

Thus, while this investigation has provided strong evidence that feedback seeking *can* influence impressions, we cannot immediately assume that these effects would also be found in an organizational setting. The effects of feedback seeking on impressions

suggested by this investigation should be replicated in a field setting where other factors such as preexisting impressions, multiple stimuli, and multiple attentional demands play their role. These results do suggest, however, that feedback-seeking behaviors may play a role in impression formation, especially early on in the interactions between a supervisor and employee (when other information is limited).

Written vignettes. A second limitation of this study is that it used a "paper people" presentation of employees seeking feedback. This research methodology has been criticized for lacking realism and failing to capture the richness of stimuli available when people interact face to face (Gorman, Clover, & Doherty, 1978; Wendelken & Inn, 1981). However, there is some evidence that these concerns may be overstated. For example, Murphy, Herr, Lockhart, and Maguire (1986) contrasted the effect sizes found in "paper people" versus "behavior observation" studies in performance appraisal research. They found no significant differences between these methods with respect to the effect sizes observed in studies examining the effects of rater and ratee characteristics on job performance ratings. Similarly, Woehr and Lance (1991) demonstrated that there were no differences in work performance ratings for subjects who watched videotaped behavior or read a vignette.

For this investigation, the written vignette method was chosen because it provides a level of control that could not be achieved with other presentations (e.g., videotapes) or in a field setting. For instance, written scenarios exclude the potential contaminating effects of attractiveness and other extraneous variables. In addition, written scenarios ensure that the feedback-seeking behaviors are salient and not overshadowed by other stimuli. Kinicki, Hom, Trost, and Wade (1995) found that rating accuracy and recall

were higher for written vignette stimuli than for videotapes. This level of control was considered to be an advantage for this investigation since this study represents the first attempt to understand the potential impressions created by feedback seeking behaviors.

In conclusion, there is no consensus regarding whether written vignette paradigms are a fatal flaw in research investigating social interactions. This method has some clear advantages for a preliminary study in this area, because it allows for a focused, controlled investigation of whether feedback seeking can carry impression costs or benefits. In this study, feedback request presentation had a significant effect on every single outcome that followed it. This implies that the paper officers had enough impact to differentially effect ratings of attributions, impressions, and organizational outcomes. However, this study should be validated by field research that can examine the question of whether or not feedback seeking does carry impression costs or benefits within the complex social context of an organization.

Repeated measures design. Third, the repeated measures design used in this investigation carries potential threats to internal validity. Repeated presentation of stimulus materials may oversensitize participants to factors being manipulated and introduce range effects. Range effects can bias participants' responses to experimental manipulations, such that the participants' responses are influenced not only by the manipulation, but also by the range of manipulations to which they are exposed (Poulton, 1973). However, as Greenwald (1976) argued, within-participant designs can minimize these negative effects and also take advantage of potential advantages for external validity. For this investigation, the repeated measures design was selected because of its

potential contributions to external validity and for experimental efficiency (i.e., greater statistical power with fewer participants).

To reduce negative effects of the within-participants design, participants were instructed to clear each set of stimuli from their minds and not make comparisons among the individuals they were rating. In addition, the order of presentation of the experimental manipulation conditions (styles of feedback seeking) was randomized across blocks. Evidence from the second pilot investigation suggested that participants were not overly attentive to the feedback-seeking behaviors or the particular styles of seeking as the central manipulations of the experiment. Examination of the data from the main investigation indicated that there were few differences in findings when only the first set of responses for each participant was examined. A summary of the analyses of data only from the first within-participant manipulation is given in the next paragraph. In some cases, tests of mean differences were not significant for the smaller data set; this discrepancy from the full data set is ignored. Only differences in the conclusions to be drawn from the data are noted.

As with the analyses of the full set of data, there were no significant main effects for feedback seeker's gender in the partial data. Likewise, rank orderings of the feedback-seeking styles with respect to attribution of motive ratings were the same. With respect to impressions, ratings for conscientiousness and self-esteem showed the same general pattern in the first-only data as in the full data. However, for impressions of intelligence, officers who did not seek feedback were rated significantly higher than officers who sought feedback. In the full dataset, officers who did not seek feedback were rated less intelligent than officers who requested feedback with an explanation or

positive spin, and more intelligent than officers who requested feedback with a negative spin.

With respect to job-related outcomes, results from the dataset including only each participant's first exposure to feedback seeking showed few significant differences in mean ratings across the four styles. For ratings of general performance, performance dimensions, and advancement potential, the partial data showed no significant differences across feedback seeking styles. However, the trends in means were nearly identical to those found in the data including all within-participant manipulations. The nonsignificant findings could simply result from the reduced sample size and power associated with the statistical tests for the partial data. The only exception was for ratings of advancement potential, where officers who did not seek feedback were given higher ratings than those who used a negative spin. In contrast, the full data set showed the opposite pattern. Finally, ratings for project assignment showed the same basic pattern of significant mean differences for the partial and full data, with the exception that officers who did not seek feedback were rated equivalently with those who sought feedback with an explanation, and higher than the other groups. In the full data, non-seekers were given lower ratings than seekers who used an explanation or positive spin.

The few differences in findings using only the first within-participant manipulation suggest that there were no major drawbacks of the repeated measures design. Moreover, the repeated measures design may be a more accurate test of what would happen in a real organizational setting. Real supervisors are exposed to multiple employees who could vary in terms of whether and how they seek feedback. Supervisors' reactions and responses to these employees are not likely to be completely

independent. To the extent that this is true, any comparison effects that occurred in this investigation might reflect those that would be made in a real organization. Additional research, using between-subjects manipulations or a field setting could provide added support for the conclusions drawn here or more directly address the comparisons that might occur.

Undergraduate sample. Fourth, this study sampled undergraduate students and asked them to fill the role of supervisor. In the absence of a true organizational context, they had to mentally imagine the scenarios. More specifically, participants were asked to take on the role of a police lieutenant supervising officers, a role with which they had no personal familiarity. In some senses, this might make the results of this investigation more generalizable, because it may tap into some basic human reactions rather than reactions to particular situations and people with which the participants were familiar. However, it is also possible that how participants thought they would respond differs from how they would actually respond if faced with a feedback seeker. If this is true, participants' responses may not capture well what would actually happen in organizational settings with people who are in supervisory positions, and particularly with police lieutenants. Although a rather large proportion of participants did report having some experience in supervisory roles, none of them had experience as a police lieutenant.

Police job. Finally, results based on the police job may not generalize to other jobs. An interesting complement to this study would be to evaluate how high perceived costs of seeking feedback are for police officers. The level of perceived costs for this job might suggest what other types of jobs the results might generalize to. In addition, the

results of this research may be a good indicator of potential impressions in other male-stereotyped jobs. Finally, it is possible that these results capture a general human process that would be standard across jobs. Caution should be used to avoid overgeneralizing these results until they can be replicated with other jobs or until moderating characteristics are identified to explain differences in the effects of feedback seeking behaviors on impressions across different jobs.

In conclusion, further research could address the limitations and extend the results of this investigation to provide a better understanding of the effects of feedback seeking behaviors on impressions. The results presented here should be replicated, and the questions remaining or raised as a result of this research should be addressed.

Implications

With these limitations and the need for further research in mind, there are some preliminary implications for employees and organizations that can be drawn from this research. From a practical standpoint, the goal of this study is to begin to address questions such as: Can employees seek feedback without incurring negative social costs? How should they present their feedback requests? Will these answers be the same for all potential feedback providers? What sort of stand should organizations take with respect to employee-initiated feedback seeking? In this section, I discuss answers that are suggested by this investigation.

Implications for Employees

Results of this investigation suggest that employees can seek feedback without incurring negative social costs. In fact, this study suggests that the opposite may be true: Feedback seeking might create positive impressions that lead to favorable evaluations

and job-related outcomes. In this study, feedback seekers created more positive impressions and received better evaluations and outcomes than employees who did not seek feedback. The implication of this is that employees may benefit in multiple ways from seeking feedback, particularly if they also obtain valuable information about their work performance.

Feedback-seeking style. Secondly, the differential impacts of the various feedback-seeking styles studied here suggest that employees may be able to maximize the impression benefits of seeking feedback. In this study, employees who sought feedback using an explanation were consistently rated highest. They were only surpassed on ratings of attributions of impression management and self-esteem. The lower ratings on impression management are probably desirable, and indicate that the explanations given were likely to be believed. For self-esteem, feedback seekers who gave an explanation for their request were rated lower than those who put a positive spin on their request (i.e., provided a direct indication that they believed their performance was good). Those who used a positive spin were consistently rated second. They were seen as the strongest impression managers, and the least interested in improving their performance (other than those who did not ask for feedback at all). But they were rated very high on self-esteem and had the second-highest rating on almost everything else. The exception to these high ratings occurred for liking. Employees who used a positive spin were not as well liked as officers who used an explanation or negative spin. Together, these findings suggest that, at least for good performers, seeking feedback with an explanation or positive spin will be beneficial to the seeker.

In contrast, negative spin generally seemed to work against the seeker, at least when the seeker was a good performer. Employees who used this self-deprecating style did look like they wanted to improve their performance, and were the least likely of any of the feedback seekers to look like they were trying to manage an impression. However, they were given relatively low ratings of intelligence and self-esteem (even lower than officers who asked no questions). They were also seen as the least conscientious of the feedback seekers. Interestingly, negative spinners were liked fairly well, more so than their self-enhancing peers or those who asked no questions. In terms of evaluations and outcomes, they were rated better than those who didn't ask for feedback in terms of their general performance, performance on specific job dimensions, and potential for advancement. But they were rated lowest for participants' comfort assigning them to challenging projects. In conclusion, the results of this investigation suggest that employees can benefit from seeking feedback, and that while certain styles create more positive impressions than others, *any* style of feedback seeking may lead to more positive impressions and outcomes than not seeking feedback.

Gender differences. In addition, this study offers some preliminary evidence that perhaps men and women need to seek feedback differently to create similar impressions and outcomes. While the overall patterns of impression ratings for men and women are the same across feedback seeking styles, there are bigger differences for men than for women. This can be taken to mean that for men, style matters less. It also means that women may be less able to impact the providers' impressions; thus female employees may have to be more careful in their choice of strategies for seeking. With respect to impressions of intelligence, men seem to make out equally well using either an

explanation or positive spin, whereas giving an explanation is a better strategy for women. In addition, women who seek feedback with a negative spin suffer more severe consequences in terms of impressions of intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem than men. Thus, while using a negative spin does not lead to high impressions for either gender, it is particularly unadvisable for women.

All together, these results indicate that even simple things like how employees ask for feedback about their work can impact how superiors react in terms of what they think of employees and the decisions they make. The best way to go, assuming that performance is generally good, seems to be to simply offer an explanation for the request for feedback. Employees should let the supervisor know they are interested in improving in a particular area and would like to get the supervisor's input and evaluation of their performance. Alternatively, a little bit of positive self evaluation or statements indicating confidence do not seem to hurt. However, this study presents some evidence that positive spin may be interpreted as a desire to make an impression, which seems to make the employee less likable. Perhaps a combination of these two strategies (explanation and positive spin) would tone down these negative effects. Finally, the evidence from this study generally suggests that downplaying performance will not work in the employee's favor when they are performing well (i.e., slightly above average). Employees who use a negative spin may look more hardworking and more like they care about their performance than employees who do not ask for feedback. However, employees, and especially women, who use a negative spin may be shooting themselves in the foot and limiting their opportunities to be involved in projects that will help them move forward in the organization.

Implications for Organizations

Presuming that feedback seeking leads to a valuable increase in feedback exchange within an organization, the results of this investigation suggest that organizations could benefit by creating a climate or putting mechanisms in place that encourage people to seek feedback and facilitate feedback exchange. Examples of ways this could be done include modeling feedback-seeking behaviors during employee orientation, providing training on proactive feedback seeking, reducing barriers to feedback seeking by training supervisors to be available and approachable, using performance appraisal meetings as a place to foster employees' questions, and measuring and rewarding employees' efforts to assess and develop their skills. In particular, the results of this investigation suggest that such programs should emphasize to employees that they should be thoughtful about the way they seek feedback, because style matters. Examples presented in orientation or training programs should model use of strategies that offer the supervisor an explanation for why the feedback is being sought or encourage good performers to let the supervisor know that they think they did a good job but would like additional feedback.

Caveat

To balance research evidence suggesting that feedback seeking would be beneficial for employees and organizations, it is important to consider some potential drawbacks of relying too heavily on employee-initiated feedback exchanges. One potential problem is that employees will seek feedback that is consistent with their own evaluations of their performance, and will thus tend to receive confirmatory, rather than developmental, feedback information. Research shows that despite the fact that

individuals wish to receive diagnostic information about their abilities, they tend to avoid negative information about themselves in order to protect their self-esteem (Carver, Antoni, & Scheier, 1985; Meyer & Starke, 1982; Sachs, 1982; Zuckerman, Brown, Fox, Lathin, & Minasian, 1979) and to try to obtain positive information about themselves in order to elevate their self-esteem (Miller, 1976; Regan, Gosselink, Hubsch, & Ulsh, 1975; Skolnick, 1971). Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that negative feedback is often misperceived, so even if employees seek it, its value may be undermined (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979). Another potential problem is that individuals will seek too much feedback. Ilgen, Fisher, and Taylor (1979) cautioned that more frequent feedback is not beneficial when individuals must interpret complex feedback, as would likely be given in an organizational setting. Care should be taken against taking the results of this investigation too far—supervisors and employees need to determine when feedback will be beneficial and what kinds will be most useful. Encouraging employee-initiated feedback seeking does not absolve organizations of the responsibility to ensure that supervisors have a clear understanding of how to respond appropriately to requests for feedback.

Evaluation of the Incomplete Blocks Design in Psychological Research

Incomplete block designs are commonly used in many research areas including agriculture, statistical quality control, and marketing research. However, these designs are rarely used in psychological research. In this section, I comment on the strengths and shortcomings of using incomplete blocks designs in psychological research.

Incomplete blocks designs are so named because they create blocks of combinations of the experimental manipulations (factors) that replace the cells of a

traditional factorial design. The cells in a factorial design capture all possible combinations of the experimental factors, and research participants are assigned independently to each cell. Thus, all manipulations occur between participants. The incomplete blocks design combines cells into blocks of treatment combinations. Participants are then assigned to a block of cells, so that the cells are no longer independent. In addition, some or all of the experimental manipulations now occur (partly) within participants. The blocks are considered to be incomplete because they do not represent all possible combinations of cells. Rather, the cells are assigned to blocks in a way that is as economical as possible while maintaining statistical interpretability.

For example, this study included three factors—one with four levels and two with two levels (4 x 2 x 2). A traditional factorial approach would produce sixteen experimental cells requiring independent participants. Context was preserved as a between-participants factor requiring two distinct groups of participants. The incomplete blocks design specified for the remaining 4 x 2 design resulted in only six blocks requiring independence. Each block contained four of the eight unique treatment combinations (each treatment is replicated in three of the blocks). All together, this resulted in twelve blocks across the two context conditions.

The key strength of the incomplete blocks design is that it allows flexibility in the tradeoff between experimental complexity (i.e., the number of factors that can be examined simultaneously) and practicality (i.e., access to research participants). The incomplete blocks design allows tests of interaction effects that could not be achieved with a typical factorial design, while helping to control the resources needed to conduct the investigation. In part, this is because of the reduction of the number of cells requiring

independent participants. In addition, examining some of the factors within participant increases statistical power; thus fewer participants are needed in each block. Finally, the incomplete blocks design carries a potential boost for external validity when social situations such as the one investigated here are examined. It is possible that exposing participants to multiple manipulations better represents what occurs outside of the laboratory. It would be interesting to investigate whether within-participant designs are more appropriate for investigation of social exchanges than between-participant designs.

