

SOCIAL SKILL IN THE WORKPLACE:  
WHAT IS SOCIAL SKILL AND HOW DOES IT MATTER?

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By

Yu-Hsien (Sharon) Wu

Dissertation Advisor  
Dr. Daniel B. Turban

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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

SOCIAL SKILL IN THE WORKPLACE:  
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Presented by Yu-Hsien (Sharon) Wu

A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Business Administration

And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worth of acceptance.

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Professor Daniel B. Turban, Dissertation Advisor

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Professor Allen C. Bluedorn

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Professor Thomas W. Dougherty

---

Assistant Professor Christopher A. Robert

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Professor Kennon M. Sheldon

I want to thank my fellow doctoral students for their moral support. They were always there for me when I needed psychosocial support. They were also the first to congratulate me when I accomplished something major. I don't think I can find a better group of friends and I will miss them dearly when I move away.

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ABSTRACT

Social skill is becoming increasingly important in today's workplace because organizational structures are becoming flatter with more service-oriented positions. Strong social skill can facilitate interpersonal interactions, which can in turn lead to effective job outcomes. Although the change in organizational structures and the importance of social skill have heightened awareness of social skill in organizational outcomes, little is known about what social skill is and its role in influencing work outcomes. In this study, I provide some insight into the definition and measurement of social skill and how social skill influences job and career success outcomes. Based on my review of the social skill literature, I defined social skill as a learnable social behavior used to achieve social goals. Further, I proposed an integrated social skill framework that theorized social skill as a higher-order construct with three sub-factors: social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility. I conducted three studies to develop a measure of social skill and examine the antecedents and outcomes of social skill. The results, based on over 400 employees, show that personality factors, such as self-monitoring and extraversion, have a positive effect on social skill. The findings also suggest that social skill successfully predicts the number of mentors, mentoring received, social support, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance. Finally, the findings indicate that social skill should be operationalized as a higher-order construct. The study provides both theoretical and practical implications for researchers and organizations interested in the development of social skill.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Social skill, or the ability to effectively interact with others, is becoming increasingly important for organizations as more team based arrangements are used and more service-oriented jobs are employed (Hochwarter, Kiewitz, Gundlach, & Stoner, 2004; Lawler & Finegold, 2000). Although the concept of social skill is not new, organizational behavior scholars have just recently started to study the role of social skill in career success (i.e. Hochwarter, Witt, & Treadway, & Ferris, 2006; Hochwarter et al., 2004; Witt & Ferris, 2003). In general, research shows that in addition to experiencing positive social interactions, people with strong social skill also reported higher performance ratings, number of promotions, and salaries (Ferris, Perrewé, & Douglas, 2002). In addition, compared to other career success predictors, such as conscientiousness and general mental ability, social skill is unique in that it is more malleable (Gilbert & Gilbert, 1991; Segrin & Givertz, 2003). When properly identified and enhanced, social skill can subsequently facilitate organizational success.

As noted above, extant research shows that social skill plays a role in influencing employees' career success. In particular, individuals with strong social skill are more successful at maintaining intimate, high quality relationships (Riggio, 1992), and are more likely to receive higher performance evaluations from their supervisors (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991). More recently, however, social skill has been theorized as a moderating variable that enhances people's performance (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). In particular, Witt and Ferris (2003) found that social skill moderates the relationship between conscientiousness and job performance, such that the relationship was stronger for individuals with higher social skill. Similarly, Ferris, Witt, and Hochwarter (2001)

found that social skill moderates the relationship between general mental ability and job performance and salary, such that the performance rating and salary were highest for individuals with both high social skill and general mental ability. Hence, research shows that social skill has both direct and indirect influences on career outcomes.

Despite the established importance of social skill on career outcomes, how social skill is conceptualized and measured is not consistent. In fact, the number of definitions approaches the number of investigators in the field because different researchers are interested in different aspects of social interaction (Gilbert & Gilbert, 1991). In addition, the variability in how social skill is defined and measured leads to difficulties in differentiating social skill from other related constructs, such as social intelligence, emotional intelligence (EI), and self-monitoring. For example, some scholars have conceptualized social skill as a sub-component of social intelligence (i.e., Marlowe, 1986) while others have conceptualized it as a competency (i.e., Rubin & Martin, 1994). Furthermore, the sub-dimensions of social skill are inconsistent across frameworks, which results in a less coherent literature. In other words, what social skill means is different for different researchers, which creates the confusion in the definition and the construct domain of social skill.

There is limited attempt to integrate the findings from these diverse disciplines. Developing a theoretically driven social skill framework is not an easy task given the variability in definitions across various disciplines. Nevertheless, it is vital to have a coherent definition of social skill that incorporates knowledge from different disciplines to advance the social skill literature. Although a clear definition of social skill is imperative in advancing the social skill literature, I am not aware of any study that has

integrated the social skill literature to build an encompassing framework of social skill. Given the importance of social skill in influencing job outcomes, an in-depth investigation of the social skill construct is much needed and will be the focus of this research project.

Specifically, the purpose of the present study is threefold. First, the study seeks to define social skill and propose an integrated social skill framework and measure. Second, the study aims to compare and contrast social skill from similar constructs, such as emotional intelligence. Finally, I intend to study the precursors and proximal outcomes of social skill in understand the process through which social skill influences career success.

The results of this study should be valuable in a number of ways. First, they should increase our understanding of social skill and the specific facets that make up the construct. Second, the study identifies personality variables that are associated with individual social skill; in particular, the study investigates how individual differences, such as emotional intelligence and extraversion, are related with social skill. Third, the results shed some light on the direct and the moderating roles of social skill in proximal work related outcomes, such as organizational citizenship behaviors. In summary, the study contributes to the social skill literature by providing an integrated social skill definition and investigating factors associated with social skill.

In general, the goals of this study are to synthesize the literature and propose a conceptually coherent social skill construct and to investigate the precursors and outcomes of social skill. In order to accomplish these goals, I have organized this dissertation into two major phases. In the first phase of my study, I critically review

relevant social skill literature to first propose a social skill definition and second to develop an integrated framework of social skill. Based on the proposed definition and framework, I then highlight the similarities and differences across various social effectiveness constructs, such as emotional intelligence and self-monitoring. A social skill measure is created to capture the integrated social skill framework, and is used in the second phase of the study to examine a more comprehensive model of social skill. In the second phase of the study, I obtain paired responses from employees and supervisors and test the antecedents and outcomes of social skill using regression and structural equation modeling. A usefulness analysis is also conducted to examine how social skill should be operationalized. I conclude with the discussion of the implications of the results and future research directions.

## CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS SOCIAL SKILL?

More recently, social skill is conceptualized as one of the sub-constructs of the social effectiveness construct. Social effectiveness is defined as “the ability to effectively read, understand, and control social interactions” (Ferris et al., 2002, p. 49), and includes labels such as social skill, social intelligence, emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, and political skill. Although these social effectiveness constructs contribute to varying degrees of interpersonal success, social skill have received considerable attention because it is more observable and trainable than intelligence and personality and is a skill that can be used to various settings rather than just in a political environment. Because of its unique characteristics, various definitions and frameworks of social skill were investigated and proposed, but to date, there is not an agreed-upon definition of social skill, which makes it difficult to measure and develop the skill.

Scholars from different disciplines, such as communication, training, and organizational behavior have offered critical insights into what social skill is, but there is no consensus on what social skill is (Phillips, 1985). For example, from a clinical perspective, Wolpe (1958) defined social skill as an ability to express general feelings and to hide anxiety. Similarly, Libet and Lewinsohn (1973) defined social skill as a complex ability that produces behaviors that will be positively reinforced and not produce behaviors that will be punished by others. Phillips (1978) conceptualized social skill as a skill to communicate with others in a way that fulfills one’s needs without hurting other people’s rights and needs. From a training perspective, Riggio (1986) defined social skill as an individual difference in communication patterns. It was not until more recently, given the change in the economy and organizational structure that organizational scholars

began to investigate social skill in the workplace and conceptualized it as an individual difference in interpreting and managing social interactions (Ferris et al., 2001). In general, these definitions appear to be complementary rather than contradictory and suggest that social skill is trainable and is driven by social objectives (i.e., Riggio, 1986; Witt & Ferris, 2003). Hence, I define social skill as a situationally appropriate behavior used to reach social goals. The definition incorporates the notion that social skill is a learnable and adjustable behavior and is mainly used to obtain specific social goals.

Different social goals require different skills as the specific form of effective behavior varies from one social task to another (Schlundt & McFall, 1985). Hence, social skill is a complex phenomenon that involves several sub-skills. Rather than using a deductive (theory-based) or an inductive (empirical driven) approach to determine the core components of social skill, I conducted a critical review on the social skill literature to identify common sub-components of social skill. I then used theories to support why these sub-components are vital in achieving situationally appropriate behaviors.

A review of the social skill literature shows that social skill consists of three distinct sub-skills: first, the skill to present selves in a socially appropriate manner (social presentation); second, the skill to scan the changing social environment (social scanning); and third, the skill to adjust social presentation according to the changing social situation (social flexibility) (i.e., Argyle & Kendon, 1967; Ferris et al., 2001; Riggio, 1986). In this chapter, I discuss in detail key social skill frameworks with an aim to develop a concise social skill framework.

