“Did You See That?” The Effect of Social Sharing on Witnesses’ Reactions to Observed Incivility

by

Jessica Garant

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ABSTRACT

“DID YOU SEE THAT?” THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL SHARING ON WITNESSES’ REACTIONS TO OBSERVED INCIVILITY

Jessica Garant
University of Guelph, 2016

Advisor:
Dr. Peter Hausdorf

Andersson and Pearson’s (1999) incivility model suggest that witnessing incivility can lead to negative responses. Although research has focused on the impact of observed incivility on witnesses’ emotions, attitudes, and behaviours, no studies have explored the impact of social sharing on incivility outcomes despite the fact that people talk about upsetting experiences (Rimé, 2009). Results from 83 female undergraduate students (assigned to a situational or personal experimental condition) demonstrated that listening to an observer reframing in terms of situational factors reduced the witnesses’ negative affect which lowered the amount of task allocated to the instigator (as an indicator of punishment). Reframing reduced witnesses’ negative affect, their negative attitudes toward the instigator and the negativity of the instigator’s work-related evaluation. However, reframing had no effect on the extent to which witnesses were willing to help the instigator. In sum, shared situational attributions could reduce the incidence of an incivility spiral.

**Keywords:** Incivility Spiral, Witnesses, Attribution Theory, Social Sharing, Empathy
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“Did You See That?” The Effect of Social Sharing on Witnesses’ Reactions to Observed Incivility

Uncivil workplace behaviours and their consequences have become a prominent issue because those behaviours can escalate to aggression and ultimately to violence (Bandow & Hunter, 2007). Uncivil behaviours or workplace incivility (WPI) is defined by Andersson and Pearson (1999) as a “low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect [such as] being rude, discourteous, or displaying a lack of respect for others.” (p. 456). Examples of WPI include ignoring, insulting, yelling, and acting unprofessionally (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Johnson & Indvik, 2001; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000) and is a problem that affects a large majority of the 21st century’s workplaces. In fact, the prevalence of experienced WPI ranges between 71% (Cortina et al., 2001) and 96% (Porath & Pearson, 2010). WPI can have negative effects such as increased interpersonal tension, decreased job performance, decreased job satisfaction, and increased job withdrawal (Cortina et al., 2002; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008; Pearson & Porath, 2009).

Most research has focused on the targets of WPI, however, the collaborative nature of work in modern organizations increases the likelihood of witnessing WPI. Previous research has used various terms such as observers, third-parties, and witnesses to describe individuals who are present and observe different events (e.g., incivility) in the workplace. These terms are considered to be equivalent in meaning, but to ease the reader’s understanding, I will use the term witnesses to describe individuals who have observed incivility.

Just like for the targets, these disrespectful behaviours had a negative impact on witnesses’ emotional and behavioural reactions (Lim et al., 2008; Porath & Erez, 2009; Reich &
Hershcovis, 2015; Totterdell, Herschovis, Niven, Reich, & Stride, 2012). In relation to how individuals react, Andersson and Pearson (1999) suggested that witnessing WPI would generate negative affect if the behaviour is interpreted as unfair. This negative affectivity would then motivate the witness to reciprocate the uncivil behaviour which could then be perceived as unfair by the other party. As a result of the perceived injustice, the other party would retaliate and create what has been described as an “incivility spiral”. These negative interactions could escalate into more aggressive behaviours and ultimately to violence. If nothing is done to prevent and reduce these incivility spirals, WPI could permeate and define the workplace as incivility would increase in social interactions.

Widespread WPI creates a stressful work environment for the target, the instigator, and the coworkers (Lim et al., 2008). The negative affect induced by witnessing WPI can generate a desire for reciprocation (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). However, reciprocating the incivility is one aspect of the possible witnesses’ behavioural reactions. To shed light on these possible reactions, O’Reilly and Aquino (2011) proposed a model describing how witnesses would react to observing mistreatment (such as incivility) based on the deontic model of justice. They suggested that according to various factors, witnesses would either punish the instigator directly or indirectly, help the target, or do nothing about the situation. Because punishing the instigator (e.g., by reciprocating the incivility) could increase the likelihood of a secondary incivility spiral by eroding the extent to which employees are being civil towards each other, I will study these behavioural reactions. Moreover, to cope with the previous literature’s lack of consideration for the communicative nature of workplaces, this study will have a specific focus on how listening to a colleague sharing their thoughts on the event affects the witnesses’ reactions (affect and attitudes) and responses (retributive behaviours).
I will first review how witnessing WPI generates negative affect. Then, I will review how this negative affect can influence witnesses’ reactions based on the deontic model of justice (Folger, 2001). Finally, I will describe how listening to someone sharing their thoughts on the event could impact the listener’s negative affect and subsequent retributive behaviours.

**Emotional Reactions to Witnessed Incivility**

The affective events theory stipulates that the emotions induced by different workplace events influence employees’ behaviours through either a direct mechanism (behaviours influenced by affect only) or an indirect mechanism (behaviours influenced by both affect and attitudes) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Positive events tend to induce positive emotions, whereas, negative events induce negative emotions. Uncivil treatments are going against the norms of respect and would therefore elicit negative emotions. As such, it has been found that witnessing rudeness from a superior or a coworker generated negative affect (Porath & Erez, 2009; Reich & Hershcovis, 2015) and increased negative attitudes toward the instigator (Reich & Hershcovis, 2015). Interestingly, stronger negative emotions were elicited by witnessing WPI when both the target and the witness were the same gender (Miner & Eischeid, 2012). In sum, witnessing WPI tends to generate negative affectivity and these emotions could influence how witnesses react towards the instigator.

Witnessing a colleague being uncivil towards someone else can generate some negative emotions as described by the affective events theory, however, witnessing a target feeling frustrated or stressed from being treated unfairly could also make the observer feel the same way through an emotional contagion process. Hatfield (1992) described the process of emotional contagion as: “the tendency to catch (experience/express) another person’s emotions (his or her emotional appraisals, subjective feelings, expressions, patterned physiological processes, action
tendencies, and instrumental behaviors).” (p. 153). In consequence, the negative affect experienced by the target could translate to witnesses who would then feel angry. Conversely, Harvey, Treadway, and Heames (2007) argued that emotional contagion could influence witnesses to mimic the instigator’s behaviours. Emotional contagion could then influence witnesses’ reactions in favor of either the instigator or the target.

The process of reacting to injustice, such as WPI, is more complex than the mere emotional contagion. Moreover, the affective events theory does not provide details on what are the specific course of actions witnesses could engage in. Therefore, the deontic model of justice and O’Reilly and Aquino’s (2011) associated model will be reviewed to describe how perceptions of incivility could generate negative affect and motivate retaliation.

**Behavioural Responses to Witnessed Incivility**

According to the deontic model of justice (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003, 2005; Folger, 2001), witnessing injustice, such as incivility, generates negative emotions which provokes individuals to engage in retributive behaviours, or also called “deontic reactions”, in order to restore justice. These deontic reactions stem from the perceptions that the behaviours violate how people should be treated in a given circumstance (Folger, 2001). Therefore, when an instigator is treating someone unfairly, witnesses tend to react in order to restore justice. This relationship between the perceived injustice and the deontic reactions has been shown in studies in which witnesses tend to punish individuals who transgress moral values (O’Reilly, 2013; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010; Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress, & Gee, 2002). Witnesses can also choose to either help the target (O’Reilly, 2013) or do nothing about the injustice (Rupp & Bell, 2010). O’Reilly and Aquino’s (2011) model of morally motivated responses to mistreatment expands the deontic model of justice and describes that reactions to witnessed injustice are
varied, but will depend on the (non)concordance between the negative emotions (moral anger) and the individual’s justice cognitions (i.e., if the target was harmed, deserved the treatment, and if the instigator is responsible for his/her actions). In sum, witnesses could feel some negative emotions if they perceive that the uncivil behaviours are going against how they believe people should be treated and might decide to punish the instigator as one of various possible course of action.

Witnessing WPI generates deontic reactions because it contravenes the mutual norms of respect and, therefore, goes against how people think others should be treated. Research has supported this relationship. Mitchell, Folger, and Vogel (2014) demonstrated that witnessing a supervisor mistreating an undeserving coworker triggered anger and motivated the witnesses to harm the abusive supervisor (i.e., supervisor-directed deviance such as rudeness or gossiping). Similarly, Reich and Hershcovis (2015) found that witnesses of WPI negatively evaluated the instigator and subsequently allocated them undesirable work tasks. In addition to these negative responses, witnessing WPI also reduces helping behaviours. Porath and Erez (2009) found that rudeness generated negative affect, which reduced the witnesses’ performance and their willingness to help the instigator. These helpful behaviours or organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB: defined as discretionary behaviours that employees choose to engage in voluntarily; Organ, 1997) are a beneficial aspect of organizational performance. Refusing to help the instigator could thus be a form of punishment for the witnessed incivility.

In summary, observing incivility typically generates negative emotions that could motivate witnesses to engage in retributive behaviours in order to restore justice. However, research on social sharing suggests that people often want to talk about their negative experiences with others (Rimé, 2009). The following section will discuss the influence of having
someone share their emotions related to a witnessed uncivil event on the listener’s subsequent retributive behaviours.

**Influence of Listening to Someone Sharing**

Following an emotional situation, 80 to 95% of people tend to talk about it with spouses, friends, coworkers, etc. (Rimé, 2009; Rimé, Philippot, Boca, & Mesquita, 1992; Rimé, Finkenauer, Luminet, Zech, & Philippot, 1998). Sharing negative emotions serves various functions such as getting “help and support, comfort and consolation, legitimization and validation, as well as reception of advice and solutions” (Rimé, 2009, p.80). During that social sharing interaction, it was found that the person sharing spoke 89.3% of the time, whereas, the listener spoke only 11.7% of the time. Moreover, the person sharing was giving information about the event in 94.7% of the time and was expressing feelings in 84.2% of the time (Luminet, Bouts, Delie, Manstead, & Rimé, 2000). Listening to someone talking about their emotions can be emotion-inducing (Christophe & Rimé, 1997) which could in turn affect the listener’s behaviour. To illustrate this, let’s take a fictive example where Employee A is being uncivil towards Employee B during a meeting while Employee C and D are witnessing the situation. Because the uncivil behaviours were ambiguous, Employee C felt angered by this treatment s/he feels is unfair, but was unsure what to think of what happened. In an attempt at making sense of this, Employee C went to Employee D to share their anger and discuss the event. During this exchange, Employee D might be influenced by Employee C’s sharing content. This could result in Employee D feeling angered as well and deciding to punish Employee A for their inappropriate behaviour. Employee D’s responses after hearing about Employee C’s anger could increase the likelihood of having an incivility spiral as described earlier. Therefore, as an attempt at reducing the probability of having the workplace permeated by incivility, it is a necessity to
understand how the content of the social sharing could either alleviate or accentuate this risk. One theory that can help to articulate the potential content of these conversations related to ambiguous uncivil events and their influence is the attribution theory.

**Attribution Theory.** The negative affect generated by witnessing WPI and the ambiguity of the harmful intention can motivate witnesses to talk about it with coworkers in order to make sense of the situation (Rimé, 2009). Attribution theory stipulates that individuals focus on understanding the causes of observed behaviours as part of the sense making process (Harvey, 1984; Harvey et al., 2014; Weiner, 1985). When trying to make sense of observed WPI, attribution theory suggests that witnesses will ask themselves “Why was that person uncivil?” in order to decide on how to react. For instance, witnesses might not only discuss their emotions (as suggested by the social sharing literature), but might also share their thoughts on why they think the instigator was disrespectful.