With the appropriate data structure, SAS easily handles analysis of incomplete blocks data. However, the price paid for this flexibility is some difficulty with interpretation of the analyses. For this study, the tests for the between-participants factor had to be hand-computed to use the correct degrees of freedom. In addition, no R^2 measure was available for the repeated measures regressions with time-varying covariates. Thus, it was impossible to determine the amount of variance in the dependent variables accounted for by the predictors (e.g., the effects of attributions on impressions). In addition, multivariate analyses with the sets of impression or outcome variables were not possible. Therefore, no conclusions could be drawn regarding the extent to which the specific impressions represented a general impression or the outcome measures represented an overall evaluation. This is particularly limiting for the current study because of the high correlations among the measures.

Finally, because incomplete blocks designs examine the factors within participant, this type of design carries all of the problems created by these designs as well. For instance, experimental manipulations may need to be parallel rather than identical. This introduces uncertainty about whether the effects of the factor result from the

manipulation or are an artifact of stimulus materials that are not truly equivalent. In this study, content of the behaviors and feedback requests varied across the four feedback seeking styles (though identical content was used across gender and context). Even though the behaviors were selected based on a pilot study that showed raters' reactions to the behaviors to be reasonably equivalent, there may have been some differences based on the content rather than the style of seeking, especially when the materials were placed in combination in the log entries.

These difficulties are not necessarily irresolvable shortcomings of incomplete blocks designs. Given the limited use of this type of design in social scientific research, however, solutions to these problems are not readily available. They may be buried in the expertise of other disciplines or special problems not yet addressed by researchers and statisticians. Further applications of this type of design in the social sciences might provide guidance and resolve some of the issues involved in conducting, analyzing, and interpreting analysis of incomplete blocks designs.

In conclusion, incomplete blocks designs can be useful in lab investigations provided that their benefits and costs are understood. Incomplete blocks designs are most appropriate when: the researcher is interested in testing the concurrent effects of multiple factors, R^2 measures or multivariate analyses are not essential to answering the research question (at least until such measures and analyses are available for incomplete blocks designs), and time and participant resources preclude use of a complete factorial design. In some cases, incomplete blocks designs may be desirable even when resources are not limited, simply to include within-participant effects in the design to increase statistical

power or better represent a real world environment in which people seldom encounter single stimuli without basis for comparison.

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APPENDIX A

Sample Size Requirements (Overall) for Power = .80

		N required for $\alpha = .05$		
Hypothesis	**Analysis**	**Small**	**Medium**	**Large**
1: Supervisors' impressions of subordinates will be positively related to organizational outcomes.	Regression (3 IV)	547	76	34
2a: Performance improvement attributions will be positively related to impressions.	Regression (1 IV)	783	85	28
2b: Impression management attributions will be negatively related to impressions.	Regression (1 IV)			
3: The positive relationship between impression management attributions and impressions will be stronger for female feedback providers.	Regression (3 IV)	547	76	34
4a: Feedback requests will lead to stronger attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives than performance incidents.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for feedback request presentation	<393	<64	<26
4b: Performance improvement attributions will be highest for explanation, then negative spin, and then positive spin.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA Planned comparisons			
4c: Impression management attributions will be highest for positive spin, then negative spin, and then explanation.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA Planned Comparisons			
5a: Performance improvement attributions will be higher in training than in performance contexts.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for work context	786	128	52
5b: Impression management attributions will be higher in performance than in training contexts.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for work context			
5c: The differences in both performance improvement and impression management attributions across feedback request presentations will be greater in performance contexts.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for feedback request presentation by context interaction	<786	<128	<52
6a: Performance improvement and impression management attributions will be different for male and female seekers.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for gender	<786	<128	<52
6b: Differences in performance improvement and impression management attributions across the feedback request presentations will be different for male and female seekers.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for feedback request presentation by gender interaction	786	128	52
7: Feedback providers' mastery goal orientation will be positively related to performance improvement attributions and negatively related to impression management attributions.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for mastery goal orientation	783	85	28
8: Feedback providers' performance goal orientation will be positively related to performance improvement attributions and negatively related performance improvement attributions.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for performance goal orientation			
9: Positive attitudes toward feedback seeking will be positively related to performance improvement attributions and negatively related to impression management attributions.	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for attitudes toward feedback seeking			

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire Packet #2: Manipulation Checks, Individual Differences, and Demographics

"You're the Boss"

Questionnaire Packet #2

Fall 1999

Read *INSTRUCTIONS* carefully.

If you are not sure about what to do at any time,
please ask the experimenter.

Please DO NOT write on this packet.

Instructions:

- *Take out a NEW Scan Sheet (this should be your last blank Scan Sheet).*
- *Fill in your last name and PID on the Scan Sheet. (This information will be used only for data-matching purposes. It will not be used to identify individual responses.)*
- *Find the label for "Section" on the Scan Sheet. Enter your 3-digit subject number in these boxes. The experimenter gave you a subject number at the beginning of the session. If you are unsure what your number is, please raise your hand and ask the experimenter for assistance.*

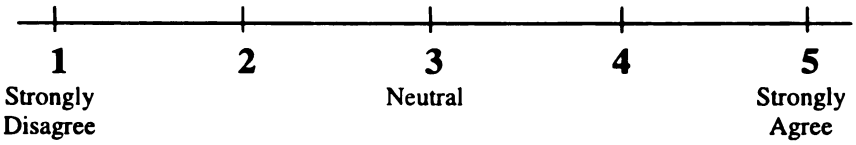
For this questionnaire, you will complete Items 1 – 36 on the Scan Sheet. Please answer the questions carefully and honestly. If you have any questions about what to do, please raise your hand and the experimenter will assist you. Mark all answers on the Scan Sheet.

1. **Which of the following is NOT one of the four major categories of expectations for police officers in this Department?**
   a. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
   b. responding to emergencies
   c. detecting and preventing criminal activity
   d. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
   e. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

2. **One of the Department's expectations for police officers is "skillfully interview witnesses and verify their answers." Which major duty does this expectation belong to?**
   a. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
   b. responding to emergencies
   c. detecting and preventing criminal activity
   d. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
   e. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

3. **Which of the following expectations belongs to the category of expectations for "Responding to Emergencies"?**
   a. quickly and accurately assess the scene
   b. back up their partner or other officers
   c. exercise caution
   d. use personal restraint and remain composed
   e. locate witnesses and suspects

Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



Confidence in Your Ratings

As mentioned in the introduction to this experiment, you received very limited information about the officers you were asked to rate. The following questions ask you to indicate how well you were able to form impressions of the officers and how comfortable you were making ratings based on the information provided.

4. I was able to imagine employees asking the questions presented in the logs.

5. Although I know that as a real lieutenant I would have more information about my officers, I was able to answer the rating questions based on the information provided.

6. I feel confident that I was able to provide reasonable ratings of these officers based on the log entries.

7. I had enough information about the officers to make these ratings relatively accurately.

Attitudes toward Feedback Seeking

8. I frequently ask my supervisor/professor about my potential for advancement within the company or field.

9. I frequently ask follow-up questions when my supervisor/professor gives me feedback about my work.

10. I am comfortable asking my supervisor/professor for feedback about my work.

11. I frequently ask my supervisor/professor how well he or she thinks I am performing.

12. My supervisor/professor would think worse of me if I asked him or her for feedback.

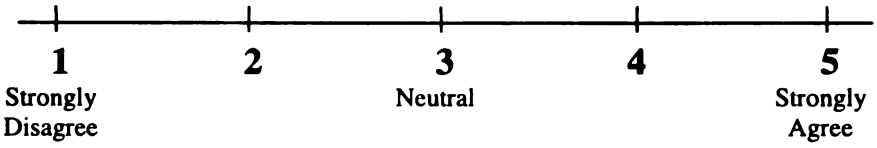
13. It is embarrassing to ask my supervisor/professor for his or her impression of how I am doing at work/in class.

14. It would bother me to ask my supervisor/professor to evaluate my performance.

15. It is a bad idea to ask your supervisor/professor for feedback because he or she might think you are incompetent.

16. It is better to try and figure out how you are doing on your own rather than ask your supervisor/professor for feedback.

Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



Goal Orientation

17. The opportunity to do challenging work is important to me.

18. When I fail to complete a difficult task, I plan to try harder the next time I work on it.

19. I prefer to work on tasks that force me to learn new things.

20. The opportunity to learn new things is important to me.

21. I do my best when I'm working on a fairly difficult task.

22. When I have difficulty solving a problem, I enjoy trying different approaches to see which one will work.

23. The things I enjoy the most are the things I do the best.

24. I feel smart when I do something without making any mistakes.

25. I like to work on tasks that I have done well on in the past.

26. I feel smart when I can do something better than most other people.

27. The opinions others have about how well I can do certain things are important to me.

28. I like to be fairly confident that I can successfully perform a task before I attempt it.

Demographic Characteristics

29. Gender

a. Male **b.** Female

30. Age

a. Less than 18 **b.** 18 – 19 **c.** 20 – 21 **d.** 22 – 23 **e.** Greater than 23

31. Year in college

a. First-year **b.** Sophomore **c.** Junior **d.** Senior **e.** Other

Work History and Experience

32. What is the total number of months or years you have worked full time (40 or more hours per week)? *Please count only time you have spent working full time, and do not count time in between jobs. For example, if you worked full time for 2 summers, your response should be 6 months.*

a. None, I have never worked full time.
b. 1-6 months
c. 7-11 months
d. 1-2 years
e. More than 3 years

33. How many full- and part-time positions have you held? *Count each position (job title) you have held. If you have held more than one job for a single employer, count each of those as one position. If you have done the same basic job for more than one employer, count each of those as one position. The number of positions you have held should be equal to or greater than the number of employers you have had.*

a. None, I have never worked.
b. 1 – 2
c. 3 – 5
d. 6 – 8
e. More than 8

34. How many of the positions you have held were supervisory or management positions (i.e., you had some level of control over employees who were below you in the organization's hierarchy)?

a. None, I have held a supervisory or management position.
b. 1 – 2
c. 3 – 5
d. 6 – 8
e. More than 8

35. Have you ever given performance ratings for employees (e.g., filled out evaluation forms similar to the ones you did today)?

a. No
b. Yes

36. How many hours per week do you work right now?

a. None
b. Less than 10
c. 10 – 20
d. 21 – 30
e. More than 30

Thank you for answering this set of questions. Please return this packet and your answer sheets to the experimenter now.

APPENDIX C

Factor Combinations Used in the Incomplete Blocks Design

8 Log Entries formed by crossing Feedback Request Presentation with Seeker Gender:

	Feedback Request Presentation			
Seeker Gender	**Control**	**Explanation**	**Positive Spin**	**Negative Spin**
Male	1	2	3	4
Female	5	6	7	8

Incomplete Blocks Design: (Subjects are nested within blocks within work context.)

	Work Context			
	Performance		**Training**	
1 block (approximately 23 subjects) →	2 3 5 8	1 4 6 7	2 3 5 8	1 4 6 7
	2 4 5 7	1 3 6 8	2 4 5 7	1 3 6 8
	1 2 7 8	3 4 5 6	1 2 7 8	3 4 5 6

APPENDIX D

Pilot Study #1 Materials

Welcome to...

"You're the Boss"

Please do not open this packet until you are instructed to do so.

Please do not write on this packet.

Police Officer Performance Behaviors

In this study, you will be asked to rate performance behaviors for police officers. You will read descriptions of things officers might do on the job. Then, you will rate the behaviors.

First, it's important that you understand some of the basic job requirements and expectations for police officers. Please read the next several pages carefully and keep this information in mind as you make your ratings of the performance behaviors. **You will be tested on this information at the end of the session.**

You will need to know the most important general duties of police officers in this Department, as well as the specific expectations in each of these areas. For example, you may be asked to answer questions similar to those listed below:

1. **Which of the following is NOT one of the four major expectations of police officers in this Department?**
    a. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
    b. responding to emergencies
    c. detecting and preventing criminal activity
    d. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
    e. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

2. **One of the Department's expectations for police officers is "skillfully interview witnesses and verify their answers." Which major duty does this expectation belong to?**
    a. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
    b. responding to emergencies
    c. detecting and preventing criminal activity
    d. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
    e. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

3. **Which of the following expectations belongs to the category of expectations for "Responding to Emergencies"?**
    a. quickly and accurately assess the scene
    b. back up their partner or other officers
    c. exercise caution
    d. use personal restraint and remain composed
    e. locate witnesses and suspects

A General Description of the Police Officer Position

The police officer is the primary entry-level position in the Police Department. Officers are typically assigned to a defined neighborhood, which they patrol in a vehicle or on foot. They are dispatched to the scenes of accidents, incidents, or reported crime within their neighborhood, or take action on their own to react to situations they observe. Officers also may be assigned to back up or assist other officers in adjacent neighborhoods.

In general, police officers have primary responsibility for detecting and preventing criminal activity in their neighborhoods. In addition, they are responsible for enforcing vehicle and traffic laws, and for directing traffic when necessary. Police officers also are charged with responsibility for rendering medical assistance to ill or injured citizens. All officers in the department are required to maintain certification as Emergency Medical Technicians. Appropriate handling of cases involving severely injured, mentally ill, intoxicated, violent, or suicidal individuals is a part of the job.

In the course of their duties, police officers encounter situations in which they must pursue individuals suspected of criminal activity, apprehend these individuals, and take them into custody. Officers must be skilled in the use of necessary physical force, including the use of firearms and other weapons. They must know the laws and regulations governing use of force to avoid endangering the public or infringing upon citizens' rights.

Police officers responding to the scene of a crime are responsible for managing the scene and ultimately apprehending suspects. They may have to identify and protect physical evidence, identify and question witnesses and victims, provide medical assistance, and arrest suspects at the scene. Responding officers often communicate information they obtain at the crime scene to detectives, technicians, or others who will complete an investigation.

Police officers regularly deal with a wide variety of complex emergency situations requiring specialized knowledge and training. These may include hazardous material incidents, major accidents or disasters, child abuse or domestic violence incidents, and hostage or crime-in-progress scenes. In each situation, the assigned officers must call upon both their training and their knowledge of laws and procedures to provide timely and effective response to the problems they encounter. In some cases, immediate, decisive action on the part of the officer may protect life or property, or thwart criminal activity.

Police officers are required by law to document their observations and actions by completing forms and providing written narrative descriptions. Officers are also required to provide statements and court testimony in criminal matters.

Expectations for Police Officers

There are a number of things the Department expects from police officers. Several of these are considered to be equally essential for good performance. The officers' four most important duties are:

- Working as a team player
- Responding to emergencies
- Conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
- Handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts

The Department has outlined some specific expectations in each of the four main areas noted above, and you are required to use these as a basis for your evaluations.

Expectations for Working as a Team Player

At incident scenes, officers are expected to:

- back up their partner or other officers.
- anticipate other officers' actions and keep their partner's safety in mind at all times.

In general, officers are expected to:

- cooperate with other divisions and assist other law enforcement agencies.
- pass on information to appropriate people in a timely way.
- provide sufficiently detailed and descriptive information to ensure maximal usefulness.

