The Influence of Interviewee Social Skill and Impression Management on Structured Employment Interview Outcomes

by

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ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF INTERVIEWEE SOCIAL SKILL AND IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT ON STRUCTURED EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW OUTCOMES

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The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the influence of interviewee social skill on the use and effectiveness of impression management (IM), as well as interviewers’ perceptions of the use of IM during the employment interview. One hundred and nine participants completed mock employment interviews for developmental purposes. An antecedent model whereby IM partially mediated the effect of social skill on interview performance was supported for observer-coded self-promotion. In contrast, a moderator model was supported for self-reported deceptive IM, as interviewees were more likely to positively influence their interview performance with the use of deceptive IM when they were high on social skill. In addition, although interviewers were mostly inaccurate in their perceptions of deceptive IM, social skill did not moderate the amount of agreement between self- and interviewer-ratings of IM. Implications for research and practice are discussed.
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The Influence of Interviewee Social Skill and Impression Management on Structured Employment Interview Outcomes

The employment interview is the most commonly used selection device for hiring employees (Judge, Higgins, & Cable, 2000). The use of this method tends to lead hiring managers to be confident in their hiring decisions (Erker & Buczynski, 2008). However, there are many potential sources of error that can impact a hiring decision, throwing into question whether this confidence is justified. One such source of error is the use of impression management (IM) by interviewees. Researchers have demonstrated that both genuine IM, or trying to put your best foot forward, and deceptive IM, which involves lying during the interview, predict interview performance (Barrick, Shaffer, & DeGrassi, 2009; Levashina & Campion, 2007). However, IM may act as a factor that reduces the predictive validity of the employment interview, based on evidence that IM is a stronger predictor of interview performance than job performance (Barrick et al., 2009). This study fulfilled a need to directly test whether IM acts as a source of error in the interview’s prediction of performance criteria. In addition, I aimed to investigate factors that a) influence the use and effectiveness of IM by interviewees and b) influence how IM is perceived by interviewers, as this information can aid researchers in developing interviews that reduce the amount of error that IM may contribute to selection decisions.

One factor that has been hypothesized to influence the use and effectiveness of IM is the interviewee’s level of social skill. Social skill is defined as being sensitive to others’ communications, being able to monitor one’s communications to others, and the ability to express messages effectively (Riggio, 1986). Models of IM use during interviews proposed by both Marcus (2009) and Levashina and Campion (2006) hypothesize that social skill acts as an antecedent of the use of IM. This study empirically tested whether social skill is a predictor of
the use of IM in interviews, as Marcus (2009) and Levashina and Campion (2006) propose. The validity of their antecedent models were compared to the validity of a moderation model, where social skill moderates the prediction of interview performance by IM such that IM will more strongly predict interview performance when social skill is high. In addition, social skill was tested as a moderator of the convergence between interviewee and interviewer ratings of the use of IM during the interview. Past research has found that interviewers are inaccurate in their perceptions of interviewees’ use of deceptive IM during the interview (Roulin, Bangerter, & Levashina, 2012). I proposed that agreement is lower between interviewee reports and interviewer perceptions of deceptive IM use when the interviewees are socially skilled, because they are able to make their use of deceptive IM appear more genuine. Studying these questions allowed for an empirical test of the theoretical models which propose that social skill plays a role in the use of IM in employment interviews (Marcus, 2009; Levashina & Campion, 2006).

**Defining Impression Management**

The definition of IM in the literature has varied depending on whether the construct is examined from a personality psychology tradition or a social psychology standpoint (Levashina & Campion, 2006). In the personality psychology literature, IM is conceptualized as conscious deception, as in purposefully responding to a question in a deceptive way to appear more favourable to others (Paulhus, 1984). This construct has been applied most readily to faking in personality tests (Barrick & Mount, 1996). IM in this context has been contrasted with self-deception, where a person genuinely believes their overly positive self-reports (Paulhus, 1984). Both IM and self-deception are proposed to act as two forces that lead to socially desirable responding.
In contrast, researchers in the social psychology tradition have not defined IM solely as a deceptive act. For example, Schlenker (1980) defined IM as the “attempt to control images that are projected in real or imagined social interactions” (p. 6), which makes no mention of deceptive behaviour. Models of IM in this tradition have discussed the motivations behind controlling the images that we project (Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Baumeister, 1982). It is generally agreed upon that “self-construction”, a desire to project an image that is congruent with our ideal selves, and “pleasing the audience”, or constructing an image that is favourable to those around us, are the two main motivations for using IM in our everyday lives (Baumeister, 1982). This social framework has been relied on in the study of IM in interviews, as it is more congruent with the interview as a social interaction, compared to the solitary act of completing a personality test.

The definition of IM provided by social psychologists does not make a distinction between the use of IM to promote characteristics that a person honestly believes that they possess, and the use of IM to project a dishonest image in order to deceive others for personal benefit. Levashina and Campion (2006, 2007) were the first researchers to make this distinction for the study of employment interviews when they described the constructs of Honest IM and Deceptive IM. Honest IM involves providing honest and accurate information in order to highlight positive credentials and characteristics that are relevant for the position being applied for. Deceptive IM is defined as “the conscious distortion of answers to the interview questions in order to obtain a better score on the interview and/or otherwise create favourable perceptions” (Levashina & Campion, 2007). Both honest and deceptive IM were examined in this study, as both types of IM have been found to influence interviewer judgments of interview performance.
Honest and Deceptive IM Tactics

In order to study the use of honest and deceptive IM in interviews, researchers have developed taxonomies of honest and deceptive IM tactics. For this study, the categorization of honest IM was based on a taxonomy that is widely used in the study of IM in interviews (Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Ellis et al., 2002). This taxonomy makes a distinction between verbal and non-verbal IM tactics. I decided to focus on verbal tactics in this study for two reasons. First, it is questionable whether individuals are able to give accurate self-reports of their non-verbal IM tactic use (Stevens & Kristof, 1995; DePaulo, 1992). Interviewees were asked to give self-reports of their use of IM tactics, and I wanted to focus on measuring tactics that participants could report on accurately. Second, self-report scales of non-verbal IM tactic use have demonstrated poor internal consistency in the past (e.g., Tsai, Chen, & Chiu, 2005), making the reliability of such reports questionable as well. Therefore, for this study the verbal tactics outlined in the adopted IM taxonomy were used to categorize IM behaviour.

In the honest IM taxonomy adopted in this study, the two broad categories of honest IM verbal tactics are assertive and defensive tactics (See Table 1; Ellis et al., 2002). Assertive tactics involve actively promoting a favourable impression of oneself in an interview. Assertive tactics can be divided into self-focused (self-promotion) tactics, which is defined as attempting to show that one has job-desirable qualities, and other-focused (ingratiation) tactics, which are tactics used to promote interpersonal liking and attraction. Whereas specific types of self-focused tactics are self-promoting utterances, entitlements, enhancements, and overcoming obstacles, other-
focused tactics consist of other-enhancements and opinion conformities. Defensive tactics, which involve protecting or repairing one’s image, include using excuses, justifications, or apologies.

To define deceptive IM in this study, the taxonomy created by Levashina and Campion (2007) was adopted (see Table 2). Mirroring the self-focused tactics described above, slight image creation and extensive image creation are categories that describe faking to actively create the image of a suitable candidate. Tactics defined as slight image creation are embellishing, tailoring, and fit enhancing. With extensive image creation, the tactics used are constructing, inventing, and borrowing. Like the other-focused tactics described above, the deceptive ingratiation category of tactics in Levashina and Campion’s (2007) taxonomy involve attempting to gain favour with the interviewer, using the tactics of opinion conforming and interviewer/organization enhancing. Finally, the image protection category describes tactics used to defend an applicant’s image, which relates closely to the defensive tactics described above. Omitting, masking, and distancing are the tactics included in this category.

Measurement of IM Use

In past research, IM has been measured by self-reports and behavioural coding of taped interviews by trained observers (e.g., Kristof-Brown, Barrick, & Franke, 2002; Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Ellis et al., 2002). With the exception of Stevens and Kristof (1995), studies of IM use in interviews have employed either self-report or behavioural coding techniques to measure interviewee’s use of IM. In this study, the use of IM was measured both by self-report and coding of verbal IM tactics by observers to reduce the reliance on a single method. In addition, interviewer perceptions of IM use by interviewees was collected to examine convergence with self-reported IM use.
Interviewer reports of IM use have been collected in the past to examine the accuracy of interviewer perceptions of IM use (Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Roulin et al., 2011). However, interviewer reports of IM have not been used as a standard measure of IM use due to the concern of whether interviewers are able to accurately detect IM (Kristof-Brown et al., 2002; Roulin et al., 2011). This concern is potentially compounded by the retrospective nature of interviewer-reports of IM use, which is a disadvantage that is avoided with coding by trained observers. Therefore, for this study, interviewer reports of IM use by interviewees were framed as *perceptions* of IM use that are not necessarily accurate.

**Measuring honest vs. deceptive IM.** Coding of verbal IM in interviews by trained observers was first developed by Stevens and Kristof (1995). Ellis et al. (2002) refined the taxonomy of verbal IM tactics (see table 1) that is now adopted in studies that code the use of verbal IM by interviewees (e.g., Peeters & Lievens, 2006). With studies that employ only behavioural coding methods, the distinction between honest and deceptive IM is impossible to make because an observer cannot objectively rate whether the use of a tactic was done in a deceptive or an honest manner. In addition, interviewers can report their perceptions of the use of deceptive or honest IM by interviewees, but cannot know objectively whether their perceptions are accurate. Only the interviewee can report whether an example they gave or an assertion about their traits or skills that they made is actually truthful. Therefore, the assumptions were made that observer-coded IM will represent the use of both honest and deceptive IM, and interviewer-reports of deceptive and honest IM use are perceptions that could be incorrect. Self-report methods allow researchers to separate the use of each type of IM.

In earlier studies where interviewees completed self-reports of IM, the distinction between honest and deceptive IM was not made (Levashina & Campion, 2007). Some studies
used self-report measures that asked questions with no mention of outright deceptive behaviour, which logically taps in to the construct of honest IM (e.g., Kristof-Brown et al., 2002). However, some studies used self-report measures that blended honest and deceptive questions (e.g., Higgins & Judge, 2004). The creation of the Interview Faking Behaviour Scale (IFBS; Levashina & Campion, 2007) has afforded researchers the opportunity to measure self-reported deceptive IM. Items in the IFBS tap in to the taxonomy of deceptive IM behaviours that Levashina and Campion (2007) created. For this study, items from the IFBS were used to measure self-reported deceptive IM, and items from past studies (i.e. Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Tsai et al., 2005) that were focused only on honest IM behaviours were used to measure self-reported honest IM.

**Impression Management and the Employment Interview**

When entering into an employment interview situation, it is intuitive from the applicant’s perspective that there is high motivation to engage in IM (Marcus, 2009). In this situation, applicants need to make a positive impression on the interviewer in order to obtain their goal of employment with the organization. Though this is a necessary and understandable aspect of the interview, researchers have voiced concerns over how IM may influence the predictive validity of the interview in selecting employees who will perform well on the job. Many studies of IM (e.g., Fletcher, 1990; Gilmore & Ferris, 1989; Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Ellis et al., 2002; Peeters & Lievens, 2006) have found that the use of IM tactics during an employment interview positively predicts interviewer judgments of suitability for a job. What is concerning is that the use of IM positively predicts interview performance, but very weakly predicts actual supervisor ratings of job performance (Barrick et al., 2009). This finding suggests that IM at least partially acts as a source of error in interviewer judgments, as interviewers are using information to make their selection decision that is not a valid predictor of on-the-job performance. Rather, applicants
are giving the impression that they are suitable for the job, but interviewers may not be able to pick up on the potentially false nature of some of their claims.

Determining ways to design the interview to mitigate the potential negative effect that IM has on its predictive validity has been a priority for researchers for some time. For example, it has been argued that using a structured interview rather than an unstructured interview influences the interviewer to focus on job-relevant criteria (Campion, Palmer, & Campion, 1997). Because of the interviewer’s focus on job-relevant criteria, using a structured interview reduces the impact of IM on interview performance ratings (Barrick et al., 2009). The type of structured interview has also been investigated as a moderator of the influence of IM on interview performance, with interviewees more likely to successfully use self-focused and defensive tactics with behavioural descriptive interviews (BDI) and other-focused tactics with situational interviews (SI; Ellis et al., 2002; Peeters & Lievens, 2006; Van Iddekinge, McFarland, & Raymark, 2007). Overall, these studies demonstrated the impact of interview design on how interviewees employ IM during interviews.

Recently, examining interviewee-specific antecedents of the use of IM in interviews has become more of a priority. This is because while interviews can be constructed to limit the amount that IM influences interview performance, individual differences will lead to interviewees using different IM tactics in varying frequencies with varying amounts of success. For example, Peeters and Lievens (2006) and Van Iddekinge et al. (2007) investigated personality antecedents of the use of IM tactics, and found that neuroticism, agreeableness, and openness predicted the use of different types of IM strategies. The possibility exists that personality traits are not the only type of individual difference that can influence interviewees’ use of IM, but that individual differences in skills and abilities can also make an impact. In
theoretical models of IM use in interviews, it has been proposed that social skill positively affects the use and effectiveness of IM tactics (Marcus, 2009; Levashina & Campion, 2006). If this is the case, then social skill acts as a factor that explains how a possible source of error in the interview, the use of IM, affects ratings of interview performance.