One of the first social skill models was developed by Argyle and Kendon (1967) specifically for mentally impaired individuals. In general, Argyle and Kendon (1967)

conceptualized social skill as a process, which first starts with perception. Social perception then leads to accurate social behavior, which is based on individuals' understanding of the social environment. Finally, the process involves a feedback loop, which allows individuals to adjust their behaviors based on the changing social situations. In sum, according to Argyle and Kendon (1967), social skill is a goal-oriented process, which starts with accurate perception of the social situation, then the skill to behave according to the social situation, and finally the skill to adjust one's own behavior according to the changing social situation.

In 1986 Riggio combined the social skill training and communication literatures to develop a social skill framework that is for non-clinical settings. Riggio (1986) suggested that social skill includes six learned sub-skills, which allow individuals to express social selves, understand environmental stimuli, and fit in with the surrounding. In particular, social expressivity and emotional expressivity help an individual to convey both verbal and non-verbal messages to communicate with others. Social sensitivity and emotional sensitivity allow individuals to understand both verbal and non-verbal messages. Finally, social control and emotional control allow individuals to manage their emotional and verbal communication to fit in with the social environment. In summary, Riggio's (1986) social skill framework defines social skill as an individual difference in communication patterns, which allows individuals to manage their emotions and adapt their behaviors according to the social environment.

Originally, social manipulation was the seventh skill in Riggio's (1986) framework, which was defined as a general orientation to manipulate others in order to influence a social outcome. Nevertheless, social manipulation was dropped in

subsequent studies (Riggio & Carney, 2003), which is consistent with Kozmiski and John's (1993) finding that socially effective behavior does not entail the manipulation of others. Although Riggio's model has proven its reliability, it is limited in that some of the items are personality related while some items are skill related.

In 1992, Schneider proposed a social effectiveness construct called social competence, and defined it as an individual difference in socially effective behavior that is helpful in achieving individuals' social goals. A competency model, as discussed earlier, is broader than a skill model because it includes elements such as personality, values, motives, knowledge, and skill. Nevertheless, Schneider's model provides valuable insight into what effective social behavior involves. The social competence framework involves eight dimensions, which include extraversion, warmth, social influence, social insight, social openness, ability to form and maintain friendship, social maturity, and social appropriateness. In general, the social competence framework assesses people on their abilities to express appropriate social selves (i.e., extraversion, warmth, social influence, and social appropriateness), to understand oneself and the social environment (i.e., social maturity and social insight), and to behave flexibly (i.e., social openness). A subsequent study shows that this model is closely related with personality and moderately related with cognitive ability (Schneider, Ackerman, & Kanfer, 1996).

From a communication perspective, Rubin and Martin (1994) developed a social skill framework called interpersonal communication competence, which is defined as "an impression or judgment formed about a person's ability to manage interpersonal relationships in communication settings" (p. 33). Ten sub-dimensions are involved,

which can be broadly categorized into three general groups. The first group involves the ability to adequately present and communicate with others, which includes self-disclosure, social relaxation, assertiveness, and expressiveness. The second ability group involves sensitivity toward others and includes empathy, altercentrism (interest in others), immediacy (caring), and supportiveness. The last ability group is adjustability, which involves environmental control and interaction management, or the skill to adjust conversations patterns to reach a social goal. Although the authors proposed a multi-dimensional construct, the authors reported that all 30 items loaded on a single factor. Thus, the construct validity of this framework is unclear.

Two key global social skill measures are available in the literature. One was developed by Sheldon and Kasser (1998) to measure the relationship between social skill and goal-directed outcomes. They found that individuals with strong social skill made more progress toward their goals. Although no formal definition and framework of social skill were provided, the items indicate that social skill involves several sub-dimensions, such as the skill to express social self (i.e., express myself and communicate effectively, be assertive when necessary), the skill to understand self and social environment (i.e., perceive social norms, use my emotions as information about the current situation), and the skill to be adaptable (i.e., adopt different roles as situations require). The second global social skill measure was developed by Ferris and colleagues (2001). As one of the first researchers to investigate the role of social skill in a work context, they defined social skill as an individual difference in interpreting interpersonal dynamics and adjusting social behavior according to different situations in order to influence others (Ferris et al., 2001).

Although social skill appears to influence important job outcomes, Ferris, Kolodinsky, and colleagues (2001) proposed that political skill, an interpersonal skill that is used specifically for the workplace, may be a more appropriate skill to study work-related phenomena (Ferris, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, & Frink, 2001). Political skill is defined as “the ability to understand others at work and to use that knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal or organizational objectives” (Ferris, Davidson, & Perrewe, 2005; p.7). Unlike the global social skill proposed by other scholars, political skill is a multidimensional construct and includes four sub-skills, which are social astuteness (ability to sense others’ emotion and hidden agenda), interpersonal influence (the ability to be flexible in order to elicit a particular response from others), networking ability (the ability to develop and use the networks created to achieve a certain goal), and apparent sincerity (the ability to demonstrate honesty and authenticity). The authors argued that people who have high political skill are able to combine social sensitivity with the ability to adjust their behaviors to the changing environment in a manner that is sincere, trustworthy, and therefore influence the behaviors of others (Ferris et al., 2005).

In general, political skill is a specific skill used in the organizational setting, while social skill is a more general skill that can be applied in different situations (Ferris, Kolodinsky, et al., 2001). Even though social skill and political skill appear to be similar constructs, political skill is a narrower construct than social skill in that it focuses more on specific techniques to help individuals get ahead in a political arena. For example, one of the key sub-skills is interpersonal influence, which stresses the importance of applying influencing tactics, such as ingratiation and self-promotion. Another key skill is

networking ability, which involves using networks developed to obtain personal goals.

Apparent sincerity is yet another key sub-skill of political, which focuses on the skill to appear honest and sincere. These are specific skills that are critical in obtaining career success, but a work environment involves more than achieving political agenda.

Employees need to have the skills to effectively interact with teammates, customers, and vendors to get important messages across, to solve potential problems, and to build pleasant work relationships, which can in turn contribute to work effectiveness.

More recently, social skill is conceptualized as an individual difference in the following skills: active listening skill, speaking skill, social perceptiveness (the ability to sense other people's reaction and understand such reaction), coordination (adjusting own behavior according to other's behavior), service orientation (actively searching for ways to help others), cooperation (being pleasant and encouraging others to work together), and stress tolerance (behave in a calm manner during stressful situation and deal with criticisms well) (Morgeson, Reider, & Campion, 2005). Although it appears that Morgeson et al.'s (2005) social skill construct is a mixed framework because it includes sub-dimensions that are not related with the core definition of social skill, such as service orientation and stress tolerance, the remaining sub-skills are consistent with the sub-facets proposed by the social skill scholars. For example, active listening and speaking skills are related to adequate social presentation while social perceptiveness is consistent with social sensitivity skill. Finally, coordination is consistent with the skill to be socially flexible.

In sum, the social skill literature in general tends to show that social skill is a complex construct, which involves multiple skills (Riggio, 1986; Schneider, et al, 1996;

Ferris et al., 2005). The literature suggests that social skill is distinct from general mental intelligence and personality (Ferris et al., 2001). Despite what is known in the literature, the current social skill models remain inadequate. For example, some of these sub-skills are outcomes of social skill rather than skills themselves, such as Ferris et al.'s (2005) networking ability and Rubin and Martin's (1994) supportiveness and immediacy. Nevertheless, the existing social skill frameworks tend to focus on three general skills, which are the skill to control social presentation, the skill to scan social environment, and the skill to be flexible in a social situation (See Table 1).

Table 1

*Major Social Skill Frameworks and Sub-dimensions*

<b>Studies</b>	<b>Social Presentation</b>	<b>Social Scanning</b>	<b>Social Flexibility</b>
<b>Argyle (1967)- Social skill</b>	Motor responses	Perception	Feedback loop
<b>Riggio (1986) – Social skills</b>	Social expressivity, emotional expressivity	Emotional sensitivity, social sensitivity	Social control, emotional control
<b>Schneider (1992) – Social competence</b>	Extraversion, warmth, social influence, and social appropriateness	Social insight	Social openness
<b>Rubin &amp; Martin (1994) – Interpersonal communication competence</b>	Social relaxation, assertiveness, expressiveness	Empathy, altercentrism	Environmental control, interaction management
<b>Sheldon &amp; Kasser (1998) – Social skill</b>	Express myself and communicate effectively,	Perceive social norms, use my emotions as information about the current situation	Adopt different roles as situations require
<b>Ferris et al. (2001) – Social skill</b>	Interpersonal influence	Interpersonal perceptiveness	Behavioral flexibility
<b>Ferris et al. (2005) – Political skill</b>	Apparent sincerity	Social astuteness	Interpersonal influence
<b>Morgeson et al. (2005) – Social skill</b>	Active speaking skill	Social perceptiveness	Coordination

## **Theoretical support of the proposed social skill construct**

In general, the literature review conducted above suggests that in order to demonstrate socially effective behavior one must be able to present oneself in a socially appropriate manner (social presentation) (i.e., Ferris et al., 2005; Ferris et al., 2001; Riggio, 1986; Sheldon & Kasser, 1998), scan the changing social environment (social scanning) (i.e., Ferris et al., 2005; Ferris et al., 2001; Riggio, 1986; Sheldon & Kasser, 1998), and be flexible so that one is able to adjust the behavior in order to fit in with any social situation (social flexibility) (i.e., Ferris et al., 2001; Morgeson et al., 2005).