Expectations for Responding to Emergencies

Officers are expected to:

- quickly and accurately assess the scene.
- determine how to make the scene safe and provide medical attention without hesitation when necessary.
- use proper procedures for dealing with hazardous conditions.
- establish rapport with individuals involved in the emergency, and provide emotional comfort and support to victims and other affected individuals.
- effectively transport or assist in transporting injured or aided individuals when necessary.
- provide complete, accurate, and clearly written reports of the incident.

Expectations for Conducting Preliminary Investigations and Making Arrests

Officers are expected to:

- use force and authority appropriately to resolve an incident promptly and effectively, and in accord with Department policies.
- anticipate events and deal effectively with unpredictable people, groups, and situations.
- analyze and piece together information about the situation and accurately separate facts from opinions.
- locate witnesses and suspects.
- skillfully interview witnesses and verify their answers.
- obtain complete descriptions of the incident and persons involved.
- follow up on all cues and leads.
- remain composed under pressure or personal abuse.
- defuse dangerous situations.
- restrict public activities in dangerous situations.
- protect crime scenes to maintain integrity of evidence and preserve physical evidence.
- ensure public safety when apprehending suspects or offenders.
- provide complete, accurate, and clearly written reports of the incident.

Expectations for Handling Domestic Disputes and Mediating Conflicts

Officers are expected to:

- mediate during arguments and fights between domestic combatants.
- maintain impartiality.
- use personal restraint and remain composed.
- exercise caution.
- refer citizens to appropriate agencies for further help.
- provide complete, accurate, and clearly written reports of the incident.

Now, imagine yourself as a police lieutenant. The statements on the next page represent behaviors police officers might do on the job. Read each behavior carefully. Then, you should:

1. **Imagine an officer doing the behavior on the job.**

2. **Rate the behavior in terms of the level of job performance it represents.** For each behavior, decide whether an officer who performs the behavior would most likely be an *excellent performer*, an *average performer*, or a *poor performer*.

Use these guidelines to assign ratings:

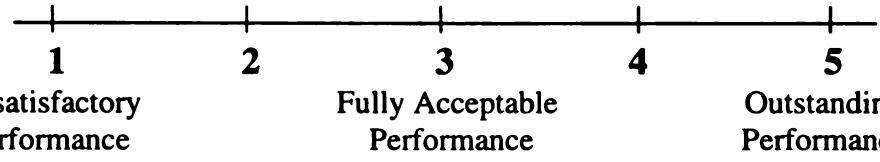
4 or 5 ***Outstanding Performance***. You should give the behavior an above-average rating (4 or 5) if you think the behavior represents something that would be likely to make the officer stand out from other officers. This rating indicates that if you watched the officer perform this behavior, you would be impressed. You would consider this behavior to be among the best things your officers could do. You might make a note of this behavior in the officer's file, or give the officer some sort of special recognition for this behavior.

3 ***Fully Acceptable Performance***. You should give the behavior an average rating (3) if you think the behavior represents something that officers should do as a normal part of their job. This rating indicates that you would not be particularly impressed by this behavior. On the other hand, you might notice if the officer DID NOT perform this behavior. You would expect this behavior from all of your officers.

2 or 1 ***Unsatisfactory Performance***. You should give the behavior a below-average rating (2 or 1) if you think the behavior represents something the officer should not do or should do better than described. This rating indicates that if you watched the officer perform this behavior, you would not be impressed. You would consider this behavior unacceptable. You might make a note of this behavior in the officer's file, and would consider reprimanding the officer for this behavior.

Behavior Ratings for Police Officers

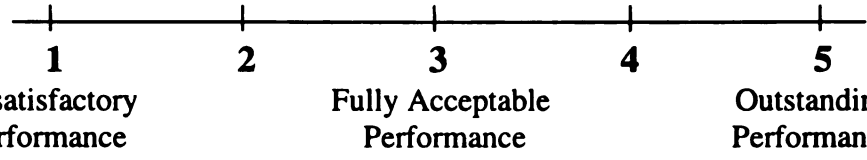
Please rate the performance level represented by each performance behavior listed below. Use the rating scale described on the previous page. PLEASE MAKE YOUR RATINGS ON THE SCAN SHEET.



Working as a Team Player

1. The officer radioed other officers about what to expect at the address they were responding to.
2. The officer ordered additional units responding to the scene to report to particular locations based on the circumstances at the scene.
3. The officer coordinated the other officers at the scene of the accident.
4. The officer discussed objectives with other officers at the scene to facilitate coordinated action.
5. The officer kept other officers at the scene in sight to protect him or herself and coordinate actions.
6. The officer wrote a careful report of the incidents for the next shift officers.
7. The officer told his relief officer about two calls concerning an extremely noisy party.
8. In response to a car robbery call, the officer immediately informed other officers before starting the report.
9. The officer compared notes with other officers investigating the scene and compiled and organized the information into a final report.
10. The officer completed a Missing Persons Report to inform other officers and agencies of the missing person's status.
11. The officer responded quickly to the attorney's questions about the case.
12. The officer followed orders given by the first officer who had arrived at the scene.
13. The officer coordinated initial activities from an incident scene by conversing with the supervisor by radio and establishing a command post.
14. The officer relayed pertinent information to the hostage negotiating team.

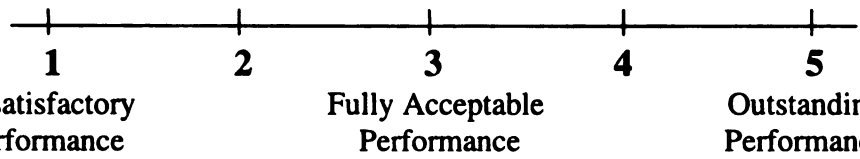
Please rate the performance level represented by each performance behavior listed below. Use the rating scale described on the previous page. PLEASE MAKE YOUR RATINGS ON THE SCAN SHEET.



Responding to Emergencies

15. The officer evaluated the scene of the incident and questioned witnesses to determine the actions that needed to be taken.
16. The officer assessed injuries and vital signs at the scene and questioned witnesses to determine what had happened.
17. The officer calmed the hysterical victim at the scene and recorded her story of what had happened.
18. The officer determined that the scene should be evacuated, and coordinated the evacuation of the building.
19. The officer radioed the ambulance to inform paramedics of the conditions at the scene.
20. The officer prepared a complete description of the accident after interviewing all witnesses.
21. On observing the woman jumping from the bridge into the river, the officer jumped into the river and pulled the woman to shore.
22. On arriving at the scene of a pedestrian hit-and-run, the officer positioned the patrol car to protect the injured woman from oncoming traffic, called for an ambulance, and got help from an onlooker.
23. Approaching the scene of the auto accident, the officer noticed the number and type of vehicles involved, extent of damage, potential injuries, leaking fuel, etc., and informed the dispatch officer of the type of assistance needed.
24. On the way to the emergency scene, the officer watched for possible suspects and suspicious conditions related to the crime.
25. The officer talked with the mentally disturbed woman to establish rapport, defuse the situation, and facilitate communication.
26. For safety, the officer secured his weapon while transporting the injured woman.
27. The officer provided first aid to the injured victim, stopping his bleeding leg and taking precautions against shock.
28. The officer stayed at the emergency scene to make sure it was safe until the ambulance had left.

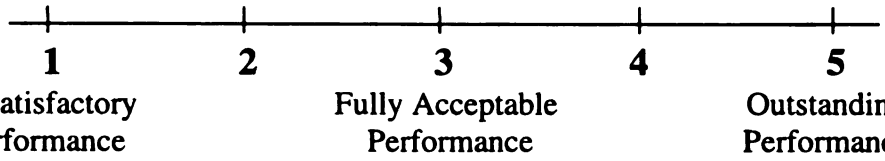
Please rate the performance level represented by each performance behavior listed below. Use the rating scale described on the previous page. PLEASE MAKE YOUR RATINGS ON THE SCAN SHEET.



Conducting Preliminary Investigations and Making Arrests

29. The officer assessed the crime, witnesses, and suspect to determine probable cause for arrest.
30. The officer interviewed victims and witnesses at the scene to determine the circumstances of the incident and identify suspects.
31. The officer conducted a preliminary search of the crime scene for evidence and properly preserved footprints.
32. The officer pursued and apprehended a suspect found several blocks from the crime scene.
33. The officer prepared signed written reports of witness' observations for the detectives.
34. The officer completed a supporting deposition statement to support the arrest.
35. The officer was threatened with a lawsuit by a businessman suspected of receiving stolen property. The officer let the suspect go, even though the officer had probable cause for the arrest.
36. The officer found the suspect in a crowded area and made the arrest without creating a confrontation.
37. The officer approached the crime scene quietly, allowing for apprehension of potential suspects.
38. At the accident scene, the officer checked the drivers to determine if probably cause existed for DUI by comparing observations of the drivers' conduct (e.g., speech) and the results of the field sobriety test with departmental standards.
39. The officer questioned persons at the scene to identify impartial witnesses who can assist in establishing the facts.
40. The officer asked standard sets of questions and took notes to secure depositions from witnesses and victims for use as evidence.
41. The officer "frisked" the suspects to prevent serious bodily injury to the officer or citizens.
42. The officer entered the license plate information to determine ownership and verify the vehicle description.

Please rate the performance level represented by each performance behavior listed below. Use the rating scale described on the previous page. PLEASE MAKE YOUR RATINGS ON THE SCAN SHEET.



Handling Domestic Disputes and Mediating Conflicts

43. The officer physically separated the brothers to prevent them from becoming more angry.
44. The officer removed the couple from the kitchen to avoid potential weapons.
45. The officer listened to each group's side of the conflict to allow them to calm down.
46. The officer interviewed both parties to determine the cause of the dispute.
47. When approaching the conflict scene, the officer listened carefully for indications of the nature and seriousness of the incident.
48. The officer controlled the discussion so that the parties could resolve their disagreement.
49. The officer completed a report of the incident the next day to ensure proper processing.
50. The officer noticed a bulge under the man's coat and searched him for a gun.
51. The officer calmly convinced the man who was pointing a rifle at his employer to hand over the weapon.
52. The officer physically restrained the man to prevent possible injury.
53. The officer secured his weapon at the conflict scene to avoid risk.
54. The officer completed Domestic Disputes forms to document facts and actions taken.
55. The officer administered sobriety tests to all of the participants in the conflict.
56. After arresting the man, the officer referred his wife to a local counseling center.

Thank you for completing these questions. Please turn your packet in to the experimenter now. Keep your scan sheet. After you complete one more form, you will be debriefed and dismissed from the experiment.

"You're the Boss" Knowledge Test

Subject Number: _____

Please turn your Scan Sheet over and mark the correct answer for each question.

57. Which of the following is NOT one of the four major expectations of police officers in this Department?

f. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
g. responding to emergencies
h. detecting and preventing criminal activity
i. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
j. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

58. One of the Department's expectations for police officers is "skillfully interview witnesses and verify their answers." Which major duty does this expectation belong to?

f. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
g. responding to emergencies
h. detecting and preventing criminal activity
i. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
j. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

59. Which of the following expectations belongs to the category of expectations for "Responding to Emergencies"?

f. quickly and accurately assess the scene
g. back up their partner or other officers
h. exercise caution
i. use personal restraint and remain composed
j. locate witnesses and suspects

APPENDIX E

Pilot Study 2 Materials

"You're the Boss"
Pilot Test Questions

Thank you for your participation in this experiment. Before you go, I would like to ask you a final set of questions regarding your experience today. Your responses to these questions will help me to evaluate and improve this investigation. Please answer honestly and share any suggestions you have about how I could improve the materials used in this study. Your responses to these questions are completely anonymous—please do not write your name or subject number on this page. Thanks.

1. **What do you think the purpose of this study is? What do you think my hypotheses are?**

2. **Please describe the role you were asked to play in this experiment. Who were you in relationship to the officers you were rating? What was your experience with them?**

3. **Please describe any difficulties you had following the experiment procedure, and make suggestions for improving the materials.**

4. **Please write any additional comments on the back of this page.**

APPENDIX F

Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT

Subject's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Project Title:	Performance Evaluation Study
Investigators' Names:	Karen Milner and Dr. Richard DeShon
Description and Explanation of Procedure:	This study investigates how people form impressions of employees and rate their performance. You will read about several employees and rate their performance based on your impressions of them. You will also be asked to answer several questionnaires to help us understand how you are making your ratings.
Estimated time required:	2 hours
Risks and discomforts:	None

You have been fully informed of the above-described procedure with its possible benefits and risks. You will be able to view your responses at a later date and be fully debriefed on them if you so desire. The investigators will be available to answer any questions you may have. If, at any time, you feel your questions have not been adequately answered, you may speak with the Head of the Department of Psychology (Dr. Gordon Wood, 355-9563), or the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (355-2180). You are free to withdraw this consent and discontinue participation in this project at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw from the study prior to its completion, you will receive credit only for the time you have spent in the study. You can be removed from the study for disruptive behavior. If you are removed from the study, you will not receive credit for your participation. Within one year of your participation, a copy of this consent form will be provided to you upon request.

I freely give permission for my participation in this study.

_____

Signature

APPENDIX G

Log Entry Booklets

General Introduction

In this study, you will be asked to act as if you are a police lieutenant completing annual performance reviews for the four officers under your supervision. You will read descriptions of the behaviors of each officer on the job, and your job is to form an impression of each officer and make judgments about his or her performance.

First, it's important that you understand some of the basic job requirements and expectations for police officers. Please read the next several pages carefully and keep this information in mind as you make your ratings of the officers. **You will be tested on this information at the end of the session!**

You will need to know the most important general duties of police officers in this Department, as well as the specific expectations in each of these areas. For example, you may be asked to answer questions similar to those listed below:

4. **Which of the following is NOT one of the four major expectations of police officers in this Department?**
    f. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
    g. responding to emergencies
    h. detecting and preventing criminal activity
    i. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
    j. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

5. **One of the Department's expectations for police officers is "skillfully interview witnesses and verify their answers." Which major duty does this expectation belong to?**
    f. handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts
    g. responding to emergencies
    h. detecting and preventing criminal activity
    i. conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
    j. working as a team with other police officers at incident scenes

6. **Which of the following expectations belongs to the category of expectations for "Responding to Emergencies"?**
    f. quickly and accurately assess the scene
    g. back up their partner or other officers
    h. exercise caution
    i. use personal restraint and remain composed
    j. locate witnesses and suspects

A General Description of the Police Officer Position

The police officer is the primary entry-level position in the Police Department. Officers are typically assigned to a defined neighborhood, which they patrol in a vehicle or on foot. They are dispatched to the scenes of accidents, incidents, or reported crime within their neighborhood, or take action on their own to react to situations they observe. Officers also may be assigned to back up or assist other officers in adjacent neighborhoods.

In general, police officers have primary responsibility for detecting and preventing criminal activity in their neighborhoods. In addition, they are responsible for enforcing vehicle and traffic laws, and for directing traffic when necessary. Police officers also are charged with responsibility for rendering medical assistance to ill or injured citizens. All officers in the department are required to maintain certification as Emergency Medical Technicians. Appropriate handling of cases involving severely injured, mentally ill, intoxicated, violent, or suicidal individuals is a part of the job.

In the course of their duties, police officers encounter situations in which they must pursue individuals suspected of criminal activity, apprehend these individuals, and take them into custody. Officers must be skilled in the use of necessary physical force, including the use of firearms and other weapons. They must know the laws and regulations governing use of force to avoid endangering the public or infringing upon citizens' rights.