The attribution of a cause to an observed behaviour is termed locus of causality. When applied to the context of WPI, the locus of causality for “Why was that person uncivil?” could reflect one of two aspects: *personal or situational* (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Harvey et al., 2014). For example, one can think that the person was uncivil because s/he has a lot of stress due to an external event and this would be considered as a situational attribution. Although making that assumption is possible, people tend to make fundamental attribution errors (Ross, 1977), meaning that they typically make personal attributions for observed behaviours, for example, s/he acted this way because s/he is very competitive and impatient (Keaveney, 2008; Lay, Ziegler, Hershfield, & Miller, 1974; Lenauer, Sameth, & Shaver, 1976; Nisbett et al., 1973). When they make personal attributions, it has been found that individuals react more negatively (Betancourt & Blair, 1992; Keaveney, 2008).
When applying attribution theory and research to the context of WPI, making personal attributions of observed uncivil behaviours could lead the witnesses to react more negatively toward the instigator, therefore, reinforcing the risk of having an incivility spiral. Conversely, attributing the cause of the uncivil behaviour to situational circumstances could lead witnesses to react in a less negative way toward the instigator. Indeed, Betancourt and Blair (1992) found that when individuals perceived that the causes for the instigated conflict was attributed to less controllable circumstances, they felt less angry and more empathetic, which reduced the violence of their reaction. These causal attributions can be extended to the conversation between witnesses. As such, when a witness listens to another coworker framing the cause of the behaviour into less controllable circumstances (e.g., an uncontrollable situational factor such as an accident or distressing event), the witness could feel less angry and more empathetic as a result and could react less negatively.

**The Positive Impact of Empathy.** Empathy is a multifaceted construct that includes perspective-taking, defined as the ability to “spontaneously adopt the psychological point of view of others” (Davis, 1983, p. 113). By understanding others’ point of view, individuals are more open to positive communication and conflict resolution discussions (Volkema, 1996). Perspective-taking is also often used by mediators as a conflict resolution strategy (Jameson, Bodtker, & Linker, 2010) and is an effective strategy. Indeed, Eaton and Sanders (2012) found that in an interpersonal conflict situation, offended parties who sought help from a third-party were more likely to forgive the offender if the listener used a perspective-taking approach. The authors suggested that helping the offended party to feel empathetic toward the offender by reframing the situation would help the target move on even if the offender does not apologize. For instance, after witnessing someone being uncivil, listening to another colleague framing the
cause of the behaviours into situational factors could help the witness feel more empathetic toward the instigator which would increase the chance of forgiveness and as a result fewer chances of an incivility spiral. Thus, the present study will investigate if listening to a colleague who understands both perspectives and frames the cause of the uncivil behaviours in terms of situational factors reduces the witness’s negative affect and retributive behaviours.

The Present Study

As discussed earlier, individuals tend to share with others the emotional situations they experience, therefore, a main research question investigated in the present study is, how do social interactions influence the way witnesses react to observing WPI? When witnesses listen to a colleague trying to make sense of the ambiguous behaviours, the way the causes of the behaviours are framed (personal or situational attributions) can impact the witnesses who could then become negatively or positively affected by this interaction. Moreover, a second research question is: does listening to a colleague framing the causation of the instigator’s uncivil behaviours into personal or situational characteristics affects how witnesses react to observing incivility? Therefore, the purpose of this study will be to investigate the extent to which discussing the causal attribution (personal or situational) of the uncivil behaviours influences the way witnesses perceive the instigator (e.g., negative affect and attitudes) and their retributive behaviours toward the instigator as a response. In order to create a controlled situation where uncivil behaviours will be perceived and discussed between two witnesses and to assess the causal impact of the attributions on witnesses’ responses, an experimental design with confederates must be implemented. Based on the attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), two conditions are needed in which confederates will discuss their personal or situational attributions with participants after both having witnessed the incivility. Similarly, the impact of these
conversations will be assessed on witnesses’ affect and attitudes towards the instigator as well as their retributive responses (i.e. instigator work allocations, instigator work-related evaluations, and instigator requested OCBs). Based on prior research, the following hypotheses are proposed.

**Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1.** Witnesses in the situational condition (compared to the personal condition) will engage in less retributive behaviours toward the instigator: fewer work allocations (H1a), higher work-related evaluation (H1b), and more OCBs (H1c).

**Hypothesis 2.** Witnesses’ negative affect will mediate the relationship between the condition (personal or situational) and the retributive behaviours. Witnesses listening to a colleague framing the causation of the instigator’s uncivil behaviours into situational factors (compared to personal factors) will experience lower negative affect, which will result in less retributive behaviours (fewer work allocation (H2a), higher work-related evaluation (H2b), and more OCBs (H2c)).

**Hypothesis 3.** Witnesses’ negative affect and attitude toward the instigator will mediate the relationship between the condition (personal or situational) and the retributive behaviours. Witnesses listening to a colleague framing the causation of the instigator’s uncivil behaviours into situational factors (compared to personal factors) will experience lower negative affect, which will generate a more positive attitude toward the instigator, and this more positive attitude will consequently result in less retributive behaviours (fewer work allocation (H3a), higher work-related evaluation (H3b), and more OCBs (H3c)). See Figure 1 for an illustration of the hypotheses.
Method

Participants

This study included 93 female undergraduate students recruited through the University of Guelph participant pool. In exchange for their participation, they received one research credit towards their course grade. Due to a limited amount of participants from the participant pool, three additional participants were recruited through in-class announcements and obtained one chance to win a $25.00 gift card. Participants were randomly assigned to either a personal or situational attribution condition using a random number generator (https://www.random.org/). To ensure equal cell size between the two conditions, the randomization process considered the number of targeted participants and the remaining number of slots in each condition. According to a power analysis, a total of 111 participants were needed to have an 80% chance of finding an effect size of $r = .21$ which is a typical effect size for social psychological effects (Richard, Bond Jr, & Stokes-Zoota, 2003). However, due to recruitment issues (e.g., participants not showing up) and the data collection demands of the study (e.g. three confederates needed per session), a total of 96 female University of Guelph undergraduate students provided data for the study.

During the study debriefing, at the end of the experimental session, three participants verbally expressed their awareness of the study’s true purpose and nine indicated that they knew some participants were actors. These 12 participants were deleted after data collection and one participant was identified as a multivariate outlier and was deleted due to highly probable random answering because she selected 1 for every emotion and 9 for every attitude for the instigator, the target, and the observer. The final sample consisted of 83 participants placed almost equally in the two conditions (42 in personal and 41 in situational). The final power
obtained with this sample size was calculated for each outcome: .66 for the task allocation, .99 for the work evaluation, and .71 for the OCB.

**Procedure**

**Overview.** Some aspects of the methodology included scripted interactions, therefore, to cope with any problems that could occur during the experiment, a pilot study was conducted with 10 female undergraduate students using the same procedures as the actual study and paper-based measures. Moreover, the script in the situational condition was modified due to too many pilot participants finding out about the deception. In the pilot version of the script, the confederate saw the instigator at the library IT desk and overheard that her computer crashed and she lost all her files. The script was modified so that the confederate saw the instigator on her way to the lab and she overheard her saying on the phone that her computer crashed and she lost all her files. No other changes were needed and the study followed the experimental procedures illustrated by Figure 2. After the pilot study, all measures were computerized to ease the process of study administration.

**Experimental procedures.** When participants arrived in the lab (one real participant and three confederates: target, instigator, and observer), the experimenter invited them to the main study room and asked them to have a seat where their name was. The seating configuration was always the same, and name tags were displayed to ensure that everyone sat in their assigned seat (See Figure 3 for an illustration). Confederates were told to avoid discussing with real participants in order to prevent any bonding which might affect the participant’s opinion of the confederates and potentially the results. The arrival of each confederate was timed in order to have consistency in our experimental procedure. The target (Nicki) arrived five minutes before
the scheduled time, the observer (Sarah) arrived three minutes before, and the instigator (Laura) arrived one minute before.

When everyone was seated, the experimenter explained the cover story (See Appendix A). Participants were told that the experimenter was interested in understanding how personality affects team performance and were asked to read and sign a consent form (See Appendix B). Therefore, to ensure consistency with the cover story, participants were asked to complete a fake “personality” questionnaire (See Appendix C slide 2 for the Qualtrics version, and Appendix D for the measure). After everyone was done, every participant received the “Brainstorming Guidelines” (See Appendix E). The experimenter read the guidelines and the brainstorming problem aloud to the participants and then left the group to discuss the “University Problem” on their own.

During the brainstorming exercise, the instigator (Laura) engaged in a series of scripted uncivil behaviours toward the target (Nicki), while the observer (Sarah) witnessed the situation and took notes (See Appendix F for a detailed script). The behaviours included making an exasperation sound and a doubtful noise/expression of disbelief, criticizing one of the target’s suggestions, looking at her phone, and cutting off the target when she was giving a suggestion. After the 10 minutes allotted to execute the brainstorming exercise, participants were asked to fill the “Team Member Evaluation Form” assessing each team member’s group functioning as a manipulation check for the incivility manipulation that was constant in both conditions (See Appendix C slide 5 for the Qualtrics version and Appendix G for the measure).

Following the “Team Member Evaluation Form”, the experimenter explained the cover story for the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”. Participants were told that they were “randomly” paired with another participant and assigned to one of two roles (interviewee or interviewer).
However, unknown to the participants, they were always paired with Sarah (observer) and assigned the interviewer role. To make sure there was no effect of the target or the instigator discussing personal or situational attributions, the target and the instigator were always paired together and were asked to go into a second room for the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing.” When all team members were in their respective room, the experimenter went in the main room first (with the participant and the observer) to “randomly” assign roles, to provide the “Interviewer’s Question Sheet” (See Appendix H), and answer any question. Then, the experimenter repeated the process in the second room (with the target and the instigator).

The social sharing content of the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing” was inspired by the attribution theory which stipulates that individuals attempt to explain the causes of observed behaviours (Harvey, 1984; Harvey et al., 2014). Due to the ambiguity of WPI, the attribution of causation to why the instigator behaved in a disrespectful manner could influence how witnesses react to WPI. After the event, individuals will tend to ask themselves “Why was that person uncivil?” in order to make sense of what happened and decide on how to react. The locus of causality for “Why was that person uncivil?” can be internal/personal (behavioural characteristics for example ability or personality) or external/situational (uncontrollable situational factors for example unexpected events or stress) (Fiske & Taylor, 1984).

Individuals tend to react more negatively when they make personal attributions in conflict situations (Betancourt & Blair, 1992; Keaveney, 2008). When applying these results to the context of WPI, making personal attributions (i.e., she has a strong personality) to the observed uncivil behaviours could lead witnesses to react more negatively toward the instigator, therefore increasing the risk of an incivility spiral. Conversely, attributing the causation of the uncivil behaviour to situational circumstances (i.e., being stressed by an external event) could lead
witnesses to react in a more positive way toward the instigator. In our analyses, the personal condition was coded as 0 and the situational condition was coded as 1 (See Appendix I for a detailed script).

More precisely, when the observer in the personal condition answered the second question of the debriefing, they looked upset, talked about the instigator’s ambiguous uncivil behaviours, and attributed them to her personality (i.e., she has a strong personality). Conversely, in the situational condition, the observer looked empathetic, talked about the instigator’s ambiguous uncivil behaviours, and attributed them to an uncontrollable situation that the instigator might have been experiencing (i.e., stress related to her computer crashing and losing all her files). For a detailed script of each condition see Appendix I. When participants opened the door to indicate that they finished the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”, the experimenter welcomed back the target and the instigator into the main room to continue the study.

When everyone was sitting, participants were asked to complete a task (See Appendix C slides 8-14) followed by a “Teamwork Evaluation Form” (See Appendix C slides 15-25). More precisely, after an introductory statement, participants were asked to enter three alphanumeric keys as fast as possible which was designed to be a boring task and could be used by the participant as a way to punish the instigator later during the study (See Appendix C slides 10-12). Afterward, participants were asked to rate their enjoyment of the task on a 21-point scale ranging from 1 (disliked very much) to 21 (liked very much) (See Appendix C slide 13). Then, participants were asked to complete a “Teamwork Evaluation Form” (See Appendix C slides 15 to 27) for the other three team members (Laura, Nicki, and Sarah). As part of the “Teamwork Evaluation Form”, they were asked to fill a few questions regarding their willingness to work with that person again, how that person made them feel (Modified version of the PANAS-NA
scale, see Appendix J for the measure) and their attitude toward that person (See Appendix K for the measure). After the “Teamwork Evaluation Form”, a slide informed the participants that they were randomly assigned to divide the remaining 15 alphanumeric keys among all four team members (See Appendix C slides 28-31). To help the participants allocate the keys, they were informed of their team members’ rating of the alphanumeric task (They all disliked the task). Then, participants were asked to choose how many keys they want to allocate to each member and to explain in 2-3 sentences the reasons why they chose to allocate the keys the way they did.