Social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility/adaptability are critical in facilitating socially effective behavior as they influence the extent to which individuals can adequately present themselves in a social situation. In general, the skill to effectively communicate appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages is important (Burgoon, 1994; Jacobs, 1994) because people are expected to behave according to their social roles (Biddle, 1986). In addition to social presentation, individuals also need to be able to pick up social cues as interpersonal communications involve more than the exchange of verbal messages. Nonverbal communication also plays a key role in interpersonal relationships and the skill to detect nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, gestures, or body movement, can lead to effective relationships. Therefore, social scanning is another key component of social skill. Finally, different social objectives require different skills as the specific competent behavior will change from one context to another. Thus, flexibility is vital in achieving social effectiveness. A highly socially skilled individual is able to use all three skills interchangeably to achieve a desired social goal; hence, I theorize that social skill is a three dimensional construct and that all three skills have to

be present in order to achieve social effectiveness. In the next section, I discuss more specifically the role of these skills in achieving socially effective behavior.

### **Social Presentation**

In general, social presentation involves the skill to understand proper social rules and present oneself in a socially appropriate manner. More specifically, an individual with high social presentation skill is able to appropriately present both verbal and nonverbal messages according to their social roles and social norms. Scholars suggested that non-verbal messages are important for building interpersonal relationships while verbal messages are important for exchanging information and for completing specific tasks (Trower, Bryant, & Argyle, 1978). Thus, the skill to adequately *send* both verbal and nonverbal messages is important.

Proper social presentation does not only involve the skill to express verbal and nonverbal messages, it also involves the skill to follow general social rules. Rules are defined as behavior that members of a group believe should or should not be carried out in some situation (Argyle, 1967). More specifically, social rules determine proper social behavior, and when people violate social rules, they are perceived to be “costly,” which then reduces their ability to interact in a socially effective manner (Argyle & Henderson, 1985).

According to the role theory (Biddle, 1986), people behave with a predictable manner because of their social roles. A role is defined in terms of the part an individual plays within a social context, and these roles are associated with perceived and expected behaviors in social situations (Schlenker, 1980). Role theory assumes that expectations are the driving force of roles, that expectations are acquired through experience (norms,

preferences, and beliefs), and that people are cognitively aware of the expectations that they have (Biddle, 1986). In other words, people behave based on their prescribed roles, and the extent to which their behaviors match their expected social roles will contribute to the social effectiveness among individuals sharing the same social system. More specifically, these socially accepted behaviors are taught through socialization where people learn to play/perform the “parts” or “scripts” according to their roles. However, some people may not be able to play their social roles adequately because they did not have appropriate role models from which to learn (Segrin & Givertz, 2003) or because their own preferences may lead them to behave differently. These individuals will then be perceived to be costly to associate with, which leads to ineffective social exchanges.

Based on role theory, role consensus is important because social systems are able to integrate better when members within the system share similar beliefs about appropriate social conduct. Therefore, in order to behave in a socially effective manner, one must be able to play the role that one is assigned to, which is based on the expectations that are held by the social system. Furthermore, the role a person needs to enact at a specific time depends on the situation and the reaction of the interacting parties. Hence, the skill to sense the social environment is another critical skill in achieving socially effective behavior, which is the second key component of social skill.

### **Social Scanning**

Research shows that up to 60% of the meaning in any social interaction is communicated through nonverbal cues (Burgoon & Bacue, 2003); therefore, the skill to actively scan for both verbal and nonverbal cues is important. Social scanning involves the skill to actively observe and recognize both verbal and nonverbal messages from

others. This involves the skill to not only actively listen to what other social parties are saying, but also to read ‘between the lines.’

In general, researchers suggest the skill to understand nonverbal messages can enhance social interactions as nonverbal messages influence the initiation, termination, and continuation of an interaction (Burgoon & Bacue, 2003). In general, the ability to actively recognize subtle cues will allow an individual to know the appropriate role to play at a given situation. In addition, the skill to inspect the social environment will also allow someone to detect hidden messages and alter their behaviors accordingly. More specifically, people use nonverbal cues to manage when they enter and leave a social interaction, when to speak, and how they change topics. Thus, researchers have emphasized the importance of social scanning (i.e., Riggio, 1986; Ferris et al., 2001; Sheldon & Kesser, 1998). However, simply having the skill to scan the changing environment is not sufficient to achieve socially effective behavior because individuals also need the skill to adjust their behavior according to the changing environment. Thus, the final component of social skill involves the skill to be flexible to fit in any social situation.

### **Social Flexibility**

Finally, what is considered socially effective behavior is a value-based judgment. In other words, what constitutes socially effective behavior in a given situation may be different according to the people that one interacts with, the environment, and the activity involved. Therefore, the skill to be flexible in a changing environment is important to achieve effective social interactions. Not surprisingly, flexibility has been conceptualized as the hallmark of competent interpersonal communication skills because a social

interaction is not static over time (Spitzberg, 2003). Social flexibility involves the skill to smoothly adjust one's behavior from one social role to another in order to fit in any social situation. Hence, the extent to which people can change their behavior to fit in any situation can influence the successfulness in playing their prescribed social role (Ferris et al., 2001; Ferris et al., 2005; Riggio, 1986). For example, although a person may be able to behave in a socially appropriate manner in the beginning of a social interaction, without the skill to respond to the changing environment (i.e., unexpected questions or situations), such individual may be perceived as less competent or less pleasant to interact with. Hence, the inability to change with the environment can raise the costs associated with the relationship and minimize the effectiveness of a social interaction.

In sum, social skill involves three sub-skills that when properly used can facilitate effective interpersonal interactions. In particular, in order for an individual to be considered socially effective, this individual needs to have sufficient social knowledge in order to understand and play appropriate social roles at the right moment. The same individual also needs to be able to accurately interpret the social environment by reading the verbal and nonverbal cues. Finally, such a person should also possess the skill to stay flexible to fit in with the changing environment. Thus, social skill is a multidimensional construct and involves three distinct sets of skill. In the next section, I discuss in detail the studies conducted to create and validate the proposed social skill framework and measure.

## **CHAPTER 3: HOW IS SOCIAL SKILL DIFFERENT FROM CONCEPTUALLY SIMILAR CONSTRUCTS?**

The concept of effective social behavior has generated considerable interest, but how social skill is conceptualized has not been consistent (Witt & Ferris, 2003). For example, although social skill and social competency are two distinct constructs (Spencer & Spencer, 1993), some scholars used social skill and social competency interchangeably (i.e., Riggio, Watring, & Throckmorton, 1993). Similarly, social skill has been theorized as a sub-set of social intelligence (i.e., Marlowe, 1986) and emotional intelligence (i.e., Goleman, 1995). The inconsistency in how social skill is operationalized results in a less coherent social skill literature, which leads to some important questions: What is social skill? Is it behavior, personality, type of intelligence, or competency? How is social skill different from other conceptually related constructs? The answers to these questions can shed some light on how social skill should be defined and how it differs from related constructs. Therefore, in this section I seek to address these important questions by first differentiating skill and competency and then comparing and contrasting social skill with social intelligence, emotional intelligence, and self-monitoring. In sum, the goal of this section is to provide a global overview of what social skill is and why it is a unique construct worth investigating.

**Skill and competency.** Even though skill and competency are often used interchangeably, they can be differentiated (Schlundt & McFall, 1985; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Competency is a general characteristic of an individual, which is a combination of personality, value, attitudes, motive, self-concept, knowledge, and skills.

Skill is a sub-component of competency and is the specific process that allows an individual to behave in a competent manner regarding a specific task.

Specifically, social competency is “the general ability to know about and deal with the social environment,” while social skill refers to “specific abilities to know about and deal effectively with relatively specific others, in relatively specific situations, and involves relatively specific interpersonal and personal goals” (Gilbert & Gilbert, 1991, p. 8). Thus, social skill is a narrower construct than social competency because social competency is more difficult to change than social skill and includes relatively stable elements such as value, personality traits, motives, and self-concept.

**Intelligence.** Intelligence is defined as the ability to reason abstractly (Ciarrochi, Forgas, & Mayer, 2001), and involves the capabilities to distinguish the relationships among objects, to evaluate parts and understand their relation to each other as a whole, and to reason within and across different content domains (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001). Some researchers suggest that there are different types of intelligence, such as musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, social intelligence, and emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1983; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Thorndike, 1920).

Social intelligence and emotional intelligence are two notable types of intelligence that facilitate interpersonal effectiveness. Social intelligence involves the ability to notice and differentiate people’s motivations, emotions, and intentions (Thorndike, 1920), while emotional intelligence is the ability to understand the internal aspects of a person, including one’s own feelings and emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Although social and emotional intelligences can influence interpersonal interactions, they

are conceptually distinct from social skill in terms of their construct domain and motivation, which I discuss next.

**Social intelligence.** The concept of effective social behavior has been studied extensively ever since E. L. Thorndike's (1920) seminal work on social intelligence. He defined social intelligence as the ability to understand people in order to act effectively in a social situation and is distinct from abstract and mechanical intelligences, which are the abilities to understand and manage abstractions and physical objects. The first instrument of social intelligence to receive a lot of attention was the George Washington Social Intelligence Test, a one dimension test that measures participants on their judgment in social situations, recognition of mental state of speaker, observation of human behavior, memory for names and faces, sense of humor, identification of emotional expression, and social information. However, the George Washington Social Intelligence Test failed to distinguish social intelligence from abstract intelligence (R. L. Thorndike & Stein, 1937).