**Models of IM Use in the Interview**

A prominent theoretical model of IM use during the interview that focuses on the applicant’s perspective during the selection process is Marcus’ (2009) theory of self-presentation in personnel selection settings. Marcus (2009) outlines the salient motivations and skills that emerge at different points of the selection process. The four steps in this process are 1) entering with an initial motive for self-presentation, 2) using analytical skills to assess the situation, 3) developing informed motivations based on this reassessment, and 4) using the appropriate behavioural skills to manage impressions. Social skill becomes a factor in the last step in this process, acting as a skill that applicants can draw upon to manage impressions during the interview.

An additional theoretical model that focuses specifically on the use of deceptive IM in interviews is Levashina and Campion’s (2006) Model of Faking Likelihood in the Employment Interview. This model outlines three main antecedents to faking during the interview: the capacity to fake, the willingness to fake, and the opportunity to fake. All three factors must be present to some extent for an applicant to fake, with a multiplicative effect of each factor assumed. One component of the capacity to fake that Levashina and Campion (2007) outline is social skill. The authors make the assertion that given some degree of willingness and opportunity, individuals who are socially skilled will be more likely to use deceptive IM during an interview because they are more able to do so successfully. Similar to Levashina and
Campion (2007), Goffin and Boyd (2009) also posit that social astuteness, which is conceptually related to social skill, is a component of the perceived ability to fake in their model of faking with personality measures for selection. The applicant’s perceived ability to fake acts as the first step in a process that leads applicants to fake responses to personality items in order to appear favourable on a selection test.

Both Marcus (2009) and Levashina and Campion (2006) include social skill as an ability that influences interviewees to engage in impression management in their models. However, at this time there are no studies that have tested the proposed relationship between social skill and IM use and effectiveness. This study aimed to test these hypothesized relations and to further explore the link between social skill and IM use. However, before the study is outlined, the construct of social skill must be defined.

**Defining Social Skill**

Riggio’s (1986) definition of social skill, which is composed of 1) sensitivity to other’s communications, 2) monitoring or controlling of one’s communications to others, and 3) the ability to express messages effectively, was adopted for this study. There are an array of constructs that are conceptually related to social skill, including ability dimensions like emotional intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) and social intelligence (Goleman, 2006), and personality traits such as self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974) and social astuteness (Jackson, 1994). Levashina and Campion’s (2006) and Marcus’ (2009) models separate personality traits from social and behavioural abilities. They also do not include emotion-focused capabilities such as emotional intelligence. Therefore, Riggio’s (1986) framework of social skill, which involves three broad ability-based skills that focus on social interaction, was used.
A construct that is related to social skill, yet was developed with a focus towards behaviours in the workplace, is political skill (Ferris et al., 2005). Political skill involves effectively understanding the social behaviours of others at work, and using this understanding to influence others. This skill set involves being socially astute and adaptive while appearing sincere and trustworthy. The parallels with general social skill are clear, yet the focused nature of political skill on the ability to influence may more specifically tap into the skills necessary to use and effectively execute IM tactics during an interview. For this reason, both social skill as a broad construct and political skill as a specific type of social skill was used to define social skill in this study.

Social skill broadly defined involves effectively using verbal and non-verbal communication. In addition, being politically skilled, though largely measured in terms of verbal communication, also involves, to some extent, effective non-verbal communication. Although it is acknowledged that non-verbal and verbal communications often go hand in hand, for the purposes of this study, the focus was largely on verbal perception and communication skills. This decision was motivated by two reasons. First, verbal social skill, as a verbal ability, is conceptually more closely related to verbal IM, which is the type of IM that was measured in this study. Second, practically it would have been difficult to have individuals report on both their verbal and non-verbal social skills due to time constraints.

**Study Explanation and Hypotheses**

The purpose of this study was to examine how applicants’ social skills and their use of IM are interrelated in the employment interview and how these two constructs affect interview performance. The interviewer’s perception of the use of IM during the interview, how
interviewer perceptions are affected by social skill, and the impact on ratings of interview performance were also explored.

**IM and Interview Performance**

As was mentioned above, researchers have demonstrated that the use of verbal IM tactics predicts interview performance. Both self-reported honest IM (e.g., Kristof-Brown et al., 2002) and observer-coded verbal IM (e.g., Ellis et al., 2002), which taps in to both honest and deceptive IM, have been found to be reliable predictors of interview performance. In addition, Levashina and Campion (2007) found that self-reported extensive image creation, a type of deceptive IM, positively predicted interview performance. It should be noted that recent studies found contradictory findings, namely that only honest IM, and not deceptive IM, significantly predicted interview performance (Roulin et al., 2012; Swider, Barrick, Harris, & Stoverink, 2011) and that deceptive IM, specifically deceptive ingratiation, actually negatively predicted interview performance (Levashina, Roulin, & Campion, 2012). It is possible that these mixed findings may be due to moderating effects of the characteristics of the applicants (to be described in the moderator model below). Even with conflicting findings in past research, the following hypotheses are guided by Levashina and Campion’s (2007) assertion that because deceptive IM is a type of self-presentation tactic, and the use of self-presentation has been found to positively predict interview performance, deceptive IM in particular should also positively predict interview performance.

H1a: Self-reported honest IM will positively predict ratings of interview performance.
H1b: Self-reported deceptive IM will positively predict ratings of interview performance.
H1c: Observer-coded verbal IM will positively predict ratings of interview performance.

**IM and Performance Outcomes**
A recent meta-analysis by Barrick et al. (2009) found that the use of IM during interviews was a stronger predictor of interview performance than it was of job performance, suggesting that IM acts as a source of error in interviewer judgments. In this study I aimed to test whether IM is a source of error in interviewer judgments by examining if interview performance ratings predict a criterion measure of performance more strongly when IM is taken into account.

Specifically, when IM is added as a control variable when testing the interview performance – criterion relationship, I expect the relation between interview performance and the criterion to increase (i.e., a suppressor effect). Given that studies in Barrick et al.’s (2009) meta-analysis included self-report items that involved both honest and deceptive IM, and that there is no reason to suspect that the findings would be different for honest IM and deceptive IM, it was expected that both honest and deceptive IM (self-reported and observer-coded) would act as suppressors.

Because this study recruited students instead of a work sample, it was not possible to obtain a traditional job performance measure. Therefore, the participants’ current GPA acted as a criterion measure for this study. Although GPA is not an ideal performance measure, collecting these data allowed for the first test of whether IM acts as a suppressor of the relationship between interview performance and a criterion measure.

H2a: The effect of interview performance on a criterion measure of performance (GPA) will be strengthened when controlling for honest IM.

H2b: The effect of interview performance on a criterion measure of performance (GPA) will be strengthened when controlling for deceptive IM.

H2c: The effect of interview performance on a criterion measure of performance (GPA) will be strengthened when controlling for observer-coded IM.

**Convergence Between Self-Reported and Observer-Rated Verbal IM**
Both observer-coded IM and self-reported IM were collected in this study, allowing for the congruence between observer-coded verbal IM and self-reported honest and deceptive IM to be investigated. Stevens and Kristof (1995) demonstrated low to acceptable convergence between observer-coded IM and self-reported IM for other-focused tactics ($r = .09$ for opinion conformity and $r = .34$ for other-enhancement [i.e., ingratiation]), and poor convergence for self-focused tactics ($r = -.05$ for self-promotions). Although these correlations are low, I expected the convergence between self-rated IM and observer-coded IM to be significant in this study, considering that they are meant to measure similar constructs. Because Stevens and Kristof (1995) are the only researchers that have examined the convergence between these two methods, this examination provides a much-needed replication of their results.

In contrast to self-reported honest IM, no studies at this time have examined the convergence between self-reported deceptive IM and observer-coded IM. The amount of convergence will give an indication of how much observer-coded verbal IM is an indicator of deceptive behaviour during interviews. Logically, because observer-coded IM should capture the use of both honest and deceptive IM, observer-rated IM should also be positively related to self-rated deceptive IM.

H3a: Self-reported honest IM will be positively related with observer-coded IM.

H3b: Self-reported deceptive IM will be positively related with observer-coded IM.

**Social Skill**

An applicant’s level of social skill has been found to positively predict ratings of interview performance in multiple studies (Robertson & Smith, 2001). This is not surprising, given that social skill is one of a number of constructs that interviews are designed to measure (Huffcutt, Conway, Roth, & Stone, 2001). Organizations generally want to hire individuals who
are strong in communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills. In particular, this is important for jobs, such as a salesperson, that as part of their description require interpersonal skills.

Politically skilled individuals are not only socially astute, but are also self-confident and appear sincere and trustworthy (Ferris et al., 2005). Interviewers often aim to assess these characteristics when evaluating the competencies of persuasive and effective negotiation (Huffcutt et al., 2001). Consequently, political skill should positively influence interview performance, and should also promote interviewee likeability. Therefore, I expected social skill, in particular verbal social skill and political skill, to positively influence interview performance ratings.

H4a: Verbal social skill will positively predict ratings of interview performance.

H4b: Political skill will positively predict ratings of interview performance.

**Antecedent vs. Moderator Model**

This study also tested two competing models of the role that social skill may play in relation to the use of IM during interviews. The models follow from hypotheses 1 and 4, where it is expected that both social skill and the use of IM tactics will predict interview performance. What these expected findings do not tell us is how social skill and IM work together to influence interview performance. One possibility is an antecedent model, where social skill positively predicts the use of IM in interviews, which leads to increased interview performance. This can be contrasted with a moderator model, where social skill moderates the effect of IM on interview performance.

**Antecedent model.** As was outlined above, Levashina and Campion’s (2006) Model of Faking Likelihood in the Employment Interview includes social skill as a component of the capacity for an interviewee to fake. Goffin and Boyd’s (2009) model of faking with personality measures also
hypothesizes that social astuteness, which is conceptually related to social skill, acts as a factor in the perceived ability to fake. Both models make the argument that those who are socially skilled are more capable of faking responses in a selection situation. This assertion is supported by the findings of Riggio, Tucker, and Throckmorton’s (1987) study, where socially skilled participants were able to convince judges to believe the deceptive messages that they were asked to portray.

A model like Levashina and Campion’s (2007), which includes social skill as both a component of the capacity to fake and an antecedent to the use of IM, assumes that job applicants are aware of their level of social skill and their ability to successfully manage impressions. Essentially, individuals who are aware that their social skill allows them to effectively use IM will be more likely to use IM in the future. This is a reasonable assumption, given that in our everyday interactions we receive social feedback on how we portray ourselves to others, and subsequently modify the impressions we attempt to display based on this feedback (Goffman, 1959; Schlenker, 1980). This level of self-awareness requires insight into our ability to manage impressions, and our social skill in general.

Marcus (2009) follows this line of reasoning in his previously-described model of self-presentation in a selection setting. He argues that during the process of determining whether we have the behavioural skills for effective self-presentation, we form expectancies in our mind of how capable we are of managing impressions based on our past experiences with employment interviews. Those who are socially skilled, and who have experienced success in managing impressions during prior interviews, would be more likely to use either honest or deceptive impression management in a future interview. This argument supports the antecedent model
whereby social skill fully mediates the effect of social skill on interview performance (see Figure 1):

**H5a:** IM will fully mediate the relationship between social skill and interview performance.

**Moderator model.** While the assertion that individuals are generally aware of their ability to manage impressions is reasonable, the possibility exists that this is not the case. Baron (1989) argued that individuals who use influence tactics may not necessarily be aware of how they are perceived by others. Even Goffin and Boyd’s (2006) model includes the *perceived* ability to deceive as an antecedent of faking, acknowledging that we might not always be aware of our actual ability to manage impressions. This lack of awareness would mean that individuals will use impression management, even if it will not be effective. Even if an applicant is aware of their lack of ability to successfully manage impressions, the interview is a strong situation where it is expected that the interviewee will attempt to make a positive impression (Marcus, 2009). This may lead to an interviewee using impression management even if it does not produce the desired results.

To illustrate the implications of this process, an applicant may compliment an interviewer and be sincere in their ingratiation, yet the interviewer may perceive that the compliment is merely an attempt to gain favour. Treadway, Ferris, Duke, Adams, and Thatcher (2007) note that in this situation, someone who is able to ingratiate a person while appearing sincere, regardless of whether the compliment is sincere or not, will be able to more effectively influence the target of the compliment. The ability to skillfully use ingratiation or other IM tactics would require the ability to influence, persuade, and be socially tactful. Therefore in this situation, for IM to have the desired effect, some degree of social skill is necessary. Some individuals employ IM unsuccessfully, whereas others, who are more socially skilled, are able to utilize IM to their
advantage. The possible moderating effect of social skill could be the reason for mixed findings with regards to the prediction of interview performance by deceptive IM (Levashina & Campion, 2007; Roulin et al., 2012; Swider et al., 2011).