Police officers responding to the scene of a crime are responsible for managing the scene and ultimately apprehending suspects. They may have to identify and protect physical evidence, identify and question witnesses and victims, provide medical assistance, and arrest suspects at the scene. Responding officers often communicate information they obtain at the crime scene to detectives, technicians, or others who will complete an investigation.

Police officers regularly deal with a wide variety of complex emergency situations requiring specialized knowledge and training. These may include hazardous material incidents, major accidents or disasters, child abuse or domestic violence incidents, and hostage or crime-in-progress scenes. In each situation, the assigned officers must call upon both their training and their knowledge of laws and procedures to provide timely and effective response to the problems they encounter. In some cases, immediate, decisive action on the part of the officer may protect life or property, or thwart criminal activity.

Police officers are required by law to document their observations and actions by completing forms and providing written narrative descriptions. Officers are also required to provide statements and court testimony in criminal matters.

Expectations for Police Officers

There are a number of things the Department expects from police officers. Several of these are considered to be equally essential for good performance. The officers' four most important duties are:

- Working as a team player
- Responding to emergencies
- Conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests
- Handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts

The Department has outlined some specific expectations in each of the four main areas noted above, and you are required to use these as a basis for your evaluations.

Expectations for Working as a Team Player

At incident scenes, officers are expected to:

- back up their partner or other officers.
- anticipate other officers' actions and keep their partner's safety in mind at all times.

In general, officers are expected to:

- cooperate with other divisions and assist other law enforcement agencies.
- pass on information to appropriate people in a timely way.
- provide sufficiently detailed and descriptive information to ensure maximal usefulness.

Expectations for Responding to Emergencies

Officers are expected to:

- quickly and accurately assess the scene.
- determine how to make the scene safe and provide medical attention without hesitation when necessary.
- use proper procedures for dealing with hazardous conditions.
- establish rapport with individuals involved in the emergency, and provide emotional comfort and support to victims and other affected individuals.
- effectively transport or assist in transporting injured or aided individuals when necessary.
- provide complete, accurate, and clearly written reports of the incident.

Expectations for Conducting Preliminary Investigations and Making Arrests

Officers are expected to:

- use force and authority appropriately to resolve an incident promptly and effectively, and in accord with Department policies.
- anticipate events and deal effectively with unpredictable people, groups, and situations.
- analyze and piece together information about the situation and accurately separate facts from opinions.
- locate witnesses and suspects.
- skillfully interview witnesses and verify their answers.
- obtain complete descriptions of the incident and persons involved.
- follow up on all cues and leads.
- remain composed under pressure or personal abuse.
- defuse dangerous situations.
- restrict public activities in dangerous situations.
- protect crime scenes to maintain integrity of evidence and preserve physical evidence.
- ensure public safety when apprehending suspects or offenders.
- provide complete, accurate, and clearly written reports of the incident.

Expectations for Handling Domestic Disputes and Mediating Conflicts

Officers are expected to:

- mediate during arguments and fights between domestic combatants.
- maintain impartiality.
- use personal restraint and remain composed.
- exercise caution.
- refer citizens to appropriate agencies for further help.
- provide complete, accurate, and clearly written reports of the incident.

Please be sure you are familiar with the material on pages 2-4 of this booklet. You will need to use this information throughout the experiment, and you will be tested on this information at the end of the session. You may refer back to these pages at any time while you are making your ratings.

Please turn to the next page to continue.

Log Entry and Rating Instructions (Performance Context)

Imagine yourself as a police lieutenant. It is time for annual performance reviews, and you are responsible for evaluating the four officers under your direct command. Each of the officers has been on the force for about five years. Generally, each of these officers is a good worker, but your goal is to take a careful look at each officer so that you can make some important decisions. For example, you must submit a list of officers you would recommend for promotion to the Chief of Police. In addition, you would like to use this opportunity to help develop your officers' skills by encouraging good work and improving ineffective behaviors.

Several months ago, you attended a management workshop about evaluating the performance of your officers. In this workshop, you learned that you should focus on some specific behaviors in addition to the outcomes you normally assess (e.g., number of arrests, thoroughness of reports). The workshop emphasized that the kinds of questions officers ask can give you important information about their motivation, performance, and potential. One of the skills you adopted from this workshop involves keeping a performance log in which you periodically record specific behaviors performed and questions asked by each officer. **Now you're going to evaluate these performance logs as part of your performance rating for each officer.**

When you read the notes you've recorded about your officers, try to imagine each behavior or question as if you had really observed it. Then, form an impression of the officer in your mind. Once you have an idea about what the officer is like, answer the performance review questions carefully.

Obviously, you will not have as much information about these officers as real lieutenants have when they are making evaluations. Don't worry about that--just focus your evaluations on the specific behaviors and questions presented.

Please try to erase each officer from your mind when you move on to a new officer. In other words, try not to compare officers as you are rating them. Rather, form an impression of each officer and rate him or her separately, as you would be expected to do in a Police Department.

The following pages contain excerpts from the notes that you've taken about your four officers over the past 3 weeks. You've set aside the next hour to look back through your notes and complete your evaluation forms. **Remember, try to imagine each behavior and question. Then form an impression of the officer and make your ratings carefully.**

Log Entry Instructions (Training Context)

Imagine yourself as a police lieutenant working in the Police Academy. You have just finished a three-month special training session for all officers who have been on the police force for five years. You are responsible for evaluating four of the officers you've trained. Generally, each of these officers has done well in the training, but your goal is to take a careful look at each officer so that you can make some important decisions. For example, you must submit a list of officers you might recommend for promotion later this year to the Chief of Police. In addition, you would like to use this opportunity to help develop your officers' skills by encouraging good work and improving ineffective behaviors.

Several months ago, you attended a management workshop about evaluating the training performance of your officers. In this workshop, you learned that you should focus on some specific behaviors in addition to the outcomes you normally assess (e.g., test performance, thoroughness of mock reports). The workshop emphasized that specific behaviors in training, and the kinds of questions officers ask can give you important information about their motivation, performance, and potential. One of the skills you adopted from this workshop involves keeping a training log in which you periodically record specific behaviors performed and questions asked by each officer during training. **Now you're going to evaluate these training logs as part of your training evaluation for each officer.**

When you read the notes you've recorded about your officers, try to imagine each behavior or question as if you had really observed it. Then, form an impression of the officer in your mind. Once you have an idea about what the officer is like, answer the training evaluation questions carefully.

Obviously, you will not have as much information about these officers as real lieutenants have when they are making evaluations. Don't worry about that—just focus your evaluations on the specific behaviors and questions presented.

Please try to erase each officer from your mind when you move on to a new officer. In other words, try not to compare officers as you are rating them. Rather, form an impression of each officer and rate him or her separately, as you would be expected to do in a Police Department.

The following pages contain excerpts from the notes that you've taken about your four officers over the past 3 weeks. You've set aside the next hour to look back through your notes and complete your evaluation forms. **Remember, try to imagine each behavior and question. Then form an impression of the officer and make your ratings carefully.**

Log Entries

The four log entries presented below represent the twelve log entries used in this study. The log entries in the two context conditions were identical, and log entries for the two seeker gender conditions differed only by the officer's name. Based on Pilot Test #1, performance behaviors and content of feedback requests were varied across the four feedback request presentation conditions to prevent within-person redundancy.

Introduction for Each Log Entry (Performance Context)

These are the notes you recorded about the behaviors Officer <name> has performed and the questions (s)he has asked you over the past 3 weeks. Please review them carefully, try to imagine watching each behavior or being asked each question, and then answer the questions that follow.

Introduction for Each Log Entry (Training Context)

These are the notes you recorded about the behaviors Officer <name> has performed during training scenarios and the questions (s)he has asked you over the past 3 weeks. Please review them carefully, try to imagine watching each behavior or being asked each question, and then answer the questions that follow.

Control Condition

OFFICER PERFORMANCE LOG 1999

OFFICER: <name>

BEHAVIORS OBSERVED:

- Officer <name> completed a Missing Persons Report to inform other officers and agencies of the missing person's status.
- Officer <name> talked with the mentally disturbed woman to establish rapport, defuse the situation, and facilitate communication.
- Officer <name> pursued and apprehended a suspect found several blocks from the crime scene.
- Officer <name> removed the couple from the kitchen to avoid potential weapons.

QUESTIONS OBSERVED:

- Officer <name> did not ask any questions.

Try to imagine each behavior and question as if you had really observed it. Then, form an impression of Officer <name> in your mind. Once you have an idea about what Officer <name> is like, turn to page 2 of the "You're the Boss" Questionnaire Packet #1 and answer the questions carefully. If you have any questions about how to respond to the items or use the scan sheets, please ask the experimenter.

Explanation Condition

OFFICER PERFORMANCE LOG 1999

OFFICER: <name>

BEHAVIORS OBSERVED:

- Officer <name> noticed a bulge under the man's coat and searched him for a gun.
- Officer <name> ordered additional units responding to the scene to report to particular locations based on the circumstances at the scene.
- Officer <name> evaluated the scene of the incident and questioned witnesses to determine the actions that needed to be taken.
- At the accident scene, Officer <name> checked the drivers to determine if probable cause existed for DUI by comparing observations of the drivers' conduct (e.g., speech) and the results of the field sobriety test with departmental standards.

QUESTIONS OBSERVED:

- "I've been working on my skills coordinating scenes. What did you think of the way I discussed the objectives with other officers at the scene to try to pull them together?"
- "What did you think of my decision to arrest this person? I want to make sure I understand the new rules."
- "I want to keep improving the way I handle these situations. What did you think of the way I interviewed the people involved in this dispute?"
- "I want to make sure I did what was expected of me. What did you think of the way I assessed injuries and vital signs at the accident scene?"

Try to imagine each behavior and question as if you had really observed it. Then, form an impression of Officer <name> in your mind. Once you have an idea about what Officer <name> is like, turn to page 2 of the "You're the Boss" Questionnaire Packet #1 and answer the questions carefully. If you have any questions about how to respond to the items or use the scan sheets, please ask the experimenter.

Positive Spin Condition

OFFICER PERFORMANCE LOG 1999

OFFICER: <name>

BEHAVIORS OBSERVED:

- Officer <name> interviewed victims and witnesses at the scene to determine the circumstances of the incident and identify suspects.
- When approaching the conflict scene, Officer <name> listened carefully for indications of the nature and seriousness of the incident.
- Officer <name> radioed other officers about what to expect at the address they were responding to.
- On the way to the emergency scene, Officer <name> watched for possible suspects and suspicious conditions related to the crime.

QUESTIONS OBSERVED:

- "I think I did that perfectly. What did you think of the way I radioed the supervisor and established the command post on the scene?"
- "What did you think of my preliminary search of the crime scene? I think I did a good job preserving the footprints and following our protocol."
- "I think I handled that situation well. What did you think of the way I controlled the discussion between the people involved in this dispute?"
- "I feel pretty good at this. What did you think of my description of the accident scene and my interviews?"

Try to imagine each behavior and question as if you had really observed it. Then, form an impression of Officer <name> in your mind. Once you have an idea about what Officer <name> is like, turn to page 2 of the "You're the Boss" Questionnaire Packet #1 and answer the questions carefully. If you have any questions about how to respond to the items or use the scan sheets, please ask the experimenter.

Negative Spin Condition

OFFICER PERFORMANCE LOG 1999

OFFICER: <name>

BEHAVIORS OBSERVED:

- On arriving at the scene of a pedestrian hit-and-run, Officer <name> positioned the patrol car to protect the injured woman from oncoming traffic, called for an ambulance, and got help from an onlooker.
- Officer <name> found the suspect in a crowded area and made the arrest without creating a confrontation.
- Officer <name> physically separated the brothers to prevent them from becoming angrier.
- Officer <name> followed orders given by the first officer who had arrived at the scene.

QUESTIONS OBSERVED:

- "I'm not very good at these things. What did you think of the way I informed the other officers about the car robbery before starting my report?"
- "What did you think of my decision to frisk this suspect? I don't think I made the right choice."
- "I don't think I did that very well. What did you think of my decision to secure my weapon at the conflict scene to avoid risk?"
- "I think I could have handled that better. What did you think of the way I coordinated the evacuation of that building?"

Try to imagine each behavior and question as if you had really observed it. Then, form an impression of Officer <name> in your mind. Once you have an idea about what Officer <name> is like, turn to page 2 of the "You're the Boss" Questionnaire Packet #1 and answer the questions carefully. If you have any questions about how to respond to the items or use the scan sheets, please ask the experimenter

You're Almost Done!!

Thank you, Lieutenant! You should now have 4 Scan Sheets with your subject information and items 1- 69 completed, and all 4 pages of your Essay Answer Pages completed. If you do not, please ask the experimenter for assistance. If you have done those things, you have completed the officer ratings portion of this experiment.

Please return your Log Entry Booklet and Questionnaire Packet #1 to the experimenter now. You should have one blank Scan Sheet left to use for the final set of questions in this study.

APPENDIX H

Questionnaire #1: Outcome Measures

"You're the Boss"
Questionnaire Packet #1

Fall 1999

Read *INSTRUCTIONS* carefully.

If you are not sure about what to do at any time,
please ask the experimenter.

Please DO NOT write on this packet.

Part 1: Officer Motivations

For Part 1, you will answer Section A on the Answer Page, and complete Items 1 – 18 on the Scan Sheet. You may refer back to the Log Entry for the officer you are rating at any time as you answer these questions.

A. **Why do you think this officer is doing these things and asking you these questions?**

Please answer this question in Section A of the "You're the Boss" Essay Answer Pages. First, write your subject number in the upper corner of the page. Next, write the officer's name in the space provided. Then write a brief description of why you think this officer has done these behaviors and asked these questions. What do you think the officer's motivations are?

Instructions (Repeat for each officer's Log Entry):

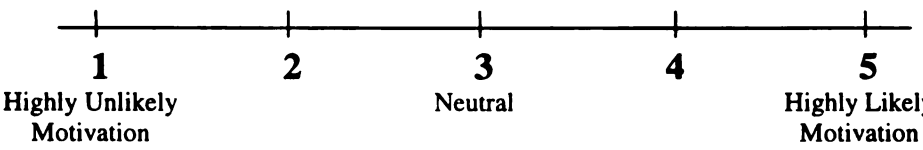
- *Take out a NEW Scan Sheet (you should have a total of 5 Scan Sheets).*
- *Fill in your last name and PID on the Scan Sheet. (This information will be used only for data-matching purposes. It will not be used to identify individual responses.)*
- *Find the label for "Section" on the Scan Sheet. Enter your 3-digit subject number in these boxes. The experimenter gave you a subject number at the beginning of the session. If you are unsure what your number is, please raise your hand and ask the experimenter for assistance.*

Focusing on the officer whose Log Entry you just read, please answer the following questions carefully and honestly. If you have any questions, please raise your hand, and the experimenter will assist you. Mark all answers on the Scan Sheet.

1. The officer I am answering questions about is
   a. Paul
   b. Susan
   c. Mary
   d. Dave
   e. None of the above

2. The officer I am answering questions about is
   a. Jennifer
   b. Michael
   c. Ron
   d. Christine
   e. None of the above

Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



To what extent do you think each of the following is a likely motivation for this officer?

The officer wants to...