Hence, some scholars suggested that a one-dimensional construct may not capture the complexity of the phenomenon; instead, a multi-dimensional approach should be taken (R. L. Thorndike & Stein, 1937). One of the first multi-dimensional social intelligence constructs was proposed by Marlowe (1986), when he defined social intelligence as "the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately upon that understanding" (p. 52). Marlowe (1986) theorized that social intelligence involves five sub-dimensions, which are pro-social attitude, social skills, empathy skills, emotionality, and social anxiety. Pro-social attitude is measured by an individual's willingness to contribute and cooperate in work, friendship, love, and self development. Social skills

measure a person's ability to send nonverbal messages and their self assessment of own social interaction skills with peers. Empathy skills assess an individual's ability to interpret the nonverbal messages. Emotionality, a personality variable, measures the extent to which an individual is emotionally expressive and sensitive. Finally, social anxiety refers to an individual's confidence and anxiety level in social situations.

Although Marlowe's definition of social intelligence is intelligence based, the sub-facets are personality and skill related. Thus, it was not surprising that by using Marlowe's (1986) measure, social intelligence was found to be distinct from general intelligence.

In 1993, Kozmitzki and John attempted to define social intelligence by asking subjects to rank 18 social intelligence related statements and use these statements to describe a female friend whom they liked. The results suggested that social intelligence involves several sub-abilities, such as perspective taking, understanding people, knowing social rules, adapting to social situations, and showing interpersonal warmth. Nevertheless, most of the sub-facets are behaviors or personality rather than the ability to reason about social information. For example, knowing social rules and showing interpersonal warmth are situation-specific behaviors rather than cognitive abilities. Therefore, the definition of social intelligence remained unclear.

More recently, Goleman (2006) introduced a social intelligence model that emphasized biological origins and cognitive ability in achieving socially effective behavior. Goleman's (2006) definition of social intelligence resembles Thorndike's (1920) and Marlowe's (1986) conceptualizations of social intelligence for it involves the ability to understand others and the ability to use the knowledge to interact with others effectively, which entails two distinct cognitive abilities: social awareness and social

facility. Social awareness refers to the general ability to understand people's feelings and thoughts, while social facility involves the ability to use the information gathered from social awareness to build successful social interactions. Although the definition is intelligence based, Goleman's (2006) social intelligence model includes lower-level abilities, such as social-presentation and concern for others, which is a mixed-model approach that leads to unknown construct validity.

In summary, although social intelligence is defined as the cognitive processing of social information, it has not been operated as such. Hence, after 87 years of research, the framework of social intelligence remained inconsistent across studies. In particular, it is unclear if social intelligence is indeed a distinct construct from general mental ability. Nevertheless, social intelligence and social skill are not the same construct because social skill is behavior oriented whereas social intelligence is a form of intelligence. Thus, social skill is a narrower and more observable construct than social intelligence because social skill is the actual behavior enacted based on the cognitive processing of social information.

**Emotional intelligence (EI).** Daniel Goleman's (1995; 1998) emotional intelligence framework is probably the most well-known one in the popular press. In particular, Goleman (1998) defined emotional intelligence as the "capacity for recognizing our own feeling and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (p. 317), and includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill as sub-dimensions. Although Goleman's (1995; 1998) work on emotional intelligence has generated a lot of attention, his emotional intelligence framework is not endorsed by all scholars (Daus &

Ashkanasy, 2005). In particular, Goleman's (1995) emotional intelligence framework is a mixed model rather than a pure intelligence model because it involves more than the ability of perceiving, assimilating, understanding, and managing emotions. Instead, Goleman's (1995) framework involves elements such as motivation, social skill, and empathy, which are not central to the intelligence model (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000).

Nevertheless, Goleman's (1995) popular book on emotional intelligence generated considerable interest and a number of personality scales were published under the label of emotional intelligence. For example, Bar-On (1997) developed the EQ-I (Emotional Quotient Inventory), which is based on a 1988 scale intended to measure psychological well-being. Bar-On's emotional intelligence model includes four general sub-domains, which are intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, and mood. Specific sub-abilities are mostly personality and behavior related, such as emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, independence, empathy, problem-solving, stress tolerance, and happiness. Similarly, Boyatzis, Goleman, and Rhee (2000) developed the Emotional Competencies Inventory (ECI), which contains 110 items and assesses four general domains: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and social skills. Some of the sub-abilities include organizational awareness, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, initiative, and leadership. In general, Bar-On (1997) and Boyatzis et al.'s (2000) emotional intelligence frameworks are considered mixed models because they include sub-components that are broader than emotional processing (Conte, 2005; Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005).

The EI framework that has received the most consensus and support in the research domain is Salovey and Mayer's (1990) work (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005). Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as a subset of social intelligence that involves "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189). In particular, Salovey and Mayer (1990) argued that emotional intelligence involves the "recognition and use of one's own and others' emotional states to solve problems and regulate behavior" (p. 189). In their initial emotional intelligence framework, Salovey and Mayer (1990) proposed three sub-mental processes of emotional intelligence: 1) appraisal and expression of emotion, 2) regulation of emotion, and 3) utilization of emotion. Mayer and Salovey (1997) later revised their emotional intelligence framework and added a fourth dimension. In particular, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence are: 1) the ability to perceive and identify the emotional content of external stimuli, 2) the ability to assimilate emotions into perceptual and cognitive processes, 3) the ability to understand and reason about emotions, and 4) the ability to manage emotions of self and others. Mayer and colleagues (2000) argued that emotional intelligence is a form of intelligence since, first, emotional intelligence reflects mental ability instead of a preferred way of behaving, second, it represents a set of correlated abilities that are similar to, but distinct from, mental abilities; and finally, emotional intelligence is developmental in nature such that it is positively related to age, although the research on this final point is limited (Mayer et al., 2000).

One of the first ability emotional intelligence tests, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI Test (MSCEIT), was developed based on Mayer and Salovey's (1997) work on emotional

intelligence, which includes several tasks to measure the four sub-abilities of emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 2000). The first ability involves the perceiving of emotions and this ability is measured through subjects' ability to identify emotions in faces and pictures. The second ability measures the ability of using emotions to facilitate thought and is measured by sensations, where participants compare emotions to other physical and sensory stimuli, and facilitation, where participants identify the emotions that would best facilitate a type of thinking. The third ability is the understanding of emotions and is measured by the subject's ability to know under what circumstances emotional intensity changes and how one emotional state changes into another. Finally, the last ability measures the management of emotions and involves presenting participants with hypothetical scenarios and asking how they would maintain or change their and others' feelings so that a desired outcome is achieved. The authors stated that the MSCEIT is considered a test of intelligence because it has answers that can be evaluated against criteria for correct answers, such as the group consensus and experts' identification (Mayer et al., 2000; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

In summary, there are currently three streams of the emotional intelligence framework. One stream is based on Salovey and Mayer's (1990) work of emotional intelligence and uses their measures. Another stream is also based Salovey and Mayer's (1990) work but uses a peer or self-report measures. Finally, the last stream includes a group of mixed models that include dimensions not included in the Salovey and Mayer's (1990) definition. As noted earlier, the third stream of emotional intelligence research is not endorsed by academia while Salovey and Mayer's definition is thought to be more theoretically sound (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005).

In general, social skill is the actual behavior used to facilitate social interaction, which can be influenced by the cognitive processing of emotion related information. Hence, social skill is a narrower construct than emotional intelligence and is behavioral based. Social skill is also more visible and trainable than emotional intelligence, which can be enhanced to facilitate organizational success. Thus, understanding the nature of social skill and its sub-facets has important organizational implications.

**Self-Monitoring.** In general, people who are high self-monitors tend to watch their social behavior and strive to present a favorable self-image (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Snyder, 1974). In particular, high self-monitors are better at self-presentation than low self-monitors and are concerned with social appropriateness. They are sensitive to the expressions of others and use them as social cues to monitor their own self-presentations. Low self-monitors, on the other hand, are less sensitive to social cues. In other words, a high self-monitor individual uses outside stimuli to control their behavior, while low self-monitors tend to act according to their own values and preferences (Kilduff & Day, 1994; Snyder, 1974).

Snyder (1974) proposed a five component self-monitoring construct and measure, which examines one's (1) concern with self-presentation, (2) attention to social comparison information as cues to appropriate self-expression, (3) ability to control and modify self-presentation and expressive behavior and (4) ability to control and modify self-presentation in particular situation, Finally, the scale also examines the extent to which the respondent's expressive behavior and self-presentation is cross-situationally consistent or variable. However, subsequent research found that Snyder's (1974) 25-item scale does not capture the proposed five components, instead they assessed people's

acting ability, extraversion, and other-directedness (Briggs, Cheek, & Buss, 1980). Briggs and his colleagues (1980) noted that some items should be removed since extroversion is not a central component of the self-monitoring construct. In addition, four of the five sub-facets were positively correlated with social anxiety, which is not consistent with the self-monitoring theory. Lennox and Wolfe (1984) proposed a two-dimensional self-monitoring scale to measure an individual's ability to modify self-presentation and understand the expressive behavior of others, which was found to have sound validity. Noting the deficiency in the measure, Gangestad and Snyder (1985) modified Snyder's (1974) original self-monitoring scale and proposed an 18 item measure that captures three key dimensions of self-monitoring: expressive self-control (i.e., the ability to hide motives through expressive control), social stage presence (i.e., not feeling awkward in public situations), and other-directed self-presentation (i.e., demonstrate behaviors that others expect one to display). Gangestad and Snyder's (1985) revised framework and measure are used extensively in the literature and the measure demonstrated sound validity and reliability (Day, Schleicher, Unckless, & Hiller, 2002).