When everyone was done, the experimenter explained that she is always looking for new research assistants and asked participants to fill a quick “Research Assistant Evaluation” for each team member (See Appendix C slide 32). The experimenter explained that this evaluation would help during the hiring process if anyone would be interested in becoming a research assistant. But before participants started completing the “Research Assistant Evaluation”, the instigator explained that she needed help from the participants and said that she would appreciate if they could fill out a quick survey from the student association (this was to measure their organizational citizenship behaviour, see Appendix L). When everyone completed the “Sign-up sheet” and “Research Assistant Evaluation”, participants were asked a few debriefing questions (See Appendix C slides 33-35). After participants completed the debriefing questions, the experimenter explained that the study was over and facilitated the verbal debriefing session and participants were asked to sign a second consent form due to the use of deception during the experiment (See Appendix M).

**Measures**

**Manipulation checks.** A first manipulation check ensured that the uncivil behaviours enacted by the instigator were perceived by the participants and that they generated the expected
reaction (i.e., the instigator being perceived as a less good team member). To do so, after the brainstorming exercise, participants were asked to rate each team member (Laura, Nicki, and Sarah) on three items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from -1 (Hindrance) to 3 (Better than most) assessing how well each team member contributed to the group functioning. The group functioning subscale (Goldfinch, 1994) was created as the second part of a peer assessment during group projects. The first part reflects the contribution of each team member to the specific tasks of the project and was not included in this study because it was not relevant to a brainstorming exercise. The items of the second part were modified to be relevant to incivility, such that one item was kept from the original measure (i.e., “Helping the group to function well as a team”), whereas the other two items were created for the purpose of this study (i.e., “Respecting of other’s suggestions/ideas” and “Listening carefully to each other’s opinions”). A mean score was calculated for Laura (α = .71, M = 3.18, SD = 0.77), Nicki (α = .78, M = 4.54, SD = 0.44), and Sarah (α = .77, M = 4.66, SD = 0.41). Lower scores for the instigator (compared to the target and the observer) would indicate that our manipulation was effective (See Appendix G for the measure).

A second manipulation check ensured that the social sharing condition (personal or situational) influenced our participants in the desired direction. After the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”, participants were asked to indicate how strongly they would like to be on a team again with every team member. Lower scores for the instigator in the personal condition (compared to the situational condition) would indicate that our manipulation was effective.

A third manipulation check measured after the experiment was over and just before the study debriefing ensured that the enacted uncivil behaviours were observed by participants. To do so, at the end of the experiment, participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale
ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) if they observed the specific uncivil behaviours during the brainstorming exercise. Participants’ answers from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 3 (Not sure) were coded as 0 (Not observed), whereas 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly agree) were coded 1 (Observed). Afterward, they were asked to identify who engaged in these behaviours and to write why they think the person acted like that.

**Negative affect toward the instigator.** The negative affect toward the instigator was measured using the negative affect subscale of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The question was modified to inquire feelings toward the instigator instead of a being an assessment of how the person feels right now (See Appendix J). Participants were asked to “indicate to what extent (Laura, Nicki, or Sarah) made you feel this way during the brainstorming exercise.” on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely). The use of the PANAS-NA allowed for the measurement of various types of negative affect.

When the 10 items were included in the composite variable, results showed that some items were negatively correlated with each other. Therefore, subsequent analyses were performed to identify which items should be kept. I first deleted the items that had low item-total correlation, however, some items were still negatively correlated. I repeated this exercise until there was no item total correlations under .30, but some items were still negatively correlated. As a second method, I wanted to correlate each item with the condition variable to see which items were relevant for the study of WPI. However, by doing so I would self-select items to confirm my hypotheses. Therefore, a third solution was selected and I performed paired t-test to analyze which negative affect participants reported feeling significantly more strongly toward the instigator (compared to the target) regardless of the condition. Results showed that Laura
(instigator) made participants feel significantly more distressed ($t(80) = 7.19$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.67, 1.18]), upset ($t(80) = 8.54$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.81, 1.29]), hostile ($t(79) = 6.17$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.52, 1.01]), irritable ($t(82) = 12.95$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [1.47, 2.00]), and ashamed ($t(83) = 2.25$, $p = .027$, 95% CI [.02, .30]) than Nicki (target). When these variables were assessed together, the internal consistency was low ($\alpha = .66$) and the item-total correlation of the item “ashamed” was low ($r = .10$), therefore I dropped this item. The final negative affect variable was composed of the four remaining items: “Distressed”, “Upset”, “Hostile”, and “Irritable”. The internal consistency of the variable was acceptable ($\alpha = .70$) and a mean score was calculated ($M = 2.26$, $SD = .81$).

**Attitude toward the instigator.** Inspired by Reich and Hershcovis (2015), participants were asked to evaluate the instigator on seven semantic differential pairs. Reich and Hershcovis’s original measure comprised only three adjectives pairs of which “pleasant”, “active”, and “good” were the positive poles. To extend their results, I used Chaiken’s (1983) attractiveness subscale of their likability measure to assess attitudes toward the instigator. Participants rated the instigator on seven 9-point semantic differential pairs with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes toward the instigator. The positive poles were: likable, friendly, approachable, pleasant, modest, warm, and unbiased. Chaiken’s expertise subscale (i.e., knowledgeable, intelligent, competent, and trustworthy) were not included in this study because they were considered as not relevant in the context of WPI. To ensure that no participant discovered the true purpose of this study, they were asked to rate all their team members on these adjectives. A mean score was calculated with the 7 items ($\alpha = .89$, $M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.32$). See Appendix K for the measure.
**Work allocation.** Inspired by Reich and Hershcovis (2015) participants were asked to complete a task as part of their team role. They had to complete three alpha numeric keys as fast as possible (See Appendix C slides 9-12). Afterward, they rated to what extent they enjoyed the task. Then, following Rupp and Bell’s (2010) design, they were “randomly” chosen to allocate the remaining 15 alphanumeric keys. They could allocate as many task as they wanted to themselves, Laura, Nicki, or Sarah, but the total had to be 15 (e.g., 5 to yourself, 10 to Laura, 0 to Nicki, and 0 to Sarah).

**Work-related evaluation.** I assessed the participants’ evaluation of the target using the items created by Reich and Hershcovis (2015). Participants were told that the experimenter is always looking for new research assistants and completing an evaluation of their team members would help the hiring process if anyone was interested in becoming a research assistant. Reich and Hershcovis’s measure had high internal consistency ($\alpha = .96$) to assess the instigator work-related evaluation and the participants’ desire to work with that person again. Participants were asked how strongly they agree with three statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*definitely not*) to 5 (*definitely*) (e.g., “Do you think this person should be considered for a volunteer research assistantship?”). A mean score was calculated with the three items ($\alpha = .90$, $M = 2.31$, $SD = 1.00$).

**Organizational citizenship behaviour.** Inspired by Porath and Erez (2009), participants identified on a sign-up sheet (See Appendix L), if they would accept (or not) to participate in a short survey (without additional research credit) to help the instigator as part of her duty for the student association. This served as a measure of organizational citizenship behaviour toward the instigator. In their study, Porath and Erez found that witnessing rudeness was negatively related
to participants’ willingness to stay for the second study. The participants’ answers were coded 0 (No) and 1 (Yes).

**Data Analytical Strategy**

The PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2013) was used to determine whether the association between social sharing content (personal or situational) and the retributive behaviours (i.e., work allocation, work-related evaluation, and OCB) was mediated through negative affect and then attitude toward the instigator. The standard errors were estimated using 5,000 bootstraps. Before conducting the mediation analyses, preliminary assumption checking revealed that in the personal condition one multivariate outlier was found for the work allocation variable, the score 11 was recoded as 8, which was the next closest value. Similarly, in the situational condition one multivariate outlier was found for the work allocation variable, the score 11 was recoded as 9, which was the next closest value. The assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were satisfied after the outliers were dealt with (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Following the winsorization of the data, the analysis of the leverage, Cook’s distance, DFBETA, and Mahalanobis’ distance across and within condition showed that a few participants were identified as influential for all three outcomes. Visual inspection of the identified participants indicated that one participant might have randomly answered because she selected 1 for every emotion and 9 for every attitude for the instigator, the target, and the observer. This participant was deleted from our analyses. Descriptive statistics and correlations for the remaining 83 participants are illustrated in Table 1.
Results

Manipulation Checks

Following the enacted uncivil behaviours during the brainstorming exercise, the instigator should have been perceived as a team member who did not contribute to the group functioning as much as the other team members. To assess this, paired t-tests were performed comparing the instigator vs. the target, the instigator vs. the observer, and the target vs. the observer. Results showed that the instigator ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.77$) was perceived as a weaker team member than the target ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 0.44$), $t(82) = -13.85, p < .001$, 95% CI[-1.55, -1.16] and the observer ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 0.41$), $t(81) = -15.26, p < .001$, 95% CI[-1.66, -1.28]. These results suggest that the uncivil behaviours that the instigator (Laura) engaged in made participants believe that she was not contributing to the group functioning as much as the target (Nicki) and the observer (Sarah). The target was perceived as a better team player than the instigator, but results showed that she was perceived as a weaker team member than the observer, $t(81) = -2.37, p = .020$, 95% CI[-.21, -.02]. However, the fact that the observer was taking the notes could explain this difference.

After the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”, it was expected that there would be a significant difference in the extent to which participants would like to be on a team again with the instigator across conditions with the personal condition having the lowest score. Results from an independent sample t-test suggest that our manipulation was effective because in the personal condition ($M = 1.76$, $SD = 0.76$) participants reported significantly lower willingness to work with the instigator again compared to the situational condition ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.33$), $t(63.38) = -3.05, p = .003$, 95% CI[-1.20, -.25]. No differences were found between conditions for the target and the observer.
As per the extent to which the specific uncivil behaviours were observed, cutting off was observed by 96.3% of the participants, criticizing the target’s suggestion by 79.5%, looking at her phone by 63.9%, making a doubtful noise by 45.1%, and making an exasperation sound by 21.7%. This suggest that cutting off, criticizing, and looking at the phone were uncivil behaviours noticed by at least half of the participants.

I also analyzed these results according to either the personal or the situational condition. Results showed that in the personal condition, cutting off was observed by 92.9% of the participants (vs. 100.0% in situational), criticizing the target’s suggestion by 81.0% (vs. 78.0% in situational), looking at her phone by 66.7% (vs. 61.0% in situational), making a doubtful noise by 51.2%, (vs. 39.0% in situational) and making an exasperation sound by 26.2% (vs. 17.1% in situational). All participants identified Laura as the instigator, and it was surprising to note that in the situational condition, 39% still believed the behaviours were due in part to the instigators’ personality even if her personality was not mentioned during the experiment, whereas 56% believed it was due only to an external cause, and 5% had a different explanation.

In the personal condition, 81% believed it was only due to her personality, whereas 17% thought it might also have to do with something situational, and 2% had another explanation. For the purpose of the analysis I excluded the answers that did not include a description of either personal or situational attribution. A Chi-square analysis (See Table 2) comparing if the attribution was in concordance with the condition or if some aspect of the other type of causality was described in the participant’s answer was performed. Results showed that in the situational condition more participants believed the cause of the behaviour was also due to personal factors, $\chi^2(1, N = 90) = 5.60, p = .018$. Those results suggest that our manipulation of the situational condition might not have been as strong as expected.
Main Analyses

To assess the proposed hypotheses, I conducted three regression-based analyses using an SPSS macro (PROCESS v2.13; Hayes, 2014) estimating the proposed serial multiple mediated models (See Figure 1). PROCESS uses an ordinary least squares path analytic framework to evaluate multiple mediator models (Hayes, 2013, 2014). The experimental condition (personal or situational) was entered as the independent variable, with negative affect (PANAS-NA-state score) and attitude toward the instigator as mediator variables. A serial multiple mediated model was executed for each of the outcome variables (i.e., undesirable work allocation, work-related evaluation, and OCB).

