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Compensation Negotiation Dilemma**

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Relational Accounts: An Answer for Women to the Compensation Negotiation Dilemma

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Abstract

Women face a compensation negotiation dilemma in which they have to weigh the economic benefits of asking for higher pay with the social risks of defying prescriptive sex stereotypes (Bowles, Babcock, & Lai, 2007). In four experiments, we show that enhancing the legitimacy of women's compensation requests does not eliminate the social risk of asking, and that eliminating the social risk of asking is not sufficient to legitimize their requests. We identify strategies for overcoming the compensation negotiation dilemma using "relational accounts" that simultaneously explain why the negotiating behavior is appropriate under the circumstances and affirm concern for organizational relationships.

Keywords: accounts, backlash, compensation, gender, negotiation, relational, sex, status, stereotypes, social

Relational Accounts: An Answer for Women's Compensation Negotiation Dilemmas

Jane is about to be promoted to a more senior management position, and she would like to earn more than her organization is currently offering her. Her friend Jack advises her to, "Go in and tell them what you think you're worth." She agrees that this is the time to negotiate, but she feels nervous about doing it. Research suggests that Jane's nervousness is reasonable, because it is more socially risky for a woman than for a man to follow Jack's advice. In multiple studies, researchers have found evaluators to be significantly less inclined to work with a female manager who attempted to negotiate for higher compensation as compared to one who did not, and this effect was consistently greater for female than for male candidates (Bowles et al., 2007).

Attempting to negotiate for higher compensation is socially risky for women because it violates prescriptive sex stereotypes. The prescriptions for appropriate feminine and masculine behavior derive from the traditional division of labor between the sexes (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984) and the social hierarchy that that traditional division of labor creates (i.e., men in charge, women in support roles) (Conway, Pizzamiglio, & Mount, 1996; Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Hoffman & Hurst, 1990; Jackman, 1994; Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1977; Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004). Competitively negotiating for greater resources for oneself contradicts the normative expectations for feminine behavior that women—as members of the subordinate sex—should be other oriented, caring, and deferential (Bowles, Babcock, & McGinn, 2005; Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly, 1987; Jackman, 1994; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Wade, 2001). Negotiating for higher compensation, in particular, poses an additional problem for women, because it involves not only asserting one's self interest but also making claims to a status-linked resource that is traditionally associated with the male "breadwinner" role (Callahan-Levy & Messe, 1979; Ridgeway, 2001; Weber, 1968). Evaluators become less willing

to work with female job candidates who ask for higher compensation (vs. not) because they perceive them to be *both* lacking in niceness and overly demanding (Bowles et al., 2007).

One piece of advice for female managers like Jane is to weigh carefully the potential social costs and economic gains of initiating compensation negotiations (Bowles et al., 2007). If all a woman really cares about is the immediate raise in compensation, then she should not hold back. Negotiation pays: those who initiate compensation negotiations tend to increase their earnings significantly over their starting offer (Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Gerhart & Rynes, 1991; O'Shea & Bush, 2002). Moreover, the higher negotiators' aspirations and opening demands, the more value they tend to gain from negotiation (Freedman, 1978, 1979; Galinsky, Mussweiler, & Medvec, 2002; Major, Vanderslice, & McFarlin, 1984; Stevens, Bavetta, & Gist, 1993; Zetik & Stuhlmacher, 2002). However, if a woman cares less about her short-term earnings than her long-term career prospects within the organization, then pause may be warranted. Negotiations take place in the context of relationships (McGinn & Keros, 2002), and negotiation behavior that is negatively perceived can sour the potential for future problem-solving and cooperation (Morris, Larrick, & Su, 1999; O'Connor & Arnold, 2001; Tinsley, O'Connor, & Sullivan, 2002).

But, what if female managers care both about the social and economic implications of negotiating? How could they minimize the social risks of negotiating for higher compensation—so that they can get what they want and not undermine potentially important relationships in the process? This is the practical aspiration of the current research, to offer theoretically and empirically grounded advice for women who do not want to wait for society to change before they can negotiate effectively for higher pay or other status-linked organizational resources.

This research also makes important theoretical contributions to the study of gender in negotiations, status in social influence, and the use of social accounts in organizations. Investigation of psychological mechanisms that mitigate, as well as create, resistance to female negotiators enables a deeper understanding of the backlash phenomenon in negotiation. It also contributes to research on social and economic tradeoffs in negotiation (Amanatullah, Morris, & Curhan, 2008; Gelfand, Smith-Major, Raver, & Nishii, 2000; Morris et al., 1999) by illuminating mechanisms for serving both relational and material interests. Finally, expanding the literature on status in social influence, this research suggests that different types of status violations (e.g., claims to status-linked resources vs. task contributions) may require different types of legitimization to be both socially acceptable and effective.

Explaining Behavior and Motives

In order to identify strategies for women to resolve their compensation negotiation dilemma, we have drawn inspiration from two literatures from sociology and psychology. The first is on social accounts that help to legitimize deviant behavior in general. The second is on reducing risks of counter-stereotypical self-presentation for women specifically. In the studies that follow, we show that enhancing the legitimacy of a woman's compensation request is not sufficient to eliminate the social costs of asking for higher pay and that eliminating the social costs to a woman for asking for higher pay does not in itself legitimize her request. We find that *relational accounts*—explanations that simultaneously legitimize a woman's request and convey concern for organizational relationships—resolve the compensation negotiation dilemma.

Accounting for One's Behavior

Social accounts explain generally harmful or inappropriate behaviors in terms that make those behaviors seem more legitimate under the specific situational circumstances (Scott &

Lyman, 1968). There is an extensive literature on accounts, which has its roots in classic sociological theories of the explication of motives in social interaction (Goffman, 1971; Mills, 1940; Scott & Lyman, 1968; Weber, 1947) and which has been elaborated in recent years with regard to behavior in organizations. The more recent research has illuminated some of the nuances in what makes for acceptable accounts in organizations, primarily in terms of the language or logic of the account presented (Bies & Moag, 1986; Brockner, DeWitt, Grover, & Reed, 1990; Conlon & Ross, 1997; Elkins, Bozeman, & Phillips, 2003; Lee & Robinson, 2000; Sitkin & Bies, 1993; Skarlicki, Folger, & Gee, 2004) and the predispositions of targets of influence to honor the account (Cobb, Stephens, & Watson, 2001; Davidson & Friedman, 1998; Friedman & Robinson, 1993; Kickul, Gundry, & Posig, 2005; Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1999).

In our review of the literature on social accounts in organizational behavior, we found that it focused virtually exclusively on mitigating the perceived harm or injustice caused by higher power parties (e.g., organizational restructuring on employees, supervisors' mistreatment of subordinates) (cf., Skarlicki et al., 2004). In contrast, we were interested in identifying ways to legitimize a status violation by a lower status organizational actor—a female job candidate behaving in a stereotypically masculine (i.e., higher status) way making claims to status-linked organizational resources. For inspiration, we returned to Scott and Lyman's (1968) seminal work on "Accounts," in which they took a more general approach to the explication of deviance, including examples of misbehavior by both low- and high-status actors (e.g., accounting for the sexual affairs of homosexual vs. heterosexual men).

Scott and Lyman (1968) offered two general categories of accounts: justifications and excuses. *Justifications* explain why the circumstances should permit or require behavior that would otherwise be impermissible. For instance, killing is wrong, but legitimate for a soldier

facing the enemy in battle. Whereas justifications assert the appropriateness of the behavior under the circumstances, the aim of *excuses* is to shift responsibility for the inappropriate behavior away from the actor. For instance, the soldier may have killed under orders, unaware that the victim was not an enemy combatant. In either case, the aim is to persuade the evaluator that the actor's behavior was appropriate under the circumstances.

Scott and Lyman (1968) offered these general categories of account, but emphasized the importance of their adaptation to the specific situation in which the deviant behavior occurred and to the context within which the account is being offered. They argue that, to be effective, the idiomatic form of the account must be socially suited to the culture, subculture, and interpersonal relationship between the actor and evaluator. For instance, they suggest that a heterosexual man in a macho culture could justify a sexual affair based on the rights of his manhood, whereas a homosexual man would have to appeal to factors outside of his control (e.g., biology, abuse). It is, therefore, not simply the inherent legitimacy of a social account that makes it successful—it must fit with the social identity of the account maker within the situation.

Following Scott and Lyman (1968), we propose that women can use accounts—justification or excuses—in order to legitimize their claims to greater compensation or other status-linked organizational resources. However, in order to fully restore the woman's image to its prenegotiation equilibrium, we argue that her account must also appeal to the normative expectations for feminine behavior in eyes of her evaluator.

Expressing Communal Motives

One documented strategy that women can use to make themselves appear acceptably feminine when behaving in a stereotypically masculine manner is to demonstrate communal motives. There are two distinct, but complementary, explanations for why communal motives

make counterstereotypical behavior by women more acceptable. The first is that it makes the woman appear nicer, which is a core attribute of the feminine stereotype (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Jackman, 1994; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman, 1998). For instance, Carli et al. (1995) found that competent women were significantly more influential when they used a social style of influence (e.g., leaning in with a friendly expression) as opposed to a strictly task-oriented style of influence, because the social style made them more likeable. Another example is Heilman and Okimoto's (2007) research, which showed that negativity toward women who succeed in male tasks was ameliorated when evaluators had information that the woman was communal (e.g., concerned about others, encouraged cooperation).

The second argument for why the demonstration of communal motives allows women to behave in more stereotypical masculine ways is more explicitly status based. That is, the demonstration of communal motives is a way for those with low status to enhance their perceived value to the group enterprise, because their contributions will seem more valuable when they are perceived to benefit the group as opposed to themselves (Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1977; Ridgeway, 1978, 1982). Testing this theory, Ridgeway (1982) showed that women in male work groups were significantly more influential when they appeared group-oriented than when they appeared self-oriented, whereas men's influence in female work groups was high regardless of how they presented their motivations. This explanation is also consistent with meta-analytic research, which shows that female leaders are evaluated significantly more positively—and as positively as male leaders—when they use a more inclusively democratic, as opposed to autocratic, style (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992).

The challenge of conveying communal motives when negotiating for higher compensation is that the behavior itself—competitively making claim to a status-linked resource

for oneself—inherently defies communal motivation. We propose, therefore, that women must either assert directly and explicitly their communal motivations in general when asking for higher compensation or provide an account for their behavior that eliminates any contradiction between their negotiating behavior and their communal orientation.