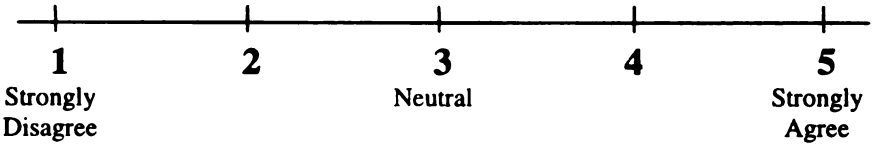
3. learn how to be a better police officer.
4. find out what he or she needs to improve to get promoted.
5. make sure he or she is doing the job right.
6. gain new information about something he or she needs to do to succeed.
7. check whether or not something he or she has done meets my expectations.
8. get a clearer understanding of how I am evaluating specific parts of his or her work.
9. figure out what he or she needs to improve on a similar task he or she will have to complete in the future.
10. find out what he or she can improve on a task in progress.
11. make sure I'm aware of something he or she did well.
12. make sure I notice the positive parts of what he or she did in this situation.
13. demonstrate that he or she is a hard worker.
14. show me that he or she wants to improve.
15. make me feel like he or she needs or values my input.
16. show me that he or she is interested in being promoted.
17. demonstrate that he or she is trying to meet my expectations.
18. look like he or she wants to be successful.

Part 2: Your Impressions of the Officer

For Part 2, you will answer Items 19 – 44 on the Scan Sheet. You may refer back to the Log Entry for the officer you are rating at any time as you answer these questions. If you have any questions, please raise your hand, and the experimenter will assist you. Mark all answers on the Scan Sheet.

On the basis of the Log Entry for this officer, please form an impression of the officer in your mind. Then respond to the following statements about the officer. Rate each statement according to what you expect this officer to be like.

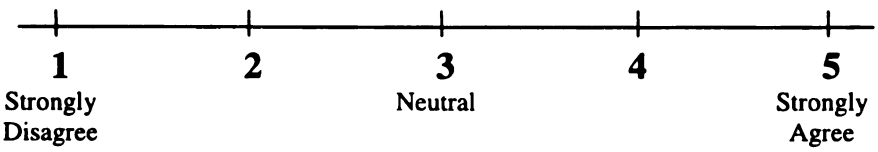
Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



Intelligence

19. This officer is smart.
20. This officer is a good decision-maker.
21. This officer is creative.
22. This officer is good at solving problems.
23. This officer is a clear thinker.
24. This officer is an independent thinker.
25. This officer is qualified for the job.
26. This officer is competent.

Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



Conscientiousness

27. This officer keeps his or her belongings clean and neat.
28. This officer is pretty good about pacing himself or herself to get things done on time.
29. This officer is not a very methodical person.
30. This officer tries to perform the tasks assigned to him or her conscientiously.
31. This officer has a clear set of goals and works toward them in an orderly fashion.
32. This officer wastes a lot of time before settling down to work.
33. This officer works hard to accomplish his or her goals.
34. When this officer makes a commitment, he or she can always be counted on to follow through.
35. Sometimes this officer is not as dependable or reliable as he or she should be.
36. This officer is a productive person who always gets the job done.
37. This officer never seems to be able to get organized.
38. This officer strives for excellence in everything he or she does.

Self-Esteem

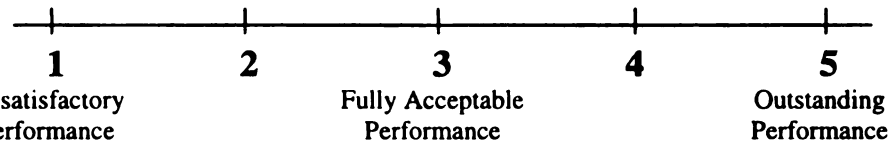
39. This officer feels that he or she is a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
40. This officer feels that he or she has a number of good qualities.
41. This officer is able to do things as well as most other people.
42. This officer feels he or she does not have much to be proud of.
43. This officer takes a positive attitude toward himself or herself.
44. At times this officer thinks he or she is no good at all.

Part 3: General Performance Ratings

For Part 3, you will answer Items 45 – 56 on the Scan Sheet. You may refer back to the Log Entry for the officer you are rating at any time as you answer these questions.

***First, imagine the officer doing the behaviors and asking the questions listed in the Log Entry. Then, rate the officer's level of job performance. Decide whether the officer described in the log entry is an* excellent performer, *an* average performer, *or a* poor performer.**

For the questions on the following pages, use the 5-point scale below.



Use these guidelines to assign ratings:

4 or 5 **Outstanding Performance**. You should give the officer an above-average rating (4 or 5) if you think the officer stands out from other officers. This rating indicates that you are impressed by this officer, or think the officer has special potential. You would consider this officer to be among the best on your police force. You might give the officer some sort of special recognition based on the information in the log entry.

4 **Fully Acceptable Performance**. You should give the officer an average rating (3) if you think the officer is completing normal job duties. This rating indicates that you are not particularly impressed by this officer. However, you think that the officer is meeting the requirements of the police officer position. You would expect all of your officers to do the things listed in the log entry.

2 or 1 **Unsatisfactory Performance**. You should give the officer a below-average rating (2 or 1) if you think the officer is not fulfilling the requirements of the police officer position. This rating indicates that you are not impressed by this officer. You would consider the officer's performance unacceptable. You might consider reprimanding the officer based on the information in the log entry.

Based on the Log Entry for this officer, please respond to the following items. Rate each statement according to your evaluations of this officer's performance. Obviously, you do not have as much information about these officers as real lieutenants have when they are making evaluations. Don't worry about that--just focus your evaluations on the specific information presented. If you have any questions, please raise your hand, and the experimenter will assist you. Mark all answers on the Scan Sheet.

45. Working as a team player.

What performance level would you expect from this officer on the performance dimension "working as a team player"?

Outstanding Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive high ratings for teamwork.	• Volunteers to help other officers, divisions, and agencies without compromising own responsibilities; willingly assists other officers even in dangerous circumstances. • Effectively coordinates investigating and questioning methods with other officers; always finds effective ways to cooperate to solve incidents and apprehend suspects. • Always shares all relevant information with all appropriate persons and agencies promptly, regardless of the circumstances; always provides clear and accurate information to other officers, divisions, and agencies.	**5**
		4
Fully Acceptable Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive average ratings for teamwork.	• Helps, cooperates, and coordinates with other officers, divisions, and departments; assists other law enforcement agencies; backs up partner or other officers in spite of danger or risk. • Communicates accurate information to appropriate people in a timely way.	**3**
		2
Unsatisfactory Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive low ratings for teamwork.	• Does not help other officers, divisions, and agencies unless ordered to do so or given specific assignments; does not assist other officers in dangerous situations. • Fails to coordinate investigating and questioning methods with other officers; does not consult with other officers at the scene about the investigating methods to be used; interrupts other officers who investigate a case. • Does not share important information with partner, other officers, or other divisions in a timely manner when required; provides incomplete or inaccurate information to other officers, divisions, and agencies.	**1**

46. Conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests

What performance level would you expect from this officer on the performance dimension "conducting preliminary investigations and making arrests"?

Outstanding Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive high ratings for conducting investigations and making arrests.	• Conducts preliminary investigations thoroughly and effectively; always conducts proper searches for evidence at crime scenes and in nearby areas; effectively protects crime scenes under all circumstances; collects all relevant information about cases from multiple sources, including friends and relatives of suspects and victims; always verifies and compares information; relays accurate and complete information to those who will conduct the investigation. • Even under severe field conditions, follows the appropriate procedures for collecting, protecting, preserving, and recording evidence completely and effectively; even in very complicated cases, effectively distinguishes between facts and opinions when collecting statements. • Appropriately uses escalation of force; always uses appropriate amount of force for situation; maintains personal control even when confronted with extremely hostile and provocative situations; remains very calm and objective even in severe confrontational situations; deals exceptionally effectively with confrontational and hostile persons and situations.	**5**
		4
Fully Acceptable Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive average ratings for conducting investigations and making arrests.	• Analyzes and pieces together information about cases; obtains complete information and descriptions. • Protects crime scenes to maintain integrity of evidence; preserves physical evidence; accurately separates facts from opinions; follows up on clues and leads. • Appropriately uses escalation of force to resolve incidents promptly and effectively; maintains personal control when confronted with hostility and provocation; maintains objectivity.	**3**
		2
Unsatisfactory Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive low ratings for conducting investigations and making arrests.	• Investigates cases inappropriately and incompletely; conducts inadequate searches of crime scenes; does not protect crime scenes; collects incomplete information from witnesses and suspects; does not collect information from witnesses and victims in a timely way; fails to relay basic or critical information to those who will conduct the investigation. • Does not follow appropriate procedures for collecting, protecting, preserving, and recording evidence; confuses facts with opinions when collecting statements. • Inaccurately evaluates the appropriate amount of force needed to resolve incidents; uses escalation of force principles inappropriately; tends to abuse force and authority; responds aggressively to law enforcement situations; tends to escalate confrontational situations; fails to maintain objectivity and personal control; easily becomes aggravated and distressed by hostility.	**1**

47.Handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts

What performance level would you expect from this officer on the performance dimension "handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts"?

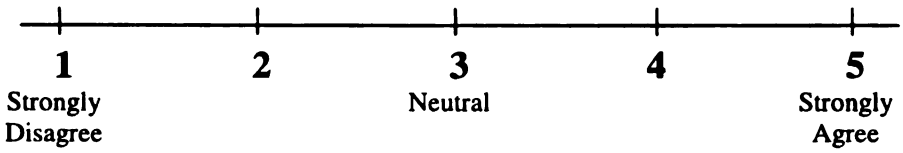
Outstanding Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive high ratings for handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts.	• Quickly and effectively gains control at incident scenes, including those where confusion, uncertainty, or hostility are present; adjusts degree of forcefulness and control to the nature of the situation; de-escalates hostile situations. • In threatening situations, defends self using only necessary force; does not back off unless doing so is necessary to reduce unacceptable level of risk to self or others, or is tactically the best approach. • Always maintains impartiality and treats both sides fairly.	**5**
		4
Fully Acceptable Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive average ratings for handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts.	• Takes effective control at incident scene, giving and enforcing commands as needed to manage the situation or gain control. • Accepts reasonable personal risk and will use force when appropriate and necessary.	**3**
		2
Unsatisfactory Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive low ratings for handling domestic disputes and mediating conflicts.	• Fails to take effective command at incident scenes; allows situations to get worse because of inability or unwillingness to give and enforce commands; is inappropriately aggressively and controlling, resulting in escalation of the situation. • In threatening or confrontational situations, will either overreact aggressively against any potential threats, or will retreat inappropriately; generally attempts to avoid all risk to self. • Tends to show favoritism to one side when dealing with disputants.	**1**

48. Responding to emergencies

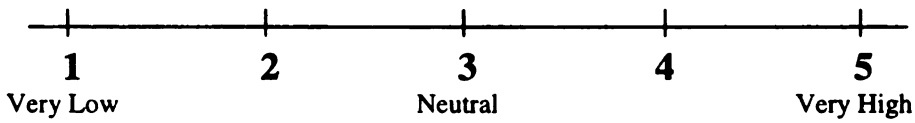
What performance level would you expect from this officer on the performance dimension "responding to emergencies"?

Outstanding Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive high ratings for responding to emergencies.	• Immediately identifies emergency situations; assesses all the situation requires quickly and completely. • Assesses injuries quickly and accurately even under pressure; provides appropriate first aid even in dangerous situations; effectively coordinates with emergency agencies. • Even when faced with unpredictable and high-risk situations, makes very effective decisions; demonstrates intelligent and effective thinking even under extreme pressure; anticipates chain of events and prepares for them; always comes up with appropriate and effective solutions to very complicated situations. • Always finds ways to eliminate risk to victims and suspects during emergencies. • Strives to reduce threats to own and partner's safety.	**5**
		4
Fully Acceptable Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive average ratings for responding to emergencies.	• Assesses the situation and needs quickly and accurately; thinks on their feet; uses good judgments and makes good decisions; keeps calm under pressure. • Calls for backup when appropriate; deals effectively with unpredictable people and situations; calms victims. • Maintains public safety during emergencies, while responding to calls, or when apprehending suspects and offenders. • Keeps own and partner's safety in mind at all times.	**3**
		2
Unsatisfactory Performance These are examples of behaviors that are typical of officers who receive low ratings for responding to emergencies.	• Fails to identify high-risk situations; assesses situation needs inadequately; follows procedures for emergency situations inappropriately and incompletely. • Assesses injuries inadequately; does not notify other emergency agencies when necessary; does not inform other responding units of the situation. • Uses poor judgment when reacting to risky situations; does not maintain clear thinking under pressure; tends to make hasty decisions or becomes indecisive in stressful situations; violates rules and regulations when responding to an emergency. • Does not take the necessary actions to protect public safety during emergencies. • Does not take the necessary actions to maintain own and partner's safety.	**1**

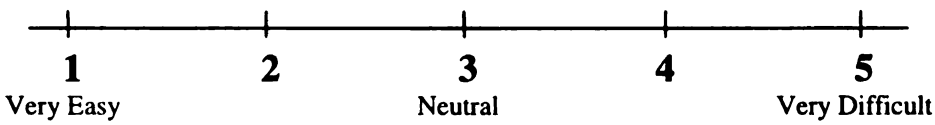
Please use the scale printed directly above each set of questions.



49. Overall, I think this officer would perform the job the way I would like it to be performed.
50. I think this officer's performance would meet my expectations.
51. Overall, I think this officer would effectively fulfill the roles and responsibilities of being a police officer.
52. I would hire this officer again if I had a chance to do it over.



53. On the basis of the behaviors presented in the log, what overall level of performance would you expect from this officer?
54. Please rate this officer's competence as a police officer.
55. Please rate this officer's likely future success on the job.



56. How easy do you think it would be to find another officer as good as this officer?

Part 4: Your Decisions about the Officer

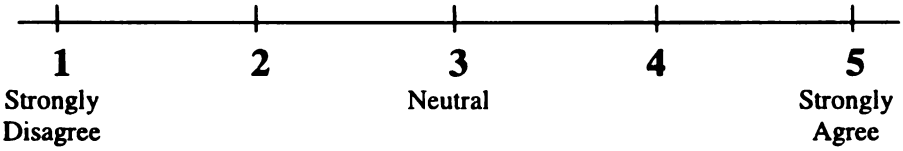
For Part 4, you will answer Items 57 – 64 on the back side of the Scan Sheet and respond to Sections B and C on the Essay Answer Pages. You may refer back to the Log Entry for the officer you are rating at any time as you answer these questions. If you have any questions, please raise your hand, and the experimenter will assist you.

On the basis of the Log Entry for this officer, please form an impression of the officer in your mind. Then respond to the following statements about the officer. Rate each statement according to the decisions you would make about this officer.

Advancement Potential

One of the major decisions that you are currently faced with as lieutenant is which of your officers to recommend for promotion. Please rate this officer in terms of whether you think he or she would be a good candidate for promotion. Remember, you should rate each officer independently--do not let your ratings of one officer influence your ratings of other officers. There is no limit on the number of officers you may recommend. You may rate all of your officers highly on this scale, or you may give all of them low ratings, or you may give a mix of ratings.

Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



57. This officer has a high potential for advancement.

58. This officer is a good candidate for promotion within the Police Department.

59. I would recommend this officer for promotion.

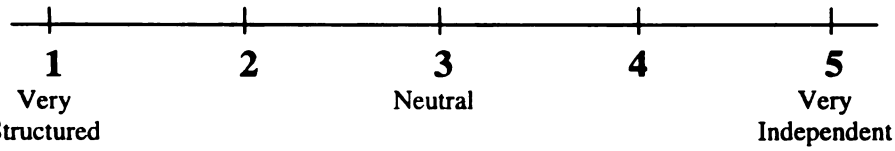
B. Why would you or wouldn't you recommend this officer for promotion?