Results indicated that for the three models, the social sharing content (i.e., listening to a colleague framing the causation of the instigator’s uncivil behaviours into situational factors) was associated with lower negative affect toward the instigator ($b = -.36, 95\% \text{ CI}[-.71, -.02])$, $F(1, 81) = 4.32, p = .041$. Negative affect ($b = -.77, 95\% \text{ CI}[-1.09, -.45]$) was significantly associated with more negative attitudes toward the instigator, but the social sharing content (i.e., listening to a situational explanation) did not affect attitude toward the instigator ($b = .40, 95\% \text{ CI}[-.11, .91])$, $F(2, 80) = 15.50, p < .001$.

In regards to Model A (See Figure 4), undesirable work allocation was significantly predicted by negative emotions ($b = .57, 95\% \text{ CI}[.03, 1.10])$, but not by attitudes toward the instigator ($b = -.15, 95\% \text{ CI}[-.49, .18])$, nor by condition (listening to a situational explanation) ($b = .15, 95\% \text{ CI}[-.62, .92])$, $F(3, 79) = 3.14, p = .030$. Results from the serial mediation analysis revealed that the direct effect of the condition on undesirable work allocation was non-significant ($b = -.15, 95\% \text{ CI}[-.62, .92])$, but that there is an indirect effect of social sharing content on undesirable work allocation through negative emotions ($b = -.20, 95\% \text{ CI}[-.60, -.01])$. In sum, H2a
was confirmed, but H1a and H3a were not supported by the results. This indicates that witnesses listening to a colleague framing the causation of the instigator’s uncivil behaviours into situational factors (compared to personal factors) assigned fewer undesired work tasks to the instigator and this relationship was completely mediated by the lower negative affect generated by framing the cause of the behaviour into situational factors.

In regards to Model B (See Figure 5), work-related evaluation was significantly predicted by attitudes toward the instigator ($b = .51, 95\% \text{CI}[.37, .66]$), but not by negative affect ($b = -.08, 95\% \text{CI}[-.31, .15]$), nor by condition (listening to a situational explanation) ($b = .01, 95\% \text{CI}[-.32, .34]$), $F(3, 79) = 26.80, p < .001$. Results from the serial mediation analysis revealed that the direct effect of condition on work-related evaluation was non-significant ($b = .01, 95\% \text{CI}[-.32, .34]$), but that there was an indirect effect of social sharing content on undesired work allocation through negative affect then attitude ($b = .14, 95\% \text{CI}[,02, .34]$). In sum, H3b was confirmed, but H1b and H2b were not supported by the results. This indicates that witnesses listening to a colleague framing the causation of the instigator’s uncivil behaviours into situational factors (compared to personal factors) did have higher work-related evaluation of the instigator and this relationship was mediated by the lower negative affect and more positive attitudes.

In regards to Model C (See Figure 6), the OCB was not significantly predicted by negative affect ($b = .23, 95\% \text{CI}[-.43, .88]$), attitudes toward the instigator ($b = .35, 95\% \text{CI}[-.07, .78]$), nor by condition (listening to a situational explanation) ($b = -.40, 95\% \text{CI}[-1.33, .53]$). Results from the serial mediation analysis revealed that the direct effect of condition on OCB was non-significant as well as the indirect effect through negative affect and the indirect effect through both negative affect and attitude. In sum, H1c, H2c and H3c were not supported by the results. This indicates that witnesses listening to a colleague framing the causation of the
instigator’s uncivil behaviours into situational factors (compared to personal factors) did not engage in more OCB toward the instigator. Conversely, 62% agreed to help in the personal condition, compared to 56% in the situational condition which is contrary to our expectations (See Table 2).

Post-Hoc Analyses

To have a better picture of how participants decided to allocate the remaining tasks, further analyses of the paired mean differences were performed between the instigator and the other team members. Results showed that in general, more tasks were given to the instigator ($M = 4.19, SD = 1.74$) compared to the target ($M = 3.36, SD = 0.85$), $t(82) = 3.30, p < .001, 95\% CI[.33, 1.33]$. And this difference held true in both the personal $t(41) = 2.56, p = .014, 95\% CI[.19, 1.58]$ and the situational conditions $t(40) = 2.10, p < .042, 95\% CI[.03, 1.53]$. This suggests that despite how the cause of the uncivil behaviours is framed by a colleague, witnesses tend to either punish the instigator or aid the target by giving them fewer tasks. Subsequent analyses showed that in the personal condition, the number of tasks allocated to the target ($M = 3.39, SD = 0.81$) did not differ from the observer ($M = 3.51, SD = 0.83$) and the participant ($M = 3.75, SD = 1.08$). However, in the situational condition, the target ($M = 3.33, SD = 0.91$) received similar amount of tasks compared to the observer ($M = 3.43, SD = 0.86$), but fewer than the participant ($M = 4.09, SD = 1.77$), $t(40) = -2.21, p = .033, 95\% CI[-1.45, -.07]$. This suggests that in the situational condition, witnesses might have tried to not only restore justice by punishing the instigator, but also by taking on themselves some of the tasks to help the target.

Discussion

Previous research examining how witnesses respond to observed incivility have focused primarily on understanding their immediate individual reactions (Reich & Henschcovic, 2015).
This approach is overly narrow in perspective as it ignores the social aspect of how employees respond to distressing events. Workplaces are social environments and people tend to discuss emotional events in order to make sense of them by giving information and expressing their feelings to their listener (Rimé, 2009). The present study addressed this gap in the literature by examining the influence that listening to a witness sharing their thoughts on an uncivil event can have on another witness’s responses. To achieve this goal, the present study manipulated the content discussed during a debriefing session (i.e., framing the cause of the incivility in terms of situational or personal factors) and explored its impact on the witness’s retributive behaviours toward the instigator (i.e., work allocation, work-related evaluation, and OCB) as mediated by their affect and attitudes.

Results from this study showed that listening to a witness discussing their thoughts on why the instigator acted uncivilly (personal or situational) has an impact on subsequent behavioural responses. More precisely, if the witness attributes the cause of the incivility to situational factors (compared to personal factors) this reduces the listener’s negative reactions and responses toward the instigator.

This reduced negativity was explained by two different mechanisms. With respect to allocating undesired work tasks to the instigator, a situational explanation reduced the witness’s negative affect which subsequently reduced the number of work allocations. In contrast, with respect to negatively evaluating the instigator, a situational explanation reduced the witness’s negative affect and improved their attitude which subsequently improved the evaluation. Despite these interesting patterns, the situational explanation had no impact on the witness’s likelihood of helping the instigator with a request after the experiment (i.e. an OCB). Moreover, the impact of
a situational (versus personal) explanation only reduced the negative outcomes indirectly (i.e. via negative affect or both negative affect and attitude).

Results from this study confirmed that negative affectivity has an important role in how people decide to respond to injustice (i.e., incivility) which is in line with the deontic model of justice (Folger, 1998, 2001). According to this model, witnesses observing uncivil behaviours may perceive that the target’s treatment was unfair based on their belief of how people should be treated in a given circumstance. This perception of injustice triggers deontic reactions - strong morally-based emotional reactions, that could then lead the individual to retaliate because they feel it is the right thing to do. Inspired by the deontic model of justice, O’Reilly and Aquino (2011) proposed a model describing how third-parties decide to respond to mistreatment. They suggested that after observing mistreatment (e.g., incivility), witnesses would have an intuitive/unconscious feeling that something is morally wrong. This would be almost instantly followed by a negative emotional reaction (moral anger) because this injustice goes against their idea of how people should be treated in the workplace. As a result of this negative emotional reaction, individuals would then make sense of the situation by evaluating the severity of the harm done, if the target deserved the treatment, and if the instigator is responsible. This study only manipulated how the confederate expressed each of these cognitions during the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”, but did not specifically assessed the participants’ cognitive process. During the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”, the observer expressed their thoughts on the instigator’s responsibility by attributing the cause of the behaviour to either personal or situational factors. As a result, framing the cause of the behaviour into situational factors could reduce the responsibility put on the instigator. Because incivility is ambiguous, the intent of harm was left unknown as expressed by the observer in the script “I don’t know why Laura acted like
that […]”. In relation to the deservingness of the treatment, the observer expressed that she felt bad for the target which indicates that the target should not have been treated like that.

This cognitive and emotional process then leads witnesses to decide on their course of action to restore justice or not. Because incivility is a form of mistreatment that is ambiguous and of low intensity, it can be inferred that witnesses would first be confused as to how they should feel. After talking to someone else to make sense of the situation (e.g., another witness), witnesses should experience moral anger if the other person convinced them that the cause of the behaviour was personal or should feel empathetic if the cause of the behaviour was framed in terms of situational factors. Feeling morally angered would then motivate the witnesses to retaliate, whereas feeling empathetic would reduce the chances of retaliation. In retrospect to the original deontic model of justice described in the introduction, it is possible that listening to a witness reframing the cause of observed incivility may not have a direct effect on the listeners’ retaliation. Our hypotheses were based on previous research that found a direct effect of observing incivility (Reich & Hershcovis, 2015) or rudeness (Porath & Erez, 2009) on witnesses’ reactions. However, the measure of incivility or rudeness in these studies were less ambiguous than in our study. As such, the behaviours in both studies were more aggressive by attacking the target directly instead of simply criticizing the idea she was providing. As an example, in Reich and Hershcovis (2015), the instigator said: “God, you’re full of bad ideas.” and “Would you seriously want to do that??!” In Porath and Erez (2009) the instigator was even more aggressive by saying: “‘come on. . .what’s taking so long? What are you, stupid? Can’t you read? This thing is a no-brainer...just do it and let’s get on with this. Can’t you tell you’re holding the entire group up?” Therefore, the elevated ambiguity in our manipulation could have reduced the estimated direct effect of reframing the cause of the behaviour in personal or situational factors.
Another explanation for the absence of a direct effect of social sharing content could be that the two conditions (personal versus situational attributions) were too similar to produce a direct effect on our outcomes (i.e., work allocation, work-related evaluation, and OCBs). In fact, both conditions were identical with the exception of one sentence where the confederate said that they either thought the instigator had a strong personality or had lost all their files due to their computer crashing. In both conditions, the confederate said: “I hate when people act like that, cause I never know how to react.” Perhaps the effect of our condition was reduced by having the confederate share a negative emotional reaction toward the instigator by saying that they feel upset. This sentence could have either been deleted from the script or modified to reflect a more empathetic emotional reaction in the situational condition in order to create a stronger effect.

With respect to the strength of the manipulation, I assessed participants’ explanations for the instigator’s behaviour after the experiment ended. Surprisingly, 39% of the participants in the situational condition still believed the behaviours were due in part to the instigators’ personality even if her personality was not mentioned during the experiment. Conversely, in the personal condition only 17% thought the behaviours were due in part to a situational factor. This discrepancy between what was said to the participant during the debriefing session in the situational condition and what they believe was the cause of the uncivil behaviours could have also affected our results. Several reasons could explain this interesting finding such as the weakness of our manipulation (as was described earlier), a lack of perceived credibility in the confederate’s comment, or a primacy effect of the attribution bias toward personal explanations. To expand on the latter reason, it is a possibility that cannot be excluded that prior to discussing the uncivil behaviour with a colleague, the witness might have already attributed the cause of the behaviour to either personal or situational factors. Due to the tendency to make personal
attributions, perhaps they disregarded the explanation given by their colleague or saw it as an alternative explanation, but still thought the behaviours were due to personal factors.