Overview of Studies

In four studies we tested the social implications of various approaches to initiating compensation negotiations. In all studies presented, the participants assumed the role of an executive evaluating an internal candidate for a management placement within their department. The candidate was an employee and not a job applicant, because it is generally regarded as inappropriate to negotiate compensation without a job offer (Pinkley & Northcraft, 2000; Thompson, 2005). This is the same basic procedure used in previous research that demonstrated significant social costs to women for initiating compensation negotiations (Bowles et al., 2007, Studies 2 and 3), so it also allows us to test some of the limits of those earlier findings.

In Study 1, participants evaluated a female candidate based on the text of an interview transcript in which she negotiated for higher compensation. We examined the social implications of two types of accounts: self-worth (“I deserve this”) and an outside offer. In previous research demonstrating the social costs to women of asking for higher pay, researchers used negotiating scripts that were either ambiguous in terms of motivation or justified in terms of the candidate’s self-perceived deservedness (Bowles et al., 2007, Studies 2 and 3). We predicted that an outside-offer account would make a female candidate’s compensation request seem significantly more legitimate than if she presented no account or a self-worth account, because it would provide external validation that she should be paid more money. We predicted further that the outside-offer account would be significantly more effective in reducing the social costs of asking for

higher compensation if the female candidate expressed communal motives (i.e., “I want to stay”) when invoking the outside offer than when she left her intentions ambiguous or framed the outside offer in competitive terms (i.e., “...or else I’ll go”).

The purpose of Study 2 was to test the social impressions created by emphasizing one’s communal motives at the time one is negotiating for higher pay, with or without justifying the compensation request with an outside offer. Participants evaluated a gender-ambiguous candidate based on the text of an interview transcript in which the candidate either negotiated for higher compensation or let the opportunity to negotiate pass. We predicted that candidates who emphasized their communal motives would appear significantly more communal (i.e., relational and deferential) than candidates who simply asked for higher compensation and that emphasizing one’s communal motives would soften the perceived aggressiveness of the outside-offer account.

Study 3 was a replication and extension of Study 2, in which participants evaluated videotaped interviews with male and female candidates who either negotiated for higher compensation or let the opportunity to negotiate pass. We examined the effects of emphasizing one’s communal motives and justifying a compensation request with an outside offer on evaluators’ impressions of the candidates and their willingness to work with them.

In Study 4, participants evaluated videotaped interviews with female candidates who either negotiated for higher compensation or let the opportunity to negotiate pass. We examined the social implications of three types of social accounts: the outside-offer account plus two new “relational accounts.” The relational accounts were devised to both legitimize the candidate’s negotiating behavior and communicate attention to organizational relationships. More specifically, they involved either presenting the candidate’s propensity to negotiate as a valuable skill she brings to the organization (skill contribution) or shifting responsibility for the request to

the candidate's team leader (mentor excuse). We predicted that all three accounts would enhance the legitimacy of the female candidates' compensation requests, but that only the relational accounts (skill contribution, mentor excuse) would minimize the social costs of asking.

Study 1

In Study 1, participants evaluated a female job candidate before and after she initiated compensation negotiations, so that evaluations of the candidate before the compensation request served as a baseline against which to measure the effect of negotiating for higher compensation. The female candidate either offered no account for the compensation request (simple ask) or used a "self-worth" or "outside-offer" justification for the request.

In the *self-worth* account, the candidate justified her request based on her self-perceived deservedness for higher compensation. In the *outside-offer* account, she explained that she was asking because she had received a job offer from another company for higher compensation. Because evaluators might interpret the invocation of outside offer as a threat to leave the firm (Boswell, Boudreau, & Dunford, 2004) and question the woman's loyalty to the company (Blackaby, Booth, & Frank, 2005), we tested further whether clarifying the candidate's motivations with regard to the outside offer would influence evaluators' perceptions of her. Participants in the outside-offer justification condition read one of three versions of the negotiating script, in which the candidate either explained simply that she had an outside offer (simple outside offer), explained that she had an outside offer and wanted to stay with the company (cooperative outside offer), or explained that she had an outside offer and would leave the company if the offer were not matched (competitive outside offer).

In sum, Study 1 was a 2 (pre- vs. post-ask) \times 5 (ask strategy: simple ask, self-worth account, simple outside-offer account, cooperative outside-offer account, competitive outside-

offer account) factorial design, with pre- vs. post-ask as within-subjects measures and ask strategy as between-subjects conditions. Consistent with past research, we predicted that evaluators would be significantly less inclined to work with a female candidate after she initiated compensation negotiations using a simple-ask strategy, because such negotiating behavior would make her appear less nice and more demanding (Bowles et al., 2007). We predicted a similar result for the self-worth justification, because an egocentric, self-promoting justification would only reinforce that the woman is not nice (Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004).

We predicted that evaluators would perceive the candidate's compensation request to be significantly more legitimate when she used an outside-offer account (as compared simple ask and self-worth), because an outside offer is an indicator of the value of one's human capital in the labor market and one's alternative to a negotiated agreement with one's employer. We predicted further that the cooperative outside-offer account would be more effective than the simple (ambiguous) or competitive outside-offer account in reducing the social costs of initiating compensation negotiations because it would make her appear nicer and less demanding.

Participants

Participants were 497 college-educated adults recruited by a market research firm to complete an online survey in exchange for points for prizes (e.g., a car). Thirty-three participants failed to correctly identify the candidate's gender or whether she said she had an outside offer. We eliminated these cases because this indicated that they had either not read or comprehended the scripts and the purpose of the study was to analyze impressions based on the content of the scripts. The final sample included 464 respondents (230 men, 234 women). The participants were 89-percent White, four-percent Asian, three-percent Black, one-percent Hispanic, and

three-percent “Other.” The participants had a median age of 49 years and an average of 24 years of work experience. Sixty-seven percent had management experience ($M = 14$ years).

Procedure

The placement scenario and evaluation measures were adapted from materials used in past research on the social risks to women of initiating compensation negotiations (Bowles et al., 2007). Participants logged into the survey website remotely, gave their consent to participate, and were connected to a page describing the placement scenario. The background information explained that the candidate had been hired out of college and had just completed the company’s year-long management training program and that the purpose of the interview was to determine in which department the candidate would be placed within the company. The candidate had a feminine name and was described with female pronouns.

Participants clicked on a link to read Part I of the transcript, which contained responses to questions related to the candidate’s management training and experience. Based on Part I of the transcript, participants rated the impression created by the candidate. Participants rated on a 7-point scale how well 14 personal attributes characterized the candidate. Presented in random order, seven of the attributes were characteristic of feminine *niceness* (i.e., good listener, helpful, kind, likeable, sensitive to the needs of others, supportive, warm) and seven of the items were characteristic of *demandingness* (i.e., cocky, demanding, dominating, overbearing, presumptuous, pushy, self-centered). On the following page, the participants responded on 7-point scales to three questions related to their *willingness to work with the candidate* (i.e., how likely they were to hire her into their department and how much they would enjoy and benefit from working with her). The measures of niceness, demandingness, and willingness to work with

the candidate were consistent with the measures used in previous research on the social costs for women of initiating compensation negotiations (Bowles et al., 2007, Studies 2 and 3).

Following this baseline evaluation of the candidate, participants clicked on a link to read Part II of the transcript, which contained the script of the candidate's attempt to negotiate for higher compensation. Participants were randomly assigned to read one of five different versions the candidate's negotiation attempt: simple ask, self-worth account, simple outside-offer account, cooperative outside-offer account, or competitive outside-offer account. (See Appendix A for the text of the negotiation scripts for all studies.) After reading Part II of the transcript, participants evaluated the candidate a second time using the same measures as in Part I. However, Part II also included a set of four measures (inserted before the willingness-to-work items), which were aimed at capturing the perceived *legitimacy of the candidate's request* (e.g., "I would definitely grant [the candidate's] request for the top salary and a bonus"). (See Appendix B for the full text of the items.) Finally, participants completed an Exit Survey including checks on their memory of the candidate's gender and whether the candidate mentioned having an outside offer as well as other demographic questions.

Results

We created mean composite indicators of the evaluators' ratings of the candidate's niceness and demandingness and their willingness to work with her before and after the initiation of negotiation and of the perceived legitimacy of her compensation request ($\alpha > .83$ for all composites). Across all conditions, participants' evaluations of the candidate were significantly more negative (i.e., less nice, more demanding, less willing to work) after reading the negotiation scripts as compared to the before ($ps < .001$). In order to measure the between-subjects effect of the ask strategies on the evaluators' impressions of the candidate, we created difference scores of

the participants' ratings of the candidate before and after the initiation of negotiation (e.g., post-ask niceness minus pre-ask niceness for each condition). Table 1 displays the mean difference in niceness and demandingness, the mean legitimacy of request, and the mean difference in willingness to work across conditions. We observed no significant effects by evaluator gender. (In all studies, we only mention effects by evaluator gender if they were significant.)

Niceness

Overall, the candidate's average perceived niceness declined from 4.93 ($SD = 1.00$) before negotiating to 3.59 ($SD = 1.22$) after negotiating, $t(462) = 27.85, p < .001, d = 2.59$. ANOVA revealed no significant moderating effect of ask strategy on the post-ask decline in perceived niceness, $F(4, 459) = 0.27, p = .90$.

Demandingness

Overall, the average perceived demandingness of the candidate increased from 3.23 ($SD = 1.23$) before negotiation to 5.33 ($SD = 1.15$) after negotiation, $t(462) = 34.97, p < .001, d = 3.25$. ANOVA showed that ask strategy had a significant effect on the post-ask increase in perceived demandingness, $F(4, 459) = 4.14, p < .01$. As shown in Table 1, the candidate appeared significantly less demanding when she explained that she had an outside offer but wanted to stay with the company (cooperative outside-offer) than she did in any of the other conditions, all $ts > 2.89, ps < .01, ds > .41$.

Legitimacy of Request

Ask strategy significantly moderated the perceived legitimacy of the candidate's request, $F(4, 459) = 4.82, p < .001$. As predicted, the outside-offer account made the candidate's request appear significantly more legitimate (outside offer $M = 2.85, SD = 1.37$; no outside offer $M =$

2.34, $SD = 1.21$, $t(462) = 4.04$, $p < .001$, $d = .38$). There was no significant difference in the perceived legitimacy of the simple-ask and self-worth scripts, $t(177) = 0.85$, $p = .40$, $d = .13$.

Willingness to Work with the Candidate

Overall, the average willing to work with the candidate decreased from 4.86 ($SD = 1.37$) before negotiation to 3.43 ($SD = 1.58$) after negotiation, $t(462) = 23.29$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.17$. Only 4.5% of participants were more willing to work with the candidate after she negotiated. ANOVA indicated that ask strategy had no moderating effect on the evaluators' willingness to work with the candidate ($F[4,459] = 0.77$, $p = .54$).