Although self-monitoring and social skill appear to share some similar sub-facets, such as proper social presentation, self-monitoring is a personality trait, which entails preferred way of behaving rather than situationally specific (Davis-Blake & Pfeffer, 1989). Interestingly, self-monitoring research shows that as individuals get older, high self-monitors are more likely to behave according to their true attitudes and values (Day et al., 2002). Social skill is theorized to be distinct from personality in that "positive social skill have been found to persist even in the presence of negative personality dimensions, such as insecurity, selfishness, and treachery" (Ferris et al., 2001, p. 1076).

In other words, low self-monitors may possess strong social skill by making the effort to actively observe the environment and adjust their behaviors according to the social situation in order to achieve a desired social goal. Actively observing the environment and knowing how to present self in a given situation are the essence of social skill, which is to achieve social goals rather than simply to present a favorable social self.

**Summary.** As indicates in Table 2, social skill, social intelligence, emotional intelligence, and self-monitoring are distinct constructs because they tap into different construct domains, and involve different definitions, sub-dimensions, and motivation. More specifically, social intelligence deals strictly with social information, while emotional intelligence is more intrapersonal and involves the processing of emotion related information and using such information for intellectual development. Self-monitoring is distinct from social skill in that it is a personality trait and is driven by the need to impress others. In the next chapter, I examine the sub-dimensions of social skill with a goal to develop a theoretically driven social skill construct.

Table 2

*Comparison Table of Social Skill with Social Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Self-Monitoring*

	<b>Construct Domain</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Sub-dimensions</b>
<b>Social Skill</b>	Skill/Behavior	Interpersonal	Situational appropriate behavior used to achieve social goals	Social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility
<b>Social Intelligence</b>	Intelligence	Interpersonal	The ability to process social information	Social awareness and social facility
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>	Intelligence	Intrapersonal	The ability to process emotional information and manage emotions	Emotion perception, emotion regulation, understanding of emotion, and utilization of emotional information
<b>Self-Monitoring</b>	Personality	Intrapersonal	The tendency for someone to watch and adjust their social presentation with an aim to present a favorable social self	Expressive self-control, social stage presence, and other-directed self-presentation

## CHAPTER 4: SCALE DEVELOPMENT

Currently, there are three dominant social effectiveness measures in the literature. One is a 7-item global social skill measure, which provides an overall score of social skill, but does not allow for individual assessments on the sub-skills of social skill (Ferris et al., 2001). Another key measure is the 18-item political skill measure, which assesses one's specific skills in influencing and networking with others at the workplace with an aim to achieve career success. The measure provides both an overall score and individual scores for the four sub-skills, but it is considered as a narrower construct than social skill because it focuses on the specific skills to get ahead in a workplace rather than on how effective one interacts or connects with others to successfully accomplish a task (Ferris et al., 2005). The third key social skill measure is a multidimensional measure developed by Riggio (1986). Although the measure provides sound reliability and validity, the 90-item communication based measure is only available at a cost. I extended the literature by creating a measure to capture the three-factor social skill framework proposed in a succinct manner.

To achieve this goal, two studies are conducted to create and validate the scale. The first study involves an expert review to generate an initial item pool. In general, 10 items were created to capture each of the sub-skills, thus a 30 item-scale was created. A separate study was conducted to validate the newly developed scale. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to trim items and finalize the scale. In addition, the scale was validated by examining its convergent, discriminant, and predictive validities, which involves testing the relationships between social skill and its

theoretical antecedents and consequences. I describe the two studies more fully in this chapter.

## **Study 1**

**Step 1: Construct definition and dimensionality.** In general, a scale development starts with a clear construct definition, which can be used to generate potential items (Clark & Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer, Bearden, & Sharma, 2003). To review, social skill is defined as a situational appropriate behavior used to achieve social goals, and involves three sub-components, which are social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility. Social presentation involves the skill to understand and play proper social roles. People who have high levels of social presentation skill are able to express both appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages according to social norms. Social scanning refers to the skill to actively examine and recognize both verbal and nonverbal social messages. Finally, people with strong social flexibility skill are able to adjust their behavior to fit in any social situation.

**Step 2: Item creation.** Based on the definitions listed above, I created a set of initial items. I followed the basic principles when writing items (Clark & Watson, 1995). For example, I made sure that the language is simple, straight forward, and appropriate for the target population. I also avoided trendy expressions that will vary with age, ethnicity, and gender, and double-barreled items that assess one or more characteristics. I created items that demonstrate both high and low amounts of each skill. Six items were adopted from existing constructs, such as Riggio's (1986) Social Skill Inventory, Schneider's (1992) Social Competence Questionnaire, and social confidence and social intelligence from the International Personality Item Pool. Note that the item modified

from the social intelligence measure was behavior based rather than cognitive processing oriented. A few of the items created ask respondents how other people perceive their social abilities to maximize the accuracy of this self-report social skill measure. For example, based on a five-point scale, individuals rated the extent to which they agree with the following statements: “People tell me that I have good manners” and “People tell me that I am not flexible (Behavior wise).” Other items include, “Sometimes I don’t understand why people react the way they do,” “I don’t know what to say when I am in an unfamiliar social situation,” and “I am able to adjust my behavior quickly.” A total of 34 items were created during the initial item generation phase, with 12 items for social presentation, 12 items for social scanning, and 10 items for social flexibility (See Table 3).

Table 3

*Initial Social Skill Items*

<b>Social presentation</b>		
	High	Low
1	I behave according to social norm	I behave according to my mood
2	I know the right things to say in a social situation	I rarely follow social rules
3	I can start a pleasant conversation	I tend to make social errors
4	I can express my ideas easily	I have trouble getting my message across
5	I understand proper social rules	I rarely say hi to my coworkers
6	People tell me that I have good manners	I have trouble interacting with people at workplace
<b>Social scanning</b>		
	High	Low
1	I am able to read people well	I rarely pay attention to people's body language
2	I know when people enjoy the conversation	I can't tell if someone is telling a lie
3	I know when people are upset	Sometimes I don't understand why people react the way they do
4	I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior	I am not good at sensing what other people are feeling
5	I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting	I have trouble anticipating people's reaction
6	I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them	I don't know how to "read between the lines"
<b>Social flexibility</b>		
	High	Low
1	I am able to adjust my behavior quickly	I don't know what to say when I am in a unfamiliar social situation
2	I am able to fit in any social situation well	I don't know how to socialize with people that I just met
3	I put on a smile even when I am upset	I have trouble engaging in conversations with people who have different backgrounds
4	I act cheerfully when needed	People tell me that I am not flexible (behavior wise)
5	I know how to handle just about any social situation	I don't know how to handle unexpected situations

**Step 3: Expert review.** After an initial item pool is generated, the next step involves having experts review the items, which serves several purposes. The first purpose is to confirm or invalidate the items based on the definition provided. The second purpose is to identify awkward or confusing items. A third purpose is to generate

additional items that may be included. I sought help from 13 individuals from both the management and financial disciplines, who were either in the doctoral program or had their PhDs, by sending them an email and asking them to complete a survey (See Exhibit A for the email instructions). They were asked to complete two tasks in the questionnaire (See Exhibit B for the questionnaire). The first task asks them to generate social skill items. More specifically, they were provided with the definition of the three sub-skills of social skill and were instructed to read each definition carefully and think of at least two statements that they believed best represent people with either high or low amounts of that particular skill based on the definition provided.

The second task asks the experts to sort the 34 initial items into different groups based on the definitions provided. Following the Q-sort method (Block, 1978), I asked respondents to sort the items into four categories. In addition to the three categories for the three sub-dimensions of social skill, they were provided with a “Not sure” category for items that they had trouble categorizing. The instruction reads, “This task asks you to sort the following statements into different groups based on the definitions provided. If you do not think the statement fits any of the three groups or are unsure, please select “Not sure.”

I received responses from 11 individuals and 94 new items were generated from the first task (See Exhibit C). In terms of the second task, 12 items received less than 90% agreement and were subsequently removed from the item pool or reworded as they appeared to tap into two or more sub-dimensions of the social skill construct (See Exhibit D). Sample items that were eliminated were “I behave according to social norms,” “I have trouble interacting with people at workplace,” “I don’t know how to socialize with

people that I just met,” and “I behave according to my mood.” Five out of the six items adopted from existing measures were kept as they received more than 90% agreement. The item that was dropped was “I tend to make social errors,” which only received a 64% agreement as a social presentation item.

To create the final social skill scale, 10 items were selected from the 94 items created by the experts, which results in a 30-item social skill measure, with 10 items per each sub-dimension of social skill (See Exhibit E). Sample items from the social presentation dimension include “I have trouble getting my message across (100% agreement)” and “People often say that I am good at expressing myself (expert item).” Sample items from the social flexibility dimension include “I am able to adjust my behavior quickly (100% agreement), “I don’t know how to handle unexpected situations (100% agreement),” and “I don’t change my behavior to suit different social situations (expert item).” Finally, sample items from the social scanning dimension include “I am able to read people well (100% agreement)” and “I have trouble anticipating people’s reaction (100% agreement).”

## **Study 2**

After finalizing the item pool, I conducted a second study to examine the psychometric properties of the measure (DeVellis, 1991). This step serves two purposes. First, pilot-testing of the items allows researchers to trim items and obtain initial estimates of reliability and validity. This involves initial data reduction by performing exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The second purpose of the study is to validate the focal construct by examining its convergent, discriminant, and predictive validities. This involves testing the theoretical antecedents

and consequences of the focal construct, which in this case includes emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, and polychronicity.