**Mediating Effect of Negative Affect and Attitude**

It is interesting to note that framing the cause of the uncivil behaviours in terms of situational factors reduced the number of task allocated to the instigator through negative affect only, but improved the work-related evaluation through negative affect and attitudes toward the instigator. As suggested by affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), following a negative event in the workplace, employees’ emotions influence their behaviours through either a direct or indirect mechanism. Negative emotions directly influence behaviours that are affect-driven, whereas, negative emotions have an indirect effect on judgment-driven behaviours through attitudes toward that event. Perhaps when witnesses make the choice of giving more or fewer tasks to the instigator, they make their choice according to how they feel and not necessarily to how they perceive the person (judgment). Because the allocation of tasks does not require a specific evaluation of the instigator, the simple fact of having negative emotions would be sufficient to generate more or less intense retributive behaviours. On the other hand, the work-related evaluation of the instigator requested witnesses to rate to what extent they would like to work with that person again. This assessment of knowing if one would like to work on a team with someone again and would perceive them as being a good research assistant requires a more evaluative process during which the instigator is judged and a decision is made to evaluate them positively or negatively.

The first surprising result is the fact that framing the cause of the behaviours into situational or personal factors did not affect the witnesses’ helping tendencies (OCBs). OCBs are voluntary behaviours that people engage in to either receive some form of benefit or to simply be
kind (Anderson & Williams, 1996). People help according to a norm of reciprocity: “You help me, I help you” (Festinger, 1950) or simply because of social norms of respect (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). If a coworker is engaging in uncivil behaviours, witnesses would deem them undeserving of this reciprocal form of respect and would refuse to help them. For example, it was shown by Porath and Erez (2009) that one act of rudeness reduced the observer’s intention to help the instigator. Refusing to engage in OCBs can be considered as an indirect form of punishment toward the instigator because the individual is refusing to be helpful. I expected that attributing the cause of the behaviours in terms of situational factors would reduce the extent to which the observer punished the instigator by refusing to help them. However, reframing was not only ineffective at increasing the witnesses’ helpfulness, but I found the opposite relationship with more participants accepting to help the instigator in the personal condition. Perhaps if injustice was done and perceived as such by the observer, their intention to help the instigator could remain the same because witnesses still believe the instigator is undeserving of their help. Moreover, the measure of OCB could have been poorly designed. Indeed, the confederate asked for help because she is looking for students to fill out surveys as part of her responsibilities for the student association. Because she was asking on behalf of the student association, the measure was not assessing helpfulness toward the instigator, but more toward the organization (University of Guelph). It could also have been possible that participants just wanted to leave after the experiment because they were exhausted from the exercise or from dealing with the instigator’s uncivil behaviours.

Despite the significant result from the mediation analysis, the analysis of the means for the amount of task allocated to the instigator indicated that, in both the personal ($M = 4.27, SD = 1.60$) and situational ($M = 4.11, SD = 1.92$) condition, the standard deviations were high. This
suggests that there might be considerable variability in how many tasks witnesses decided to allocate to the instigator, but is consistent and even lower than Reich and Hershcovis’s (2015) study which had standard deviations between 2.62 and 2.96 for a similar activity. This high variability in how participants decided to allocate the tasks suggests that the reasons for allocating the tasks between the team members may be very varied and not solely attributed to the desire to punish the instigator. No specific qualitative analysis was done to examine the reasons why witnesses chose to allocate the remaining tasks, but the variability in the explanations suggests that restoring justice is not the only possible motivator to allocate undesired tasks. For example, some may have decided to allocate the tasks according to whom they perceived would complete the task faster, to the reliability of the team members, to the way the team members interacted as a group, etc. This indicates that some individuals thought about the group performance as a more important outcome than punishing the instigator for their uncivil behaviours. This aspect of the possible witnesses’ reactions should be considered in future studies by taking into consideration the fact that punishment is not the only option. To do so, a qualitative study could assess the various possible reactions to observing WPI and then a survey could assess the frequency and antecedents of this response.

In regards to how the tasks were allocated among the various team members (as assessed in the post-hoc analyses), the fact that the participants gave themselves more tasks in the situational condition could suggests that they might have tried to not only restore justice by punishing the instigator, but also by taking on themselves some of the tasks to help the target. Perhaps after listening to a situational explanation, witnesses felt that the instigator was not as deserving of a retaliation (compared to personal explanation), but felt that the target still needed some support. In an attempt at helping the target, they might have thought that by allocating
more tasks to themselves they would restore justice in a more constructive way. This finding has some theoretical implications because it suggests that some individuals are ready to sacrifice themselves to restore justice by helping the target. This opens a new area of investigation that could include the assessment of factors leading witnesses to sacrifice themselves in an attempt to restore justice.

**Summary of Findings**

In sum, the results from this study showed that as proposed by the affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), individuals experience negative emotions following distressing events when working with others. Applied to the workplace, our findings support the idea that the way colleagues frame their views of an uncivil interaction when discussing with a witness impacts the witness’s affect and attitudes towards the instigator. And when witnesses experience negative emotions following incivility, they will tend to engage in retributive behaviours in order to restore justice.

As expressed by the attribution theory (Betancourt & Blair, 1992; Keaveney, 2008; Weiner, 1985), when making personal attribution (compared to situational attribution), people tend to react more negatively, and our result supported this proposition. Indeed, witnesses listening to a colleague framing the cause of the behaviours in terms of situational factors engaged in fewer retributive behaviours. Finally, depending on the type of retributive behaviour available to the observer, the mechanism explaining this relationship will vary, with negative emotions explaining affect-driven behaviours (e.g., allocation of undesired tasks) and negative emotions and attitudes explaining judgment-driven behaviours (e.g., work-related evaluation).
Theoretical Implications

Incivility was first defined by Andersson and Pearson (1999) as a low-intense deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm that goes against the mutual norms of respect. Andersson and Pearson described how this highly prevalent behaviour could escalate into more aggressive behaviours due to an incivility spiral of anger and retaliation (tit-for-tat model). However, despite the possible escalation of incivility into violence, only a minority of extremely violent incidents are reported. Results from this study provide an explanation to why the escalation does not always happen. Indeed, this study shows that reframing the cause of the behaviour in terms of situational factors instead of personal factors could serve as an emotion regulation strategy to prevent the risk of an incivility spiral. For instance, when observing incivility, witnesses tend to experience negative affect, but listening to another witness reframing the cause of the behaviour into situational factors could reduce this negative affect. Because the decision-making process to intervene or not includes both an emotional response and cognitive assessment of the instigator’s responsibility (O’Reilly & Aquino, 2011), reframing could reduce the extent to which witnesses engage in retributive behaviours which would in turn start or maintain an incivility spiral. Indeed, by reframing in terms of situational attribution, the witness is able to understand the instigator’s point of view and might feel more empathetic as a result.

The ability to take perspective in a conflict situation is an aspect of empathy. It was shown by Betancourt and Blair (1992) that attributing the cause of a behaviour to less controllable factors made the individual feel more empathetic. This empathetic feeling led to fewer violent reactions. Results from this study confirms this tendency by showing that listening to someone framing the cause of the behaviour into situational factors reduced the negativity of the affect which then resulted in fewer retributive behaviours. This could reflect the fact that
participants might have felt more empathetic toward the instigator after being aware of their computer problem, which affected the participants’ responses. However, no specific assessment of the empathetic feelings toward the instigator was performed, therefore these conclusions are only speculations.

Moreover, previous research assessing witnesses’ reaction (Reich & Hershcovis, 2015) has primarily focused on understanding the parties of the incivility spiral in silos without considering the social nature of the workplace environment. This study makes a significant contribution to the literature by considering and showing the impact of coworkers’ interactions in the study of how incivility spirals could spread or terminate. Similar to our results, the venting literature has found that when someone is experiencing a conflict with an offender, the effect of venting about the situation was dependent on the content of the reply from the other party (Parlamis, 2012). If the other party was reframing the cause in terms of situational factors (versus personal), the venting person was feeling less angry, but felt better only when the other party was reinforcing the personal attribution. It can thus be expected that people might vent expecting the other party to confirm their thoughts and feelings about the instigator, but based on the results from this study providing a reinterpretation of the cause of the behaviour into situational factors would be a better avenue to reduce subsequent retributive behaviours.

**Practical Implications**

Results from this study has several implications for managers who wish to increase the performance of their team by reducing the extent to which incivility permeates their organization. Indeed, a first implication resides in the importance of the social sharing content of the interactions between employees. As was shown, framing the cause of the behaviours in terms of situational factors can alleviate the negative consequences of witnessing incivility.
Consequently, managers could reinforce the importance of understanding all perspectives of a conflict situation when responding to someone venting about problems they have with another colleague. By having more empathy towards both the target and the instigator, witnesses would help them solve the issue at the root of the problem instead of “putting oil into the fire” by simply confirming everything that the target might say. In the case where no situational explanations are readily available, it could be important for managers or employees to talk with the instigator in a non-judgmental way to probe if anything could have caused them to act like that.

This logic also applies for manager’s responses to observing uncivil behaviours, such that reframing will be critically important when employees approach their manager for help after being the target of uncivil behaviours. By being non-judgmental of the instigator’s behaviour and by trying to understand the situation from both perspectives prior to reprimanding the offender, the manager would reinforce the perception that the organization fairly treats their employees. However, the manager needs to be careful of not devaluing the target’s experience. To do so, the manager could express to the target that they understand their feeling and will go see the instigator to understand what happened and could in the end create a mediating meeting where both the instigator and the target could discuss the situation. Moreover, by acting right away on the situation, managers would reinforce that the norms for respect need to be valued and applied by all employees, which could reduce the chances of having a secondary incivility spiral.

The design of this study reflects the work that newly formed teams have to do at the beginning of their team process. Therefore, the results from this study can be generalized to newly formed teams, but over time if the instigator keeps engaging in uncivil behaviours, reframing the cause of the behaviours into situational factors will no longer be a valid argument.
Indeed, if someone keeps acting in a similar fashion over the course of several weeks or several months, different mechanisms should be put in place to reduce the risk of an incivility spiral. Such mechanism could include coaching to help the instigator understand the extent to which their behaviours are being disruptive and unpleasant. Moreover, one main task that newly formed teams need to do is to establish a set of norms for their group functioning. Graham (2003) proposed a model of norm development based on computer-mediated teams and suggested that the process of norm development starts with an initiation event where the need for norms is established, then a set of norms are proposed, boundaries are discussed and then accepted. Then, the team moves on to work together and either comply or not with these norms. A special attention needs to be given to the differences in how team members understand each norm because it could be the source of possible conflict and in the context of this study could lead to perceptions of incivility. Indeed, team members might have a different understanding of the boundaries for the established norms which could result in perceived uncivil behaviours because what might seem like a respectful behaviour for one could be perceived as uncivil by another.

Results from this study also shed light on what could be a possible avenue for the creation of new interventions to reduce WPI. Indeed, previous intervention focused mainly in increasing the level of civility among team members. However, uncivil behaviours will still occur because they stem from the perception of unfair treatment and some individuals are more sensitive to these perceptions. As such, creating workshops and team building exercises to help employees reframe their attributions could help reduce the risk of an incivility spiral. In sum, new interventions could empower employees as third-parties and give them confidence that they can have a positive influence on how others react to incivility by taking perspective prior to responding to an uncivil situation. Witnesses are affected by the uncivil event, but making an
attempt at understanding the situation from both the instigator and the target’s perspective prior to reacting could alleviate the negativity of the response and promote more civil ways to cope.

**Research Implications**

**Limitations.** This study is not without its flaws. First, due to recruitment issues, the sample size was smaller than the 111 participants suggested by the power analysis. The lack of power from our sample size could explain the lack of significance for the model assessing the helping behaviours (OCBs). Moreover, our sample comprised only of female undergraduate students which reduces the external validity and the generalizability of our results. I chose to assess only females to control for any gender effects (Miner et al., 2012) as it was shown that, when the target of the uncivil behaviour is of the same gender, observer tends to react more negatively. Future research should investigate whether the mechanism of witnesses’ reactions varies by gender. According to a meta-analysis by Archer (2004), males tend to use physical and verbal aggression more often than females which could translate into different patterns of behavioural responses to observed WPI.