Consistent with past research (Bowles et al., 2007), regressions showed that niceness and demandingness each significantly and independently predicted the evaluators' willingness to work with a female candidate (niceness $\beta = 0.45$, $t = 10.66$, $p < .001$; demandingness $\beta = -0.25$, $t = -5.99$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = .37$). The perceived legitimacy of the request was also significantly correlated with evaluators' willingness to work with the candidate ($\beta = 0.46$, $t = 11.27$, $p < .001$), even after controlling for perceived niceness and demandingness ($\beta = 0.27$, $t = 7.04$, $p < .001$).

Discussion

Despite the fact that all of the negotiation approaches produced significant social costs for the female candidate, there were some encouraging findings. First, we found that justifying the request for higher compensation in terms of an outside offer significantly enhanced the legitimacy of the female candidate's compensation request as compared to the types of requests used in previous research (i.e., simple ask, self-worth). Second, we found that explaining that she had an outside offer in cooperative ("I want to stay") terms made the candidate's compensation request appear significantly less demanding than in any of the other conditions.

The primary challenge presented by these results was how to strengthen the demonstration of communal motives so that woman's request would appear *both* more legitimate and more socially acceptable. The results of Study 1 also made us question whether the strength of the negative response to the female candidate's negotiating behavior might have been heightened by the pre/post-negotiation within-subjects design. Therefore, in Study 2, we moved to a between-subjects experimental design and began testing the impressions created by a more emphatic expression of communal motives with and without the outside-offer account.

Study 2

Study 2 was a five-condition between-subjects design: 1 (No Ask) plus 2 (Ask with Communal Motives Yes/No) \times 2 (Ask with Outside-Offer Account Yes/No). In devising the communal motives script, we sought to make the candidate appear both relational and deferential, in order to maximize conformity to the norms for appropriate feminine behavior and to the prescriptions for low-status behavior more broadly (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Carli, 1990; Conway et al., 1996; Eagly, 1987; Jackman, 1994; Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1977; Ridgeway, 1982; Rudman & Glick, 2001). The outside-offer script was an elaborated version of the manipulation used in Study 1. We had participants evaluate a gender-neutral candidate so that we could test what the scripts communicated when gender was not salient. We predicted that the communal-motives script would make the candidate appear significantly more relational and deferential and that expressing communal motives would ameliorate the perceived aggressiveness of the outside-offer account.

Participants

Participants were 166 adults recruited through the website of a university-based research laboratory to complete an online survey for five dollars. Thirty-five participants failed to report

correctly whether the candidate mentioned an outside offer. We removed these cases because this indicated that they had failed to read or comprehend the scripts and the purpose of study was to analyze impressions based on the content of the scripts. The final sample included 131 cases (35 men, 96 women). The participants were 79-percent White, 13-percent Asian, six-percent Hispanic, and two-percent Black. Participants had a median age of 32 years and an average of 13 years work experience. Fifty percent had management experience ($M = 3$ years).

Procedure

The online survey process and placement scenario were the same as in Study 1, with the exceptions that (a) we presented the candidate in gender neutral terms, (b) participants evaluated the candidate only once after reading the entire transcript, and (c) we revised the negotiation scripts. Participants were randomly assigned to read one of five versions of the transcript: no ask, simple ask, ask with communal motive, ask with outside-offer, and ask with outside-offer and communal motive. Appendix A contains the texts of the negotiation scripts for each condition.

After reading the transcript, participants rated their agreement with fourteen statements presented in random order, which related to how *relational* (five items, e.g., “This person clearly cares about relationships”), *deferential* (five items, e.g., “This person recognizes that they have low status in the organization”), and *aggressive* (four items, e.g., “This person is using a threat as leverage to get more money”) the candidate had acted in the interview. (See Appendix B for the full text of the items.) The Exit Survey included a check on whether the candidate had mentioned having outside offer and demographic questions.

Results and Discussion

We created composite indicators of the participants’ evaluations of how relational ($\alpha = .92$), deferential ($\alpha = .73$), and aggressive ($\alpha = .81$) the candidate had acted. The relational and

deferential measures were positively correlated ($r = .71$), and each was negatively correlated with aggressive (relational $r = -.57$; deferential $r = -.62$). Table 2 summarizes the mean ratings by condition for each of these variables.

Relational

As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made the candidate appear significantly less relational ($ts > 2.29$, $ps < .03$, $ds > .60$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that ask strategy significantly influenced how relational the candidate appeared, $F[3, 101] = 2.94$, $p < .04$. There were no main effects for communal motives ($F[1, 101] = 0.34$, $p = .56$, $\eta^2 < .01$) or outside offer ($F[1, 101] = 1.09$, $p = .30$, $\eta^2 < .01$) on the relational composite, but there was a significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1, 101] = 6.67$, $p < .02$, $\eta^2 = .06$). As indicated in Table 2, expressing communal motives alone (no outside offer) made the candidate appear more relational (M difference = 0.72, $t[56] = 2.14$, $p < .04$, $d = .57$) than in the simple-ask condition. However, expressing communal motives with the outside-offer account made the candidate appear no more relational than in the simple-ask condition (M difference = 0.11, $t[45] = 0.31$, $p > .76$, $d = .09$) and significantly less relational than in the communal motives condition (M difference = 0.83, $t[53] = 3.16$, $p < .01$, $d = .87$).

Deferential

As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made the candidate appear significantly less deferential ($ts > 2.94$, $ps < .01$, $ds > .77$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that ask strategy significantly influenced how deferential the candidate appeared, $F(3, 101) = 3.24$, $p < .03$. There was a significant main effect for communal motives ($F[1, 101] = 4.79$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .05$), no main effect for outside offer ($F[1, 101] = 0.16$, $p = .69$, $\eta^2 < .01$), and a marginally significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside

Offer ($F[1,101] = 3.57, p < .06, \eta^2 = .03$). Expressing communal motives made the candidate's negotiating behavior appear more deferential (ask with communal motives $M = 4.06, SD = 0.93$; ask without communal motives $M = 3.60, SD = 1.00, t(103) = 2.42, p < .02, d = .48$).

Aggressive

As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made the candidate appear significantly more aggressive ($ts > 8.93, ps < .001, ds > 2.37$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that how the candidate negotiated significantly influenced how aggressive the candidate appeared, $F(3, 101) = 20.43, p < .001$. There was no main effect for communal motives ($F[1, 101] = 1.03, p > .31, \eta^2 = .01$), a significant main effect for outside offer ($F[1, 101] = 54.14, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35$), and a marginally significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1, 101] = 2.71, p < .10, \eta^2 = .03$). Using the outside offer as a justification for negotiating for higher compensation made the candidate appear significantly more aggressive (ask without outside offer $M = 3.82, SD = 1.11$, ask with outside offer $M = 5.33, SD = .92, t[103] = 7.48, p < .001$). As shown in Table 2, expressing communal motives after explaining about the outside offer did not reduce the perceived aggressiveness of the outside-offer account.

In sum, the results of Study 2 partially supported our expectations. As compared to a simple ask, the communal-motives script (alone) made the candidate appear significantly more relational and deferential and the outside-offer script made the candidate appear significantly more aggressive. We had predicted that the communal-motives script would soften the aggressive tone of the outside-offer justification, but it did not. Indeed, in the joint condition, the outside offer account negated the relational impression created by the communal-motives script. Contrary to our intentions, the joint script—explaining one has an outside offer and expressing communal motives—undermined the credibility of the candidate's relational concerns.

Study 3

In Study 3, we sought to replicate and extend the results of Studies 1 and 2. We employed the same five-condition between-subjects experimental design as in Study 2 (1 [No Ask] plus 2 [Ask with Communal Motives Yes/No] \times 2 [Ask with Outside-Offer Justification Yes/No]), but also manipulated the candidate's gender (10 conditions total). We sought to replicate the results of Study 2 in terms of the impressions created by the communal-motives and outside-offer scripts, but we also wanted to test the effects of the scripts on the perceived legitimacy of the compensation request and evaluators' willingness to work with the candidate as we had done in Study 1. We manipulated the gender of the candidate in order to test whether the scripts would have differential effects on evaluators' willingness to work with male and female candidates.

Unlike Studies 1 and 2, the participants in Study 3 evaluated videotaped enactments of the interview scripts. Video (as compared to text) enhances the social presence of the actor by broadening the bandwidth of communication to include nonverbal cues from the speaker's voice and physical appearance (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976; Walther & Parks, 2002). The evaluation of a more socially present candidate improves the external validity of the findings because it more closely models an actual interview situation. Moreover, given that our aim was to identify ways to overcome the gender penalty, video (vs. transcripts) allowed for a more conservative test of our hypotheses, because cues from a speaker's physical characteristics are more influential on video than in written communication (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983).

Participants

Participants were 355 college-educated adults recruited by the same market research firm as in Study 1. Seventy-nine participants reported technical problems watching the video or failed to identify correctly the candidate's gender or whether s/he mentioned receiving an outside

offer.¹ We removed these cases because the participants' evaluations were only meaningful if they had watched and understood the video. This left a total of 276 participants (149 male, 127 female). Participants were 87-percent White, six-percent Asian, four-percent Black, and three-percent Hispanic. Participants had a median age of 38 years and an average of 16 years of work experience. Sixty percent of participants had managerial experience ($M = 11$ years).

Procedure

The online survey process and placement scenario were the same as in Study 2, with the exception that participants watched a video of either a female or male candidate. The videos were professionally produced with experienced actors. The interviewer in the video was male, and the footage of the interviewer was identical across conditions.

We made two sets of modifications to the interview script used in Study 2. First, we enhanced the clarity and realism of the interview script based on the advice of a professional scriptwriter. Second, we sought to reduce the aggressiveness of the outside-offer justification by explaining that the candidate had received the offer through a client (as opposed to a job search). We also revised the joint script so that the candidate expressed communal motives before and after explaining about the outside-offer. (See Appendix A for the text of the negotiation scripts.)

Participants were randomly assigned to watch one of twenty different versions of the interview (i.e., four actors [two female, two male] \times five scripts [no ask, simple ask, communal motive, outside offer, and communal motivesplus outside offer]). After watching the video, participants evaluated the candidate using the relational, deferential, and aggressive measures described in Study 2 and then the willingness to work measures described in Study 1. In the ask conditions only, the participants also rated the legitimacy of the candidate's request before the willingness-to-work items (as described in Study 1). The Exit Survey was the same as in Study 1.