There is evidence to support a moderator model from studies of the use of IM in organizations and work groups. For example, Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, and Shaw (2007) found that political skill moderated how the use of IM tactics affected job performance ratings by supervisors. Specifically, individuals who were high in political skill received higher performance ratings when they used IM tactics compared to individuals who were low in political skill. Turnley and Bolino (2001) found that participants in student workgroups who were high in self-monitoring and who used IM tactics were rated more favourably by group members in comparison to participants who were low in self-monitoring and used IM tactics. As self-monitoring ability is conceptually related to social skill (Riggio, 1986), this finding also supports the moderator model. Finally, Treadway et al. (2007) surveyed retail workers and their supervisors about the subordinate’s use of ingrati ation at work. They found that for subordinates who were high in political skill, their use of ingrati ation was not perceived by supervisors, yet supervisors recognized the use of ingrati ation with subordinates who were low in political skill. This suggests that subordinates who are high in political skill are able to use ingrati ation in a manner that appears sincere and not self-serving. In an interview context, this would suggest that socially skilled applicants may be able to use influence tactics without appearing to be using them solely for personal gain.

The evidence described provides a rationale for the moderator model (see Figure 2): H5b: Social skill will moderate the prediction of interview performance by IM, such that IM will more positively predict interview performance when social skill is high.
**Interviewer Perceptions**

As previously discussed, Treadway et al. (2007) found that retail supervisors did not detect the use of ingratiation by subordinates who were high in political skill. This result highlights the importance of examining the interviewer’s perspective of the use of IM in interviews. Though the workers in their study who were high in political skill reported using ingratiation, supervisors did not recognize the use of ingratiation as such. Rather, supervisors perceived that these workers engaged in more interpersonal facilitation. Therefore, even though the workers were possibly disingenuous in their use of ingratiation, because they were skilled at employing the tactic, it actually came across as genuine. Essentially, the supervisors were not able to “see through” the worker’s deceptive behaviour.

It is possible that the same process is at play during the employment interview. In a study examining interviewer judgments of IM, Roulin et al. (2012) collected self-reported and interviewer-rated IM from 164 interviews with real applicants at a recruiting agency. They found that there was a lack of agreement between interviewer judgments and interviewee ratings of their use of deceptive IM, with correlations ranging from $r = -.11$ to $r = .08$. Another study with students in a mock interview setting also found non-significant correlations between self- and interviewer-ratings of deceptive IM (Levashina et al., 2012). Perhaps socially skilled applicants who used deceptive IM were able to do so in a way that appeared genuine to the interviewers. If this was the case, it would suggest that interviewer perceptions of deceptive IM are less accurate as the applicant is more socially skilled. Essentially, increased social skill of the interviewee attenuates agreement between self-reports of deceptive IM and interviewer perceptions of deceptive IM. This argument provides a rationale for the next hypothesis (see Figure 3):
H6: Social skill will moderate the agreement between interviewer perceptions and interviewee self-reports of deceptive IM, such that agreement will be lower when social skill is high.

Because interviewees are not intending to hide their motives when using honest IM, the moderating effect of social skill on agreement between interviewer and interviewee reports of deceptive IM is not proposed to take place with reports of honest IM. Indeed, both Roulin et al. (2012) and Levashina et al. (2012) found significant, yet low agreement between self-reports and interviewer perceptions of honest IM ($r's = .14$) in their studies suggesting that interviewers are at least somewhat accurate in detecting the use of honest IM during interviews.

In this study I also expect that Roulin et al.’s (2012) and Levashina et al.’s (2012) results with respect to the influence of interviewer-perceived honest and deceptive IM on interview performance will be replicated. Namely, interviewer-perceived honest IM was positively correlated with interview performance in both studies ($r's = .68$). These results are not surprising, given that applicants are expected to promote themselves during an interview. However, interviewers who perceive that an applicant is using deceptive IM tactics most likely attribute negative characteristics to the interviewee such as arrogance and lack of skills and experience (Turnley & Bolino, 2001; Roulin et al., 2012). The interviewer could also be concerned about hiring a person that would engage in deceitful behaviour at work. This rationale explains why Roulin et al. (2012) also found that interviewer-perceived slight image creation negatively predicted interview performance ($\beta = -.21$). These findings led to the following hypotheses:

H7a: Interviewer-perceived honest IM will positively predict interview performance.

H7b: Interviewer perceived deceptive IM will negatively predict interview performance.

Summary
The purpose of this study was to examine a number of hypotheses with regards to the role of social skill and IM in interviews. First, IM was examined as hypothesized predictor of interview performance. Second, it was expected that IM would act as a suppressor of the relationship between interview performance and a criterion measure of performance. Third, the convergence between self-reported and observer-coded IM was investigated. Fourth, social skill was hypothesized to positively predict interview performance. Fifth, competing hypotheses regarding the possible antecedent or moderating role that social skill plays with IM in its prediction of interview performance was tested. Finally, the role of social skill in the convergence of self-reports and interviewer perceptions of deceptive IM, and the prediction of interview performance by interviewer’s perceptions of IM was also examined. These hypotheses were tested with students participating in a mock interview scenario.

Methodology

Participants

A total of 119 participants were recruited for this study. Ten participants were removed from the sample due to their response of “strongly disagree” or disagree” to the post-interview filter question, “I took the mock interview as seriously as I would normally take a real interview”. After removing these participants, the average response for this question was 4.27 on a scale from 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The final sample consisted of 110 participants (32 male, 77 female), with a mean age of 19.8. Seventy-seven (70%) of the participants were of European/Canadian descent. Their average year of study was 2.3 years, with 45.5% of the participants indicating that they were psychology majors. Participants had participated in an average of 4.5 interviews before the study, with the number of interviews ranging from 0-20. When responding to the question, “I experienced a high degree of
apprehension and nervousness in the mock interview”, participants reported an average of 3.26 with answers ranging from 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). This level of anxiety suggests that participants took the mock interviews seriously, supporting the generalizability of the results of this study to real employment interview situations from the interviewees’ perspective (Marcus, 2009).

Participants for this study were recruited from two sources. Forty-five participants were from an upper-year human resources management course, who as part of the course were required to complete a mock employment interview. The mock interview was videotaped and students chose a partner from the class to view their interview and provide written feedback. The students had the option to participate in this study in conjunction with their assignment. The remaining 64 students were recruited from the first year psychology student participant pool. Participants were told that they would be asked to participate in a mock employment interview, and would be given written feedback on their performance in the interview for developmental purposes if requested.

For their participation, those in the upper-year human resources management class were given a $10 gift certificate while those from the first year student pool were given one research participation credit. In addition, three $50 gift certificates were awarded to those who achieved the highest interview performance ratings. The cash incentive for high performance was meant to increase the motivation of the participants to do well in the interview, and is a tactic that has been used to increase motivation in past selection research (Marcus, 2009; Van Iddekinge et al., 2007). The developmental focus of the interviews was also meant to increase the motivation of participants to perform well.

**Job Posting and Organizational Description**
Before coming in to the lab for the interview session, participants were given a job posting and a description of a mock organization that the mock interview was directed towards (see Appendix A). Participants in the upper-year course sample were given the posting and description as part of their assignment handout, while participants from the first year psychology pool were emailed this information once they signed up for the study (94% of the first year students indicated that they read the job posting before the interview). The posting and description were provided to increase the realism of the mock interview and to provide context for the interview questions and responses. Providing this information before attending the interview allowed participants to spend as much or as little time as they desired to learn about the job and the organization and to prepare for the interview. The job posting was for a summer job as an administrative assistant, which is a job that the students would likely qualify for and potentially be interested in.

**Pre-Interview Measures for Participants**

**Social Skills Inventory.** To begin the study session, participants were given a pre-interview questionnaire. The Social Expressivity (SE), Social Sensitivity (SS), and Social Control (SC) subscales of the Social Skills Inventory (Riggio & Carney, 2003; see Appendix B) were administered to measure their self-reported social skill. These specific subscales were chosen because they were largely developed to assess verbal behaviours, whereas the Emotional Sensitivity, Emotional Expressivity, and Emotional Control subscales are directed towards non-verbal behaviours (Riggio, 1986). The three subscales consist of 15 questions each. An example item from the SE subscale is, “When at parties I enjoy speaking to a great number of different people”, from the SS subscale is, “I am greatly influenced by the moods of those around me”, and from the SC subscale is, “I find it very easy to play different roles at different times.” The
items in the SSI are answered on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all like me* to 5 = *exactly like me*).

The overall internal consistency reliability of the scale in the current study was high at $\alpha = .84$, and was also acceptable for the subscales ($\alpha_{SS} = .80$, $\alpha_{SE} = .90$, $\alpha_{SC} = .80$).

**Political Skill Inventory.** The Political Skill Inventory (PSI; Ferris et al., 2005; see Appendix C) was also administered as a measure of political skill. The Networking Ability subscale of the PSI was not included, as this subscale was deemed irrelevant given its focus on behaviour at a current workplace. With the removal of the Networking Ability subscale the PSI consists of 12 items. An example item is, “It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people.” The responses to the items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). The reliability of the PSI was acceptable ($\alpha = .79$).

Next, the participants were asked to provide the email address and name of a friend or partner (referred to as acquaintance) that they have known for at least 2 months who would potentially be willing to provide an informant-report of the participant’s social skills. An informant-report of social skill was necessary given that self-reports of individual characteristics can often suffer from self-serving biases.

**Informant Measure of Social Skill**

Acquaintances who were identified by the participants were contacted and given an incentive of being entered in a draw with a 1/25 chance of winning a $50 gift certificate to participate. The same 3 subscales of the Social Skills Inventory (Riggio, 1986) and the same 12 items of the Political Skill Inventory (Ferris et al., 2005) provided to participants were administered to the acquaintances, with the questions reworded as an informant-report. An example, a reworded item from the PSI was, “My friend/partner is good at getting people to like
him/her.” The reliabilities for informant-reported verbal social skill ($\alpha = .90$) and political skill ($\alpha = .94$) were high.

Of the 86 acquaintances contacted, usable informant-reports were collected from 32. The majority of acquaintances were friends of the participant. The mean length of their acquaintanceship was 47.5 months (4 years). Self-informant agreement for the SSI was .72 ($p<.001, N = 27$) and for the PSI was .30 ($p=.091, N = 32$). These self-informant correlations are consistent with the amount of agreement that is observed in the measurement of individual differences (Connolly, Kavanagh, & Viswesvaran, 2007), providing evidence for the validity of self-reported verbal social and political skill.

**Interview Procedure**

After completing the pre-interview questionnaire, participants participated in their mock interview. Four management consultants conducted the interviews in a lab setting. I conducted a 1.5 hour training session for the interviewers on how to videotape the interviews, conduct the interviews, assess candidates’ answers, and fill out a post-interview questionnaire. They were instructed to remain as neutral as possible during the interview so that interviewer reactions were as consistent as possible across interviewees. In addition, the interviewers were instructed to use minimal probing during the interview. Specifically, they could repeat the question if necessary and say “anything else?” if answers were abrupt. This procedure is similar to past studies of impression management in employment interviews (e.g., Ellis et al., 2002, Peeters & Lievens, 2006). The questions were constructed with explicit instructions on how to answer the question properly (i.e., “Explain the situation, what you did, and the outcome”) so that a lack of probing did not mean that participants were not aware of what information they were meant to provide. The interviewers were kept blind with regards to the hypotheses of the study.
At the beginning of the interview, interviewers read a summary describing the format and purpose of the interview. Each interview consisted of three BDI and three SI questions, one of each type that assessed a competency related to the position of an administrative assistant (i.e., communication skills, flexibility, and organizational skills; see Appendix D). These competencies were also chosen as they are relevant to being successful as an undergraduate student, and therefore interview questions that target these competencies should predict students’ GPAs. To ensure that each pair of BDI and SI questions was assessing the same competency, three experienced consultants were consulted when creating the interview questions.

Interviewers took notes during the interview and scored the responses for each question on a Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS) that ranged from 1-5. Therefore, with 6 questions, the interviewees’ interview performance rating was a score out of 30.

Post-Interview Measures for Participants

Following the interview, the participants were given a post-interview questionnaire. They completed questions asking about their use of honest and deceptive IM during the interview.

Measure of Honest IM. Self-reported honest IM was rated using an 11-item scale targeted towards self-focused, other-focused, and defensive tactics (see Appendix E). Items for the 5-item self-focused tactics scale and the 3-item other-focused tactics scale were adapted from past research measuring self-reported IM (Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Tsai et al., 2005). An example item for self-focused tactics is, “I demonstrated my knowledge and expertise” and for other-focused tactics is, “I discussed non-job-related topics with the interviewer.” All honest and deceptive IM questions were answered on a 5-point scale (1 = to no extent to 5 = to a very great extent). Cronbach’s α for the self-focused tactics scale was .84, and for the other-focused tactics scale was .76. Because no self-report scale of defensive tactics has been developed, three items
were created for this purpose. The items were based on the behavioural coding scheme for
defensive IM, with each item targeted towards a defensive tactic (i.e., excuses, justifications,
apologies). The created items were: “I made it clear when I was not responsible for a negative
outcome in my past experience”, “I described how negative events in my past were not as bad as
they seemed”, and “I accepted responsibility for negative events in my past experience.” The
reliability for this scale was α = .68, which is acceptable for newly developed measures
(Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine
the fit of the honest IM factor structure. Honest IM was hypothesized to be a second order factor
consisting of the following first-order factors: self-focused, other-focused, and defensive IM. The
measurement model was specified such that the items for each of the first order factors loaded on
to their respective construct. Model fit was acceptable, chi-square (N = 104, df = 41) = 45.94, p =
.27, CFI = .984, TLI = .979, RMSEA = .034, SRMR = .052 (Bollen, 1989).