Second, there was no assessment of participants’ negative affect prior to the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing” and no assessment of the attribution participants made after the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”. Therefore, I cannot conclude that the negative affect measured in this study stem from the social sharing of emotion (anger or empathy) during the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing” or if the participants cognitively processed and adapted their emotional reactions following the causal attribution made by the other observer. It might be that discussing the uncivil behaviours increased the negative affect regardless of the attribution, but it was not possible to eliminate this possibility based on our design. All I can conclude is that there is a difference in emotional reactions following a situational or personal explanation. Future
studies should assess emotional state prior to the witnessed incivility, as well as the emotional reaction before and after the “Team Effectiveness Debriefing”. Moreover, no measure checked if the participant made a personal or situational attribution after the debriefing session. Our manipulation check simply ensured that both conditions resulted in the expected reaction toward the instigator with personal factors leading to more negative outcomes.

Third, because the design of this study required the presence of three confederates for every participant, it was difficult to consistently have the same roles performed by the same confederates. Moreover, the experimenter was outside the experimental room and could only hear the interactions, therefore, controlling for the consistency of the conditions was not possible. Consequently, results from this study need to be taken with consideration due to the possible confounding variables introduced by having several individuals acting in the various roles and 9 confederates acting as the instigator. When looking at the variables’ mean for each confederate, results show a lot of variability in our measures. For example, the mean for negative affect across the different instigators varied from 1.50 to 2.59 on a possible range of 1 to 5. Perhaps some of the confederates were more empathetic, less angry, or more likable than others which would explain the high variability in our outcome measures. Future research should try to reduce the variability of the conditions by having as few confederates as possible and to measure if all confederates generate negative affect the same way during the incivility manipulation. For example, if there are 3 confederates acting as the instigator, having an analysis of the extent to which they make the participants feel the same way would be necessary to ensure that there are no variability in the manipulation.

Fourth, our measure of negative affect did not perform as well as I expected. Previous studies using the PANAS-NA scale had high reliability (Crawford & Henry, 2004), however I
adapted the question to reflect participants’ affect toward the instigator instead of a general affective feeling. Modifying the PANAS-NA original question could have altered its reliability and validity. Therefore, to cope with the unreliability of the PANAS-NA scale, I had to subselect some items according to their relevance in the study of incivility and this modification could have altered our results. Future studies should use the PANAS-NA as was designed originally to ensure reliability of the scale or should design a measure using appropriate methodology to confirm the reliability and validity prior to its use.

**Directions for future research.** Despite the previously described limitations, this study still brings significant value by considering the interactive aspect of the workplace in the study of reactions to incivility. Indeed, previous studies have ignored this aspect of the work context and therefore are missing some important information about how individuals behave. Research on witnesses’ reaction to mistreatment and injustice (e.g., incivility) is booming and future research would greatly benefit from incorporating the interactional aspect of the workplace in their study design. To do so, I suggest that a measure of emotional reaction following a witnessed uncivil interaction be developed because the current popular measure of negative affect (PANAS-NA) was not reliable in this study. Moreover, having a negative affect scale does not allow researchers to assess the influence of each emotion on the witnesses’ response, therefore I suggest that the negative affect scale include at least 3 items for each emotion to allow the assessment of the influence of these emotion independently. This measure could include several items, but as a starting point could include the negative emotions used in this study: distressed, upset, hostile, and irritable. These four emotions are in congruence with the proposed moral anger felt when witnessing mistreatment (O’Reilly & Aquino, 2011).
Following the development of this new measure, a replication study could assess whether negative affect and attitudes mediate the relationship between the social sharing content and the retributive behaviours. Moreover, to improve the strength of the study design, a few modifications would be necessary. First, having as few confederates as possible or computerizing the experimentation would help to increase the consistency of the methodology. Second, including a measure of the negative affect towards the instigator prior and after the debriefing session would allow researchers to determine if the discussion increased the negative affectivity. Third, it would be interesting to have a specific measure of the attribution made by the participants prior and after the debriefing to see if their attributions were influenced by the content of the social sharing. Fourth, a 2 (social sharing content: personal or situational) X 3 (Referent: target, instigator, or observer) would be an interesting design to assess whether the person discussing the attribution during the debriefing (target, instigator, or observer) affects the witnesses’ reactions. Finally, including outcomes that reflect the wide range of possible behaviours following the observation of mistreatment could help us grasp the wider range of possible coping strategies that witnesses are willing to engage in (e.g., do nothing, punish directly, punish indirectly, and help the target; O’Reilly & Aquino, 2011).

**Conclusion**

The stress stemming from the need for performance and the ambiguity resulting from increased diversity, globalization, and asynchronous interactions in today’s workplaces contribute to the emergence of incivility. Similarly, workplaces are highly collaborative environments where individuals need to cooperate to perform. This elevated chance of observing incivility from both peers and superiors increases the chance of having an incivility spiral (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The violation of these norms of respect have negative
consequences for the target, but also for coworkers who witnessed directly or indirectly the situation. Because people tend to share their emotions and thoughts when they witness negative events in the workplace, it is therefore essential to focus on how employees respond in these conversations. The results from this experimental study deepened our understanding of WPI and the emotional regulatory effect that reframing (in terms of situational factors) has on witnesses’ reaction. As a consequence, by reducing the negative retributive behaviours toward the instigator, the attribution of causality was found to alleviate the negative impact that WPI can have on team work and ultimately on the organizational performance. The results from this study can thus be used to improve workplace prevention and intervention on WPI in order to enhance employees’ well-being and performance by empowering witnesses as third-parties to reduce the incidence of WPI.
References


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<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<td>-.51**</td>
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<td>[-.65, -.33]</td>
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<td>-.24*</td>
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<td>[-.43, -.02]</td>
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<td>-.00</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.21</td>
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Note. * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$. Conditions were coded as 0 = Personal and 1 = Situational. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation. The confidence interval is a plausible range of population correlations that could have caused the sample correlation (Cumming, 2014).
Table 2
Contingency table of willingness to help the instigator (OCB)

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<th>OCB</th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal (%)</td>
<td>Situational (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16 (38.1)</td>
<td>18 (43.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26 (61.9)</td>
<td>23 (56.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42 (100.0)</td>
<td>41 (100.0)</td>
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Figure 1
The mediated model of social sharing and retributive behaviours following witnessed incivility. The direct effect is represented by the dashed line.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>MAIN ROOM</th>
<th>SEPARATE ROOMS</th>
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<td>Consent Form</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Personality Test</td>
<td>Team Effectiveness Debriefing</td>
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<td>#3</td>
<td>Brainstorming Exercise <em>(Incivility)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 confrerade + 1 participant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Teammate Evaluation Form *(Uncivil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manipulation Check)*</td>
<td>1 confrerade + 1 participant</td>
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<tr>
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<td>OPEN THE COMPUTERS</td>
<td>Preference for Teammate <em>(Attribution Manipulation Check)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PANAS-NA-State</td>
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<td>MAIN ROOM</td>
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<td>Research Assistant Evaluation</td>
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<td>OCB Sign-up Sheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>True Study Purpose Awareness +</td>
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<td>Manipulation Checks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Debriefing form + second consent form</td>
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<td>10 min</td>
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*Figure 2*
Overview of procedures
Figure 3
Overview of the seating configuration
MODEL A

![Diagram showing the serial multiple mediated model for the effect of social sharing content on work allocation.]

**Figure 4**
Serial multiple mediated model for the effect of social sharing content on work allocation.
**MODEL B**

![Diagram of the model](image)

**Figure 5**
Serial multiple mediated model for the effect of social sharing content on work-related evaluation.
**MODEL C**

![Diagram](image)

<table>
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<th>Direct Effect</th>
<th>Indirect Effect 1</th>
<th>Indirect Effect 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cond-&gt;OCB</td>
<td>Cond-&gt;Emotion-&gt;OCB</td>
<td>Cond-&gt;Emotion-&gt;Att-&gt;OCB</td>
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<td>-.40, 95%CI [-1.33, .53]</td>
<td>-.08, 95%CI [-.59, .13]</td>
<td>.10, 95%CI [-.01, .36]</td>
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**Figure 6**
Serial multiple mediated model for the effect of social sharing content on OCB.
Appendix A. Cover Story Description

Temporary teams are often created in the workplace in order to accomplish very specific tasks. These newly formed teams need to collaborate and learn to work with each other in a very short period of time. We are interested in understanding how working with diverse types of personality affects the team effectiveness through the different emotions it generates. One experiment will take a total of 60 minutes and a participation credit will be given following your voluntary participation and you can opt out of the project at any time or skip any question you prefer not to answer without penalty. Thank you for taking the time to assist me in understanding and improving team work effectiveness.
Appendix B. Consent to Participate in Research

Title of Project: Personality, Mood, and Team Effectiveness

Dear Participant,

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jessica Garant and Dr. Peter Hausdorf, from the Department of Psychology at the University of Guelph. The results from this study will contribute to Jessica’s Master thesis project.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact either Jessica Garant (garant@uoguelph.ca; 519-824-4120, Ext. 58931) or Dr. Peter Hausdorf (519-824-4120, Ext. 53976; phausdor@uoguelph.ca).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
Temporary teams are often created in the workplace in order to accomplish very specific tasks. These newly formed teams need to collaborate and learn to work with each other in a very short period of time. We are interested in understanding how working with diverse types of personality affects the team effectiveness through the different emotions it generates.

PROCEDURES
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will first complete a personality questionnaire. Then, you will be paired with three other participants to perform a brainstorming exercise that will take around 10 minutes. After the brainstorming exercise, you will be paired with one of your team members to interview each other on the team’s effectiveness in completing the exercise. Then you will perform a task and complete a final evaluation of all your team members.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
You might be frustrated by the time it takes to complete the experiment. Working with newly met team members can be uncomfortable at first, but other than this we anticipate no reasonably foreseeable risks, and/or inconveniences for your participating in the current study.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY
Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their personality and how they interact in a small group setting. Participants will also have the chance to learn about the research methodologies in the field of psychology.

The results from this study will address a gap in the field of industrial and organizational psychology specifically by increasing our understanding of team interactions in the context of newly formed teams.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION
A total of 1 course credit will be given following your voluntary participation in the current research study.
CONFIDENTIALITY
Every effort will be made to ensure that any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this study is anonymized. Only the University of Guelph researchers will have access to the identified data and once these data have been linked, your name will be deleted from the data file. Your personal data will never be released to anyone outside the research team. Only aggregated data (averages) will be analyzed, and no names will be used.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind (participants will still get 1 course credit), simply inform the experimenter. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study (by letting the researchers know of your decision). You may also refuse to answer any questions you don’t want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that warrant doing so.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty (i.e. you will still earn your research credit). You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant and/or the use and safety of human subjects in this research project, contact:

Director, Research Ethics
University of Guelph,
437 University Centre
Guelph, ON, N1G 2W1
Telephone: (519) 824-4120, ext. 56606
Email: reb@uoguelph.ca
Fax: (519) 821-5236

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in understanding and improve workplaces by participating in this research study.

If you would like a summary copy of this study or if you require additional information or have questions, please contact the researchers by email or at the number listed below.

Jessica Garant
garant@uoguelph.ca
519-824-4120, Ext. 58931
Department of Psychology
University of Guelph

Dr. Peter Hausdorf
phausdor@uoguelph.ca
519-824-4120, Ext. 53976
Department of Psychology
University of Guelph
SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided for the study “Personality, Mood, and Team Effectiveness” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

____________________________________
Name of Participant (please print)

____________________________________
Signature of Participant

____________________________________
Date

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

____________________________________
Name of Witness (please print)

____________________________________
Signature of Witness

____________________________________
Date
Appendix C. Online Qualtrics Experiment

*Note. The dashed line represents the end of a slide in the Qualtrics experiment*

*Slide 1*

Please write your first name.
### Slide 2

**PERSONALITY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Below are five pairs of descriptions. **SELECT** one point between them that reflects how much you think each description sounds like you.