Results

We created mean composites of the participants' ratings of how relational ($\alpha = .91$), deferential ($\alpha = .57$), and aggressive ($\alpha = .76$) the candidate's behavior appeared, the legitimacy of the candidate's request ($\alpha = .90$), and their willingness to work with the candidate ($\alpha = .93$). The relational and deferential measures were positively correlated ($r = .55$), and each was negatively correlated with aggressive (relational $r = -.51$; deferential $r = -.41$). Legitimacy of request was positively correlated with relational ($r = .40$) and deferential ($r = .43$) and negatively correlated with aggressive ($r = -.37$). Willingness to work was positively correlated with relational ($r = .73$), deferential (.51), and legitimacy of request (.52), and negatively correlated with aggressive ($r = -.38$).

We observed one significant effect by evaluator gender, which we report below. For the sake of parsimony, we make no other mention of evaluator gender. We observed no significant actor effects within candidate gender on the variation in evaluations across conditions.

Replication of Previous Research

Comparing the simple-ask to the no-ask condition, we observed a marginally significant interaction effect of Candidate Gender \times Ask on evaluators' willingness to work with the candidate, $F(1, 95) = 3.62, p = .06, \eta^2 = .04$. Asking for higher compensation had no significant effect on evaluators' willingness to work with a male candidate, M difference (ask minus no ask) = $-.61, t(49) = 1.51, p = .14, d = .43$. In contrast, evaluators were significantly less inclined to work with a female candidate who simply asked for higher compensation as compared to one who let the opportunity to negotiate pass, M difference = $-1.65, t(46) = 4.55, p < .001, d = 1.34$.

As described below, how the male candidates negotiated for higher compensation had little effect on evaluators' willingness to work with them. In contrast, the ask scripts had a

significant influence on evaluators' willingness to work with the female candidates. Therefore, we present the effects of the scripts separately for male and female candidates. Tables 3 and 4 summarize the mean evaluations across conditions, respectively, for male and female candidates.

Male Candidates

Relational. As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made male candidates appear significantly less relational ($ts > 2.56$, $ps < .02$, $ds > .73$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that the way in which men negotiated had no impact on how relational they appeared, $F(3, 120) = 0.16$, $p = .93$.

Deferential. As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made male candidates appear significantly less deferential ($ts > 2.37$, $ps < .03$, $ds > .67$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that the way in which men negotiated had no impact on how deferential they appeared, $F(3, 120) = 0.61$, $p = .61$.

Aggressive. As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made male candidates appear significantly more aggressive ($ts > 4.88$, $ps < .001$, $ds > 1.39$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that the manner in which male candidates negotiated influenced how aggressive the evaluators perceived them to be, $F(3, 120) = 6.19$, $p < .001$. There was no main effect for communal motives ($F[1,120] = 0.36$, $p = .55$, $\eta^2 < .01$), a significant main effect for outside offer ($F[1,120] = 17.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$), and no significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1,120] = 1.19$, $p = .28$, $\eta^2 = .01$). The outside-offer account made male candidates appear more aggressive than when they offered no account (ask with outside offer $M = 5.18$, $SD = 1.30$, ask without outside offer $M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.24$).

Legitimacy of request. For male candidates, the way in which they negotiated for higher compensation had no significant effect on the perceived legitimacy of their request, $F(3, 120) =$

0.99, $p = .39$. Their requests for higher compensation were as legitimate with as without the outside-offer justification (ask with outside offer $M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.48$; ask without outside offer $M = 2.68$, $SD = 1.29$, $t[122] = 1.10$, $p > .27$, $d = .20$).

Willingness to work with candidate. The only ask condition in which men incurred a penalty (as compared to the no-ask condition) for initiating compensation negotiations was the joint (communal motives plus outside-offer account) condition, M difference = -0.88 , $t(62) = 2.55$, $p < .02$, $d = .65$. There was no significant difference in evaluators' willingness to work with male candidates in the no-ask as compared to the simple-ask, communal-motives (only) or outside-offer (only) conditions ($ts < 1.51$, $ps > .13$ $ds < .44$). There were also no significant differences among the ask conditions in the evaluators' willingness to work with male candidates, $F(3, 120) = 0.76$, $p = .52$. In short, the joint condition was worse than no ask, but not significantly different from the other ask conditions.

Mediation analyses. We conducted a post-hoc mediation analysis to investigate why male candidates were penalized in the joint condition. We found that the perceived aggressiveness of the male candidates' behavior in the joint condition (as compared to no ask) explained the disinclination to work with them, Sobel $z = 2.77$, $p < .01$.

Female Candidates

Relational. Female candidates appeared as relational in the communal-motives (only) condition as they did in the no-ask condition ($t[58] = 1.10$, $p > .27$, $d = .29$), but they appeared significantly less relational in all of the other ask conditions as compared to no-ask condition, ($ts > 2.97$, $ps < .01$, $ds > .82$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions affirmed that how the women negotiated significantly influenced how relational they appeared, $F(3, 94) = 3.59$, $p < .02$. There was a significant main effect for communal motives ($F[1,94] = 5.23$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .05$), no main

effect for outside offer ($F[1,94] = 0.52, p = .47, \eta^2 < .01$), and a significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1, 94] = 4.06, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$). As indicated in Table 4, the only significant mean difference among the ask conditions was that female candidates appeared significantly more relational in the communal-motives (only) condition than they did in any of the other ask conditions, $ts > 2.22, ps < .03, ds > .60$.

Deferential. Expressing communal motives (alone or jointly with justification) made female candidates appear as deferential as in the no-ask condition (ask with communal motives vs. no ask M difference = 0.33, $t[83] = 1.68, p > .09, d = .37$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions indicated that how the women negotiated marginally significantly influenced how deferential they appeared, $F(3, 94) = 2.53, p < .07$. There was a significant main effect for communal motives ($F[1, 94] = 6.88, p < .01, \eta^2 = .07$), no significant main effect for outside offer ($F[1, 94] = 0.93, p = .34, \eta^2 = .01$), and no significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1, 94] = 0.11, p = .74, \eta^2 < .01$). Among the ask conditions, female candidates who expressed communal motives appeared significantly more deferential than those who did not (ask with communal motives $M = 3.96, SD = .83$, ask without communal motives $M = 3.50, SD = .96$).

Aggressiveness. As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made female candidates appear significantly more aggressive ($ts > 7.25, ps < .001; ds > 2.13$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that the manner in which female candidates ask for higher pay influenced how aggressive the evaluators perceived them to be, $F[3, 94] = 8.45, p < .001$. There was no main effect for communal motives ($F[1,94] = 2.29, p = .13, \eta^2 = .02$), a significant main effect for outside offer ($F[1,94] = 21.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = .19$), and no significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1,94] = 0.81, p = .37, \eta^2 < .01$).

Justifying a compensation request with an outside offer made female candidates appear significantly more aggressive than when they offered no account (ask with outside offer $M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.37$, ask without outside offer $M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.12$).

Legitimacy of request. For women, the perceived legitimacy of their compensation requests differed significantly across the ask conditions, $F[3, 94] = 3.42$, $p < .03$. There was no main effect for communal motives ($F[1,94] = 0.02$, $p = .88$, $\eta^2 < .01$), a significant main effect for outside offer ($F[1,94] = 10.23$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .10$), and no significant interaction effect of Communal Motives \times Outside Offer ($F[1,94] = 0.21$, $p = .65$, $\eta^2 < .01$). Explaining that they had an outside offer made the female candidates' compensation requests appear significantly more legitimate than when they offered no account (ask with outside offer $M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.49$, ask without outside offer $M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.25$).

Willingness to work with candidate. For female candidates, ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that the way in which the female candidates negotiated had a significant effect on evaluators' willingness to work with them ($F[3, 90] = 4.57$, $p < .01$) and that evaluator gender was a marginally significant moderator of the effect of the ask strategies on the willingness to work with the candidate ($F[3, 90] = 2.62$, $p < .06$ for joint F -test of the three interactions between type of ask and evaluator). Comparing the effects of each of the ask strategies to the simple-ask condition, we found that male and female evaluators differed significantly only with regard to the outside-offer account, $F(1,90) = 4.65$, $p < .04$, $\eta^2 = .05$

With both male and female evaluators, expressing communal motives alone (no outside offer) eliminated the social risks of negotiating for higher pay for female candidates. Evaluators were as willing to work with female candidates in the communal-motives (only) condition as in the no-ask condition (M difference = 0.41, $t(58) = 1.36$, $p = .17$, $d = .36$), and they were

significantly more willing to work with the female candidates in the communal-motives (only) condition than in the simple-ask condition (M difference = 1.24, $t(48) = 3.74$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.08$).

Female evaluators did not penalize female candidates (relative to no-ask condition) if they justified their compensation request with an outside offer (ask with outside offer vs. no ask M difference = 0.22, $t[38] = 0.54$, $p > .59$, $d = .18$). Female evaluators were also significantly more inclined to work with female candidates who explained they had an outside offer than with those who simply asked (ask with outside offer vs. simple ask M difference = 1.45, $t[32] = 3.57$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.26$). In contrast, male evaluators were significantly less inclined to work with female candidates who negotiated on the basis of an outside offer than with those who did not negotiate (ask with outside offer vs. no ask M difference = 1.64, $t[35] = 3.63$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.23$), and were no more willing to work with female candidates who used the outside-offer account than with those who simply asked (M difference < 0.01 , $t[31] < 0.01$, $p > .99$, $d < .01$).

Mediation analyses. We had hypothesized that expressing communal motives would reduce the social risks of asking for higher compensation (as compared to a simple ask) because it would make the candidate appear significantly more relational and deferential—the central prescriptions of the communal stereotype. Mediation analyses showed that expressing communal motives enhanced the evaluators' willingness to work with a female candidate (as compared to simple ask) because it made the women's behavior appear more relational (Sobel $z = 2.98$, $p < .01$) but not because it made the women appear more deferential (Sobel $z = 1.37$, $p = .17$).

While emphasizing communal motives eliminated the social risk of asking for higher pay, it did not enhance the legitimacy of the female candidates' compensation requests. What did enhance the legitimacy of female candidates' pay requests was using the outside-offer account, but it was only socially acceptable with female evaluators. Male evaluators were no more willing

to work with female candidates who justified their compensation requests with an outside offer than with those who simply asked for higher pay.

