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**14. ABSTRACT**

Research was conducted for clarifying linkages among individual differences in social skill/intelligence constructs, contextual differences in social contingencies (i.e., accountability mechanisms), and performance outcomes. Research suggests that social intelligence may offer relatively high validities for performance prediction, while accountability has consistently shown to be a determinant of behavior, interacting with personal and contextual characteristics. Furthermore, the social contingency nature of accountability (both formal and informal) provides a conceptual linkage with social intelligence, suggesting there should be interactions of these constructs on performance. A multi-study approach was used to develop a measure of social skill in organizations, to demonstrate convergent and discriminant validity for multiple measures of the social skill construct, and to advance understanding of how individuals differing in social skills respond to differing accountability perceptions in terms of performance. First, the psychometric properties of multiple measures of social skill/intelligence were analyzed relative to potentially related dispositional constructs. Specifically, measures of emotional intelligence, political skill, and Self-Monitoring was gathered from student subjects, along with personality constructs of Conscientiousness and Locus of Control to assess both convergent and discriminant validity of these measures in a performance context. Second, a laboratory experiment approach extended this survey approach into a performance context. Third, a field study was used to replicate and extend the relationships supported in the preceding studies in an organization, using standard and contextual performance measures. Finally, another field study extended these findings into an organizational context, examining the interaction of social skill and accountability on desirable organizational performance. This investigation fits into the Navy's ongoing job matching project.

**15. SUBJECT TERMS**
Social Skill, Social Intelligence, Political Skill, Accountability

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# FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

GRANT #: N00014-00-1-0595

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Dwight D. Frink & Gerald R. Ferris

INSTITUTION: School of Business, University of Mississippi, and College of Business, Florida State University

GRANT TITLE: Personal and Structural Influences on Job Performance in Dynamic Environments: An Investigation of Social Skill/Intelligence and Social Contingencies

AWARD PERIOD: 1 April 2000 - 31 March 2003

OBJECTIVE: To develop the social skill/intelligence construct via developing a valid instrument and further testing it in a dynamic social context in terms of accountability.

APPROACH: A multi-study approach was used, including field surveys, laboratory experiments, and field studies. The first step was to use a survey approach to investigate the psychometric properties of the new instrument, establish the factor structure, and establish convergent and discriminant validity. Next, the instrument was tested as a performance predictor to support criterion-related validity. Finally, the interactive effects of the new instrument with accountability perceptions on performance ratings was examined.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (throughout award period): The political skill inventory (PSI) was developed initially by a process of determining from previous literature what seemed to be appropriate dimensions, and then writing sets of items to tap those dimensions. As a result of empirical testing, it was reduced to an 18 item measure assessing four dimensions.

The resulting scale was then subjected to validity testing, including convergent and discriminant validity, criterion-related validity, and contrasting with numerous other conceptually related measures.

Finally, the initial goal of investigating the interaction of social context and social acuity on performance was accomplished by finding an interaction of accountability perceptions and PSI scores on performance ratings.

CONCLUSIONS: The 18-item Political Skill Inventory (PSI) was developed in this research, and found to reflect adequate psychometric properties as indicated by the confirming evidence across three studies and seven different samples.

***Evidence for factor structure.*** An underlying four-factor dimensionality of the PSI was established in Study 1 and confirmed in Study 2, with good fit statistics. Furthermore, Study 2 altered the response format of the PSI items, changing to a five-point, from a seven-point, scale to assess the scale's robustness across response formats. Although the five-point format demonstrated the capacity to withstand range restriction and replicate the factor structure, results suggest that the variance associated with the seven-point scale provides a cleaner interpretation of the four-factor structure. Finally, the correlations among the political skill dimensions were modest in magnitude, as expected, and recent research has supported such results. Treadway (2003) reported a range of correlations for the four dimensions of .27 - .48. Similarly, Blass (2003) reported correlations of the political skill dimensions ranging from .30 to .59.

***Evidence for convergent and discriminant validity.*** Part of Study 1, and two of the samples in Study 2, focused on convergent and discriminant validity, and supported the three fundamental conceptual issues regarding political skill. That is, first, that political skill is only modestly correlated with personality and other interpersonally-oriented constructs like self-monitoring and emotional intelligence. Second, that political skill is significantly and negatively related to trait anxiety, thus supporting arguments by Perrewé et al. (2000). Third, that political skill is not correlated with GMA.
Concerning the dimensions of political skill, the proposed relationships of the specific dimensions with other constructs were established in Study 1 and replicated in Study 2. Specifically, social astuteness was proposed, and found, to be most strongly related to self-monitoring, conscientiousness, and political savvy. Also, interpersonal influence was found to be the strongest predictor of trait anxiety of the four dimensions. Finally, networking ability was most strongly related to the exchange, upward appeal, coalition, and assertiveness influence tactics of all the political skill dimensions. The apparent sincerity dimension of political skill did not distinguish itself as providing differential prediction. It was related to some of the other constructs examined, but only its relationship with agreeableness in Table 3 was the strongest of any of the dimensions.