**Generally, I come across as:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Someone who is talkative, outgoing, is comfortable around people, but could be noisy and attention seeking</th>
<th>Someone who is a reserved, private person, doesn’t like to draw attention to themselves and can be shy around strangers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>someone who is forthright, tends to be critical and find fault with others and doesn’t suffer fools gladly</td>
<td>someone who is generally trusting and forgiving, is interested in people, but can be taken for granted and finds it difficult to say no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone who is sensitive and excitable, and can be tense</td>
<td>someone who is relaxed, unemotional rarely gets irritated and seldom feels blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone who likes to plan things, likes to tidy up, pays attention to details, but can be rigid or inflexible</td>
<td>someone who doesn’t necessarily work to a schedule, tends to be flexible, but disorganised and often forgets to put things back in their proper place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone who is a practical person who is not interested in abstract ideas, prefers work that is routine and has few artistic interests</td>
<td>someone who spends time reflecting on things, has an active imagination and likes to think up new ways of doing things, but may lack pragmatism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Slide 3

Great! The **Personality Questionnaire** is now done.

Let the experimenter know that you are finished.

The experimenter will enter the password to continue the study.

### Slide 4

The following questionnaire is a **Team Member Evaluation Form** to understand how each team member performed during the brainstorming exercise.

Today you were working with:

- **Laura**
- **Nicki**
- **Sarah**
Slide 5

TEAM MEMBER EVALUATION FORM

Below is a list of criteria necessary for the efficient functioning of a group. For each criterion, award each of your TEAM MEMBERS marks as follows and SELECT the appropriate number to record your answers.

3 for “better than most of the group in this respect”
2 for “about average for this group in this respect”
1 for “not as good as most of the group in this respect”
0 for “no help at all in this respect”
If necessary, you can even award:
- 1 for “a hindrance to the group in this respect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-1 Hindrance</th>
<th>0 No help</th>
<th>1 Not as good as most</th>
<th>2 Average</th>
<th>3 Better than most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treating everyone equally</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting of other’s suggestions/ideas</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening carefully to each other’s opinions</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Laura**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-1 Hindrance</th>
<th>0 No help</th>
<th>1 Not as good as most</th>
<th>2 Average</th>
<th>3 Better than most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treating everyone equally</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting of other’s suggestions/ideas</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening carefully to each other’s opinions</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nicki**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-1 Hindrance</th>
<th>0 No help</th>
<th>1 Not as good as most</th>
<th>2 Average</th>
<th>3 Better than most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treating everyone equally</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting of other’s suggestions/ideas</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening carefully to each other’s opinions</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 6

Great! The **Team Member Evaluation Form** is now done.

Next is the **Team Effectiveness Debriefing**.

Let the experimenter know that you are finished and you will be paired with one of your team members.

---

Slide 7

The experimenter will enter the password to continue the study.

---

Slide 8

Temporary teams are often created in the workplace in order to accomplish very specific tasks. These newly formed teams need to collaborate and learn to work with each other in a very short period of time.

You will be asked to complete a task and, then, to evaluate your team members.

Moreover, in organizations, employees are often in situations where they must divide tasks among different people. In this study, we are also interested in exploring how “task allocation decisions” are made. As such, unknown to the rest of the team members, one person will be randomly chosen to anonymously divide the task among themselves and other team members.

---

Slide 9

As part of your teamwork, you are asked to complete the following task.

Your goal is to correctly enter a series of alphanumeric keys as fast as possible (Your time is being monitored).

Be careful, the keys are sensitive to upper and lower cases.
Enter the following alphanumeric keys as fast as possible. Be careful, the keys need to be exact in order to complete the task. Keys contain numbers (0-9), uppercase letters, and lowercase letters.

G6bjlE91vP0a2m1dT6AOq4lTo8B

Enter the following alphanumeric keys as fast as possible. Be careful, the keys need to be exact in order to complete the task. Keys contain numbers (0-9), uppercase letters, and lowercase letters.

4bor2P8V0hqM7GD1Xa5MOh6Y

Enter the following alphanumeric keys as fast as possible. Be careful, the keys need to be exact in order to complete the task. Keys contain numbers (0-9), uppercase letters, and lowercase letters.

x8Ed92YnN03oO1v4qQwPc4801
**Slide 13**

Please rate your enjoyment of the alphanumeric key task on a 21-point scale from 1 (no liking at all) to 21 (extreme liking).

![Rating Scale]

---

**Slide 14**

Great!
You just completed your assigned task!

---

**Slide 15**

The next section is a *Teamwork Evaluation Form*, please answer the following questions about your different team members.

This first section will be about:
- **Laura**

---

**Slide 16**

1. **Indicate** how strongly you would like to be on a team again with **Laura**. Use the following scale to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 (Strongly Disagree)</th>
<th>2 (Moderately Disagree)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat Disagree)</th>
<th>4 (Neutral)</th>
<th>5 (Slightly Agree)</th>
<th>6 (Moderately Agree)</th>
<th>7 (Strongly Agree)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would like to be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on a team with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>him/her again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Indicate to what extent Laura made you feel this way during the brainstorming exercise.

**SELECT** the appropriate number to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Very slightly or not at all</th>
<th>2 A little</th>
<th>3 Moderately</th>
<th>4 Quite a bit</th>
<th>5 Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritable</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashamed</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jittery</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
<td>♡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. For each pair of adjectives, **SELECT** the point between them that reflects the extent to which you believe the adjectives describe Laura.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfriendly</th>
<th>Friendly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unlikeable</td>
<td>Likeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unapproachable</td>
<td>Approachable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
<td>Modest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased</td>
<td>Unbiased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 19

This second section will be about:
- **Nicki**

Slide 20

1. **Indicate** how strongly you would like to be on a team again with **Nicki**. Use the following scale to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to be on a team with him/her again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slide 21

2. This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Indicate to what extent **Nicki** made you feel this way during the brainstorming exercise.

**SELECT** the appropriate number to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Very slightly or not at all</th>
<th>2 A little</th>
<th>3 Moderately</th>
<th>4 Quite a bit</th>
<th>5 Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>1 Very slightly or not at all</td>
<td>2 A little</td>
<td>3 Moderately</td>
<td>4 Quite a bit</td>
<td>5 Extremely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashamed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jittery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Slide 22

3. For each pair of adjectives, **SELECT** the point between them that reflects the extent to which you believe the adjectives describe **Nicki**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfriendly</th>
<th>Friendly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unlikeable</td>
<td>Likeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unapproachable</td>
<td>Approachable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
<td>Modest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased</td>
<td>Unbiased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Slide 23

This third section will be about:

- **Sarah**

### Slide 24

1. **Indicate** how strongly you would like to be on a team again with **Sarah**. Use the following scale to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would like to be on a team with him/her again</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>⬤</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 25

2. This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Indicate to what extent **Sarah made you feel this way during the brainstorming exercise.**

**SELECT** the appropriate number to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Very slightly or not at all</th>
<th>2 A little</th>
<th>3 Moderately</th>
<th>4 Quite a bit</th>
<th>5 Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritable</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashamed</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jittery</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slide 26

3. For each pair of adjectives, **SELECT** the point between them that reflects the extent to which you believe the adjectives describe **Sarah.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfriendly</th>
<th>Friendly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unlikeable</td>
<td>Likeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unapproachable</td>
<td>Approachable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
<td>Modest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased</td>
<td>Unbiased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 28

You were randomly assigned to allocate the remaining tasks.

The rest of the team are not aware that you will divide the work.

Your team still needs to complete 15 alphanumeric keys and you need to allocate the number of keys each member will enter.

The number of keys you decide to allocate will be anonymously distributed and completed by each team member at the end of the experiment.

No one will know who allocated the keys.

Slide 29

To help you divide the task (15 alphanumeric keys) among your team members, here are your team members’ enjoyment of the task.

Laura = no liking at all
Nicki = no liking at all
Sarah = no liking at all

Slide 30

Allocate 15 alphanumeric keys among your team members.

Take note that the total needs to be 15.

| Number of keys allocated to Laura. | 0 |
| Number of keys allocated to Nicki. | 0 |
| Number of keys allocated to Sarah. | 0 |
| Number of keys allocated to yourself. | 0 |
| Total | 0 |

Could you please explain in 2 to 3 sentences what are the reasons why you chose to allocate the alphanumeric keys to your team members?
Great! You allocated the remaining tasks to your team members.

Let the experimenter know that you are finished.

The experimenter will enter the password to end the study.

---

### Slide 32

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT EVALUATION**

**SELECT** how strongly you agree with each statement about yourself and your team members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yourself</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>VOLUNTEER</strong> research assistantship?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>PAID</strong> research assistantship?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to work with this person again, for example, in another research study?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laura</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>VOLUNTEER</strong> research assistantship?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>PAID</strong> research assistantship?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to work with this person again, for example, in another research study?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicki</td>
<td>1 Definitely Not</td>
<td>2 Probably Not</td>
<td>3 Maybe</td>
<td>4 Probably</td>
<td>5 Definitely</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>VOLUNTEER</strong> research assistantship?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>PAID</strong> research assistantship?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would you like to work with this person again, for example, in another research study?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>1 Definitely Not</th>
<th>2 Probably Not</th>
<th>3 Maybe</th>
<th>4 Probably</th>
<th>5 Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>VOLUNTEER</strong> research assistantship?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you think this person should be considered for a <strong>PAID</strong> research assistantship?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to work with this person again, for example, in another research study?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for participating in this research project. Your contribution is highly valued. Please answer the following questions and then read the debriefing form.

1. During the study, were you aware of the research purpose? Please SELECT your answer.
   - No
   - Yes

2. If YES, please explain in 1 or 2 sentences what you think was the research purpose.
3. **During the brainstorming exercise**, have you observed the following behaviours from a participant toward another participant?

Indicate your agreement by **SELECTING** the appropriate number to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Not sure</th>
<th>4 Agree</th>
<th>5 Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exasperation sound after a suggestion</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking at her phone when the person was talking</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubtful noise/expression of disbelief after a suggestion</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticizing the person's suggestion</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting off the person</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. What was the name of the person who **was treating** the other participant differently?

   

5. Why do you think the person acted like that? (Refer to the behaviours identified in question #3)

   

---

**Slide 35**

Great! The study is now finished.

Please let the experimenter know that you are done.

When every participant will be finished, the experimenter will distribute the debriefing forms.
Appendix D. Personality Questionnaire

Below are five pairs of descriptions. SELECT one point between them that reflects how much you think each description sounds like you.

Generally, I come across as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Someone who is talkative, outgoing, is comfortable around people, but could be noisy and attention seeking</th>
<th>Someone who is a reserved, private person, doesn’t like to draw attention to themselves and can be shy around strangers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone who is forthright, tends to be critical and find fault with others and doesn’t suffer fools gladly</td>
<td>Someone who is generally trusting and forgiving, is interested in people, but can be taken for granted and finds it difficult to say no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone who is sensitive and excitable, and can be tense</td>
<td>Someone who is relaxed, unemotional rarely gets irritated and seldom feels blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone who likes to plan things, likes to tidy up, pays attention to details, but can be rigid or inflexible</td>
<td>Someone who doesn’t necessarily work to a schedule, tends to be flexible, but disorganised and often forgets to put things back in their proper place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone who is a practical person who is not interested in abstract ideas, prefers work that is routine and has few artistic interests</td>
<td>Someone who spends time reflecting on things, has an active imagination and likes to think up new ways of doing things, but may lack pragmatism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E. Brainstorming Guidelines

THE 4 BASIC GUIDELINES OF BRAINSTORMING

1) **Criticism is ruled out.** Adverse judgment of ideas must be withheld until later. The purpose of the brainstorming session is the generation of many, varied and unusual options.