**Interview Faking Behaviour Scale.** Deceptive IM was rated using 14 items from the Interview
Faking Behaviour Scale (IFBS; Levashina & Campion, 2007; see Appendix F), which consisted
of 4 items for slight image creation (α = .82), 4 items for extensive image creation (α = .73), 3
items for image protection (α = .73), and 3 items for ingratiation (α = .81). An example item for
slight image creation is, “I exaggerated my responsibilities on previous jobs”, for extensive
image creation is, “I fabricated examples to show my fit with the organization”, for image
protection is, “I tried to avoid discussing my lack of skills or experiences”, and for deceptive
ingratiation is, “I tried to express the same opinions and attitudes as the interviewer.” This subset
of items from the IFBS was chosen for three reasons. First, previous research used a similar
subset of questions from the IFBS (Roulin et al., 2012). Second, items were chosen that had high
factor loadings in Levashina and Campion’s (2007) validation study and were relevant given the
interview context and questions. Finally, I examined descriptive statistics and performed a CFA on the original 22 items that were given to participants, and removed items with low variability and low loadings on the factors that they were meant to represent. The measurement model whereby the final 14 items loaded on to their intended factors and the four types of deceptive IM loaded on to a second-order deceptive IM factor indicated that the model did not fit the data well, chi-square ($N = 104, df = 73) = 121.28, p < .001, CFI = .854, TLI = .817, RMSEA = .080, SRMR = .058$ (Bollen, 1989). Although the fit of the model was poor, I decided to employ the subscales that were developed by Levashina and Campion (2007) because they have been validated and used in previous research. However, results with respect to deceptive IM should be interpreted with caution.

Finally, after obtaining permission from participants to access their end of semester GPA, this proxy for job performance (refer to hypothesis 3) was collected for 62 participants. After completing the post-interview questionnaire, the participants were debriefed by the research assistant and compensated for their time.

**Post-Interview Measures for Interviewers**

The interviewers completed a post-interview questionnaire after each interview. After rating the interviewee’s interview performance, they indicated their perception of the interviewee’s use of honest and deceptive IM. The same questions were used as described for the participants, but reworded as an informant-report. For example, a question was, “The applicant demonstrated their knowledge and expertise.”

**Behavioural Coding by Trained Observers**

Videotaped interviews were coded for the use of verbal impression management. Coding procedures were adapted from past research (e.g., Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Ellis et al., 2002;
Peeters & Lievens, 2006). Five undergraduate student Research Assistants (RAs) participating in a research course were trained as coders. To ensure that visual information from the interviews did not affect the coding of verbal tactics, coding was done with the RAs listening to solely the audio portion of the interviews. The frequency of the use of specific verbal tactics were coded and then collapsed within the larger category that they belonged to. Specifically, self-promotion tactics consisted of specific self-promoting utterances, entitlements, enhancements, and overcoming obstacles. Ingratiation tactics consisted of opinion conformity and other enhancements. Finally, defensive tactics consisted of excuses, justifications, and apologies.

Three coders were assigned to code each video. Where discrepancies arose (which occurred with at least one tactic for 33% of the videos), coders were instructed to re-code those videos with the author having the final say on the use of a tactic when there was still disagreement. A tactic was considered as being exhibited during the interview when at least two coders agreed upon use of the tactic. Agreement was 77% (Cohen’s K = .68) for self-promotion, 88% (K = .76) for ingratiation, and 95% (K = .76) for defensive tactics, which was comparable to past studies that coded for the use of IM during interviews (e.g., Van Iddekinge, McFarland, & Raymark, 2007).

Results

Table 3 provides descriptive statistics and the inter-item correlations between the main study variables. When examining self-reported use of IM, all interviewees reported using self-promotion, 82% used other-focused tactics, 83% used defensive tactics, 94% used slight image creation, 60% used extensive image creation, 69% used image protection, and 34% used deceptive ingratiation. The distributions of scores for self-rated, interviewer-rated, and observer-rated IM were positively skewed because many of the specific IM tactics that comprise each type
of IM are used in low frequencies. As a result, the decision was made to run all regression analyses using the Maximum Likelihood Robust (MLR) estimation within Mplus version 5 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012). MLR estimation takes in to account the non-normality of the data when estimating the standard errors (Field & Smith, 1994). In addition, for the regression analyses that involved self-rated and interviewer-rated IM, honest and deceptive IM subscales were calculated by trichotomizing each item (i.e., 1 and 2 [low frequency] were recoded to 1, 3 [neutral] was recoded to 2, and 4 and 5 [high frequency] were recoded to 3) then summing the items for each subscale.

An additional concern was the nested nature of the data (i.e., interviewers interviewed multiple participants). Intraclass correlations (ICC’s) were computed to examine the extent to which variance in the interviewer-rated variables was attributable to interviewer effects. Examination of the ICC’s for interview performance (ICC = .80) and interviewer-perceived IM (ICC’s ranged from .03-.10) revealed that a substantial amount of variation in interview performance was due to interviewer effects. Therefore, interviewer was included as a cluster variable, using the complex sampling option Type = Complex in Mplus, in all regression analyses. This option was chosen so that standard errors and confidence intervals would be estimated with the dependency on interviewer assignment taken into account (Asparouhov, 2005). Given that the study participants came from two distinct sources (i.e., upper-year human resources management students and first year psychology students), the ICC values were also examined to ensure that participant responses were independent of their cluster. The ICC values (.00 for interview performance, .00-.04 for self-reported IM tactic use) confirmed that clustering did not need to be accounted for across the groups. Therefore the two groups were merged in all of the study analyses. However, I also included sample as a control variable in all regression
analyses as it was a significant predictor of interview performance. In addition, similar to past IM studies (e.g., Roulin et al., 2012), age and interview experience were introduced as control variables as individuals with more experience to draw upon should perform better on the interview. The effect of IM use on interview performance should be present regardless of how much interview and work experience interviewees have.

The Prediction of Interview Performance by IM

Hypotheses 1a-c made the prediction that self-reported honest IM, self-reported deceptive IM, and observer-coded verbal IM would predict interview performance (see Table 4 for a summary of study results). Two multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine these hypotheses. First, self-reported honest and deceptive IM were entered as predictors to examine the effect of self-reported IM on interview performance (see Table 5). Deceptive ingratiation was not entered as a predictor as it highly correlated with other-focused IM ($r = .85$), indicating a potential lack of discriminant validity between the two constructs. Hypothesis 1a was partially supported, as self-focused IM significantly positively predicted interview performance ($\beta = .50, p<.001$). However, other-focused IM was a non-significant predictor, and defensive IM actually negatively predicted interview performance ($\beta = -.27, p<.001$). Hypothesis 1b, which concerned deceptive IM, was not supported as none of the self-reported deceptive IM tactics were significant predictors of interview performance.

A second regression analysis was done to test if observer-coded IM predicted interview performance. Observer-ratings and self-ratings are two methods that are meant to measure the same construct, therefore the decision was made to run a regression with observer-coded IM predicting interview performance that was separate from self-rated IM predicting performance. Hypothesis 1c was partially supported, as both self-promotion ($\beta = .21, p<.01$) and ingratiation
(β = .18, p=.016) significantly positively predicted interview performance (see Table 6).

Defensive IM was a non-significant predictor of interview performance, although the regression coefficient approached significance (β = -.31, 95% CI [-.64, .01], p=.056), albeit in the opposite direction than was hypothesized.

**IM as a Suppressor of the Interview Performance – Criterion Relation**

The prediction was made that IM would be a suppressor of the relation between interview performance and a criterion measure of performance (i.e., GPA). To examine this hypothesis, I performed a series of regression analyses (see Table 7). In the first model, GPA was regressed only on interview performance. Interview performance was a significant positive predictor of GPA (β = .25, p=.039), which was expected given that the interview was designed to target competencies that were related to performance in school. Next, I tested a second model in which self-reported IM (honest and deceptive) was entered into the regression. When controlling for IM, interview performance was a slightly stronger predictor of GPA (β = .27, p=.044). Using Steiger’s (1980) method for calculating the difference between two dependent correlation coefficients, I found that the regression coefficient was not significantly different from the first model (p = .87). In addition, a third model was tested in which observer-coded IM (and not self-reported IM) was entered into the regression. Once again, when controlling for IM, interview performance was a slightly stronger predictor of GPA (β = .32, p=.015), but the regression coefficient was not significantly different from the first model (p = .59). Therefore, hypotheses 2a-c were not supported.

**Convergence Between Self-Rated and Observer-Coded IM**

To examine the convergence between self-reported IM and observer-coded IM, correlations were computed between the three types of observer-coded IM (i.e., self-promotion,
ingratiation, and defensive) and the self-reported honest and deceptive IM tactics that would logically relate to the coded tactics. Unlike the simple correlations reported in Table 3, analyses were done with MLR estimation and the items for each subscale were trichotomized and summed because of the skewed nature of the data (as described above).

**Self-promotion.** The first type of observer-coded IM, self-promotion, was correlated with self-reported honest self-focused IM and deceptive slight and extensive image creation as these tactics are types of self-promotion during the interview. The analyses revealed that observer-coded self-promotion was positively significantly related with self-reported self-focused IM ($r = .25$, $p=.011$), but not significantly related to self-reported slight image creation ($r = -.16$, $p = .24$) or extensive image creation ($r = .03$, $p = .76$).

**Ingratiation.** Self-reported honest other-focused IM and deceptive ingratiation were examined as correlates of observer-coded ingratiation because these types of IM are all meant to promote interpersonal liking and attraction between the interviewee and interviewer. Observer-coded ingratiation had a non-significant relation with self-reported other-focused IM ($r = -.09$, $p = .29$), and surprisingly had a negative relation with self-reported deceptive ingratiation ($r = -.19$, $p=.039$).

**Defensive IM.** The final observer-coded IM tactic, defensive IM, was correlated with self-reported honest defensive IM and deceptive image protection. The use of these tactics is meant to protect oneself from a negative image during the interview. Observer-coded defensive IM was not related to self-reported defensive IM ($r = -.02$, $p = .84$) or image protection ($r = .02$, $p = .61$).

To summarize, Hypothesis 3a, that there would be convergence between self-rated honest IM and observer-coded IM, was only supported for self-reported self-focused IM and observer-coded self-promotion. In addition, Hypothesis 3b was not supported, as self-rated deceptive IM
was not positively related to observer-coded IM. In fact, the only significant relation was between self-reported other-focused IM and observer-coded ingratiation, and these variables were negatively related.

**The Prediction of Interview Performance by Social Skill**

Hypothesis 4 made the prediction that both verbal social skill and political skill would positively predict interview performance. Only self-reported verbal social skill and political skill were used to test this hypothesis because there were not enough informants to have adequate power to test these hypotheses with informant-rated data. As mentioned above, the self-informant correlations for verbal social skill and political skill were high, which justifies using self-reported social skill for hypothesis testing. The analyses revealed that verbal social skill was a significant positive predictor of interview performance (β = .30, p < .001; see Table 8). Follow-up analyses revealed that the social expressivity subscale of verbal social skill was the only significant predictor of interview performance (β = .25, p < .001) when separate regressions were done for each subscale. Therefore, social expressivity, and not social control or social sensitivity, seems to be the main factor contributing to the relation between verbal social skill and interview performance. In addition, a separate regression revealed that political skill was a non-significant predictor of interview performance (β = .12, p = .511; see Table 9). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported, as verbal social skill was a significant positive predictor of interview performance, whereas political skill was non-significant predictor of interview performance.

**Testing the Antecedent and Moderator Models**

IM research supports the assertion that there are two possible models of the role that social skill plays in relation to the use of IM during the interview: an antecedent and a moderator model. These models were tested with both verbal social skill and political skill as indicators of
social skill, and with self-reported and observer-coded IM as indicators of IM. Verbal social skill, political skill, and interview performance were entered as observed variables with error terms that corrected for unreliability in the measures. For self-reported IM, a latent variable was created for each type of IM using the items from the subscale (e.g., the shared variance of the 5 self-focused tactic items represented self-focused IM). Observer-coded IM was a single-item indicator because it was a frequency measure of the number of tactics used. Interviewer-rated IM was not used as an indicator of IM when testing these models because this type of measurement represents perceptions of the use of IM during interviews that have questionable accuracy. In contrast, self-rated and observer-coded IM are considered more accurate representations of the use of IM during an interview.

**Antecedent Model.** The antecedent model was tested by specifying a path model whereby interview performance was regressed on IM, while IM was regressed on social skill. The indirect effect of social skill on interview performance, acting through IM, was then estimated. To assess the indirect effect, bootstrapped confidence intervals (with 500 bootstraps) were also estimated as per MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, and Sheets’ (2002) recommendation. This model was tested only for self-reported self-focused and defensive IM, and observer-coded self-promotion and ingratiation, because these were the only IM tactics that were significant predictors of interview performance. Verbal social skill was also the only indicator of social skill used to test these models because it was a significant predictor of interview performance, whereas political skill was not.

The analyses revealed that there was a non-significant indirect effect of verbal social skill through self-reported self-focused and defensive IM. For observer-coded IM, self-promotion partially mediated the effect of verbal social skill on interview performance ($\beta_{\text{indirect}} = .064$ [95%
CI = .003 [.124], \( p = .034 \); see Figure 4). Ingratiation was a non-significant mediator of social skill on interview performance. Overall, these findings suggest that the antecedent model with partial mediation applies to self-promotion during interviews, but not to the other types of IM.