Please answer this question in Section B of the "You're the Boss" Essay Answer Pages. First, check to be sure that you are on the correct page for the officer you are currently rating (you should have written the officer's name in the space provided at the top of the page). Then write a brief description of why you would or would not recommend this officer for promotion.

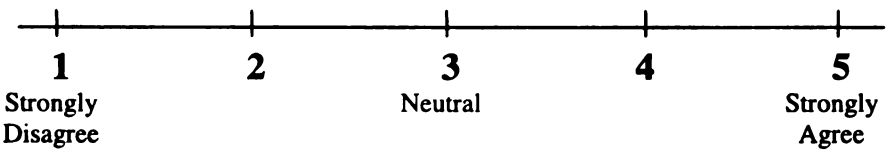
Project Assignment

You are planning to assign all of your officers to special community projects that they will be expected to work on while they are performing their normal patrol duties. Please rate this officer in terms of the types of projects you would feel comfortable assigning to him or her.

Please use the scale printed directly above each question.



60. You may assign some officers to very structured projects, in which you maintain a great deal of supervision and control, and other officers to very independent projects, in which you allow them to make their own decisions. What level of independence would you give this officer in a project assignment?



61. You may assign some officers to work alone, and others to work with a partner. Please respond to this statement: I would assign this officer to work alone.
62. I would assign this officer to a difficult and challenging project.
63. The Chief of Police has asked all lieutenants in the Department to consider nominating an officer to complete a particularly challenging assignment. Please respond to this statement: I would nominate this officer for this special project assignment.
64. Imagine that this officer was assigned to a difficult project. Please respond to this statement: I would be confident that this officer could successfully complete the difficult project.

C. **Please explain the level of confidence you have in this officer (your response to question #64).**

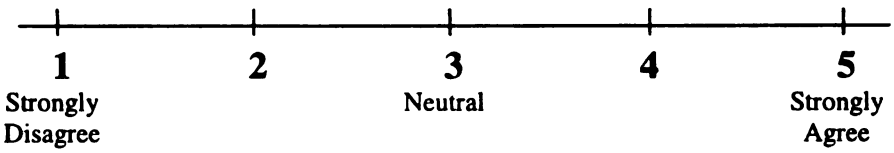
Please answer this question in Section C of the "You're the Boss" Essay Answer Pages. First, check to be sure that you are on the correct page for the officer you are currently rating (you should have written the officer's name in the space provided at the top of the page). Then write a brief description of why you would or would not feel confident that this officer could successfully complete a difficult special assignment.

Part 5: Your Opinions of the Officer

For Part 5, you will answer Items 65 – 69 on the back side of the Scan Sheet. You may refer back to the Log Entry for the officer you are rating at any time as you answer these questions. If you have any questions, please raise your hand, and the experimenter will assist you.

On the basis of the Log Entry for this officer, please form an impression of the officer in your mind. Then respond to the following statements about the officer. Rate each statement according to your opinions of this officer.

Answer the questions on this page using the 5-point scale below.



65. I would like this officer.

66. I would enjoy working with this officer.

67. I would enjoy being around this officer.

68. I could see this officer as a friend.

69. I would enjoy talking with this officer.

Thank you for answering this set of questions. Please return to where you left off in the Log Entry Booklet. If you are unsure about how to proceed, please raise your hand and ask the experimenter for assistance.

APPENDIX I

Open-Ended Questions

"You're the Boss"
Essay Answer Pages

Use these pages to respond to lettered questions in the questionnaire packet. Use one page for each officer you rate. If you need space beyond that provided, use the back of the page for that officer. Respond to multiple choice items using the Scan Sheets.

OFFICER NAME: _____

A. Why do you think this officer is doing these things and asking you these questions?

Response to Question A:

B. Why would you or wouldn't you recommend this officer for promotion?

Response to Question B:

C. Please explain the level of confidence you have in this officer (your response to question #64).

Response to Question C:

APPENDIX J

Debriefing Form

Performance Evaluation Study
Debriefing Notice

Fall 1999

The purpose of this experiment is to investigate how people form impressions of and rate the performance of employees based on specific behaviors. In particular, we are interested in how certain individual personality characteristics relate to your evaluations. We assigned participants to different employment contexts, presented you with a variety of examples of employee behaviors, and asked you to answer some questions about yourself to find out how these influenced your ratings.

There was no deception involved in this experiment, but we cannot tell you now the specific variables we are investigating. If you wish to have more information about the details or results of the study, you may contact the Karen Milner at (517) 355-2171 after data collection is complete (in 4-6 months). Individual results will not be available because we are looking only at aggregated data.

Thank you for participating.

APPENDIX K

Analysis Summary

Hypothesis	IV	DV	Test
Hypothesis 1a: Feedback providers' attributions that the feedback seeker is asking for feedback to improve his or her performance will be positively related to impressions of the seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self esteem.	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement	**Impression Formation** Intelligence Conscientiousness Self-esteem	Repeated Measures Regression for each impression outcome Main effect
Hypothesis 1b: Feedback providers' attributions that the feedback seeker is asking for feedback to manage the provider's impression will be negatively related to impressions of the seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self esteem.	**Attributions of Motive** Impression Management	**Impression Formation** Intelligence Conscientiousness Self-esteem	Repeated Measures Regression for each impression outcome Main effect
Hypothesis 2: When attributions of impression management motives for seeking feedback are high, female feedback providers will form more positive impressions of the feedback seeker's intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem than will male feedback providers.	**Attributions of Motive** Impression Management **Provider's Gender**	**Impression Formation** Intelligence Conscientiousness Self-esteem	Repeated Measures Regression for each impression outcome Interaction effect
Hypothesis 3a: Attributions of performance improvement motives and attributions of impression management motives will be higher for the three presentations of feedback requests (explanation, positive spin, and negative spin) than for the control condition including only behavioral statements of performance incidents.	**Feedback Request Presentation** Control (no feedback seeking) Explanation Positive Spin Negative Spin	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement Impression Management	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for feedback request presentation

Hypothesis 3b: Attributions of performance improvement motives will be highest for feedback requests presented with an explanation, followed by requests presented with a negative spin, and then requests presented with a positive spin.	**Feedback Request Presentation** Explanation Positive Spin Negative Spin	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA Planned comparisons
Hypothesis 3c: Attributions of impression management motives will be highest for feedback requests presented with a positive spin, followed by requests presented with a negative spin, and then requests presented with an explanation.	**Feedback Request Presentation**	**Attribution of Motive** Impression Management	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA
Hypothesis 4a: Attributions of performance improvement motives for feedback requests will be higher in training contexts than in performance contexts.	**Work Context** Performance Training	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for work context
Hypothesis 4b: Attributions of impression management motives for feedback requests will be higher in performance contexts than in training contexts.	**Work Context** Performance Training	**Attributions of Motive** Impression Management	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for work context
Hypothesis 4c: Work context will moderate the relationship between feedback request presentation and attributions of motive for feedback seeking, such that the differences in attributions of both performance improvement and impression management motives across the feedback request presentations will be greater in performance contexts than in training contexts.	**Feedback Request Presentation** Control (no feedback seeking) Explanation Positive Spin Negative Spin **Work Context** Performance Training	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement Impression Management	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for feedback request presentation by context interaction
Hypothesis 5a: Attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives for feedback seeking will be different for male and female seekers.	**Seeker's Gender**	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement Impression Management	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for gender

Hypothesis 5b: The seeker's gender will moderate the relationship between feedback request presentation and attributions of motive, such that differences in attributions of performance improvement and impression management motives across the feedback request presentations will be different for male and female seekers.	**Feedback Request Presentation** Control (no feedback seeking) Explanation Positive Spin Negative Spin **Seeker's Gender**	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement Impression Management	Incomplete Blocks ANOVA F-test for feedback request presentation by gender interaction
Hypothesis 6: Feedback providers' mastery goal orientation will be positively related to attributions of the feedback seeker's desire to improve performance and negatively related to attributions of desire to manage an impression.	**Mastery Goal Orientation**	**Attributions of Motive** Performance Improvement Impression Management	Repeated Measures Multiple Regression for each Attribution
Hypothesis 7: Feedback providers' performance goal orientation will be positively related to attributions of the feedback seeker's desire to manage an impression and negatively related to attributions of desire to improve performance.	**Performance Goal Orientation**		
Hypothesis 8: Providers' positive attitudes toward feedback seeking will be positively related to attributions of performance improvement motives and negatively related to attributions of impression management motives.	**Attitudes toward feedback seeking**		
Hypothesis 9: Supervisors' impressions of subordinates' intelligence, conscientiousness, and self-esteem will be positively related to organizational outcomes such as assignment to challenging projects, performance appraisal ratings, and promotions.	**Impression Formation** Intelligence Conscientiousness Self-esteem	**Job-Related Outcomes** Performance appraisal Advancement potential Project assignment	Repeated Measures Multiple Regression for each of the three job-related outcomes

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Individual Difference and Outcome Measures

	Mean[a]	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Individual Differences (n=279)															
Goal Orientation															
1 Mastery	3.99	.56	*.83*[b]												
2 Performance	3.92	.63	.03	*.80*											
3 Feedback Seeking Attitudes	3.82	.57	.27*	.03	*.81*										
Outcome Measures (n=1116)															
Organizational Outcomes															
4 Performance Appraisal	3.75	.90	.03[c]	.06*	.06*	*.95*									
5 Performance Dimensions	3.77	.80	.05	.08*	.08*	.80*	*.84*								
6 Advancement Potential	3.35	1.22	.02	.04	.05	.86*	.70*	*.96*							
7 Project Assignment	3.36	1.10	.03	.04	.04	.79*	.66*	.80*	*.92*						
Impressions															
8 Intelligence	3.74	.80	.08*	.09*	.11*	.80*	.68*	.72*	.75*	*.93*					
9 Conscientiousness	3.71	.64	.06*	.06	.11*	.76*	.61*	.70*	.65*	.69*	*.90*				
10 Self-Esteem	3.61	1.00	.04	.00	.06*	.49*	.30*	.53*	.56*	.51*	.50*	*.91*			
11 Liking	3.44	1.01	.05	.03	.10*	.66*	.55*	.67*	.55*	.57*	.56*	.25*	*.96*		
Attributions															
12 Performance Improvement	3.52	1.29	.04	.05	.05	.46*	.41*	.50*	.24*	.29*	.46*	.09*	.50*	*.97*	
13 Impression Management	3.46	1.13	.05	.07*	.03	.54*	.43*	.60*	.40*	.40*	.55*	.43*	.41*	.79*	*.93*

Note. [a] Responses for all scales were on a 1-5 scale, where 5 represented strong endorsement of the item.
[b] Alpha reliabilities for the scales are in italics on the diagonal.
[c] For correlations between individual difference and outcome measures, n=1108.
* $p < .05$.

Table 2

Regression Weights for Effects of Attributions of Motive for Feedback Seeking on Impressions

		Impression			
Attribution	df	Intelligence	Conscientiousness	Self-Esteem	Liking
Gender[a] (G)[b]	1, 275	-.13*	-.04	-.07	-.13*
Performance Improvement (PI)	1, 829	-.07*	.02	-.48****	.35****
Impression Management (IM)	1, 829	.35****	.29****	.80****	.06
G x PI[c]	1, 829	-.12	-.05	-.12	-.13
G x IM	1, 829	.14	.10	.21*	.12

Note. [a] 0=Male, 1=Female. This is the gender of the feedback provider (supervisor).
[b] Regression weights for main effects (G, PI, IM) are unique (partial) effects when all impressions are entered simultaneously into the regression.
[c] Regression weights for interaction effects (G x PI, G x IM) are unique (partial) effects when all main and interaction effects are entered simultaneously in to the regression.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Effects of Work Context, Feedback Seeker's Gender, and Feedback Request Presentation on Attributions of Performance Improvement Motives

Source	df	MS	F
Between-Persons			
Work Context (C)	1	1.53	2.14
Error	277	0.72	
Within-Persons			
Feedback Seeker's Gender (G)	1	2.73	5.78*
Feedback Request Presentation (P)	3	416.74	883.54****
C x P	3	0.18	0.39
G x P	3	2.66	5.63***
C x G x P	3	1.19	2.52
Error	823	.47	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 4

Analysis of Variance for Effects of Work Context, Feedback Seeker's Gender, and Feedback Request Presentation on Attributions of Impression Management Motives

Source	df	MS	F
Between-Persons			
Work Context (C)	1	0.01	0.01
Error	277	0.75	
Within-Persons			
Feedback Seeker's Gender (G)	1	5.59	14.02***
Feedback Request Presentation (P)	3	288.01	722.57****
C x P	3	0.51	1.28
G x P	3	1.64	4.10**
C x G x P	3	1.11	2.79*
Error	823	0.40	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 5

Mean Ratings of Attributions of Performance Improvement Motives by Feedback Request Presentation and Seeker Gender

		Feedback Seeker (Officer)			
Feedback Request Presentation	df	Male		Female	Combined
Control (No Feedback Seeking)	1, 823	1.67	≠	1.86	1.76[a]
Explanation	1, 823	4.59		4.56	4.57[b]
Positive Spin	1, 823	3.87	≠	3.53	3.70[c]
Negative Spin	1, 823	4.16	≠	3.92	4.04[d]
Combined	1, 823	3.57[e]		3.47[f]	

Note. Means reported are least-squares estimates, adjusted to account for unbalanced cells created by the incomplete blocks design.
≠ indicates significant difference between male and female officers within the feedback request presentation condition ($p < .05$).
[a, b, c, d] Means for the feedback request presentation main effect (in right margin) with different superscripts are significantly different ($p < .0001$).
[e, f] Means for the gender main effect (in lower margin) with different superscripts are significantly different ($p < .05$).

Table 6

Mean Ratings of Attributions of Impression Management Motives by Feedback Request Presentation and Seeker Gender

		Feedback Seeker (Officer)			
Feedback Request Presentation	df	Male		Female	Combined
Control (No Feedback Seeking)	1, 823	2.14		2.01	2.08[a]
Explanation	1, 823	4.20		4.11	4.15[b]
Positive Spin	1, 823	4.26		4.31	4.29[c]
Negative Spin	1, 823	3.51	≠	3.11	3.31[d]
Combined	1, 823	3.53[e]		3.38[f]	

Note. Means reported are least-squares estimates, adjusted to account for unbalanced cells created by the incomplete blocks design.
≠ indicates lack of significant difference between male and female officers within the feedback request presentation condition.
[a, b, c, d] Means for the feedback request presentation main effect (in right margin) with different superscripts are significantly different ($p < .0001$ for all comparisons except Explanation versus Positive Spin, where $p < .05$).
[e, f] Means for the gender main effect (in lower margin) with different superscripts are significantly different ($p < .001$).