The literature suggests that for pools of 20 items or more, a large convenient sample in the 300 range is ideal to validate a scale (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Thus, I sought participation 1,010 individuals from two management classes at the University of Missouri and 749 surveys were received, thus making the response rate 74%. The average age was 21 with 47% female and 89% White. Since the sample size was large, I randomly split the data into two completely distinct data sets for cross-validation purposes. More specifically, the first data set was used in the initial data validation step, which involves EFA, while the second data set was used to cross-validate the results from EFA. The survey of the study 2 can be found in Exhibit F.

**a. Initial item analyses.** EFA was performed for two purposes (Netemeyer et al., 2003). First, it can be used to reduce the number of items in a scale so that the remaining items maximize the explained variance in the scale and the scale's reliability. Second, it can be used to identify potential underlying dimensions in a scale. In particular, I used principle component factor analysis (PCA) with a Varimax rotation because this method estimates the factors with the fewest number of meaningful components (Netemeyer et al., 2003). I restricted the number of factors to three as the theoretical construct of social skill has three underlying factors (Clark & Watson, 1995). Generally, items with factor loading in the .40 range and above are considered substantial while loading above .50 are considered "very significant" (Netemeyer et al., 2003). I used a factor loading of .45 as a cut-off score on the factor and cross-loadings of no more than .40 on other factors. The results show that 14 items met the criteria for the social presentation factor, 9 items for

the social scanning factor, and 3 items for the social flexibility factor. Loadings for each item can be found in Table 4.

As Table 4 indicates, 8 items out of the 10 social presentation items (items 1 through 10) loaded on its specific factor. Although item 1, “People tell me that I have good manners,” had a factor loading of .41, which was considered substantial, it was dropped because it did not reach the .45 cut-off score. Item 5 “I have little difficulty using appropriate words while interacting with others” had a factor loading of .07, and thus was dropped. Interestingly, 6 out of the 10 items that were designed to capture the social flexibility dimension loaded on the social presentation factor. Item 17, 18, and 20, which were supposed to measure social flexibility loaded on their respective factor and are retained for further analyses. The items were “I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with,” “I am good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations,” and “I don’t change my behavior to suit different social situations.” In general, items that were created to capture the social scanning factor (items 21 through 30) loaded on their respective factor. Item 22, “I don’t know how to “read between the lines,” was the only item that did not meet the cut-off score, and thus was removed.

The results from the analyses suggest a few things. First, since items from the social presentation and social flexibility dimensions tend to load together, it appears that social flexibility may be a central component of effective social presentation, such that people need to be flexible in order to adequately present proper social selves. Second, it is possible that the items created for the social flexibility dimension did not capture the dimension. Finally, it is likely that social skill simply involves two broad dimensions: the ability to properly present oneself and the ability to understand the social environment.

Hence, I plan to create additional items and gather additional data during the hypothesis testing phase of my study to examine if social flexibility is indeed a unique dimension of social skill. I hope results from the third study can help shed some light on the dimensionality of the construct. Before testing the social flexibility items, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to cross-validate the results generated from the exploratory factor analysis. The procedures and the outcomes are discussed below.

Table 4

*Social Skill Factor Loadings*

	<b>Rotated</b>		
	<b>Social Presentation</b>	<b>Social Scanning</b>	<b>Social Flexibility</b>
1. People tell me that I have good manners	0.41	0.26	0.02
2. I have trouble getting my message across	<b>-0.58</b>	-0.11	0.02
3. I can express my ideas easily	<b>0.55</b>	0.24	0.10
4. I can start a pleasant conversation	<b>0.63</b>	0.15	-0.08
5. I have little difficulty using appropriate words while interacting with others	0.07	0.17	0.03
6. People often say that I am good at expressing myself	<b>0.54</b>	0.25	0.12
7. I often feel uncertain as to what is the right thing to say in a social setting	<b>-0.60</b>	-0.13	0.06
8. I am very good at presenting myself in a social situation	<b>0.68</b>	0.27	-0.09
9. I often feel uncertain as to what expressions I should display in a social setting	<b>-0.69</b>	-0.10	0.17
10. I am well aware of how to preset myself in social interactions	<b>0.68</b>	0.20	-0.09
11. I am able to fit in any social situation well	<b>0.64</b>	0.20	-0.20
12. I am able to adjust my behavior quickly	<b>0.56</b>	0.26	-0.34
13. I don't know how to handle unexpected situations	<b>-0.50</b>	-0.20	0.42
14. People tell me that I am not flexible behavior wise	-0.43	-0.15	0.47
15. I know how to handle just about any social situation	<b>0.65</b>	0.22	-0.13
16. I am able to engage in conversations with people who have different backgrounds	<b>0.62</b>	0.13	-0.22
17. I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with	-0.03	0.11	<b>-0.68</b>
18. I am good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations	-0.39	-0.06	<b>0.68</b>
19. I fit in with just about any crowd	<b>0.50</b>	0.16	-0.36
20. I don't change my behavior to suit different social situations	0.10	-0.13	<b>0.77</b>
21. I am able to read people well	0.29	<b>0.65</b>	-0.21
22. I don't know how to "read between the lines"	-0.31	-0.39	0.39
23. I know when people are upset	0.25	<b>0.54</b>	-0.17
24. I can usually tell if someone is lying	0.05	<b>0.71</b>	-0.05
25. I am good at sensing what other people are feeling	0.21	<b>0.75</b>	-0.05
26. I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them	0.16	<b>0.75</b>	-0.06
27. I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior	0.24	<b>0.54</b>	-0.16
28. I have trouble anticipating people's reactions	-0.25	<b>-0.52</b>	0.19
29. I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting	0.06	<b>0.63</b>	-0.10
30. I know when people enjoy the conversation	0.28	<b>0.51</b>	-0.20

**b: Confirmatory factor analysis.** Based on the results from the exploratory factor analysis conducted, items 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, and 19 should load on the social presentation factor, item 21 and items 23-30 should load on the social scanning factor, whereas items 17, 18, and 20 should load on the social flexibility dimension. Structural equation modeling is used to examine the hypothesized relationship among the factors and their respective items.

For this analysis, a sample size of 349 was used to first calculate the correlation matrix, which was then input into AMOS 6.0 for analyses. Fit indices, such as chi-square, goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and root-mean-square-error-of-approximation (RMSEA), were examined for the overall model fit. Initial results show that the model had a marginal fit to the data,  $\chi^2$  (822.8,  $df = 296$ ,  $N = 349$ ,  $p < .001$ ),  $GFI = .84$ , comparative fit index = .84, and  $RMSEA = .07$ . Although generally CFA is used to confirm the factor structure, it can also be used to trim items that threaten the dimensionality of the scale and this can be done by examining the modification indices (Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse, & Mohr, 2004). In general, modification indices “assess the statistical significance of an unspecified model relationship and represent the approximate reduction in  $\chi^2$  that would be obtained by estimating the unspecified parameter of interest. “Modification indices (MIs) greater than 3.84 are considered statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), and thus freeing a parameter with an MI of 3.84 or greater would significantly improve model fit” (Netemeyer et al., 2003, p. 155).

The modification indices show that item 20 “I don’t change my behavior to suit different social situations,” a social flexibility item, loads on the social scanning and social presentation factors ( $MI = 10.72$  and  $9.35$  respectively). Thus, I removed item 20

from the model, and the fit appears to improve slightly,  $\chi^2$  (720.1, df = 272, p < .001), GFI = .86, CFI = .86, and RMSEA = .07. The modification indices also suggest that if I were to add a path from item 3 to item 6, such that item 3 predicts item 6, the chi-square would improve by at least 25.88. Similarly, if I were to free the regression weight for using item 6 to predict item 3, the chi-square would improve by 25. Also, if I were to free the regression weight for using item 2 to predict item 3, then the chi-square would improve by 40. In general, it appears that item 3 is significantly correlated with other items in the same factor, so I removed item 3. The fit appears to improve slightly,  $\chi^2$  (608.4, df = 249, p < .001), GFI = .87, CFI = .88, and RMSEA = .06.

Continuing these efforts, I removed item 13 “I don’t know how to handle unexpected situations,” a social flexibility item, because it cross loads with the social scanning dimension. The fit appears to improve slightly,  $\chi^2$  (540.65, df = 227, p < .001), GFI = .88, CFI = .89, and RMSEA = .06. I then removed item 11 “I am able to fit in any social situation well” since it cross loads with the social scanning items. The fit appears to improve slightly,  $\chi^2$  (449, df = 206, p < .001), GFI = .89, CFI = .90, and RMSEA = .06. The modification indices show that if I were to free the regression weight using item 9 to predict item 7, then the chi-square would improve by at least 23. In addition, if I were to free the regression weight for using item 28 to predict item 7, then the fit would improve by 13. Because these additional paths do not make theoretical sense, thus I removed item 7 “I often feel uncertain as to what is the right thing to say in a social setting.” All of these efforts resulted in a much better fit to the data,  $\chi^2$  (364, df = 186, p < .001), GFI = .91, CFI = .92, and RMSEA = .05. The social presentation factor now consists of 10 items, which includes items 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, and 19. The social scanning

factor has 9 items, which includes 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, and just two items, 17 and 18, comprise the social flexibility dimension.