**Moderator Model.** The moderator model was tested using latent moderated structural equations approach (LMS; Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000). For self-reported IM, both verbal social skill and political skill did not moderate the effect of any of the honest IM tactics (i.e., self-focused, other-focused, and defensive) on interview performance. However, there was evidence of moderation for some of the deceptive IM tactics. First, the interaction term for slight image creation and verbal social skill was marginally significant in its prediction of interview performance (\( B = 3.970, \ p = .094 \)). This interaction was further explored just with social expressivity, which was the only subscale of verbal social skill that positively predicted interview performance. There was evidence of an interaction between slight image creation and social expressivity (\( B = 2.261, \ p = .048 \); see Figure 5). Exploration of this interaction revealed that interviewees who were higher in social expressivity were more effective at using slight image creation to positively influence their interview performance compared to interviewees low in social expressivity. Essentially, slight image creation was most effective at influencing interview performance when interviewees were socially expressive. Slight image creation did not significantly interact with political skill.

There was also support for the moderator model with extensive image creation, as verbal social skill, but not political skill, moderated the effect of extensive image creation on interview performance (\( B = 3.925, \ p < .001 \); see Figure 6). Examination of the simple slopes revealed that when interviewees were high in verbal social skill, their use of extensive image creation positively influenced interview performance, but when interviewees were low in verbal social skill, their use of extensive image creation had no effect on interview performance. Therefore,
similar to slight image creation, extensive image creation was most effective at influencing interview performance for individuals with high verbal social skill.

When examining image protection, the interaction between this type of deceptive IM and verbal social skill approached significance (B = 16.258, \( p = .093 \)), but further exploration did not reveal a significant interaction with the social expressivity subscale of verbal social skill. However, image protection did significantly interact with political skill (B = 6.697, \( p = .046 \); see Figure 7) such that when interviewees were high in political skill, their use of image protection had a more positive effect on interview performance than when participants were low in political skill. These results mirror the pattern found with slight and extensive image creation, as image protection was most predictive of interview performance when interviewees were politically skilled. There was no evidence that deceptive ingratiation interacted with either verbal social skill or political skill.

When examining observer-coded IM, verbal social skill and political skill did not moderate the influence of self-promotion, ingratiation, or defensive IM on interview performance. The only finding of note in this analysis was that the interaction between ingratiation and political skill approached significance (B = -1.618, \( p = .058 \)). As a whole, the results of the moderator analyses suggest that social skill is not a moderator of the effect of self-reported honest IM and observer-coded IM on interview performance. However, social skill has a moderating effect on some of the deceptive IM tactics. In particular, social expressivity interacts with slight image creation, verbal social skill interacts with extensive image creation, and political skill interacts with image protection to predict interview performance. The pattern of results with all of these interactions supports the hypothesis that socially skilled applicants are
more adept than individuals low in social skill at using deceptive IM to positively influence their interview performance.

**Social Skill as a Moderator of Agreement Between Self and Interviewer Ratings of IM**

Hypothesis 6 made the prediction that social skill would moderate the agreement between interviewer perceptions and interviewee reports of deceptive IM, such that agreement would be lower when social skill is high. First, correlations between self- and interviewer-ratings of IM were computed using MLR estimation to examine the amount of agreement. Consistent with past studies that had interviewers rate their perceptions of IM during the interview (e.g., Roulin et al., 2012), self- and interviewer-ratings of self-focused IM were significantly correlated ($r = .32$, $p<.01$; see Table 10). Interestingly, the self-interviewer correlation for defensive IM was significantly negative ($r = -.20$, $p<.01$). The correlations between self- and interviewer-ratings for other-focused IM, and all of the deceptive IM tactics except for deceptive ingratiating ($r = .29$, $p<.05$), were non-significant. Thus, interviewer perceptions of deceptive IM, with the exception of deceptive ingratiating, appear to be inaccurate. Second, social skill was tested as a potential factor that influences the inaccuracy of interviewer-ratings of deceptive IM. A regression was conducted where I entered centred social skill and centred self-ratings of deceptive IM as predictors of interviewer-ratings of deceptive IM. Next, I added the product term of centred social skill and centred self-ratings of deceptive IM in to the regression to represent the interaction term. There was no support for this Hypothesis 6, as both verbal social skill and political skill did not moderate the amount of agreement between self-ratings and interviewer-ratings of each of the types of deceptive IM.

**Interviewer-Rated IM and Interview Performance**

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Finally, Hypothesis 7 proposed that a) interviewer-perceived honest IM would positively predict, and b) interviewer-perceived deceptive IM would negatively predict interview performance. The results of a multiple regression revealed that as expected, interviewer-perceived self-focused IM ($\beta = .56$, $p < .001$) and defensive IM ($\beta = .15$, $p < .01$) positively predicted interview performance (see Table 11). However, Hypothesis 7a was only partially supported as interviewer-rated other-focused IM was not a significant predictor of interview performance. In addition, Hypothesis 7b was not supported as none of the interviewer-perceived deceptive IM tactics were significantly related to interview performance.

**Discussion**

The results of this study present a number of interesting findings that replicate and extend past research on IM in employment interviews. First, I will discuss findings that support past research regarding the prediction of interview performance by IM and social skill. Second, the examination of IM as a source of error in ratings of interview performance will be discussed. Third, this study’s novel examination of social skill as a factor that acts as an antecedent and a moderator of the effect of IM on interview performance will be reviewed. Finally, I will discuss findings surrounding the convergence between self-reported and both observer-coded and interviewer-rated IM and the implications that these findings have for future IM research.

**IM and Social Skill as Predictors of Interview Performance**

In concordance with past research, I found that self-reported self-focused IM and observer-coded self-promotion and ingratiation positively predicted interview performance. Self-rated other-focused IM was a non-significant predictor of interview performance. Perhaps interviewees’ use of other-focused IM was not as effective as would be expected because they were completing mock interviews rather than participating in a high-stakes situation.
Nonetheless, the positive prediction of interview performance by observer-coded ingratiation shows that at least to some extent, depending on the method of measurement, IM that is focused towards the interviewer did have a positive effect on performance. Contrary to prediction, self-rated defensive IM actually negatively predicted, and observer-coded defensive IM was a marginally significant negative predictor of interview performance. In retrospect this finding is not surprising, given that honest IM in general tends to be a positive predictor of interview performance, but there have been mixed findings with regards to defensive IM and it’s relation with interview performance (Van Iddekinge et al., 2007; Peeters & Lievens, 2006). It seems that in this study, individuals who brought up negative events during their interviews, even when they attempted to repair their image with defensive tactics, did not succeed in doing so and actually hindered their interview performance by discussing them.

I also found that self-reported deceptive IM was a non-significant predictor of interview performance. Although it was expected that deceptive IM would positively predict interview performance in line with Levashina and Campion’s (2007) finding, recent research has found conflicting results (Roulin et al., 2012; Swider et al., 2011; Levashina et al., 2012) suggesting that the relation between deceptive IM and performance is not clear. Interviewees who attempt to create a fraudulent image of themselves during the interview do not necessarily perform better; rather, honest IM tactics seem to produce the most favorable results. However, there are contingencies to the relation between deceptive IM and interview performance, to be discussed in the section below focused on social skill as a moderator of the IM – interview performance relation.

In addition to the findings in relation to self-reported and observer-coded IM, the analyses revealed that interviewer-rated self-focused and defensive IM were positive predictors
of interview performance. This finding supports past research that found that interviewer-rated self-promotion positively predicted interview performance (Roulin et al., 2012). However, interviewer-perceived defensive IM has not been examined in the IM literature. The finding that interviewer perceptions of defensive IM positively predicted interview performance is particularly interesting considering that self-reported defensive IM negatively predicted interview performance. Therefore, it seems that if interviewers perceive that an interviewee is repairing their image after describing a negative event, that it has positive consequences for the applicant. In contrast, self-perceptions of defensive IM may capture attempts to repair one’s image, but not necessarily attempts that are picked up by the interviewer and result in a successful interview performance rating.

The results of this study also revealed that interviewer-rated deceptive IM was a non-significant predictor of interview performance. This finding is surprising, given that the negative attributions that an interviewer would likely make about an interviewee who they believe is lying should make the interviewer less willing to hire the applicant. However, recent research has found conflicting results. Specifically, as hypothesized interviewer-perceived deceptive IM has negatively predicted interview performance (Roulin et al., 2012), but has also been found to have no effect on interview performance (Levashina et al., 2012). Similar to Roulin et al.’s (2012) and Levashina et al.’s (2012) findings, in this study interviewers underestimated the amount that interviewees used deceptive IM (i.e., interviewer-ratings of deceptive IM ranged from 1.03–1.29 and self-ratings ranged from 1.39-1.94 on a scale from 1-5). If interviewers don’t believe that interviewees are using high amounts of deceptive IM, then it is reasonable that they would not form negative perceptions of the applicants that would have a negative impact on interview performance ratings.
The other main construct that was examined as a predictor of interview performance in this study was social skill. As expected, verbal social skill was a significant positive predictor of interview performance. Verbal social skill is conceptually closely related to the overall construct of social skill, which has been found to predict interview performance in the past (Robertson & Smith, 2001). However, political skill is a more specific type of social skill. Although it was hypothesized that the characteristics of a politically skilled individual, namely being socially astute, self-confident, and appearing sincere and trustworthy, would lead to higher interview performance ratings, this was not the case. Perhaps the most important aspect of social skill that interviewers look for in an applicant is the ability to express themselves in an engaging and expressive manner. This may tap more in to the general communication and interpersonal skills that are valued by an employer and often targeted in employment interviews (Huffcutt et al., 2001).

**IM as a Source of Error in Interview Performance Judgments**

This study made the first direct attempt to demonstrate that IM can be a source of error in judgments of interview performance. Barrick et al. (2009) found that IM more positively predicted interview performance than it did supervisor ratings of job performance, which is preliminary evidence to suggest that IM is a source of error in interviewer judgments. However, it is possible that IM is not a significant predictor of job performance because of the nature of these ratings. Specifically, job performance measures are broadly conceptualized and could be influenced by many factors, whereas interview performance ratings should only be influenced by factors specific to the interview situation, such as IM.

The methodology in this study provided a more direct test of IM as a potential source of error by analyzing whether IM was a suppressor of the relation between interview performance...
and a criterion measure of performance (i.e., GPA). There was no evidence of a suppressor effect in this study, and this could be due to two possibilities. First, it is possible that IM is not a source of error in interviewer judgments, and actually has a positive influence on the validity of selection decisions. Kleinmann and Klehe (2011) found that self-promotion contributed to the criterion-related validity of mock interviews in their prediction of proxy measures of job performance. Specifically, they found that observer-ratings of self-promotion accounted for the positive prediction of proxy criteria by interview scores. However, Kleinmann and Klehe’s (2011) study did not include measures of deceptive IM. Consequently, it is unclear whether it is only honest IM that contributes to the criterion-related validity of interview judgments. Further, deceptive IM may have the opposite effect, namely, reducing the predictive validity of the interview. Second, it is possible that IM does act as a source of error in interviewer judgments, but the current study did not allow for the ideal test of this hypothesis. Unfortunately I was only able to obtain GPA as a performance measure, and it was also only available from 62 participants. Perhaps if this hypothesis were to be tested with a more ecologically valid criterion measure with more participants, significant results may be obtained. Future research needs to explore this possibility.

**Convergence Between Self-Ratings of IM and Observer- and Interviewer-Ratings of IM**

Another contribution of this study was to examine how self-ratings of IM during the interview converge with observer-coded and interviewer-rated IM. Convergence with observer-coded IM is important from a methodological standpoint, whereas convergence with interviewer-ratings provides insight in to the dyadic process of managing impressions that emerges in the interview. Findings and implications for both investigations will be discussed in turn.
Convergence with observer-coded IM. IM researchers employ either self-ratings of IM or observer-coded IM to investigate how the use of IM during the interview influences outcomes such as interview performance. Interestingly, Stevens and Kristof (1995) are the only researchers who have examined the convergence between these ratings, and even with limited evidence of agreement, IM researchers have used both methods interchangeably seemingly without regard for the impact that this may have on study findings. The current study found that the only observer-coded IM tactic to significantly positively correlate with self-ratings of IM was self-promotion with self-focused IM ($r = .25$). This is concerning, as observer-coded and self-rated ingratiation and defensive IM share negligible variance, even though they are supposed to measure the same thing. Even observer-coded and self-ratings of self-promotion only share approximately 6% variance, which is also problematic given that they are meant to measure the same construct. As Stevens and Kristof (1995) have noted, observer-coded IM may be capturing IM tactic use at the basic level, whereas self-reported IM may be assessing IM use that is more subtle and not easily captured by an objective coding scheme.

An implication of the lack of convergence between methods is that researchers need to be cognizant that study findings may differ when IM is measured via self-report versus behavioural coding. Moving forward, perhaps coding schemes should be revised to more closely fit with self-reports of IM, or items that capture honest IM should be revised to more closely relate to observer-coded tactics. For example, the established coding manual for IM defines ingratiation as being “used when an individual expresses opinions, beliefs, or values that may reasonably be assumed to be held by the interviewer or if the interviewee described experiences likely to be similar to those of the interviewers” (Ellis et al., 2002). However, a commonly-used self-report item to measure ingratiation is “I discussed non-job-related topics with the interviewer”, which
also captures conversations that are unrelated to values held by or experiences that are similar to those of the interviewer. In this case, a closer parallel between items measuring self-rated ingratiation and the definition of ingratiation in the IM coding scheme is needed. Clearly, a close review and revision of how researchers are measuring IM needs to be a priority.