Figure 2 summarizes the results of mediation analyses conducted to explain why male evaluators penalized female candidates when negotiating on the basis of an outside offer but female evaluators did not. For male evaluators, mediation analyses showed that negotiating for higher compensation on the basis of an outside offer (as compared to not negotiating) was socially risky for a female candidate because it made her appear significantly less relational (Sobel $z = 2.91, p < .01$) and more aggressive (Sobel $z = 2.77, p < .01$). As depicted in the top graphic of Figure 2, when both relational and aggressive were included in the regression model, it was how relational the woman appeared that explained male evaluators' disinclination to work with her.

Female evaluators also perceived female candidates who used the outside-offer account to be significantly less relational and more aggressive, but they were still as willing to work with female candidates who negotiated on the basis of an outside as compared to no ask. As depicted in the bottom graphic of Figure 2, female evaluators were significantly more inclined to work with a female candidate who provided the outside-offer account (as compared to simple ask) because they perceived her request to be significantly more legitimate, Sobel $z = 2.19, p < .03$.

Discussion

The results of Study 3 provided a number of clarifying insights, perhaps, the most important of which was the influence of how “relational” a female candidate appeared on evaluators' willingness to work with her. While the feminine stereotype encompasses both relational and deferential qualities, the findings of this study suggest that it is the perceived lack of other concern as opposed to deference that women have to overcome to avoid social backlash

when negotiating for higher pay. For both male and female evaluators, the expression of communal motives (alone) eliminated the social costs to a female candidate of negotiating because it made her appear relational and *not* because it made her appear deferential. For male evaluators, the critical factor that undermined their willingness to work with female candidates who made pay requests based on an outside offer (as compared to not negotiating) was the women's perceived lack of relational concern. This finding provides greater theoretical clarity and prescriptive specificity than previous research, which had linked evaluators' disinclination to work with women who negotiated for higher pay to more general characteristics of niceness and demandingness (Bowles et al., 2007).

Another important, if nuanced, set of findings related to the effects of the use of the outside-offer account on the legitimacy of a woman's compensation request and evaluators' willingness to work with her. As in Study 1, explaining that she had an outside offer made a female candidate's compensation request appear significantly more legitimate than when she simply asked for higher pay. However, while evaluators might be more inclined to grant a compensation request to a female candidate with an outside offer (as compared to a simple ask), the social risks of her asking persist. Female evaluators were as willing to work with female candidates who negotiated on the basis of an outside offer as with those who did not negotiate, but male candidates were significantly *less* inclined to work with them. From a demographic perspective, the senior decision makers in organizations are significantly more likely to be male than female, which makes men's social resistance a greater practical problem than women's.

As foreshadowed by the results of Study 2, our attempts to ameliorate the impression problems associated with the outside-offer account by coupling it with the expression of communal motives failed. For female candidates, the joint condition (communal motives plus

outside offer) negated the relational benefits gained by expressing communal motives alone. For male candidates, the joint condition was the only ask condition in which they were penalized by evaluators for negotiating because it made them appear too aggressive.

While the results of Study 3 significantly advanced our understanding of the compensation negotiation dilemma, it did not offer a solution for it. Expressing communal motives (alone) enabled women to eliminate the social costs of negotiating, but it did not enhance the legitimacy of their request. The outside offer enhanced the legitimacy of women's requests, but still presented social risks with male evaluators. In Study 4, we built from the findings of the first three studies to devise "relational accounts" that would *both* reduce the social risks to women from negotiating and enhance the legitimacy of their compensation request.

Study 4

Study 4 was a six-condition (1 [No Ask] plus 5 [Ask Strategy]) between-subjects design in which participants evaluated videotapes of female candidates. The no-ask and simple-ask scripts were identical to those used in Study 3. We tested four ask strategies, which included two new versions of the outside-offer account (actively pursued vs. passive offer) and two new "relational accounts." The outside-offer accounts were devised to test whether the candidate's involvement in the pursuit of the outside offer would moderate the social risks of that account. The *relational accounts* were devised to legitimize the female candidates' negotiating behavior while cuing her attention to relationships within the company. In the first relational account, the candidate explained that she hoped that the evaluator would view her propensity to negotiate as a skill she brought to the job (skill contribution).¹ In the second relational account, the candidate explained that her team leader advised her to ask about her compensation (mentor excuse).

¹ We owe a debt of gratitude to an executive coach, M.J. Tocci, for suggesting this script.

Participants

Participants were 268 college-educated adults recruited by the same market research company as in Studies 1 and 3. Eighty-one participants reported technical problems watching the video or failed to identify correctly the candidate's gender or whether she mentioned receiving an outside offer. We removed these cases because watching and understanding the videos was essential to the purpose of the study. The final sample included 187 participants (83 male and 104 female). Participants were 86-percent White, six-percent Asian, four-percent Black, and two-percent Hispanic. Participants had a median age of 37 years and an average of 17 years of work experience. Sixty-three percent of participants had managerial experience ($Med = 8$ years).

Procedure

The online survey process and placement scenario were the same as in Study 3. Participants were randomly assigned to watch one of 12 videos (2 [female actors] \times 6 [scripts: no ask, simple ask, passive outside offer, active outside offer, skill contribution, mentor excuse]). Appendix A contains the text of the negotiation initiation scripts. After watching the video, participants completed the same survey questions as in Study 3.

Results

We created mean composites of how relational ($\alpha = .89$) and aggressive ($\alpha = .80$) the candidate's behavior appeared, the legitimacy of her request ($\alpha = .80$), and the evaluators' willingness to work with her ($\alpha = .93$). The relational composite was correlated negatively with aggressive ($r = -.35$). Legitimacy of request was correlated positively with relational ($r = .44$) and slightly negatively with aggressive ($r = -.21$). Willingness to work was correlated positively with relational ($r = .75$) and legitimacy of request (.53) and negatively with aggressive ($r = -.32$). Table 5 presents means of these variables by condition. Because we observed no significant

differences between the passive and active outside-offer conditions, we report the effect of the outside-offer accounts in a combined condition.

We observed no effects for evaluator gender. We also observed no significant actor effects on the variation in evaluations across conditions.

Replication of Previous Research

Comparing the simple-ask and no-ask conditions, we found that evaluators were significantly less inclined to work with a woman who simply asked for higher compensation as compared to one who did not, M difference = 0.69, $t(64) = 2.31$, $p < .03$, $d = .58$.

Relational

As compared to the no-ask condition, the simple-ask and outside-offer justifications made the female candidates appear significantly less relational, $ts > 3.68$, $ps < .001$, $ds > .77$.

However, female candidates in the skill-contribution and mentor-excuse conditions appeared as relational as female candidates in the no-ask condition, $ts < 1.22$, $ps > .22$, $ds < .33$.

ANOVA of the four ask conditions affirmed that the ask strategies varied significantly in terms of how relational the female candidates appeared, $F(3, 150) = 5.44$, $p < .01$. Female candidates in the simple-ask condition appeared significantly less relational than did female candidates in the skill-contribution condition (M difference = 0.73, $t[56] = 2.36$, $p < .02$, $d = .63$) and mentor-excuse condition (M difference = 0.94, $t[67] = 3.24$, $p < .01$, $d = .79$). Female candidates who used an outside-offer account also appeared significantly less relational than did female candidates in the skill-contribution (M difference = 0.63, $t[83] = 2.18$, $p < .03$, $d = .48$) and mentor-excuse condition (M difference = 0.84, $t[94] = 3.23$, $p < .01$, $d = .67$).

Aggressive

As compared to the no-ask condition, each of the ask conditions made the female candidates appear significantly more aggressive ($ts > 5.67$, $ps < .001$, $ds > 1.42$). ANOVA of the four ask conditions indicated that the negotiation approaches differed significantly in terms of their perceived aggressiveness, $F(3, 150) = 17.14$, $p < .001$. Using an outside-offer account made the female candidates appear significantly more aggressive than in any of the other ask conditions ($ts > 5.23$, $ps < .001$, $ds > 1.41$).

Legitimacy of the Request

ANOVA of the four ask conditions showed that legitimacy of request varied significantly across conditions, $F(3, 150) = 3.12$, $p < .03$. All three account types made the pay request appear significantly more legitimate than the simple ask ($ts > 2.25$, $ps < .03$, $ds > .54$).

Willingness to Work

As compared to the no-ask condition, evaluators were significantly less willing to work with female candidates who simply asked for higher pay (as noted above) or used an outside-offer account (M difference = 0.68, $t[124] = 2.53$, $p < .02$, $d = .45$). However, evaluators were as willing to work with female candidates who negotiated using the skill-contribution or mentor-excuse accounts as with female candidates who did not negotiate ($ts < 0.23$, $ps > .82$, $ds < .06$).

ANOVA of the four ask conditions affirmed that ask strategy moderated evaluators' willingness to work with the candidates, $F(3, 150) = 4.20$, $p < .01$. Using the outside-offer account was no better than simply asking in terms of evaluators' willingness to work with female candidates, M difference = 0.01, $t(91) = 0.03$, $p > .97$, $d < .01$. Evaluators were significantly more willing to work with female candidates who used the skill-contribution or mentor-excuse accounts as compared to those who simply asked ($ts > 2.43$, $ps < .02$, $ds > .64$).

Mediation Analyses

Relational accounts. We hypothesized our two relational accounts—skill contribution and mentor excuse—would reduce the social costs of negotiating, because it would make the candidate appear more relational and enhance the legitimacy of her compensation request (as compared to simple ask). As predicted, the relational accounts significantly improved the willingness to work with a female candidate (as compared to simple ask) because it made her appear more relational (skill-contribution Sobel $z = 2.22$, $p < .03$, mentor-excuse Sobel $z = 3.04$, $p < .01$) and because it made her request appear significantly more legitimate (skill-contribution Sobel $z = 2.47$, $p < .02$; mentor-excuse Sobel $z = 2.07$, $p < .04$). As depicted in Figure 3, for both accounts, relational and legitimate each remained significant predictors of the willingness to work with a female candidate when included together in the regression model.

Outside-offer account. Mediation analyses showed that negotiating on the basis of an outside offer was significantly more socially risky than not negotiating because it made the female candidates appear significantly less relational (Sobel $z = 3.48$, $p < .001$) and more aggressive (Sobel $z = 2.30$, $p < .03$) than when they did not negotiate. As depicted in Figure 4, when both relational and aggressive were included in the regression model, we found that it was how relational the female candidate appeared and not her aggressiveness *per se* that explained the disinclination to work with her.