The results found for the political skill dimensions in these two studies have received recent confirmation by Treadway (2003). He found that social astuteness exhibited the strongest relationship, of any of the dimensions of political skill, with self-monitoring. Also as proposed and found in the present research, Treadway found that networking ability demonstrated the strongest relationship with the exchange, upward appeal, and coalition influence tactics of any of the political skill dimensions. However, he found no relationship between networking ability and assertiveness.

***Evidence for criterion-related validity.*** Study 3 reported evidence of criterion-related validity and demonstrated that political skill significantly predicted job performance and effectiveness ratings in two samples made up of distinct occupational groups. The PSI was a significant predictor of subordinate evaluation of leader effectiveness for a group of public school administrators, even though the sample was very small (i.e., $N = 26$).

In Sample 2 of this study, branch managers of a financial services firm participated in the research, and results demonstrated that political skill accounted for a 7% increment in supervisor ratings of job performance variance beyond the extensive set of control variables. Furthermore, the social astuteness dimension of political skill was the strongest predictor of job performance in both studies. This evidence appears to indicate that, not only is the PSI a psychometrically sound measurement instrument, but also it demonstrates the capacity to predict important work criteria.

***Evidence for interactive effects of accountability and political skill on performance ratings.*** Study 4 examined the proposed interaction of accountability and political skill on performance ratings over time, and the results were that there is a strong relationship between them such that when perceptions of accountability are low and political skill is low, performance ratings are high. Alternatively, high performance ratings accompanied high political skill when accountability was high. Furthermore, networking ability and interpersonal influence dimensions of political skill seemed to be driving this relationship.

SIGNIFICANCE: The benefits of this research derive from two distinct but important sources: the ongoing Navy job matching project and the proactive agenda set forth in *Sailor 21.*

The job matching project is a substantial effort to articulate the relationships among various types of individual characteristics, various job characteristics, and various performance dimensions. This research fits directly into this project by investigating

specific sets of these dimensions. Specifically, this research deals with individual characteristics related to social interactions, job characteristics related to social contingencies, and performance characteristics related to both group and individual measures of performance widely defined.

In December, 1998, Navy Personnel Research Studies and Technology published a document entitled *Sailor 21: A Research Vision to Attract, Retain, and Utilize the 21st Century Sailor*, which laid out a research agenda the Navy is interested in pursuing in the future. Our research directly addresses a number of issues identified in *Sailor 21*. First, this document indicates a need to better understand and identify the most effective cognitive and non-cognitive predictors of performance for sailors and officers in the Navy (*Sailor 21*, pp. 35-37). For non-cognitive predictors of performance, the document makes specific reference to personality measures as well as measures of social intelligence, which is a type of political skill we discuss in this proposal. Indeed, in considering the potential relevance of social/emotional intelligence, *Sailor 21* calls for "evaluating the utility of these measures in the military" (p.30).

Second, *Sailor 21* acknowledges the changes inherent in the "Future Navy Work Environment," which has important implications for selection of personnel, evaluations of performance, and also prediction of career success (see p. 38). Our research acknowledges the changing nature of organizational environments, and the resulting impact this has on human resources systems, with specific reference to increased importance of social interaction and contextual dimensions of work performance, and the potential changes and varying parameters of accountability and effects these changing conditions might also exert.

Third, our research investigates the prediction of different dimensions of job performance, and by extension has implications for long-term indicators of career success, including retention. The *Sailor 21* document specifically identifies an interest in better understanding the factors that contribute to long-term retention of personnel (p.38).

Fourth, this research combines two quite distinct but conceptually related constructs in both experimental and field study contexts. The social psychological construct of social/emotional intelligence is examined in the social contingency construct of accountability. It is doubtful that either construct operates without moderation by the other, and this approach allows examination of a key predictive construct in the context of organizational realities.

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REFEREED PUBLICATIONS (for total award period):

1. Ferris, G.R., Treadway, D.C., Kolodinsky, R.W., Hochwarter, W.A., Kacmar, C.J., Douglas, C., and Frink, D.D. (under review). Development and validation of the political skill inventory.

BOOK CHAPTERS, SUBMISSIONS, ABSTRACTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS (for total award period)

1. Hall, A.T., Frink, D.D., Ferris, G.R., Hochwarter, W.A., Kacmar, C.J., and Bowen, M.G. (in press). Accountability in human resources management. Forthcoming in C.A. Schriesheim & L.L. Neider (Eds.), *Research in management* (Vol. 3). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.