Table 7

Regression Weights for Effects of Individual Differences on Attributions of Motive for Feedback Seeking

	df	Attribution	
		Performance Improvement	Impression Management
Mastery Goal Orientation	1, 273	.07	.09*
Performance Goal Orientation	1, 273	.11**	.12**
Attitudes on Feedback Seeking	1, 273	.08	.02

Note. Regression weights are unstandardized, unique (partial) effects when all individual differences are entered simultaneously into the regression.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 8

Regression Weights for Effects of Impressions on Job-Related Outcome Ratings

		Job-Related Outcome			
Impression	df	General Performance	Performance Dimensions	Advancement Potential	Project Assignment
Intelligence	1, 816	.45****	.47****	.41****	.63****
Conscientiousness	1, 816	.47****	.34****	.49****	.22****
Self-Esteem	1, 816	.05**	-.09****	.24****	.24****
Liking	1, 816	.21****	.13****	.41****	.19****

Note. Regression weights are unstandardized, unique (partial) effects when all impressions are entered simultaneously into the regression.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 9

Analysis of Variance for Effects of Work Context, Feedback Seeker's Gender, and Feedback Request Presentation on Impressions

		Impression							
		Intelligence		Conscientiousness		Self-Esteem		Liking	
Source	df	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Between-Persons									
Work Context (C)	1	0.22	0.29	0.28	0.64	0.43	1.13	0.83	0.85
Error	277	0.76		0.44		0.38		0.98	
Within-Persons									
Feedback Seeker's Gender (G)	1	0.12	0.24	0.09	0.33	0.74	1.78	0.98	1.26
Feedback Request Presentation (P)	3	21.84	41.60****	28.80	100.73****	219.94	527.64****	67.95	87.89****
C x P	3	1.27	2.43	1.12	3.91**	0.06	0.13	1.00	1.29
G x P	3	1.86	3.54*	1.00	3.52*	2.17	5.21**	1.52	1.97
Error	823	0.53		0.29		0.42		0.77	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 10

Analysis of Variance for Effects of Work Context, Feedback Seeker's Gender, and Feedback Request Presentation on Job-Related Outcomes

		Job-Related Outcome							
		General Performance		Performance Dimensions		Advancement Potential		Project Assignment	
Source	df	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Between-Persons									
Work Context (C)	1	2.20	2.82	0.16	0.20	0.17	0.15	0.00	0.00
Error	277	0.78		0.80		1.13		0.89	
Within-Persons									
Feedback Seeker's Gender (G)	1	0.40	0.64	0.29	0.57	0.65	0.57	0.05	0.04
Feedback Request Presentation (P)	3	50.13	79.63****	22.90	45.73****	132.30	116.26****	58.70	52.70****
C x P	3	0.79	1.26	1.40	2.80*	0.99	0.87	1.06	0.96
G x P	3	2.30	3.65*	1.70	3.39*	3.22	2.83*	2.55	2.29
Error	823	0.63		0.50		1.14		1.11	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 11

Analysis of Variance for Effects of Work Context, Feedback Seeker's Gender, and Feedback Request Presentation on Job-Related Outcomes, Controlling for Impressions

		Job-Related Outcome							
		General Performance		Performance Dimensions		Advancement Potential		Project Assignment	
Source	df	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Between-Persons									
Work Context (C)	1	2.20	2.82	0.16	0.20	0.17	0.15	0.00	0.00
Error	277	0.78		0.80		1.13		0.89	
Within-Persons									
Feedback Seeker's Gender (G)	1	0.42	2.75	0.43	1.94	0.77	2.05	0.00	0.01
Feedback Request Presentation (P)	3	5.42	35.13****	8.61	39.15****	8.88	23.70****	1.31	3.10*
C x P	3	0.14	0.91	0.05	0.21	0.26	0.70	0.17	0.40
G x P	3	0.06	0.37	0.06	0.29	0.02	0.06	0.36	0.85
Error	823	0.15		0.22		0.37		0.42	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

Table 12

Regression Weights for Effects of Individual Differences on Impressions

		Impression			
	df	Intelligence	Conscientiousness	Self-Esteem	Liking
Mastery Goal Orientation	1, 273	.08	.04	.05	.05
Performance Goal Orientation	1, 273	.10*	.05	.00	.05
Attitudes on Feedback Seeking	1, 273	.13**	.11**	.09**	.16**

Note. Regression weights are unstandardized, unique (partial) effects when all individual differences are entered simultaneously into the regression.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$.

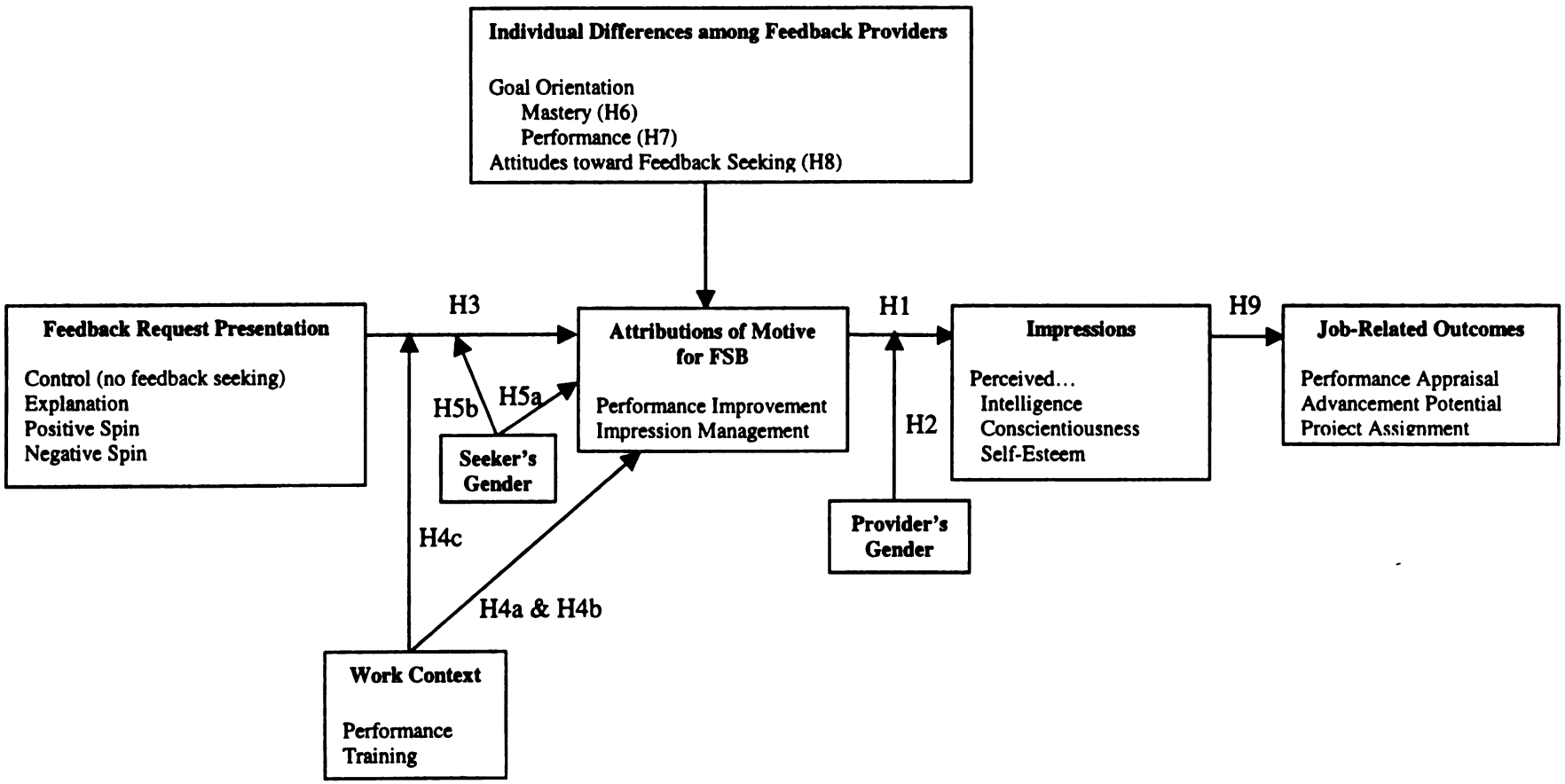


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the relationships among feedback-seeking behaviors, attributions of motive, impression formation, and job-related outcomes.

Figure 2. Effects of Attributions of Impression Management Motives and Feedback Provider's Gender on Impressions of Self-Esteem

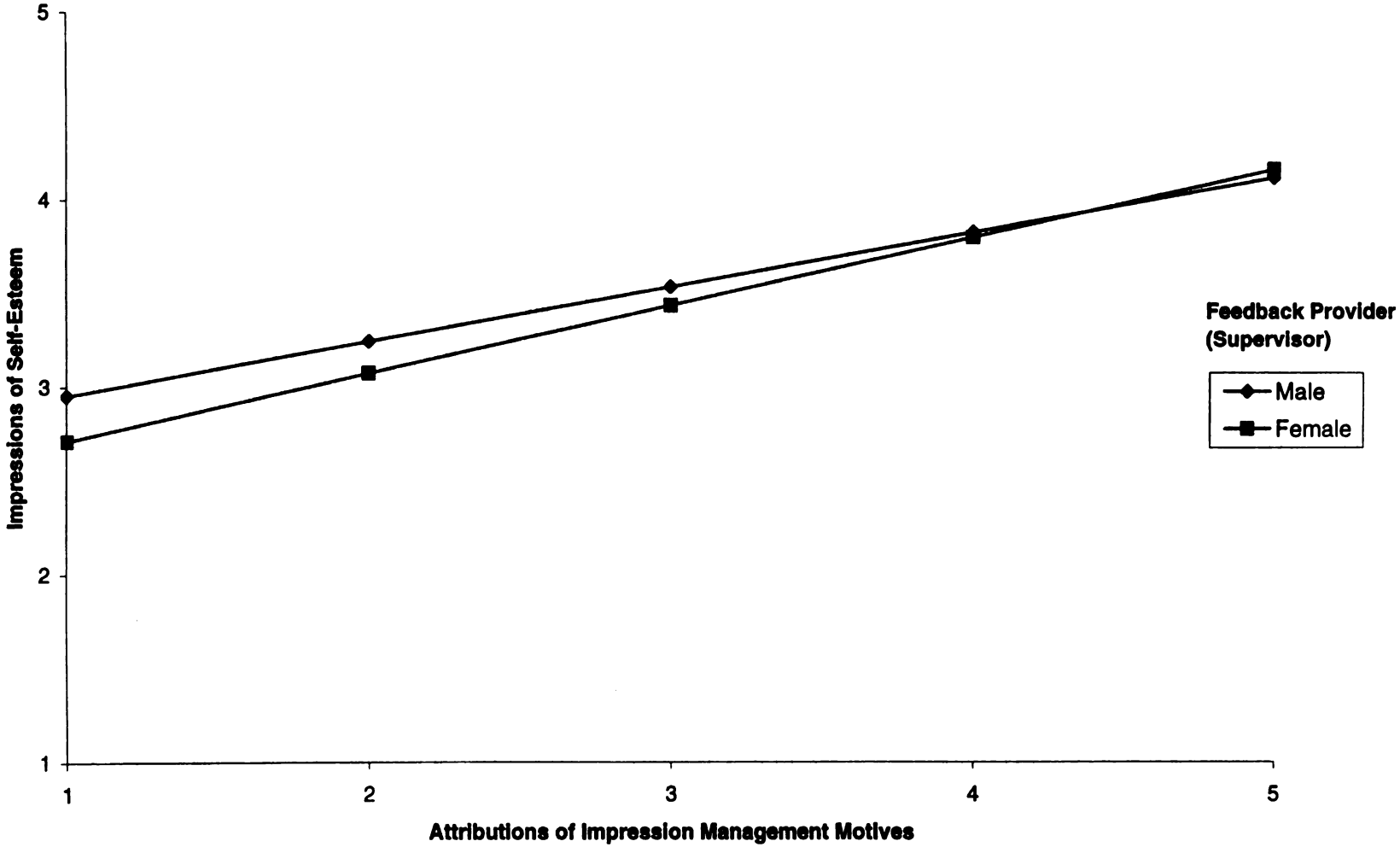


Figure 3. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style on Attributions of Performance Improvement Motives

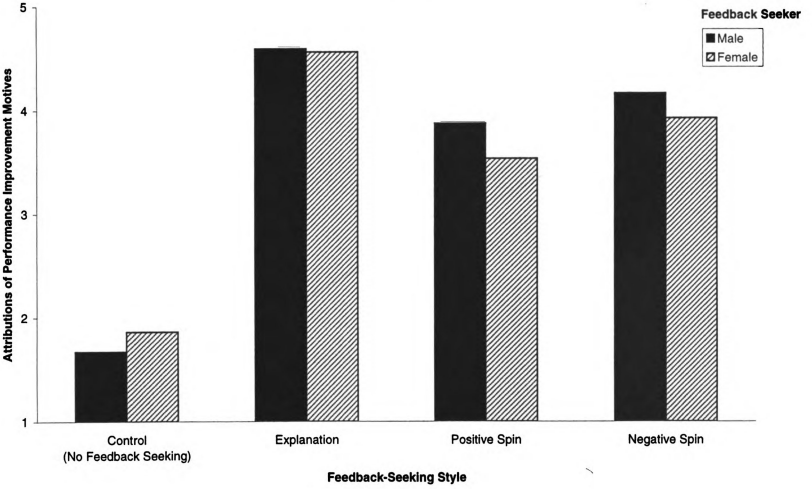


Figure 4. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Performance Improvement Motives

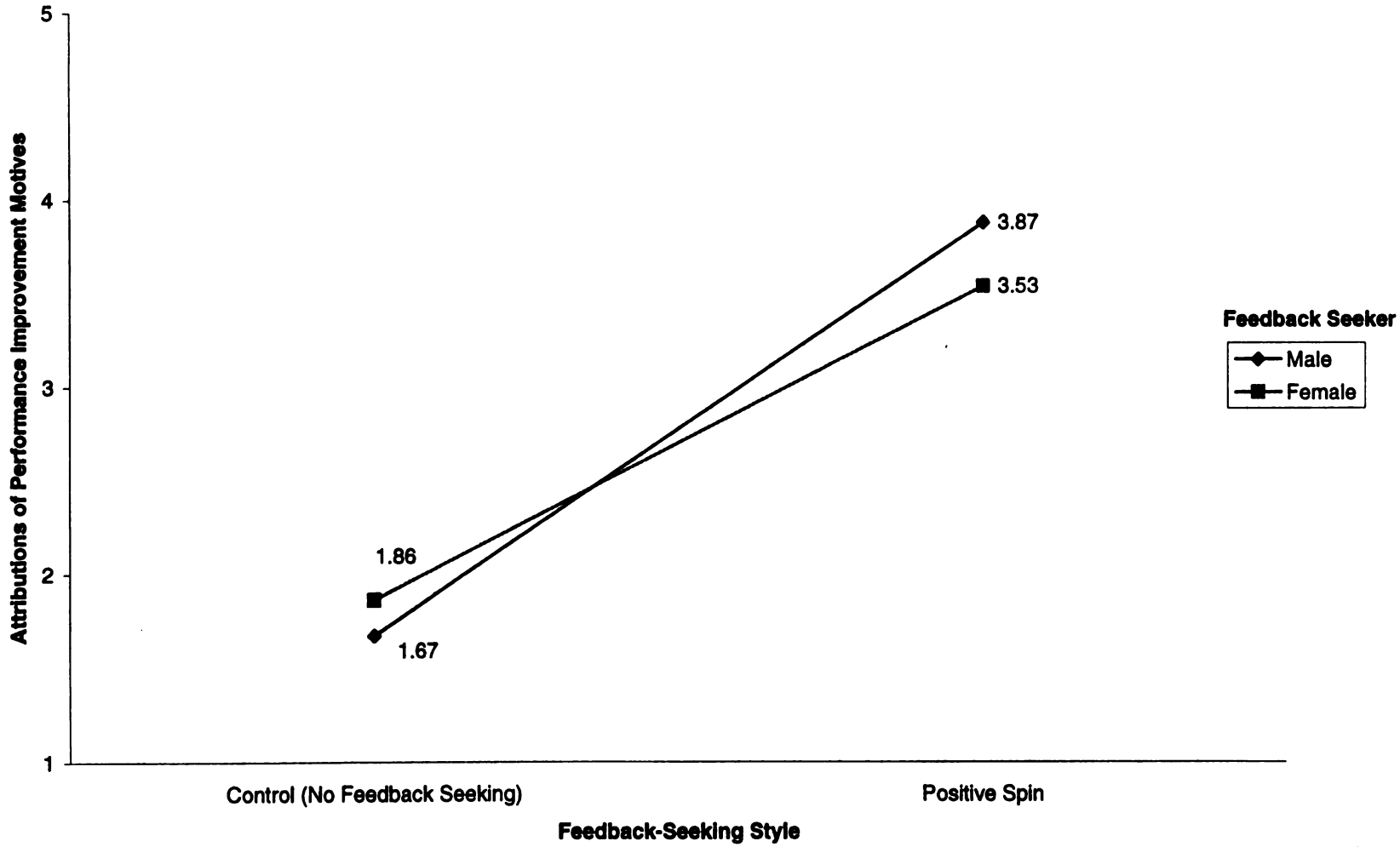


Figure 5. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Performance Improvement Motives