After finalizing the scale, I conducted reliability tests on the 3 sub-scales and the results show that the 10-item social presentation sub-scale has a reliability of .85, whereas the 9-item social scanning sub-scale had a reliability of .84. The results on the two social flexibility items indicate that the two items were negatively correlated at .32, although the items were not negatively worded. Thus, I removed the two social flexibility items from the overall social skill scale.

**c. Scale validation.** Earlier literature suggested that some key measures should be examined along with the proposed measure in order to validate a construct (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Construct validity refers to how well a measure measures what it is supposed to measure, and two ways to demonstrate construct validity are convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is achieved when the two different measures of the same constructs are strongly correlated (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Discriminant validity is the extent to which “measures diverge from other operationalizations from which the construct is conceptually distinct” (Netemeyer et al., 2003, p. 86).

To demonstrate convergent validity, I expected the proposed social skill measure to be positively and moderately to highly correlated with Ferris et al.’s (2001) social skill measure because the two measures are supposed to measure the same construct. For discriminant validity, I expect emotional intelligence, extraversion, and self-monitoring, to be moderately correlated with the proposed social skill measure because although these factors are associated with interpersonal effectiveness they are distinct from social skill. I

also expect social skill to be negatively related with neuroticism because people who are neurotic tend to have difficulty adjusting their emotions, which is not consistent with socially effective behaviors. Social skill and life satisfaction should also be positively related because people who have stronger social skill may be able to develop higher quality relationships with others, thus receiving more social support, which then leads to life satisfaction. In terms of GPA, I expect social skill to be uncorrelated with it because social skill is not a form of intelligence. In general, how one does in school is largely dependent upon their test scores, which should not be related with social skill. Of course, social skill will play a major role in classes that are project-oriented, but since most of the classes are test-based, social skill should have a limited effect on GPA. For known-group validity, I expect females to possess higher social skill because past research tends to show that females have stronger social skill than males (i.e., Riggio, 1986; Sarason, Sarason, Hacker, & Basham, 1985). Finally, for predictive validity, I expect social skill to be positively related with extra-curricular activities because people who are good at social interactions may engage in more social activities. The specific measures and the correlation matrix (Table 5) are presented below.

### ***Measures of Validation Variables***

**Social skill.** I created an overall social skill score, which includes the sub-dimensions of social presentation and social scanning, to examine the relationships between social skill and the aforementioned measures. The overall scale has an alpha of .89.

**Social skill.** Ferris et al.'s (2001) 7 item-item scale ( $\alpha = .77$ ), which is one of the few social effectiveness measures developed to study the role of social skill in career outcomes, was used to demonstrate convergent validity.

**Self-monitoring.** Self-monitoring was measured using Gangestad and Snyder's (1985) 18-item measure ( $\alpha = .67$ ), which is the most widely used scale in studies examining self-monitoring (Day et al., 2002). Sample items include "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people," "I would probably make a good actor," and "I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting."

**Emotional intelligence.** In their more recent work in the Journal of Applied Psychology, Law, Wong, and Song (2004) demonstrated that their 16-item EI measure provides sound discriminant and predictive validity ( $\alpha = .88$ ). In particular, they found that EI is distinct from the Big Five personality dimensions. Sample items include "I have good understanding of my own emotions," and "I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them."

**Extraversion.** I used Goldberg's (1999) 10-item measure ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Sample items include the extent to which respondents were "the life of the party," "feel comfortable around people," and "tend to start conversations." Respondents rated themselves based on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**Life satisfaction.** I used a five-item scale from Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) ( $\alpha = .84$ ). The items include "In most ways my life is close to my ideal," "The condition of my life are excellent," "I am satisfied with my life," "So far I have

gotten the important things I want in my life,” and “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.”

**Extracurricular activities.** This component is assessed by four questions: 1) In how many organizations (professional associations, fraternities, sororities, etc.) are you a member? 2) In how many of these organizations do you hold a position as president? 3) In how many of these organizations do you hold a position as vice president? 4) In how many of these organizations do you hold a position as chair of an important committee? I performed a square root transformation on the number of president, the number of vice president, and the number of chair for a more normally distributed data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

### ***Results***

Overall, the proposed social skill construct appears to provide sound discriminant and convergent validity. Results show that the proposed social skill measure is significantly correlated with Ferris et al.'s (2001) measure at .68, which demonstrates convergent validity. As expected, social skill is moderately correlated with extraversion at .52, which suggests that people who are more outgoing tend to have higher social skill. In terms of the relationship between social skill and other social effectiveness constructs, the results reveal that social skill is positively and significantly correlated with self-monitoring ( $r = .37$ ), which show that they are related but are distinct constructs. Social skill is shown to be distinct from emotional intelligence and moderately correlated with a significant correlation of .58. This relationship is to be expected as people who have strong emotional intelligence are able to manage their emotion better than others, thus exhibiting the ability to demonstrate socially effective behavior.

Although the relationships are weak and perhaps not meaningful, the results suggest that people who have high social skill tend to be involved in more social activities ( $r = .10, p \leq .05$ ) and tend to hold a position as chair of an important committee ( $r = .08, p \leq .05$ ). The correlation analysis also shows that overall social skill is correlated with work experience ( $r = .08, p \leq .05$ ) and that females tend to have stronger social skill than males ( $r = -.13, p \leq .01$ ), which is consistent with previous findings. Additional, the results show that social skill is not correlated with GPA, which is expected because social skill is a skill used to achieve social goals, which should not have a direct impact on how well someone performs in classes. As predicted, the results show that people who have high social skill tend to be more satisfied with life ( $r = .27$ ). Finally, the relationship between social skill and age were not related. Although the finding is not consistent with the literature, the results may be due to the restriction in age ranges, which are between 18 and 29. In general, the measure demonstrates sound construct validity, and the measure will be used in the second phase of the study to examine the antecedents and outcomes of social skill.

Table 5

Reliabilities, Means, Standard deviations, and Correlations Among Scale Development Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Social skill overall	3.82	.47	(.89)														
2. Social presentation	3.83	.54	.90**	(.85)													
3. Social scanning	3.80	.52	.87**	.56**	(.84)												
4. Extravert	3.51	.67	.52**	.62**	.29**	(.89)											
5. Self-monitoring	3.13	.38	.37**	.39**	.26**	.52**	(.67)										
6. Social Skill (Ferris)	3.33	.53	.68**	.57**	.65**	.39**	.37**	(.77)									
7. Life satisfaction	3.38	.72	.27**	.27**	.20**	.17**	-.01	.25**	(.84)								
8. Emotional intelligence	3.74	.51	.58**	.51**	.50**	.24**	.13**	.50**	.44**	(.88)							
9. Gender <sup>a</sup>	1.54	.50	-.13**	-.14**	-.08*	-.11**	.09*	-.02	-.04	-.12**							
10. Age	21.53	1.17	-.03	-.03	-.02	.01	-.03	-.04	-.10**	.01	.09*						
11. GPA	3.13	.47	.05	.04	.05	-.06	.00	.00	.22**	.01	-.17**	-.20**					
12. Work experience	18.05	32.17	.08*	.09*	.05	.06	.04	.03	-.04	.07	.01	.28**	-.11**				
13. No. of org	1.38	1.29	.10*	.15**	.01	.12**	.08*	.06	.12**	.14**	-.14**	-.15**	.32**	-.06	--		
14. President	0.08	0.30	.02	.06	-.03	.02	.06	-.01	-.01	.04	.00	.02	.06	-.03	.25**		
15. Vice-president	0.12	0.34	.00	.05	-.03	.12**	.08*	.02	.03	.05	.00	.02	.09*	-.02	.32**	.36**	
16. Chair	0.49	0.60	.08*	.14**	-.02	.21**	.11**	.06	.10*	.12**	-.11**	-.14**	.15**	-.04	.61**	.26**	.27**

\*p &lt; .05. \*\*p &lt; .01.

<sup>a</sup> 1 = Female 2 = Male

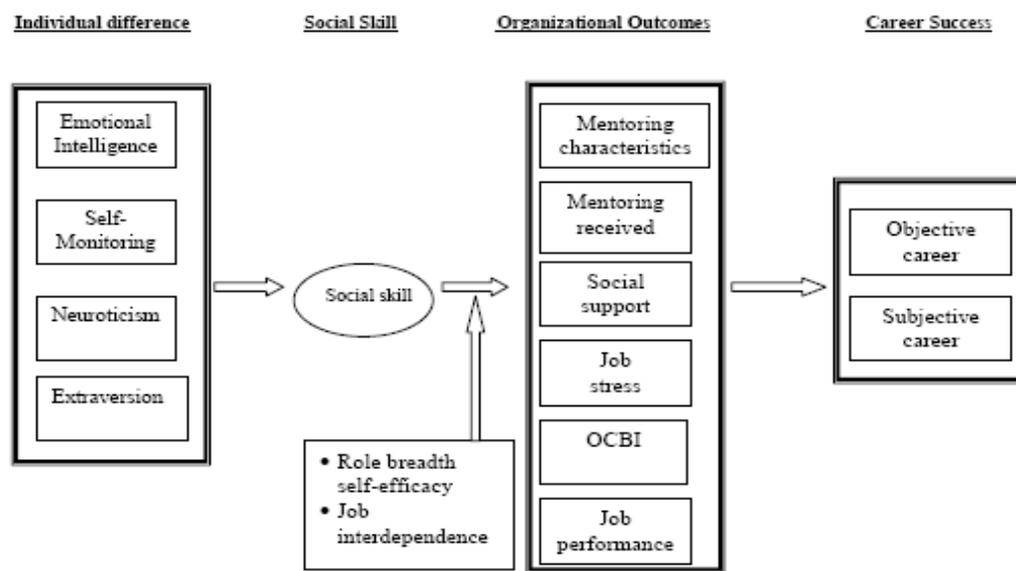
N = 693 listwise deletion

## CHAPTER 5: HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Although research shows that social skill influences career outcomes (Ferris et al., 2002), surprisingly little is known about the process through which the relationship occurs. Therefore, one major purpose of this study is to examine the precursors and outcomes of social skill. Individual differences, such as emotional stability, and self-monitoring personality, were theorized to influence one's social skill (Riggio, 1986; Trower et al., 1978), but limited research has linked individual characteristics and organizational outcomes with social skill. Hence, I contribute to the social skill literature by examining a comprehensive model of social skill (See Figure 1). More specifically, I theorize that individual characteristics influence one's social skill, which in turn affects important organizational characteristics and subsequently employee career success. As such, I address the calls in the literature to study the role of social skill in the workplace (Ferris et al., 2002). I first discuss the relationship between personality and social skill. Next, I describe how social skill influences some of the more proximal outcomes, such as mentoring received and social support. I then examine how individual and situational factors moderate the relationship between social skill and job outcomes. Finally, I look at the effects of mentoring characteristics on career success, which is a replication of prior studies.