The current study also provided a novel investigation of the convergence between self-rated deceptive IM and observer-coded IM. Although IM coding schemes were not specifically designed to measure deceptive IM, it is possible that observer-coded IM is capturing some deceptive IM because objectively, a coder cannot identify if a tactic that is displayed is genuine or not. However, I found that observer-coded self-promotion was non-significantly related to self-reported slight image and extensive image creation (i.e., deceptive tactics directed towards self-promotion) and that observer-coded defensive IM was non-significantly related to self-reported image protection (i.e., the deceptive IM tactic directed towards protecting oneself from a negative image). Surprisingly, observer-coded ingratiation was negatively related to self-rated deceptive ingratiation. These findings have a few implications. First, it appears that at least for self-promotion and defensive IM, that current coding techniques are not capturing the use of IM. It may be interesting to investigate whether coding schemes can be developed that capture some aspects of deceptive IM, perhaps through the use of non-verbal cues (e.g., DePaulo et al., 2003). Second, it is possible that observer-coded ingratiation is capturing blatant ingratiation use, whereas self-reported deceptive ingratiation is capturing more covert forms of ingratiation that are meant to be less obvious. Further research should aim to replicate this finding and explore how interviewees use deceptive ingratiatory strategies.

**Convergence with interviewer-ratings of IM.** Another aim of this study was to extend previous research that has examined convergence between self- and interviewer-ratings of IM during the
interview (e.g., Roulin et al., 2012). First, correlations between self- and interviewer-ratings of IM were examined, then social skill was tested as a moderator of the amount of agreement between both ratings. Consistent with past research, self-interviewer correlations were significantly positive for honest self-focused IM ($r = .32$). A novel finding in the current study was that self- and interviewer-ratings of defensive IM were negatively correlated ($r = -.20$), suggesting that interviewers were inaccurate in their perceptions of defensive IM. Interviewees may have even overestimated their use of defensive IM. This difference in perception could have contributed to the finding that interviewer-perceptions of defensive IM positively predicted, whereas self-ratings of defensive IM negatively predicted interview performance. Finally, interviewers were able to detect deceptive ingratiation ($r = .29$), but were inaccurate in their perceptions of all other types of deceptive IM. It is unclear why deceptive ingratiation was an exception, other than perhaps deceptive ingratiation was used so infrequently (self-rated $M = 1.39$) that when it was used, it was salient to the interviewers. Although it was hypothesized that one of the reasons for the inability of interviewers to identify the use of other types of deceptive IM during the interview was the social skill of the applicant, this was not the case. Specifically, there was no evidence that there was lower convergence between self- and interviewer-ratings of deceptive IM for applicants who were socially skilled.

There are a few potential explanations for the resultant null-finding. First, perhaps the ease of detecting deception during the interview, rather than being due to a characteristic of the interviewee, is actually more reliant on the skill of the interviewer. Although interviewing experience, age, and education of the interviewer have not been found to predict deceptive IM detection ability (Roulin, Levashina, & Bangerter, 2012), perhaps individual differences such as emotional intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) or specialized training such as detection of
microexpressions (Ekman, 2009) assist interviewers in being able to accurately rate deceptive IM. Because there were only four interviewers in this study, it was not possible to investigate whether interviewer individual differences influenced accuracy in detecting deceptive IM. A second possibility is that there was not enough variability in interviewer ratings of deceptive IM to allow for a proper test of a moderator effect. Because of the structured nature of the interview, interviewers had to focus on taking notes and making ratings using BARS, which as a task with a high cognitive load likely made it difficult for the interviewers to attend to deception cues in the interview. Perhaps if this study was conducted with an unstructured or semi-structured interview, interviewers would recognize (or believe that they recognized) more cues to deception which would increase the mean level of interviewer-perceived IM and variability in judgments. In this situation, perhaps a moderator effect would be detected.

Social Skill Influencing the Use and Effectiveness of IM in the Interview

The main contribution of this study was the examination of social skill as a potential antecedent and moderator of the use of IM during the interview. Analyses revealed that the effect of verbal social skill on interview performance was partially mediated by observer-coded self-promotion. Given that observer-coded self-promotion seems to capture honest IM more than deceptive IM (as previously discussed), it seems that verbal social skill acts as an antecedent of an honest IM behaviour. It should be noted that self-rated self-focused IM was a non-significant mediator of the relation between verbal social skill and interview performance. Therefore, although analyses with self-reported honest IM do not support the antecedent model, this study provides preliminary evidence to suggest that verbal social skill acts as an antecedent of the use of self-promotion during the interview. In practical terms, individuals who are socially skilled are more likely to use self-promotion during the interview, and their use of self-promotion
partially explains why they tend to obtain better performance ratings. This result is in line with the proposed effect of social skill in models of IM use during the interview (Marcus, 2009; Levashina & Campion, 2006).

In contrast to the antecedent model, the moderator model received support when tested with the effect of deceptive IM on interview performance. The analyses revealed that slight image creation, extensive image creation, and image protection interacted with different aspects of social skill such that the use of deceptive IM more positively influenced interview performance for socially skilled individuals. Upon examination of the specific interactions, the results suggest that deceptive IM tactics that involve stretching the truth or creating lies to self-promote (i.e., slight or extensive image creation) interact with verbal social skill, or more specifically social expressivity, to influence interview performance. Verbal communication skills seem to be important for interviewees who want to deceive the interviewer in their use of self-promotion, which makes sense as it is a task that involves being verbally expressive and assertive during the interview. Image protection, a deceptive IM tactic that involves omitting, masking, or distancing oneself from negative information, interacts with political skill in its prediction of interview performance. Perhaps the appearance of sincerity and social astuteness of politically skilled individuals allows them to seem genuine when they are attempting to cover up negative events that have happened in the past. Thus, even though social skill did not moderate agreement between self-ratings and interviewer perceptions of IM, these findings suggest that being socially skilled does allow interviewees to “fool” interviewers to some extent when they are using deceptive IM.

The results of this study demonstrated that the type of model that describes the effect of social skill on IM during the interview depends on the type of IM that is being investigated. The
antecedent model, as proposed by Marcus (2009) and Levashina and Campion (2006), is applicable to honest self-promotion. From an applicant’s perspective, this finding suggests that interviewees who are socially skilled are aware of their ability to successfully self-promote based on past experiences, and therefore are more likely to use this tactic during the interview. The moderator model, which is supported by studies of the use of IM in the workplace (e.g., Harris et al., 2007; Treadway et al., 2007; Turnley & Bolino, 2001), describes the relationship between social skill and the use of deceptive IM in the interview. Interviewees may use deceptive IM because they believe that it will enhance their interview performance, or perhaps because they feel that it is an activity that is necessitated by the situation. In either scenario, deceptive IM is only effective when the interviewee has the necessary social skills to do it well.

**Limitations & Future Research**

There are a few limitations of this study that should be discussed. First, the interviews were conducted in a lab setting for developmental purposes. It is possible that the results of this study would not generalize to a setting where applicants would be using impression management in a real job interview with greater consequences. However, there are a few reasons to suggest that this is not the case. First, participants were removed from analyses who indicated that they did not take the interview seriously, although it is possible that social desirability could influence participants to indicate that they took the interview more seriously than they actually did. Second, the remaining interviewees reported levels of anxiety that are comparable to what is reported in interviews in real-world settings (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004), which is another indication that the interviewees tried hard to do well in the interview. However, it should be noted that anxiety in this situation could be more attributable to the social situation, rather than anxiety surrounding the outcome of the interview (i.e., receiving a job offer or not). Whether the
type of anxiety could have an effect on IM during the interview is unclear. Third, the interview situation was designed to be as realistic as possible, with consultants as interviewers, a professional interview setting, and a description of the organization and job provided beforehand. Fourth, interviewees had an incentive to do well during the interview, as they knew that their performance would be evaluated to provide developmental feedback and to award prizes for the top performance scores. Finally, Barrick et al. (2009) demonstrated that the influence of IM on interview performance outcomes is comparable in field ($r = .36$) and laboratory ($r = .30$) settings. This finding suggests that lab settings, with the experimental control that they provide and the ability to videotape the interviews for behavioural coding, can be suitable settings to study IM during the interview. However, future research should attempt to replicate the study findings in a field setting.

A second limitation concerns how social skill and IM were measured. For this study, social skill was collected via self-report and was also restricted to two aspects of social skill, namely verbal social skill and political skill. However, as noted above, the convergence between self- and informant-ratings of social skill were high and comparable to self-informant correlations found in ratings of individual differences (Connolly et al., 2007). Having interviewees complete a behavioural measure of social skill, as suggested by Marcus (2009), would have been cognitively taxing and could have interfered with interview performance. Practically, it also would have been difficult to design a social skill behavioural measure that captures a wide range of social skill competencies without being too time-consuming. Time restrictions also made it necessary to restrict the measurement of social skill to two specific aspects of social skill: verbal social skill and political skill. Although non-verbal social skill may have been an appropriate aspect of social skill to measure, it is likely that verbal social skill has
more of an impact on the verbal behaviours that are captured by the types of IM that were measured in this study. In relation to this point, it would have been possible to measure non-verbal IM in this study. However, an emphasis was placed on measuring IM with both behavioural coding and self-ratings, yet self-rated non-verbal IM has questionable validity (Stevens & Kristof, 1995). Therefore, the decision was made to focus on verbal IM behaviours, and consequently verbal social skills. An interesting avenue of research could be to examine if the results of this study generalize to non-verbal social skill and IM.

A third limitation is that the study was designed so that only one type of interview was administered to all participants. The interview was structured, involved both BDI and SI questions, and had minimal probing from interviewers. It is possible that the results would be different if the interview had an alternate design. For example, unstructured interviews tend to lead to stronger prediction of interview performance by IM (Barrick et al., 2009). Perhaps the antecedent effect of social skill on self-promotion, and the moderating effect of social skill on deceptive IM, would be even more pronounced when the questions are less focused on job-relevant competencies and interviewees are given more freedom to direct the direction of the interview. In addition, interviewers may be less focused on providing structured ratings and more focused on picking up on the IM behaviours of the interviewees. This could have an effect on interviewer perceptions of IM use. It would also be interesting to examine whether the same dynamic between social skill and IM would be found in an interview with just BDI, or just SI questions. A between-subjects design may uncover that social skill has a stronger antecedent or moderating effect on IM with SI questions, which require the creation of novel explanations rather than the recall of past events. Finally, it is possible that because interviewers were instructed to use minimal probing that interviewees provided less detail in their answers than
they would in a typical interview. Consequently, this may have an effect on the use of IM. It should be noted however that Levashina and Campion (2007) found that probing actually increased the amount of deceptive IM during interviews, which suggests that the effects found in this study could be even stronger if probing was encouraged.

The final limitation of this study is that although theory supports the causal path that is implied by the models proposed in this study, the data collected were correlational, which does not allow for a direct test of causation. For example, interviewer-rated IM and interview performance were collected at the same time, so it is possible that interviewer ratings of interview performance had an effect on how much and the type of IM that interviewers believed that the interviewees engaged in. Although this is an important consideration, it was necessary for the purposes of the study to collect interviewer reports of IM and performance directly after the interview to avoid memory decay. In addition, having a different rater provide interview performance ratings or perceptions of IM use from videos of the interview could have been possible. However, it is likely that the experience of perceiving and being influenced by IM, which often involves subtle aspects, would be different from a video compared to in person.

**Practical Implications**

The study findings have implications for the use of interviews for selection in organizations. As found in multiple IM studies (e.g., Ellis et al., 2002), the use of honest impression management does have an impact on interviewer ratings of performance during the interview. This finding is not surprising, as applicants are expected to put their best foot forward during the selection process (Marcus, 2009). In addition, socially skilled individuals are more likely to use self-promotion, and this partially explains why they tend to perform better in the interview. Again, considering that socially skilled workers are often valued by organizations,
especially in positions that require social skills such as a salesperson, this finding presents no issues for human resources professionals. However, interviewers should be aware that socially skilled individuals may be more adept at using deception during the interview. Essentially, some of the information that an interviewer is gathering that is used to make their selection decision may be inaccurate, yet socially skilled applicants can get away with using fraudulent information to obtain a job. Given that deceptive information presented during the interview may lead to erroneous hiring decisions, this is a potential problem for organizations. This problem is compounded by the finding that interviewers are largely unable to accurately pick up on the use of deception during the interview. The results of this study suggest that social skill in itself does not seem to be responsible for the discrepancy between self-ratings and interviewer-perceptions of deceptive IM during the interview. However, factors that influence an interviewer’s ability to detect deception may prove to be a fruitful avenue of research that could benefit interviewing in practice.