Discussion

In Study 4, we finally succeeded in identifying a strategy—relational accounts—that resolves the compensation negotiation dilemma for women. Relational accounts made a woman's compensation request seem more legitimate than if she simply asked, and she suffered no social cost for having negotiated. The two forms of relational account that we tested were

quite different in substance and logic. The skill-contribution account justified the female candidate's negotiating behavior by relabeling it as something of value that she brings to her work. It also explicitly adopted the evaluators' perspective, by asking them to view her behavior in this positive way. The mentor-excuse account shifted responsibility for the compensation request to the candidate's team leader. This enabled her to leverage the social capital of a higher status organizational actor (Burt, 1998), but it also framed her as embedded in mutually supportive organizational relationships.

We do *not* intend to suggest that women parrot the specific language used in either of these accounts in order to overcome the compensation negotiation dilemma. As Scott and Lyman (1968) emphasized, for talk to be effective in mending social fissures it must be "suited to the circle in which it is introduced, according to norms of culture, subculture, and situation" (p. 57). What is of greatest value in these relational accounts is the principles underlying their effectiveness—that is, finding a way of explaining one's negotiating behavior as legitimate while communicating attention to organizational relationships. To be effective, women will have to devise strategies that are authentic to their own personality and that fit the norms and culture of their organizational environment and the interpersonal context of the negotiation.

Another important finding from Study 4 was the persistent failure of the outside-offer account to be socially acceptable for women, even though it consistently enhanced the legitimacy of her compensation request. This finding is important because it highlights the insufficiency for women of simply explaining why a compensation request is legitimate. As shown in Studies 1 and 3, even complimenting the outside-offer account with an explanation that the woman wanted to stay with the firm (Study 1) or with another otherwise persuasive demonstration of the woman's communal motives (Studies 3) could not overcome the relational damage caused by

invoking an outside offer. This finding also presents a challenge to the traditional negotiation literature, because it is conventional wisdom that one negotiates higher compensation on the basis of outside offers (Malhotra & Bazerman, 2007; Pinkley & Northcraft, 2000). The socially damaging effects for women of using an outside offer as a source of power strongly suggest that negotiation scholars should begin to broaden their conceptualization of what creates power in negotiation to encompass social as well as material ends. It also emphasizes the need to move beyond the assumption of “one size fits all” prescriptions for career negotiations.

General Discussion

This research makes important contributions to the literatures on gender in negotiation and to the broader study of status in social influence. It also raises numerous practical and theoretical questions for future research.

The current set of studies advances previous research on the compensation negotiation dilemma for women (Bowles et al., 2007) in at least three respects. First, it demonstrates that women can overcome the compensation negotiation dilemma, by using relational accounts to legitimize their compensation requests and demonstrate their concern for others. Second, it shows that, specifically, how relational a woman appears is a key explanatory factor in social resistance to her negotiating behavior. This finding gives more practical and theoretical precision to previous research which had linked social resistance to female negotiators to more general characteristics of niceness and demandingness (Bowles et al., 2007). Third, this research indicates that overcoming the social risks of negotiating for higher pay is not sufficient to increase evaluators' propensity to grant a woman's pay request. In Study 3, expressing concern for organizational relationships eliminated the social risks to a woman of negotiating for higher pay, but it did not enhance the legitimacy of her request. Therefore, in order to fully overcome

the compensation negotiation dilemma, women cannot focus simply on excusing their negotiating behavior. They must also validate it.

This third contribution to the negotiation research also suggests a new proposition for the study of status and social influence more broadly, which is that demonstrating other concern may be insufficient to overcome a status violation that involves making claims to status-linked resources. As discussed in the introduction, there is classic sociological research showing that individuals with low external status characteristics (e.g., women vs. men) can overcome the liabilities of their lower social rank if they persuade others that the motivations behind their task contributions are for the betterment of the group (Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1977; Ridgeway, 1978, 1982). Ridgeway's (1982) empirical test of this proposition was based on a measure of the influence of a low-status group member's contributions in an otherwise high-status group's task. The current research suggests that status violations that take the form of claims to status-linked resources present a dual problem in which low-status actors have to enhance their social credibility by demonstrating their group-oriented motivation but also legitimize their claim.

Finally, this research helps to illuminate how micro-level processes, such as negotiation, may contribute to the deconstruction as well as the construction of gender inequality in organizations (Bowles & McGinn, 2008). It is important to explicate how social structural factors contribute to gender differences in negotiation behavior and outcomes (e.g., backlash) and how those gender differences in turn reinforce the gender status hierarchy (e.g., compensation outcomes) (Bowles et al., 2007). However, in doing so, we should not ignore the potential for individual agency to overcome such dynamics. "Fixing the women" is not the solution to gender inequality in organizations (Ely & Meyerson, 2000), but strategizing about how can women can take individual action to "fix the inequalities" is a worthwhile endeavor.

The current set of studies suggests numerous directions for future research to expand upon the negotiating scripts and strategies tested and to explore how the effectiveness of various types of accounts might be moderated by factors in the social context. For instance, future research could examine how manipulating aspects of the organizational culture or the gendered character of the occupation influences the effectiveness various types of negotiating accounts. Future research could also test how other intersecting identities, such as race, national culture, or parental status, moderate the effects of gender on the social risks of negotiating for higher pay.

Looking beyond the realm of gender in negotiation, researchers could build upon this research to examine the effects of accounts on social and economic outcomes in negotiation, more broadly, and how the effectiveness of accounts are moderated by the social identity of the actor and the social context of negotiation. This research might serve as a useful foundation for exploring how accounts can be used to avoid tradeoffs between social and economic outcomes in negotiation and, more specifically, to persuade counterparts not to make undesirable attributions based one's negotiating perform in one context (Morris et al., 1999; Tinsley et al., 2002).

Conclusion

The current research shows that women can overcome the compensation negotiation dilemma by using "relational accounts" that legitimize their compensation claims in a manner that communicates their concern for organizational relationships. For practitioners, this research offers strategic principles that women can use to minimize social costs and maximize economic gains in their compensation negotiations. For scholars, this research deepens our theoretical understanding of the effects of gender on negotiation and of negotiation as a mechanism for combating, as well as reinforcing, gender inequality in organizations.

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Footnote

¹ The website required participants to launch the video before completing their evaluation, but it did not require participants to watch the entire video. While participant feedback clearly indicated that some participants had experienced technical difficulties with the video, it is likely that other excluded participants shut down the video midstream.

APPENDIX A. Negotiation Initiation Scripts by Condition

*Study 1**Simple Ask*

“I understand that there is a range in terms of how much junior managers are paid in their first placement. I would like to be paid at the top of that range. I also would like to be eligible for an end-of-year bonus.”

Account Scripts (following Simple Ask)

Self Worth. “I am asking for this higher salary and bonus because I really think I am worth it.”

Simple Outside Offer. “I am asking for this higher salary and bonus because I have an offer from another company to pay me this higher salary and a bonus.”

Cooperative Outside Offer (following Simple Outside Offer). “I’m hoping you will match this offer because I would really like to stay with the company.”

Competitive Outside Offer (following Simple Outside Offer). “If you do not match my other offer then I will take the position at the other company.”

*Study 2**Simple Ask*

“There was one thing that I wanted to ask you about. I understand that that there is a range in terms of how much junior managers are paid in their first placement. I was hoping that I could be paid close to the top of that range. I would also like to talk with you about the possibility of an end-of-year bonus.”

Communal Motives (following Simple Ask)*

“I hope it is OK to ask you about this. I would feel terrible if I offended someone by asking about money. My relationships with people here are very important to me. I am a total team player. I just thought this seemed like a situation in which I could get your advice about this. Would you be open to talking with me about this question of higher compensation?”

Outside-Offer Account (following Simple Ask)*

“I am asking because I have an offer from another company to pay me a higher salary and a bonus. So, I thought I should talk with you about matching that offer.”

* Joint condition started with Outside-Offer Account followed by Communal Motives.

*Study 3**Simple Ask*

“I do have some questions with regard to the salary and benefits package. It wasn’t clear to me whether this salary offer represents the top of the pay range. I understand that there’s a range in terms of how much managers are paid in their first placement. I think I should be paid at the top of that range. And I would also like to be eligible for an end-of-year bonus.”

*Communal Motives***

“I hope it’s OK to ask you about this. I’d feel terrible if I offended you in doing do. My relationships with people here are very important to me.” [Simple Ask] “I just thought this seemed like a situation in which I could get your advice about this. Would you be open to talking with me about this question of higher compensation?”

Outside-Offer Account (preceding Simple Ask)**

“One of the client companies I was working with during the training program just made me a job offer. It’s for a management position in their company. They’re offering to pay me a higher salary than I would make here, plus a bonus.”

** Joint condition inserted Outside-Offer Account following Simple Ask in Communal Motives.

Study 4

Simple Ask

[Same script as in Study 3.]

Relational Accounts

Skill Justification. [Simple Ask] “I don’t know how typical it is for people at my level to negotiate but I’m hopeful you’ll see my skill at negotiating as something important that I bring to the job. “

Mentor Excuse. “My team leader during the training program told me that I should talk with you about my compensation. It wasn’t clear to us whether this salary offer represents the top of the pay range. My team leader told me there’s a range in terms of how much managers are paid in their first placement. He thought I should ask to be paid at the top of that range and to explain that I would also like to be eligible for an end-of-year bonus.”

Outside-Offer Accounts (Passive/Active) (preceding Study 3 Simple Ask)

“One of the client companies I was working with during the training program just made me a job offer. [*Passive:* The offer came in yesterday. I was completely surprised by it. I wasn’t looking for another job. / *Active:* They flew me out last week for interviews, and the offer came in yesterday.] They’re offering me a management position and they’re willing to pay me a higher salary than I would make here, plus a bonus.”

APPENDIX B. Full Text of Impression Measures

Legitimacy of Request

I think it was inappropriate for [the candidate] to ask for the top salary and a bonus.

I think that [the candidate's] request for the top salary and a bonus was legitimate.

[The candidate's] request for the top salary and a bonus was justified.

I would definitely grant [the candidate's] request for the top salary and a bonus.

Relational

This seems like a people person.

This person clearly cares about relationships.

This person puts people first.

Having good relationships with colleagues is important to this person.

This person does not seem to care about maintaining good relationships at work. (reverse coded)

Deferential

This person is deferential.

This person looks up to authority figures.

This person is acting like a subordinate talking with their superior.

This person recognizes that they have low status in the organization.

This person is acting like they are the boss. (reverse coded)

Aggressive

This person is using a threat as leverage to get more money.

This person is pressuring the company to pay them more.

This is aggressive negotiating behavior.