2) **Freewheeling is welcomed.** The wilder the idea, the better; it is easier to tame down than to think up. Since criticism is temporarily ruled out, it’s acceptable and desired that really wild and unusual ideas are shared.

3) **Quantity is wanted.** The greater the number of ideas, the greater the likelihood of useful ideas.

4) **Combination and improvement are sought.** In addition to contributing ideas of their own, participants should suggest how the ideas of others can be turned into better ideas; or how two or more ideas can be joined into still another idea.

---

**THE UNIVERSITY PROBLEM**

Today, you will be working during **10 minutes** on the university problem with your team members:

List all the possible ways in which the University of Guelph can be improved and then, as a team, choose the idea that the group feels would provide the greatest improvement for students.

Here are a few categories to help you generate ideas:

*Addition/Construction/Renovation, Campus Activities, Campus Safety, Classes, Costs, Dorms, Organizations, People Interaction, and Teachers.*
PROBLEM: THE UNIVERSITY PROBLEM


BEST SOLUTION:
Appendix F. Incivility Script

Laura Smith = Instigator
Sarah Baker = Observer (personal or situational)
Nicki Walsh = Target

10 minutes

Sarah: “I don’t mind taking notes of the suggestions. Okay, so how could we improve the university?”
Laura: [AD LIB] “Mackinnon washrooms” [Nicki agrees].
Sarah: [AD LIB] “More advertisement of events happening on campus.” [Nicki agrees]
Nicki: [AD LIB] “Yeah there are events downtown and I am never aware.”
Participant: *** At least one suggestion from participant***

8 minutes

Laura: “I think that more activities should take place on campus. For example, I think that having a local band play at the beginning of the school year could be a great way to welcome new students and celebrate.”
Nicki: “Yeah that’s a good idea. I also think that there could be some art exhibition to allow local artists to expose their creations.”
Laura: “[The instigator makes a doubtful noise to indicate her distrust] Humm…That’s just not possible, I don’t know any place that would allow artists to expose. And, painting the cannon is already an artistic opportunity.”
Nicki: “[The target will make a face expression indicating her shamefulness]”.
Laura: “But what would be a good idea is to have more outlets available. There are no outlets in the UC which makes it difficult to work for a long time.”

7 minutes

Sarah: “I think that there should be more space available for studying. It’s kinda frustrating to go to the library or the UC and not being able to sit at a table to work. So, like maybe leaving the classroom open late at night for people to go study could be a solution to cope with the lack of quiet study spaces.”
Nicki: “We could build a second library.”
Laura: “No thanks, I don’t want my tuition to be raised any more than it already is.” [From here, Nicki stops agreeing].

Participant: *** At least one suggestion from participant*** [If participant doesn’t say anything, Sarah probes the participant by asking if they have other idea.]

6 minutes

Sarah: [AD LIB] “Having a better maintenance of the south residence.”

Nicki: [AD LIB] “Healthy choices at the cafeteria.” [While Nicki is talking, Laura is looking at her phone].

Laura: “[After Nicki is done talking] What?

Nicki: “I was just saying that we should have more healthy food choice on campus.”

Laura: “Oh. Well what would be important is to … ” [AD LIB] “Improving temperature control, example: the Library is always cold.”

4 minutes

Sarah: “I think that there should be compost on campus since the university is environmentally friendly.”

Nicki: “Yeah that’s true, I have a related idea [The instigator interrupts the target with her hand].” [If probed to finish idea by the participant the target says the following:] There could be online textbooks.”

Laura: “One sec.” [Sarah is making a surprised face indicating her shock of seeing that and pause before taking notes]. [The instigator probes Sarah] “That’s a really good idea! How could we make that happen?” [The instigator never returns to the target’s idea.]

Sarah: “[Pause] Well, we could write a letter to the Dean.”

Participant: *** At least one suggestion from participant*** [If participant doesn’t say anything, Sarah probes the participant by asking if they have other idea.]

Sarah: [AD LIB] “More safewalk in the parking lot. I feel that’s where there should be emergency button at night.”

Nicki: “Yeah it’s really sketchy at night.”

2:30 minute

Laura: [Only if time allows it] “We could have more stress busters throughout the semester. For example, having dogs or cats days more often to let people relax and relieve their stress.”
1:30 minute

[The experimenter reminds everyone that they need to come up with the best solution]

**Nicki:** “[In an uncertain voice] … I think that to have more space to study … [Before the target finishes her sentence, the instigator cuts her off].”

**Laura:** “[The instigator cuts the target off] … OKAY so what is on our list [Sarah reads out loud the items she took note of during the exercise].

**Sarah:** “What did you think was the best idea to improve the university?”

**Laura:** “I liked the idea of having compost on campus.”

**Nicki:** “Yeah sure”
Appendix G. Team Member Evaluation Form

Below is a list of criteria necessary for the efficient functioning of a group.

First **WRITE THE NAMES** of all your team members. Then, for each criterion, award each of your **TEAM MEMBERS** marks as follows and **CIRCLE** the appropriate number to record your answers.

3 for “better than most of the group in this respect”  
2 for “about average for this group in this respect”  
1 for “not as good as most of the group in this respect”  
0 for “no help at all in this respect”  
If necessary, you can even award:  
-1 for “a hindrance to the group in this respect”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Member</th>
<th>Hindrance</th>
<th>No help</th>
<th>Not as good as most</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Better than most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treating everyone equally</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting of other’s suggestions/ideas</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening carefully to each other’s opinions</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H. Interviewer’s Question Sheet

TEAM EFFECTIVENESS DEBRIEFING

Interviewer’s question sheet

To assess the effectiveness of your team to solve the university problem, ask the following questions to the interviewee. You should **only ask the questions and take notes of the interviewee’s answer**, as it will be used to evaluate the team’s effectiveness.

1) Did everyone actively participate?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2) Do you feel that everyone got a chance to speak?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3) Were all ideas equally considered?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Appendix I. Social Sharing Content Script

Social Sharing Content Script (Personal)

1) Did everyone actively participate during both exercises?

Sarah: “Humm … Some gave more suggestions then others, but like I think the goal of the exercise was to share ideas and agree on the best one. Well, like I thought that everyone participated.”

2) Do you feel that everyone got a chance to speak?

Sarah: “Hmm [thinking], I don’t know. I think I was able to give my opinions, but at some point during the exercise I felt like Laura was not really listening to Nicki’s ideas. I don’t know if you noticed, but, yeah, I think she even cut her off at some point during the activity. I kinda feel bad for Nicki. I don’t know why Laura acted like that, but I’m in Intro Psych with this girl, and from what I know she seems like she has a strong personality. Like, in our seminar discussions, she often ignores other people’s ideas that she disagrees with and pushes her ideas to the group. I hate when people act like that, cause I never know how to react. Sorry … what was the question again? … [wait for the participant to repeat the question] … Well yeah, so I would say that no, not everyone was really heard.”

3) Were all idea equally considered?

Sarah: “I guess that because that Laura didn’t listen to Nicki’s suggestions, we might have lost some good ideas that could have made our final idea better. And I think that her behaviour also affected how our team worked.”
Social Sharing Content Script (Situational)

1) **Did everyone actively participate during both exercises?**

**Sarah:** “Humm … Some gave more suggestions then others, but like I think the goal of the exercise was to share ideas and agree on the best one. Well, like I thought that everyone participated.”

2) **Do you feel that everyone got a chance to speak?**

**Sarah:** “Hmm [thinking], I don’t know. I think I was able to give my opinions, but at some point during the exercise I felt like Laura was not really listening to Nicki’s ideas. I don’t know if you noticed, but, yeah, I think she even cut her off at some point during the activity. I kinda feel bad for Nicki. I don’t know why Laura acted like that, but I saw her on the phone on my way here and I overheard her saying that her laptop crashed and she lost everything. I guess she’s stressed and like it affected how she reacted towards Nicki. But still, I hate when people act like that, cause I never know how to react. Sorry … what was the question again? … [wait for the participant to repeat the question] … Well yeah, so I would say that no, not everyone was really heard.”

3) **Were all idea equally considered?**

**Sarah:** “I guess that because that Laura didn’t listen to Nicki’s suggestions, we might have lost some good ideas that could have made our final idea better. And I think that her behaviour also affected how our team worked.”
Appendix J. Negative Affect Toward the Instigator (PANAS-NA modified)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Indicate to what extent Laura made you feel this way during the brainstorming exercise. SELECT the appropriate number to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Very slightly or not at all</th>
<th>2 A little</th>
<th>3 Moderately</th>
<th>4 Quite a bit</th>
<th>5 Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irritable</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashamed</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jittery</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K. Attitude Toward the Instigator

For each pair of adjectives, SELECT the point between them that reflects the extent to which you believe the adjectives describe Laura.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unlikeable</td>
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<td>Cold</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unapproachable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
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<td>Pleasant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unbiased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SIGN-UP SHEET FOR SURVEY PARTICIPATION

I volunteer for the student association and I need to recruit students to complete a very short survey. It will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and confidential.

If you would be willing to participate please check the “YES”, or if you choose to decline please check the “NO” box.

Note: To make sure there is no suspicion about the real purpose of this study, the sign-up sheets were printed using a different font to make sure that there is a clear distinction between the experimenter’s form and the target’s sign-up sheets.
Dear Research Participant,

The main purpose of this study was to test the effect of social interactions on the way people react to observing disrespectful behaviours (incivility). The researchers were interested in simulating a scenario in which incivility could be observed, and where people have the opportunity to talk with a teammate about it. The scenario would allow the researchers to understand how observers react toward the instigator following the discussion. Furthermore, the researchers were also interested in seeing whether the observed incivility would affect the likelihood that participants would be willing to engage in helping behaviours (i.e., agreeing or not to participate in a short survey for the student association).

In order to get participants engaged in thinking about our task, a cover story (i.e., the research aimed at understanding the link between personality, mood, and team effectiveness) was invoked. However, in reality, the purpose of the study was centered on reactions to witnessed incivility. The deception around the purpose of the study was used to get participants engaged without modifying their reactions toward the instigator, yet the actual purpose of the tasks was to assess what effects discussing an observed incivility event has on observers’ reactions. To create this environment where incivility could be observed and discussed, there was three confederates during the experiment who had scripted interactions:

- **Nicki**: The person who was the recipient of the uncivil behaviours.
- **Laura**: The instigator who engaged in uncivil behaviours.
- **Sarah**: The observer who had the interviewee role during the interview.

The research was also interested in looking at whether witnessing incivility would affect participants’ willingness to help with a secondary study. **As such, there is no actual survey for the student association, even if you said yes on the previous page, you will not be asked to fill a survey for one of the participant.**

On behalf of the research team, I would like to extend an apology for any negative feeling that were caused by withholding this information. Furthermore, this study used deception to understand reactions to witnessing uncivil behaviours, however, I would like to assure that most studies in psychology don’t use deception. If you have any concerns related to participating in this study please contact the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board (Telephone: (519) 824-4120, ext. 56606 or Email: reb@uoguelph.ca). Finally, it is important that you don’t discuss the true study purpose with others because if the true study purpose is disclosed, future participants
would not react as naturally as if they were not aware. Consequently, our study results would be invalidated.
If, after having read about the deception invoked in this study, you are still willing to allow the researchers to use your results in their analyses, please complete the information below. If on the other hand, you want your data to be withdrawn from the study, you will still receive your course credit.

**SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**
I have read the information about the deception provided for this study as described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow the researchers to use my results in their analyses. Having participants know the true purpose of this study would invalidate the results, as such, I agree to not share the true purpose of this study to anyone.

______________________________________
Name of Participant (please print)

______________________________________
Signature of Participant

______________________________________
Date

Thank you for your participation in this study. We appreciate your contribution to our program of research. If you have any further questions about the study, please contact either:

Jessica Garant
garant@uoguelph.ca
519-824-4120, Ext. 58931
Department of Psychology
University of Guelph

Dr. Peter Hausdorf
phausdor@uoguelph.ca
519-824-4120, Ext. 53976
Department of Psychology
University of Guelph