**Conclusion**

Researchers have consistently found that the use of IM during the interview has an influence on interviewer evaluations of performance. This finding is often considered in a negative light, with IM presented as a potential source of error in interview performance ratings. However, researchers have noted that further investigation of the supposed negative consequences of IM is needed (Barrick et al., 2009). While the current study did not find evidence to indicate that IM suppresses the relation between interview performance and a criterion measure of performance, findings surrounding the influence of social skill do suggest that IM may act as a source of error. In particular, socially skilled applicants appear to be more adept at deceiving the interviewer with their use of IM to gain higher interview performance
ratings. An implication of this finding is that some individuals may be hired into organizations based on fraudulent information, whereas others with legitimate qualifications, who simply are not socially skilled enough to “fool” the interviewer, are being bypassed. The joint influence of social skill and IM is even more concerning considering that interviewers, for the most part, seem inaccurate in their judgments of interviewees’ deceptive IM use. Therefore, it is unclear at this time exactly how much of a negative impact deceptive IM is having on selection decisions. However, what is clear is that certain applicants are successfully deceiving interviewers without their knowledge, and that interviewing in practice may be suffering as a result.
References


http://search.proquest.com/docview/617686715?accountid=11233


doi:10.1177/014920638901500405

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**Table 1**

*Descriptions of Honest Impression Management Tactics*

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<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assertive tactics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Self-promotion Tactics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Specific self-promoting Utterance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Entitlement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enhancement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overcoming obstacles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ingratiation tactics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opinion conformity</strong></td>
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organizational affiliation. Also, the interviewee may describe experiences that are likely to be similar to those of the interviewer. E.g., “I believe that a healthcare worker should be understanding of the situation of their patients, which is why I always try to ask how they are doing and be sensitive to that.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other enhancements</th>
<th>This tactic involves a favourable evaluation of the interviewer by doing things such as praising or flattering the interviewer in order to bolster the interviewer’s self-esteem (being complimentary to the interviewer or organization). E.g., “I really like your necklace!”, “Your organization is quite impressive”</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Defensive tactics</td>
<td>These tactics are used by the applicant to protect or repair his/her image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excuses</td>
<td>Using this tactic, the interviewee claims that he/she was not responsible for a negative outcome or behaviour. E.g., “The proposal that I worked on was not approved, but it was because there were a lot of procedures that I was supposed to include which I hadn’t been told about.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justifications</td>
<td>This tactic involves accepting responsibility for a negative outcome or event but suggesting that it was not as bad as it seems or denying the negative implications of such responsibility. Sometimes this tactic is used to try to convince the interviewer that he or she would have acted in the same manner. E.g., “I procrastinate sometimes but it doesn’t really matter because in the end I always get my work done on time.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apologies</td>
<td>This tactic involves accepting responsibility for a negative outcome or event and also recognizing the negative implications of such responsibility. It also often implies that the interviewee desires to make restitution to any victims and entails a promise to behave appropriately in the future. E.g., “I showed up half an hour late to work a few weeks ago which wasn’t fair to my co-workers, so I promised that it wouldn’t happen again.”</td>
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*Note: Definitions and examples are adapted from Ellis et al. (2002) and Stevens & Kristof (1995)*

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Table 2

*Descriptions of Deceptive Impression Management Tactics*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Slight image creation</td>
<td>Faking in order to make the image of a good candidate for the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embellishing</td>
<td>To overstate or embellish answers beyond a reasonable description of the truth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tailoring</td>
<td>To modify or adapt answers to fit the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit enhancing</td>
<td>To create the impression of a fit with the job or organization in terms of beliefs, values, or attitudes</td>
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<td>Extensive image creation</td>
<td>Faking in order to invent the image of a good candidate for the job (socially less appropriate than slight image creation)</td>
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<td>Constructing</td>
<td>To build stories by combining or arranging work experiences to provide better answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventing</td>
<td>To cook up better answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing</td>
<td>To answer based on the experiences or accomplishments of others</td>
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<td>Image protection</td>
<td>Faking in order to defend the image of a good candidate for the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omitting</td>
<td>To not mention some things in order to improve answers</td>
</tr>
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<td>Masking</td>
<td>To disguise or conceal aspects of background to create better answers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distancing</td>
<td>To improve answers by separating from negative events or experiences</td>
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<td>Faking in order to gain favour with the interviewer to improve the appearance of a good candidate for the job</td>
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<td>Opinion conforming</td>
<td>To express beliefs, values, or attitudes held by the interviewer or organization</td>
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<td>Interviewer or organization</td>
<td>To insincerely praise or compliment the interviewer or organization</td>
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*Note:* Definitions are adapted from Levashina and Campion (2007)
Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations Between Main Study Variables

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Note. N = 104-109, except for correlations with GPA where N = 63. Interview experience is the number of interviews the interviewees had participated in prior to the study. *p < .05.
### Table 4

**Summary of Study Results**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance.</td>
<td>defensive IM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b: Self-reported deceptive IM will positively predict ratings of interview</td>
<td>Not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c: Observer-coded verbal IM will positively predict ratings of interview</td>
<td>Supported for self-promotion and ingratiation, not supported for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance.</td>
<td>defensive IM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a: The effect of interview performance on a criterion measure of</td>
<td>Not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance (GPA) will be strengthened when controlling for honest IM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b: The effect of interview performance on a criterion measure of</td>
<td>Not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance (GPA) will be strengthened when controlling for deceptive IM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c: The effect of interview performance on a criterion measure of</td>
<td>Not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance (GPA) will be strengthened when controlling for observer-coded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a: Self-reported honest IM will be positively related with observer-coded</td>
<td>Supported for self-focused IM, not supported for other-focused or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM.</td>
<td>defensive IM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b: Self-reported deceptive IM will be positively related with observer-</td>
<td>Not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coded IM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a: Verbal social skill will positively predict ratings of interview</td>
<td>Supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4b: Political skill will positively predict ratings of interview performance. Not supported.

5a: IM will fully mediate the relationship between social skill and interview performance. Partially supported for observer-rated self-promotion, not supported for other types of IM.

5b: Social skill will moderate the prediction of interview performance by IM, such that IM will more positively predict interview performance when social skill is high. Supported for slight and extensive image creation and image protection, not supported for other types of IM.

6: Social skill will moderate the agreement between interviewer perceptions and interviewee self-reports of deceptive IM, such that agreement will be lower when social skill is high. Not supported.

7a: Interviewer-perceived honest IM will positively predict interview performance. Supported for self-focused and defensive IM, not supported for other-focused IM.

7b: Interviewer perceived deceptive IM will negatively predict interview performance. Not supported.
Table 5

*Self-Reported Honest and Deceptive IM Predicting Interview Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β   (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>.25** (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.46** (.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview experience</td>
<td>.19** (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-focused IM</td>
<td>.50** (.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-focused IM</td>
<td>-.04 (.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive IM</td>
<td>-.27** (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight image creation</td>
<td>-.06 (.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive image creation</td>
<td>.20 (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image protection</td>
<td>.08 (.09)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 104. Sample: 0 = upper year students, 1 = first year students.*  
† p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01.
Table 6

*Observer-Rated IM Predicting Interview Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>.11** (.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.34** (.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview experience</td>
<td>.10 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-promotion</td>
<td>.21** (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingratiation</td>
<td>.18* (.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive IM</td>
<td>-.31† (.16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 104. Sample: 0 = upper year students, 1 = first year students.† p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01.*
Table 7

*Interview Performance Predicting GPA when Controlling for IM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview performance</td>
<td>.25* (.12)</td>
<td>.27* (.13)</td>
<td>.32* (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant-reported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-focused IM</td>
<td>-.01 (.12)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-focused IM</td>
<td>-.11 (.15)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive IM</td>
<td>.13 (.18)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight image creation</td>
<td>-.03 (.19)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive image creation</td>
<td>.15 (.15)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image protection</td>
<td>-.04 (.12)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive ingratiation</td>
<td>-.19 (.24)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer-rated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-promotion</td>
<td>-.04 (.12)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingratiation</td>
<td>-.16 (.12)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive IM</td>
<td>.02 (.04)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 62. Values are standardized estimates (standard errors in brackets). $\Delta R^2$ is comparing the $R^2$ value to Model 1. Model 2 includes applicant-reported IM in the regression, whereas Model 3 includes observer-coded IM in the regression. * $p < .05$*
Table 8

*Verbal Social Skill Predicting Interview Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>.16* (.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.42** (.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview experience</td>
<td>.14* (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal social skill</td>
<td>.30** (.05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 105. Sample: 0 = upper year students, 1 = first year students. *p < .05, **p < .01.*
Table 9

*Political Skill Predicting Interview Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( \beta ) (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>.18* (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.43** (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview experience</td>
<td>.13 (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political skill</td>
<td>.12 (.18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* \( N = 105 \). Sample: 0 = upper year students, 1 = first year students. * \( p < .05 \), ** \( p < .01 \).
Table 10

Agreement Between Self- and Interviewer-Rated IM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Self-interviewer correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-focused IM</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-focused IM</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive IM</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight image creation</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive image creation</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image protection</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive ingratiation</td>
<td>.29*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 108. Correlations were computed using MLR estimation, whereas correlations in Table 3 were computed using ML estimation. * p < .05, ** p < .01.
Table 11

*Interviewer-Perceived Honest and Deceptive IM Predicting Interview Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>.17* (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.35* (.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview experience</td>
<td>.05 (.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-focused IM</td>
<td>.56** (.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-focused IM</td>
<td>-.13† (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive IM</td>
<td>.15** (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight image creation</td>
<td>-.01 (.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive image creation</td>
<td>.05† (.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image protection</td>
<td>-.02 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive ingratiation</td>
<td>-.04 (.17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 105. Sample: 0 = upper year students, 1 = first year students.*
† p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01.
Figure 1. Hypothesized antecedent model.
Figure 2. Hypothesized moderator model
Figure 3. Hypothesized moderation of the agreement between self- and interviewer-ratings of IM by social skill
Figure 4. Partial mediation of the effect of verbal social skill on interview performance through self-promotion.
Figure 5. Interactive effect of slight image creation and social expressivity on interview performance.
*p < .05
Figure 6. Interactive effect of extensive image creation and verbal social skill on interview performance.

*p < .05
Figure 7. Interactive effect of image protection and political skill on interview performance. *p < .05
Appendix A

Job Description

Organization and Management Solutions is looking for an Administrative Assistant for the summer term (beginning of May to end of August). The Administrative Assistant would have to provide high-level administrative support by preparing reports, handling information requests, and performing clerical functions such as preparing correspondence, receiving visitors, arranging conference calls, and scheduling meetings.

The salary for this position would be $20/hour for 40 hours per week.

Responsibilities:

- Prepare invoices, reports, memos, letters, and other documents, using word processing, spreadsheet, database, or presentation software.
- Answer phone calls and greet visitors to direct to appropriate parties or take messages.
- Read and analyze incoming memos, submissions, and reports to determine their significance and plan their distribution.
- Perform general office duties, such as ordering supplies and maintaining records management database systems
- File and retrieve corporate documents, records, and reports.
- Open, sort, and distribute incoming correspondence, including faxes and email.

Requirements:

- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Team player who is willing to help whenever necessary
- Basic word processing and database skills
- Ability to prioritize and be flexible
- Attention to detail and excellent organizational skills

Organization and Management Solutions is a management consulting firm with a focus on building better places to work. Businesses come to us for help in fostering highly-skilled, motivated employees and developing work environments that promote job satisfaction, productivity and employee retention.

Our organization is looking for someone who is enthusiastic to join our team of talented professionals. We look forward to meeting you!
Appendix B

Social Skills Inventory

On the following pages are 45 statements that indicate an attitude or behavior that may or may not be characteristic or descriptive of you. Read each statement carefully. Then, using the scale shown below, decide which response will most accurately reflect your answer and circle the appropriate number beside the question.

Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers. Circle only one response for each statement. It is important to try to respond to every statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all like me</th>
<th>A little like me</th>
<th>Like me</th>
<th>Very much like me</th>
<th>Exactly like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoy giving parties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Criticism or scolding rarely makes me feel uncomfortable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I can be comfortable with all types of people – young and rich, old and poor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It takes people quite a while to get to know me well</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My greatest source of pleasure and pain is other people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Only 5 items from the Social Skills Inventory (Riggio, 1989) are reproduced due to copyright restrictions
Appendix C

Political Skill Inventory

Instructions: Using the following 7-point scale, please place the number on the blank before each item that best describes how much you agree with each statement about yourself.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = slightly disagree
4 = neutral
5 = slightly agree
6 = agree
7 = strongly agree

___ I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me
___ I am able to communicate easily and effectively with others
___ It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people
___ I understand people very well
___ I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others

___ When communicating to others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do
___ I am good at getting people to like me
___ It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do
___ I try to show a genuine interest in other people
___ I have good intuition or savvy about how to represent myself to others

___ I always seem to instinctively know the right thing to say or do to influence others
___ I pay close attention to people’s facial expressions
Appendix D

Structured Interview

Opening Statement

Before we begin the interview today, I would like to tell you about the type of interview we will be conducting today. This will help you understand the interview process. It will also help us to ensure that there is a consistent process across all candidates.

As you know, today we are interviewing job candidates for a placement as an administrative assistant. The information you provide during the course of the interview will be confidential.

The type of interview we are conducting today is called a Structured Interview. As you may not be familiar with this type of interview, I will briefly describe the format: I will ask you a number of questions. For some of the questions you will be required to recall specific situations or events that you have been involved in at work or in other areas of your life. When you respond, we want you to give us a description of a specific situation as well as a description of what you did during the situation. Sometimes it can take a while to remember details about specific events. This is to be expected and it is nothing to worry about. For some of the questions you will be required to explain what you would do if you were in a specific situation or event at work. We would like you to provide specific details of what you would do in this situation.