This person is making a lot of concessions. (reverse coded)

Table 1. Study 1: Mean Differences in Evaluations of Female Candidate Before and After Asking for Higher Compensation and Mean Rating of the Legitimacy of Her Request

		Self-Worth		Outside-Offer Account		
		Simple Ask	Account	Simple	Cooperative	Competitive
Nice	<i>M</i> difference ^a	-1.32 _a	-1.31 _a	-1.40 _a	-1.28 _a	-1.39 _a
	<i>SD</i>	(1.03)	(0.94)	(1.16)	(1.04)	(0.99)
Demanding	<i>M</i> difference ^a	2.16 _a	2.27 _a	2.13 _a	1.62 _b	2.32 _a
	<i>SD</i>	(1.24)	(1.37)	(1.19)	(1.28)	(1.33)
Legitimacy of Request	<i>M</i>	2.27 _a	2.42 _a	2.92 _b	2.92 _b	2.66 _{a,b}
	<i>SD</i>	(1.27)	(1.15)	(1.42)	(1.26)	(1.39)
Willingness to Work	<i>M</i> difference ^a	-1.34 _a	-1.51 _a	-1.45 _a	-1.27 _a	-1.57 _a
	<i>SD</i>	(1.26)	(1.42)	(1.34)	(1.25)	(1.32)
<i>N</i>		92	87	113	88	84

Note. Means that are in the same row and have different subscripts are significantly different at the level of $p < .05$.

^a Mean differences in candidate evaluation after as compared to before the initiation of compensation negotiations. All mean differences are significantly different from zero at the level of $p < .001$.

Table 2

Study 2: Mean Ratings of How Relational, Deferential, and Aggressive the Candidate Appeared Across Conditions

		No Ask	Simple Ask	Communal Motives	Outside-Offer Account	Communal + Outside Offer
Relational	<i>M</i>	5.67 _a	4.29 _b	5.01 _c	4.64 _{b,c}	4.18 _b
	<i>SD</i>	(1.11)	(1.49)	(1.08)	(1.19)	(.72)
Deferential	<i>M</i>	4.95 _a	3.46 _b	4.23 _c	3.74 _{b,c}	3.80 _{b,c}
	<i>SD</i>	(.74)	(1.02)	(1.05)	(.97)	(.65)
Aggressive	<i>M</i>	1.59 _a	4.12 _b	3.59 _b	5.27 _c	5.39 _c
	<i>SD</i>	(.66)	(1.21)	(.98)	(.98)	(.86)
	<i>N</i>	26	25	33	25	22

Note: Means that are in the same row and have different subscripts are significantly different at the level of $p < .05$.

Table 3

Study 3, Male Candidates: Mean Ratings in Relational, Deferential, Aggressive, Legitimacy of Request, and Willingness to Work

		No Ask	Simple Ask	Communal Motives	Outside-Offer Account	Communal + Outside Offer
Relational	<i>M</i>	4.98 _a	4.14 _b	4.04 _b	4.00 _b	3.93 _b
	<i>SD</i>	(1.02)	(1.31)	(1.08)	(1.37)	(1.17)
Deferential	<i>M</i>	4.18 _a	3.56 _b	3.61 _b	3.34 _b	3.62 _b
	<i>SD</i>	(.65)	(.97)	(1.04)	(1.03)	(.74)
Aggressive	<i>M</i>	2.28 _a	4.03 _b	4.42 _b	5.25 _c	5.14 _c
	<i>SD</i>	(1.25)	(1.30)	(1.18)	(1.30)	(1.31)
Legitimate	<i>M</i>		2.42 _a	2.93 _a	2.96 _a	2.95 _a
	<i>SD</i>		(1.12)	(1.41)	(1.51)	(1.47)
Willingness to Work	<i>M</i>	4.53 _a	3.92 _{a,b}	4.06 _{a,b}	4.09 _{a,b}	3.65 _b
	<i>SD</i>	(1.33)	(1.54)	(1.20)	(1.40)	(1.37)
	<i>n</i>	25	26	27	32	39

Note: Means that are in the same row and have different subscripts are significantly different at the level of $p < .05$.

Table 4

Study 3, Female Candidates: Mean Ratings in Relational, Deferential, Aggressive, Legitimacy of Request, and Willingness to Work

Evaluator			Communal	Outside-Offer	Communal +		
Gender ^a		No Ask	Simple Ask	Motives	Account	Outside Offer	
Combined	Relational	<i>M</i>	5.31 _a	3.99 _b	5.01 _a	4.30 _b	4.36 _b
		<i>SD</i>	(1.15)	(1.18)	(.98)	(1.29)	(1.19)
Combined	Deferential	<i>M</i>	4.29 _a	3.43 _b	3.85 _{a,b}	3.55 _b	4.09 _a
		<i>SD</i>	(.93)	(.82)	(.86)	(1.07)	(.79)
Combined	Aggressive	<i>M</i>	1.77 _a	3.93 _b	3.77 _b	5.33 _c	4.72 _c
		<i>SD</i>	(.94)	(1.11)	(1.13)	(1.20)	(1.47)
Combined	Legitimate	<i>M</i>		2.41 _a	2.58 _a	3.45 _b	3.36 _b
		<i>SD</i>		(1.35)	(1.20)	(1.44)	(1.57)
Male	Willingness to Work	<i>M</i>	5.56 _a	3.92 _b	5.02 _a	4.10 _b	3.72 _b
		<i>SD</i>	(.99)	(1.49)	(.67)	(1.64)	(1.12)
Female	Willingness to Work	<i>M</i>	4.94 _a	3.27 _b	4.59 _a	5.10 _a	4.44 _a
		<i>SD</i>	(1.37)	(.95)	(1.34)	(1.37)	(.96)

<i>n</i>	29	19	31	23	25
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Note: Means that are in the same row and have different subscripts are significantly different at the level of $p \leq .05$.

^a If evaluator gender did not moderate mean differences across conditions, we present the combined means for male and female evaluators.

Table 5

Study 4: Mean Ratings in Relational, Deferential, Aggressive, Legitimacy of Request, and Willingness to Work

		Relational Accounts				
		No Ask	Simple Ask	Outside-Offer Account	Skill Contribution	Mentor Excuse
Relational	<i>M</i>	4.92 _a	3.87 _b	3.97 _b	4.59 _a	4.81 _a
	<i>SD</i>	(1.03)	(1.26)	(1.28)	(1.01)	(1.15)
Aggressive	<i>M</i>	1.75 _a	3.43 _b	5.01 _c	3.43 _b	3.45 _b
	<i>SD</i>	(.78)	(1.52)	(1.32)	(1.03)	(1.33)
Legitimate	<i>M</i>		2.36 _a	3.16 _b	3.21 _b	3.08 _b
	<i>SD</i>		(1.13)	(1.41)	(1.00)	(1.49)
Willingness to Work	<i>M</i>	4.83 _a	4.14 _b	4.15 _b	4.88 _a	4.89 _a
	<i>SD</i>	(1.17)	(1.25)	(1.46)	(0.99)	(1.07)
	<i>n</i>	33	33	60	25	36

Note: Means that are in the same row and have different subscripts are significantly different at the level of $p \leq .05$.

Figure Captions

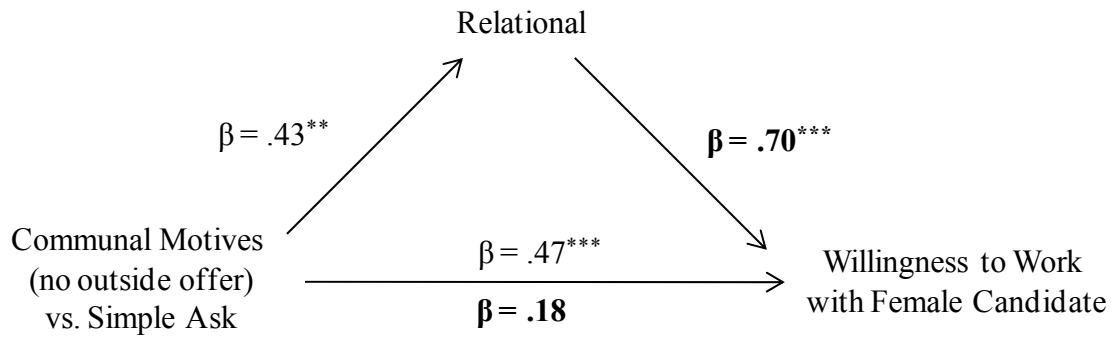
Figure 1. Study 3, Female Candidates. Figure shows that evaluators were significantly more inclined to work with a female candidate who emphasized communal motives when negotiating for higher pay (as compared to simply asked) because she appeared more relational. Coefficients in plain text report main effects. Coefficients in bold text report effects in full model.

Figure 2. Study 3, Female Candidates. Figure summarizes conflicting effects of the outside-offer account on male and female evaluators. The top graphic shows that male evaluators were less inclined to work with a female candidate who used the outside-offer account (as compared to no ask) because she appeared less relational. The bottom graphic shows that female evaluators were more willing to work with a female candidate who used the outside-offer account (as compared to simply asked) because the account enhanced the legitimacy of her pay request. Coefficients in plain text report main effects. Coefficients in bold text report effects in full model.

Figure 3. Study 4. Figure summarizes the effects of the relational accounts—skill contribution and mentor excuse—on evaluators' willingness to work with female candidates. Evaluators were more inclined to work with female candidates who negotiated using the relational accounts (as compared to simply asked), because they perceived them to be more relational and their requests to be more legitimate. Coefficients in plain text report main effects. Coefficients in bold text report effect in full model.