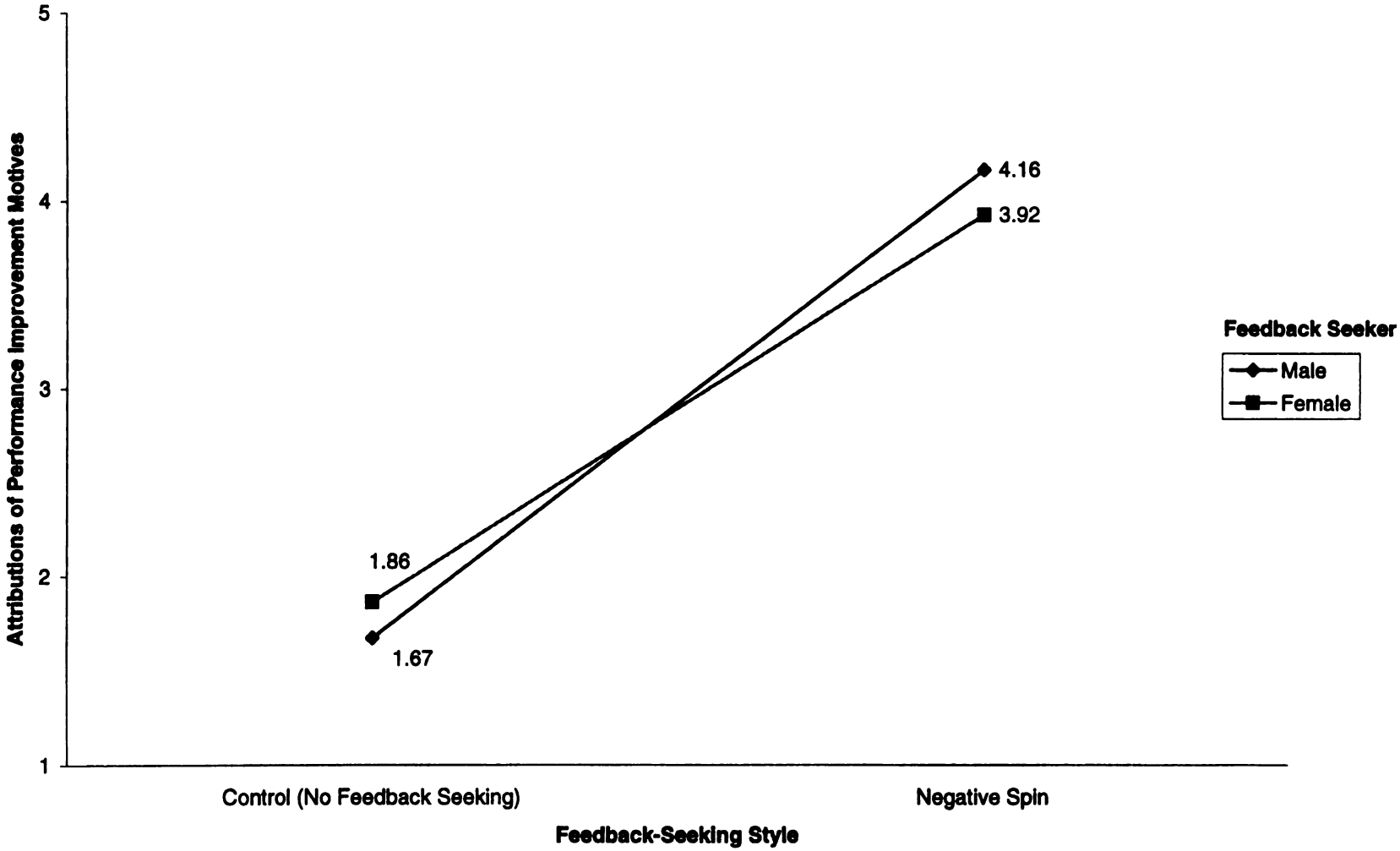


Figure 6. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Performance Improvement Motives

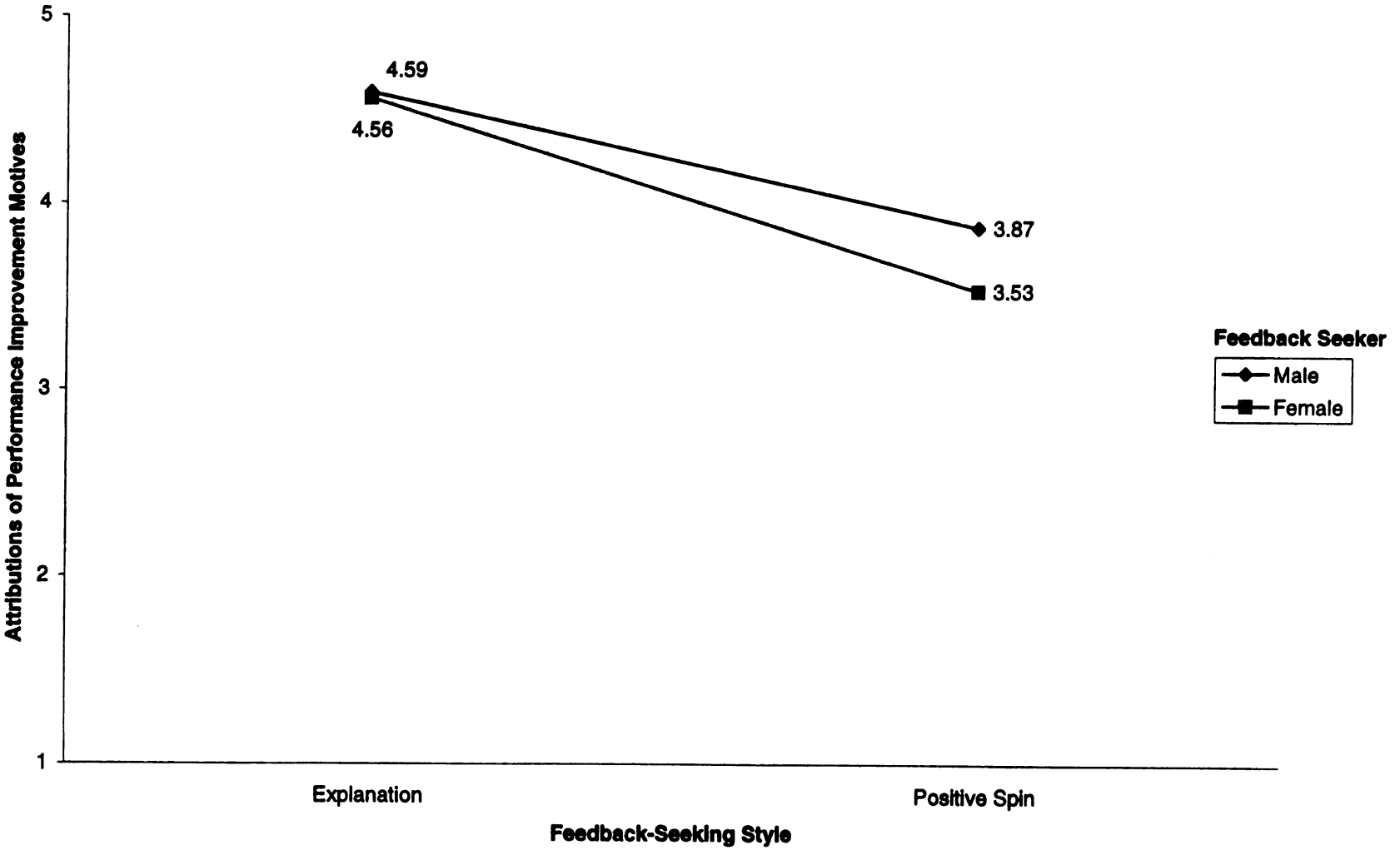


Figure 7a. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Impression Management Motives in a Performance Context

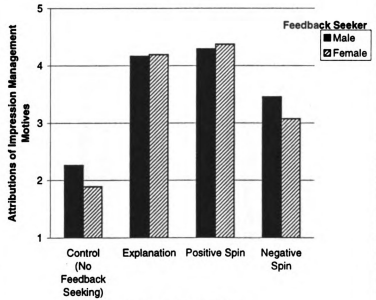


Figure 7b. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Attributions of Impression Management Motives in a Training Context

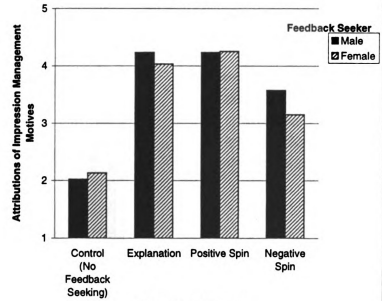


Figure 8. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Impressions

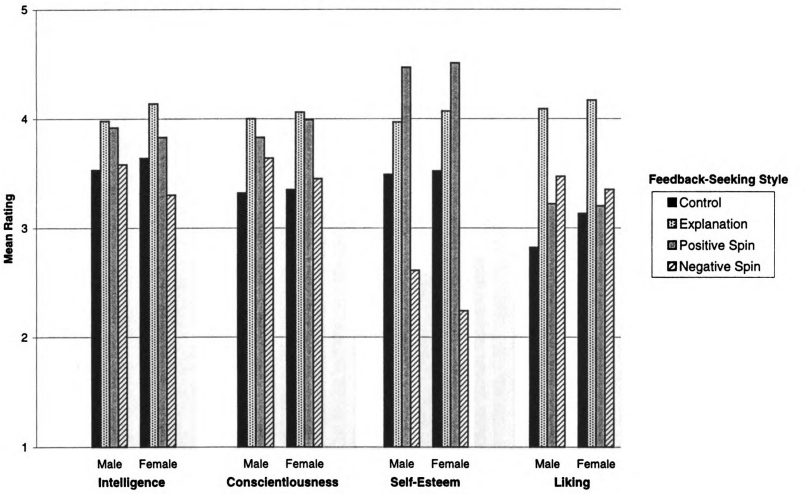


Figure 9. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Job-Related Outcomes

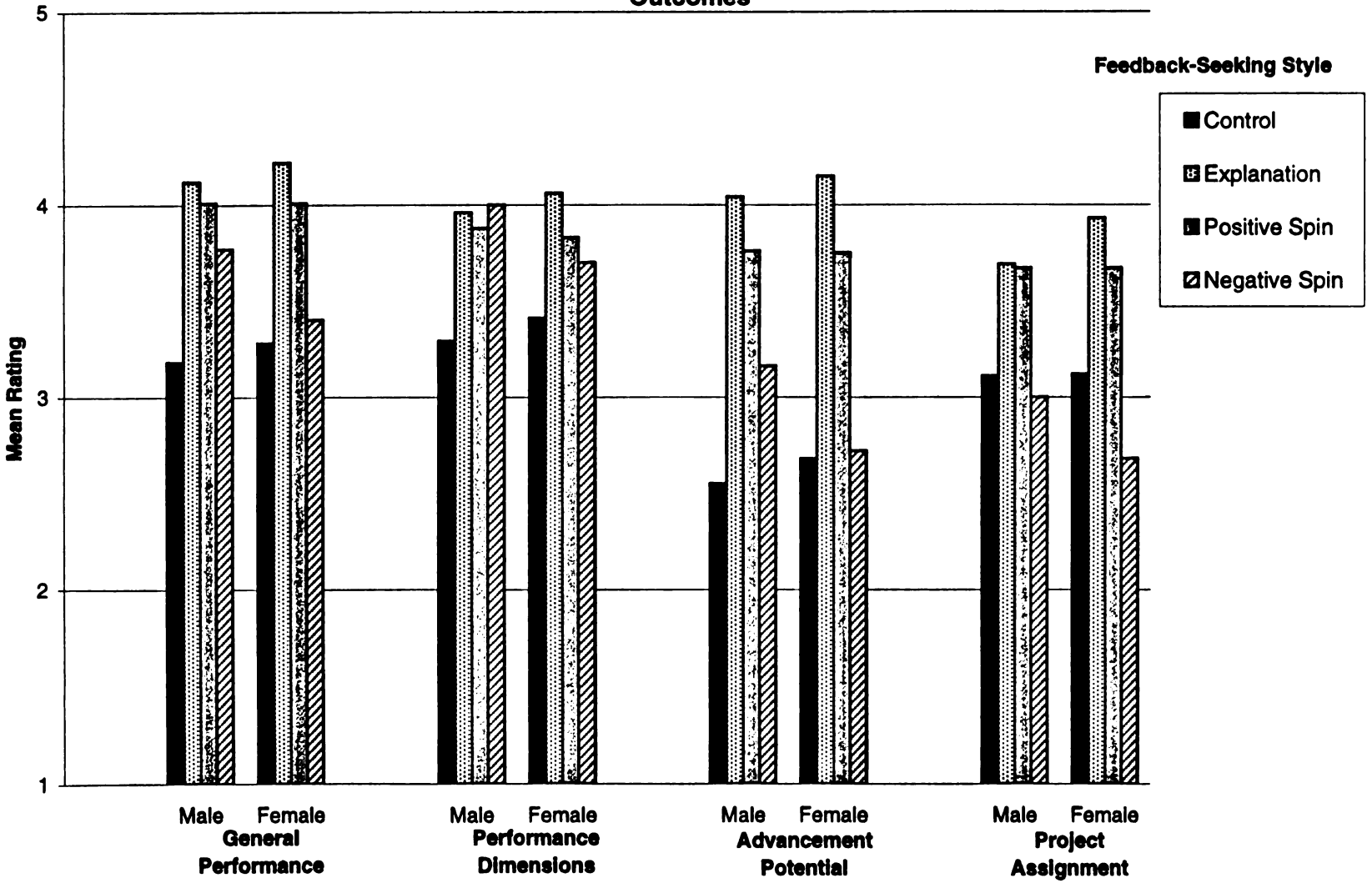


Figure 10. Effects of Feedback-Seeking Style and Feedback Seeker's Gender on Job-Related Outcomes, Controlling for Impressions