Please take your time in responding to the questions. You will be given as much time as you need to respond.

I will be jotting down a few notes during the interview to help remind me of your answers. Please do not consider the number of notes I take as a reflection of your performance on the interview.

So, we are now ready to begin. Before we start, do you have any questions about the interview?
Organizational Skills: Behaviour Descriptive

Sometimes we are assigned team projects at school, where organization is important. Can you tell me about a time when you were assigned a difficult team project with a challenging timeline? Please describe the project, the steps you took to complete it, and the outcome.

Context: Effective and efficient task completion requires organization. This is especially true when there are multiple tasks to complete in a defined timeframe. The admin assistant must approach tasks in a planned, logical manner to organize the completion of each task in order to meet deadlines and/or goals. Additionally, he/she must be able to schedule meetings and other events effectively in order to meet operational, project and individual needs.

Outstanding Score: 5
- Clarifies any ambiguities at the onset of tasks with the teacher or team
- Anticipates tasks that may become disorganized and prepares accordingly (e.g.: allots more time for complicated tasks)
- Plans the task in consultation with the teacher or team as appropriate before beginning task
- Seeks additional information from multiple resources (e.g., manuals, procedures, people) to help completion of task when necessary
- Completes all tasks on time or before deadlines when possible, ensuring most critical tasks are prioritized
- Seeks out ways to improve organization of tasks, makes recommendations
- Identifies and uses the most efficient method of completing a task as much as possible

Acceptable Score: 3
- Attempts to organize the task but uses strategies that are only somewhat effective
- Is only able to foresee some areas of the task that may become disorganized, problematic or need more time, but nonetheless completes tasks on time
- Consults readily available resources (e.g., manuals, people) but does not obtain other additional relevant information
- Recognizes the need for procedures/policy after errors have been made due to disorganization and acts accordingly (i.e.: sets up policy/procedures)
- Needs occasional reminders to complete task on time

Poor Score: 1
- Takes on task without assessing scope, timeline or skills required
- Does not complete all tasks or allow adequate time for revisions
- Makes no attempt to organize the task
- Does not ask for clarification/help
- Does not consult readily available resources
- Is constantly behind on task deadlines
- Does not take responsibility for logistical errors (e.g., does not involved individuals know about scheduling changes, obstacles, revisions, new deadlines, etc.)
- Does not inform appropriate individuals when problems first arise

Score: 0
-irrelevant example or non-rateable response given; does not provide a response
**Organizational Skills: Situational**

Imagine that you are at work, and your boss has asked you to complete a challenging project with two other co-workers within the next two days. None of you have worked on this type of project before. What steps would you take to complete the task and why?

**Context:** Effective and efficient task completion requires organization. This is especially true when there are multiple tasks to complete in a defined timeframe. The admin assistant must approach tasks in a planned, logical manner to organize the completion of each task in order to meet deadlines and/or goals. Additionally, he/she must be able to schedule meetings and other events effectively in order to meet operational, project and individual needs.

**Outstanding Score: 5**
- Clarifies any ambiguities at the onset of tasks with project director or team
- Anticipates tasks that may become disorganized and prepares accordingly (e.g.: allots more time for complicated tasks)
- Plans the task in consultation with project director or team as appropriate before beginning task
- Seeks additional information from multiple resources (e.g., manuals, procedures, people) to help completion of task when necessary
- Completes all tasks on time or before deadlines when possible, ensuring most critical tasks are prioritized
- Seeks out ways to improve organization of tasks, makes recommendations
- Identifies and uses the most efficient method of completing a task as much as possible

**Acceptable Score: 3**
- Attempts to organize the task but uses strategies that are only somewhat effective
- Is only able to foresee some areas of the task that may become disorganized, problematic or need more time, but nonetheless completes tasks on time
- Consults readily available resources (e.g., manuals, people) but does not obtain other additional relevant information
- Recognizes the need for procedures/policy after errors have been made due to disorganization and acts accordingly (i.e.: sets up policy/procedures)
- Needs occasional reminders to complete task on time

**Poor Score: 1**
- Takes on task without assessing scope, timeline or skills required
- Does not complete all tasks or allow adequate time for revisions
- Makes no attempt to organize the task
- Does not ask for clarification/help
- Does not consult readily available resources
- Is constantly behind on task deadlines
- Does not take responsibility for logistical errors (e.g., does not involved individuals know about scheduling changes, obstacles, revisions, new deadlines, etc.)
- Does not inform appropriate individuals when problems first arise

**Score: 0**
- Irrelevant example or non-rateable response given; does not provide a response
Flexibility: Behaviour Descriptive

Sometimes work and school can be unpredictable. Tell me about a time when you were working on an important task, and a new important task came up that conflicted with your progress on the original task. Please describe the situation, what steps you took, and the outcome.

Context: The admin assistant is often faced with multiple tasks with tight and/or fixed deadlines. He/she must be able to complete a variety of tasks while being able to adapt quickly in order to accommodate new ones. Additionally, the admin assistant must be able to balance sometimes ambiguous or competing priorities in order to complete or delegate tasks effectively, appropriately and on time.

Outstanding Score: 5
- Adjusts quickly (shows a willingness) to accommodate new tasks
- Prioritizes tasks by importance to organization/project
- Seeks clarification from supervisor/group when unsure of priorities
- Volunteers to put in longer hours when needed
- Demonstrates the ability to move from task to task, focusing attention on the most immediate demand
- Completes/coordinates the completion of higher priority tasks before lower priority tasks

Acceptable Score: 3
- Has some difficulty but eventually adjusts to accommodate new tasks
- Works longer hours when told by someone else
- Demonstrates the ability to move from task to task, focusing attention on the most immediate demand; may sometimes lose focus but not to point of impeding task completion

Poor Score: 1
- Refuses or complains about new tasks
- Accepts all tasks without determining priorities or ability to complete all tasks
- Does not seek clarification on ambiguous priorities from appropriate individuals
- Is not willing to work overtime
- Does not demonstrate the ability to move from task to task or focus attention on the most immediate demand
- Does not complete/coordinate the completion of higher priority tasks before lower priority tasks

Score: 0
- Irrelevant example or non-rateable response given; does not provide a response
Flexibility: Situational

Imagine that you arrive at work in the morning, and find out that your office-mate is home sick. Both you and your co-worker had to complete a different high-priority report by the end of the day, so now your boss asks you to complete both your report and your co-workers’ as well. What steps would you take to complete this task and why?

**Context:** The admin assistant is often faced with multiple tasks with tight and/or fixed deadlines. He/she must be able to complete a variety of tasks while being able to adapt quickly in order to accommodate new ones. Additionally, the admin assistant must be able to balance sometimes ambiguous or competing priorities in order to complete or delegate tasks effectively, appropriately and on time.

**Outstanding Score: 5**
- Adjusts quickly (shows a willingness) to accommodate new tasks
- Prioritizes tasks by importance to organization/project
- Seeks clarification from supervisor/group when unsure of priorities
- Volunteers to put in longer hours when needed
- Demonstrates the ability to move from task to task, focusing attention on the most immediate demand
- Completes/coordinates the completion of higher priority tasks before lower priority tasks

**Acceptable Score: 3**
- Has some difficulty but eventually adjusts to accommodate new tasks
- Works longer hours when told by someone else
- Demonstrates the ability to move from task to task, focusing attention on the most immediate demand; may sometimes lose focus but not to point of impeding task completion

**Poor Score: 1**
- Refuses or complains about new tasks
- Accepts all tasks without determining priorities or ability to complete all tasks
- Does not seek clarification on ambiguous priorities from appropriate individuals
- Is not willing to work overtime
- Does not demonstrate the ability to move from task to task or focus attention on the most immediate demand
- Does not complete/coordinate the completion of higher priority tasks before lower priority tasks

Score: 0
- Irrelevant example or non-rateable response given; does not provide a response
Communication Skills: Behaviour Descriptive

Tell me about a time when you had to present complex information in a simplified manner in order to explain it to others. Describe the situation, what you did, and the outcome.

Context: The administrative assistant is required to communicate verbally and in writing to meet specific task demands. Communicating in an effective and timely manner is also critical. Specifically, the administrative assistant must be able to communicate clearly so that the intended information is understood by the recipient, select the most appropriate method for delivery of the message and ensure that the information is received within a reasonable timeframe.

Outstanding Score: 5
- Displays highly developed oral and/or written communication skills (i.e., communicates orally/in writing in a clear, concise, and accurate manner)
- Tailors communication to the message and audience (e.g.: client, colleagues, boss; formal, casual)
- Corrects communication when necessary
-Communicates as frequently as necessary in order to fully meet the needs of recipients
- Follows up on communications in an appropriate manner and timeframe

Acceptable Score: 3
- Displays adequate written/oral communication skills
- Shows some adjustment in communication style to meet the needs of the information and audience
- Presents basic points but misses some subtleties which may require further elaboration in additional communications

Poor Score: 1
- Written/oral communication skills are inadequate
- Prepares communications without considering the audience’s needs or message’s intent
- Does not follow up with requests for more information
- Is late in communicating information; information must be requested repeatedly

Score: 0
- Irrelevant example or non-rateable response given; does not provide a response
Communication Skills: Situational

Imagine that you are at work, and your boss tells you that in the last week, a few of your company’s clients received an incorrect order because of a computer error. Your boss asks you to draft an apology letter for the clients, and to deal with any angry clients who may call in. What steps would you take to complete these tasks and why?

Context: The administrative assistant is required to communicate verbally and in writing to meet specific task demands. Communicating in an effective and timely manner is also critical. Specifically, the administrative assistant must be able to communicate clearly so that the intended information is understood by the recipient, select the most appropriate method for delivery of the message and ensure that the information is received within a reasonable timeframe.

Outstanding Score: 5
- Displays highly developed oral and/or written communication skills (i.e., communicates orally/in writing in a clear, concise, and accurate manner)
- Tailors communication to the message and audience (e.g.: client, colleagues, boss; formal, casual)
- Corrects communication when necessary
- Communicates as frequently as necessary in order to fully meet the needs of recipients
- Follows up on communications in an appropriate manner and timeframe

Acceptable Score: 3
- Displays adequate written/oral communication skills
- Shows some adjustment in communication style to meet the needs of the information and audience
- Presents basic points but misses some subtleties which may require further elaboration in additional communications

Poor Score: 1
- Written/oral communication skills are inadequate
- Prepares communications without considering the audience’s needs or message’s intent
- Does not follow up with requests for more information
- Is late in communicating information; information must be requested repeatedly

Score: 0
- Irrelevant example or non-rateable response given; does not provide a response
Appendix E

Measure of Honest IM

Please think about the employment interview that you just had. What strategies from the list below did you use during your interview? Rate the extent to which you used each strategy by circling the appropriate number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I demonstrated my knowledge and expertise.*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I described my skills and abilities in an attractive way*</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I took charge during the interview and got my main points across*</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I tried to draw the interviewer’s attention to my records of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplishment*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I emphasized the qualities that I possess*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I discussed non-job-related topics with the interviewer*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I discussed interests that I shared in common with the interviewer*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I praised the organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I complimented the interviewer or organization*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I made it clear when I was not responsible for a negative outcome in my past experience*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I described how negative events in my past were not as bad as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>they seemed*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I accepted responsibility for negative events in my past experience*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Items marked with an asterisk were used in the final measure of honest IM.
Appendix F

*Interview Faking Behaviour Scale*

Please think about the employment interview that you just had. What strategies from the list below did you use during your interview? Rate the extent to which you used each strategy by circling the appropriate number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To no extent</th>
<th>To a little extent</th>
<th>To a moderate extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a very great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I exaggerated my future goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I exaggerated my responsibilities on my previous jobs*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I exaggerated the impact of my performance on my previous jobs*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. During the interview, I distorted my answers based on the</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments or reactions of the interviewer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. During the interview, I distorted my answers to emphasize</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what the interviewer was looking for</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I enhanced my fit with the job in terms of attitudes, values, or Beliefs*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I inflated the fit between my values and goals and the values and goals of the organization*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I told fictional stories prepared in advance of the interview to best present my credentials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I fabricated examples to show my fit with the organization*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I made up stories about my work experiences that were well developed and logical*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. I misrepresented the description of an event ........................ 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
24. I stretched the truth to give a good answer * ...................... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
25. When I did not have a good answer, I borrowed work experiences of other people and made them sound like my own * ....... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5

26. I used other people’s experiences to create answers when I
did not have good experiences of my own ............................. 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
27. I tried to avoid discussion of job tasks that I may not be able to do* 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
28. I tried to avoid discussing my lack of skills or experiences* ... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
29. When asked directly, I did not mention some problems that I
had in past jobs ...................................................................... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
30. I did not reveal requested information that might hurt my chances of getting a job* ............................................................. 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5

31. I tried to express the same opinions and attitudes as the interviewer* 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
32. I tried to appear similar to the interviewer in terms of values,
attitudes, or beliefs* ............................................................. 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
33. I exaggerated the interviewer’s qualities to create the impression
that I think highly of him/her* ................................................ 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
34. I exaggerated my positive comments about the organization ............................. 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5

Note: Items marked with an asterisk were used in the final deceptive IM scale