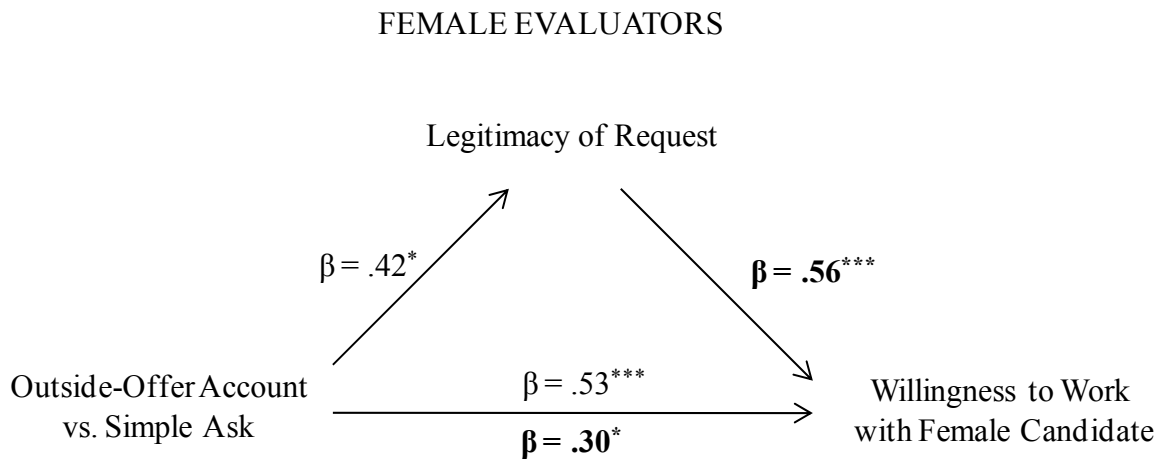
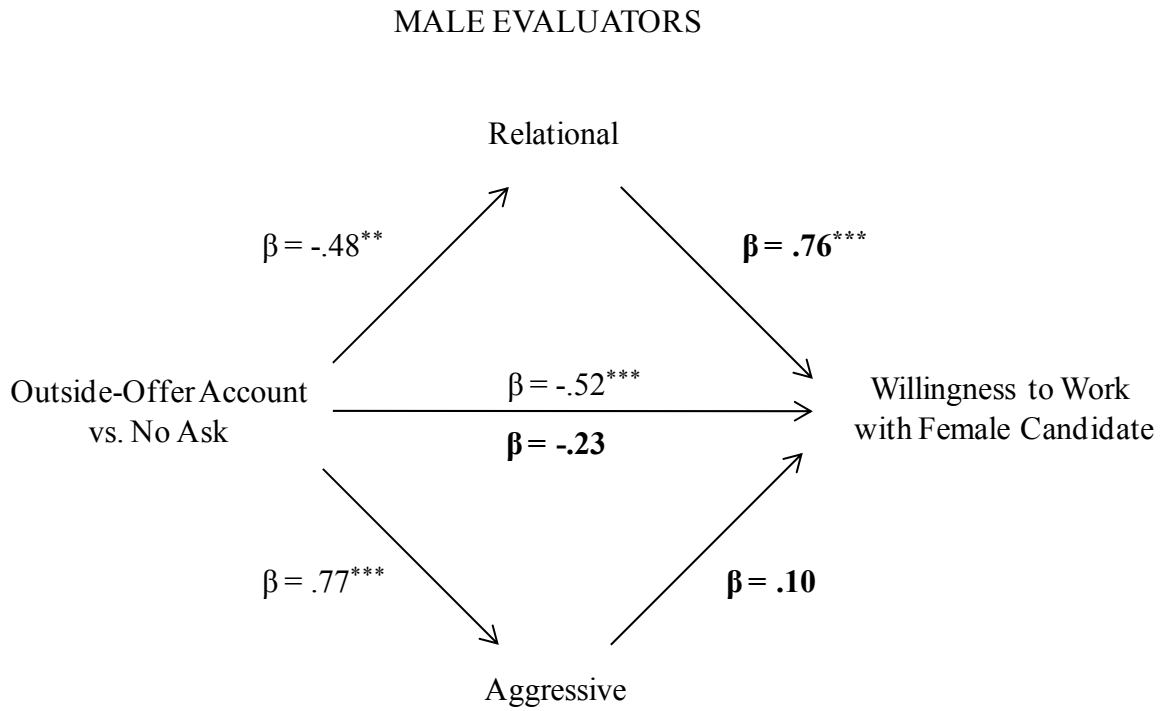
Figure 4. Study 4. Figure shows that evaluators were less inclined to work with female candidates who negotiated using the outside-offer account (as compared to no ask), because they appeared less relational. Coefficients in plain text report main effects. Coefficients in bold text report effects in full model.

Figure 1



** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

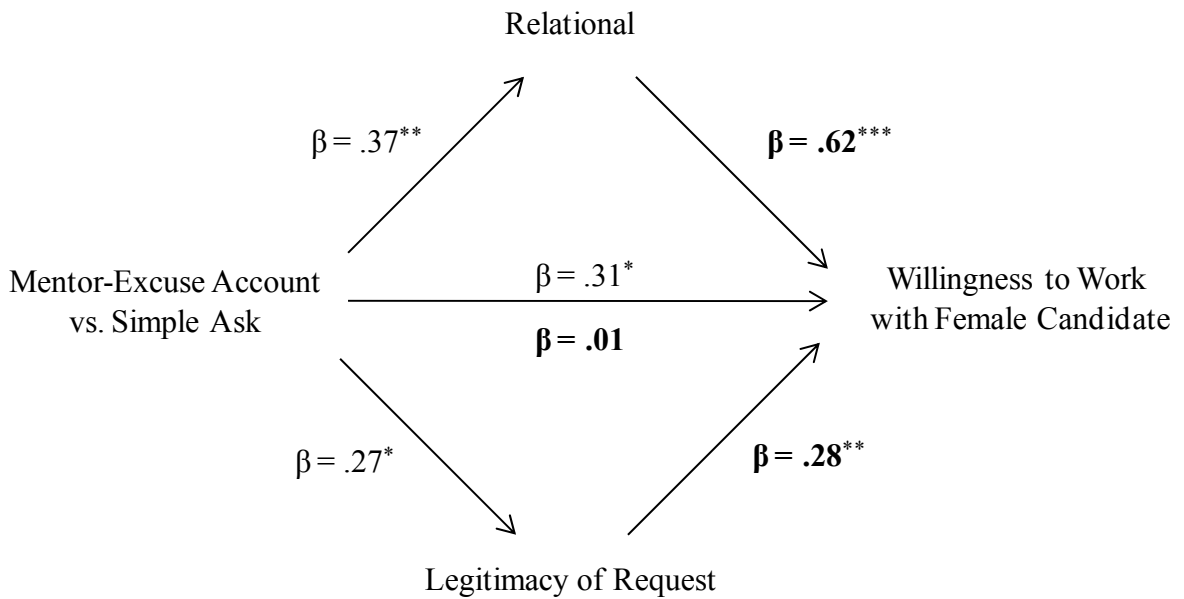
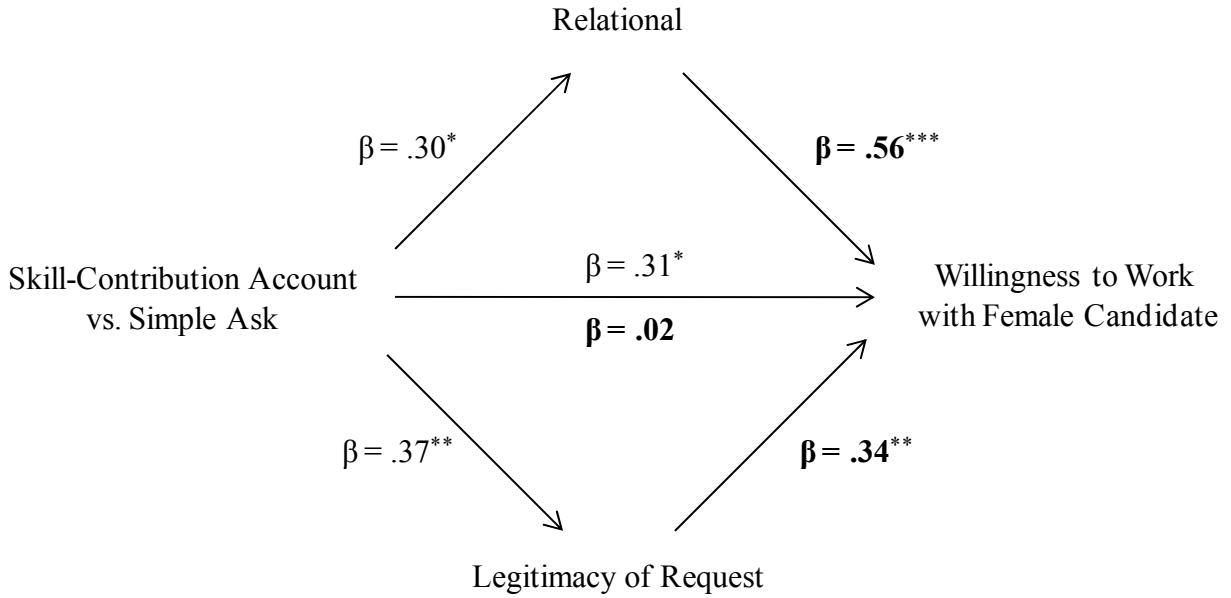
Figure 2



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

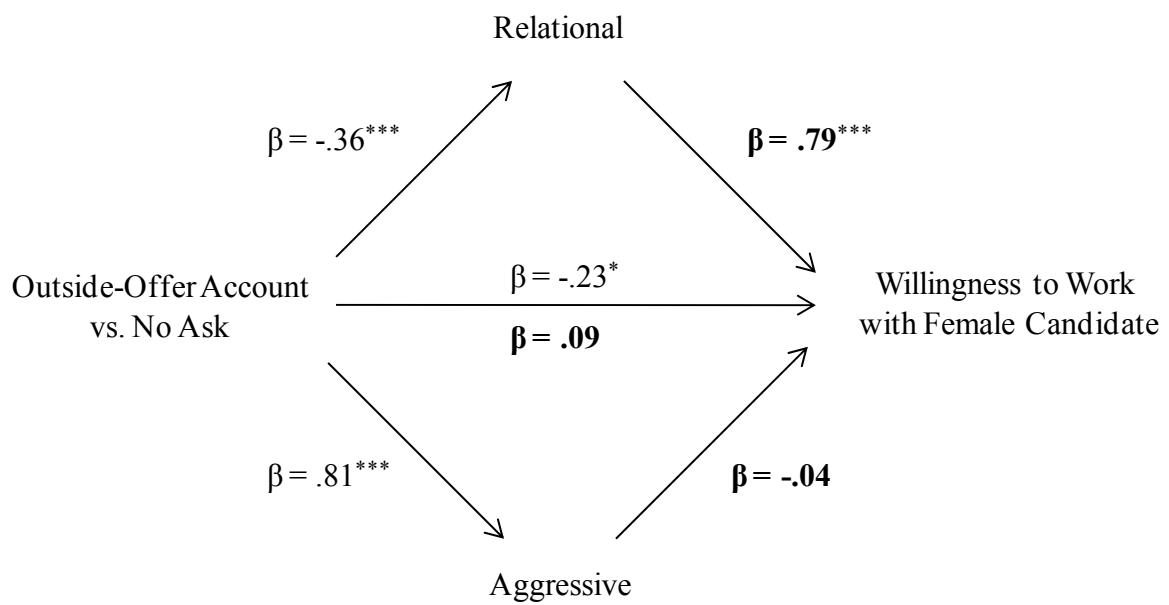
Figure 3

RELATIONAL ACCOUNTS



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

Figure 4



*** $p < .001$.