Even though recent research shows that social skill contributes to organizational success (Ferris et al., 2002), we know very little about factors leading to individuals' social skill. Limited research suggests that inherent characteristics can influence an individual's overall social skill score (Riggio, 1986). For example, using Snyder's (1974) self-monitoring scale and Riggio's (1986) social skill inventory, Riggio (1986) found that

social skill was significantly and positively associated with two of the three sub-dimensions of self-monitoring. The same study also shows that people who were more outgoing and more emotionally stable tend to have higher social skill. Thus, limited research suggests that individual characteristics can affect one's social skill. I extend such research by examining how individual characteristics such as emotional intelligence and self-monitoring, are related with social skill. Note that social intelligence is not examined because to date there is not an adequate scale to capture the construct. Also note that although the results from the construct validation phase of the study already demonstrated some of the relationships between the proposed antecedents, such as emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, extraversion, and social skill, I plan to investigate these relationships more fully in the later section. In particular, I plan to examine whether social skill mediates the relationship between these antecedents and the career outcomes.



**Figure 1**  
**Conceptualized Model**

**Emotional intelligence.** As noted earlier, emotional intelligence is the innate ability that allows an individual to recognize meanings of emotions and use the information as a basis for reasoning and self development (Mayer et al., 2001). In general, emotional intelligence involves four abilities: the ability to correctly identify, judge, and express emotions, the ability to understand emotions, the ability to manage emotions, and the ability to promote emotional and intellectual development (Jordan, Ashkanasy, & Hartel, 2003; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Although emotional intelligence is mainly intrapersonal because it involves the regulation of self emotions and the use of emotions for intellectual development, I theorize that high emotionally intelligent individuals will possess strong social skill because these individuals with strong emotional intelligence are able to use their ability to sense and regulate emotions to enhance social interactions. For example, individuals with high emotional intelligence are more sensitive toward self and others' emotions, which can

contribute to their ability to understand the changing social environments and make proper adjustment in their emotions to fit in the changing environment. Furthermore, since people with high emotional intelligence are able to stay positive and motivated even under the most stressful or uncomfortable social situations, they may be more successful at managing disagreements or adjusting to difficult interpersonal relationships. Hence, I theorize that people with high emotional intelligence are more likely to have strong social skill.

*Hypothesis 1: Emotional intelligence is positively correlated with social skill.*

**Self-monitoring.** Self-monitoring is a personality variable not captured by the big-five model (Funder, 2001). The theory of self-monitoring states that people differ in the extent to which they engage in expressive control. In general, high self-monitors tend to care about situational appropriateness of their social presentation and monitor and regulate their social presentation accordingly. In other words, high self-monitors are highly responsive to social and interpersonal cues with an aim to portray positive self-images (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

Although studies show that self-monitoring is positively associated with social skill (Ferris et al., 2001; Riggio, 1986), little is known about why they are related. I theorize that self-monitoring and social skill are positively related because they share similar mechanisms to achieve effective social presentations. First, high self-monitors have the inherent need to obtain others' approval; therefore, high self-monitors are more knowledgeable on appropriate social behaviors and are likely to behave according to their social roles, which coincides with social presentation, one of the key sub-skill of social skill. Second, high self-monitors tend to monitor their social behaviors, which is

consistent with social scanning. Finally, high self-monitors tend to modify their expressive behaviors to fit in with the social situations, which means they are able to adjust their social behaviors. Thus, high self-monitors already have the key characteristics of an individual with high social skill, although their goal is to obtain favorable self evaluations. Hence, I expect a positive relationship between self-monitoring and social skill.

*Hypothesis 2: Self-monitoring is positively correlated with social skill*

**Neuroticism.** As one of the key Big Five personality dimensions, neuroticism describes someone who has the tendency to show poor emotional adjustment (Mount & Barrick, 1995). In other words, a neurotic individual is less adaptable to the changing environment as they have trouble coping with the negative emotion that arises from within. As such, their inability to manage emotions can negatively influence how they present themselves during social situations. In addition, research shows that people who are neurotic tend to be guilt-prone, moody, angry, insecure in relationships, and lacking in confidence (Capsi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005), which can in turn leads to inaccurate assessment on social cues. Hence, neurotic individuals may become overly sensitive toward others' feelings or verbal cues, which can result in inappropriate social responses. Although research suggests that, through learning, people with negative personality dimensions, such as insecurity, can still possess strong social skill (Ferris et al., 2001), in this study, I theorize that without intervention, neurotic individuals will have the tendency to show poor social skill because of their inability to regulate their social behaviors.

*Hypothesis 3: Neuroticism is negatively correlated with social skill.*

**Extraversion.** Extraversion is defined as the degree to which an individual tends to be warm, outgoing, energetic, positive, and assertive (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1992). In general, extraverts are more effective communicators than introverts because they are more communicatively expressive and tend to show a wide range of topics and claims of common ground (Howard & Street, 1994). In addition, extraverts are able to accurately send and decode non-verbal messages (Howard & Street, 1994). Since extraverts are able to communicate both verbal and non-verbal messages effectively and are sensitive to their social environments, which are skills needed to demonstrate effective social behaviors, I theorize that extraverts are more likely to have high social skill.

*Hypothesis 4: Extraversion is positively correlated with social skill.*

In sum, emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, neuroticism, and extraversion are theorized to be related to social skill. In particular, I theorize that through influencing the three sub-skills of social skill, emotional intelligence and self-monitoring are able to influence the effectiveness of one's social interactions. Neuroticism is hypothesized to negatively influence a person's social skill because people who score high on neuroticism may be overly sensitive toward the environmental cues, which can negatively influence their ability to fit in with the environment. Extraverts, on the other hand, tend to be more social and have better encoding and decoding abilities. In addition, they have the ability to accurately sense the environment and present proper social self, which are the skills needed to demonstrate socially effective behavior.

### ***Outcomes of social skill***

Research shows employees with strong social skill tend to have greater career success (Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, Blass, & Kolodinsky, 2002). Surprisingly, little research has examined *how* social skill influences career success. Thus, another goal of this research is to examine how social skill leads to job success by studying the effect of social skill on more immediate outcomes, such as mentoring received and social support, which then influence career success.

Research shows that individuals with strong social skill are able to cultivate more intimate and successful interpersonal relationships (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991). Extrapolating from prior research, I theorize that people with strong social skill are able to form strong relationships with their colleagues and supervisors, which then leads to effective organizational outcomes. More specifically, I theorize that individuals' social skill will be positively associated with how many mentors they have and the organizational status of their mentors. In addition, I hypothesize that individuals' social skill will influence the amount of mentoring received, their organizational citizenship behaviors, and social support. Finally, I expect a negative relationship between social skill and employee job stress because people with higher social skill are able to adjust their behavior according to different situations, which may in turn reduce their stress level.

**Social skill and mentoring characteristics.** In general, a mentor, who is at an organizational position that is one to two levels above the protégés, provides both career and psychosocial functions to enhance their protégés' career success (Kram, 1985). Research indicates that mentoring leads to positive career outcomes for protégés, such as

higher salary, promotion rate, and career satisfaction (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004). However, despite the large body of literature on mentoring and career success little is known about the process of how mentoring leads to career outcomes (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003). Given that a mentoring relationship involves close interpersonal interactions, Kram (1985), in her seminal work, suggested that interpersonal skills may influence how mentoring relationships are formed. Nevertheless, the central role of interpersonal skills in a mentoring relationship has received limited attention. Therefore, I examine how social skill influences mentoring relationships. More specifically, I hypothesize that individuals with strong social skill, as compared to individuals with low social skill, are more likely to have multiple mentors and have mentors with higher organizational status.

I theorize that social skill can influence mentoring relationships through two mechanisms. First, individuals with strong social skill are more likely to initiate mentoring relationships as considerable evidence indicates that individuals tend to engage in behaviors that they believe they have the ability to perform successfully (Ajzen, 1991). More recent evidence also suggests that protégés with certain characteristics tend to seek out mentors (Aryee, Lo, & Kang, 1999; Day & Allen, 2004; Turban & Dougherty, 1994). For example, Turban and Dougherty (1994) found that protégés who monitor their social behaviors, which are characteristics consistent with individuals with high social skill, tend to initiate more mentoring. Extrapolating from prior research, I theorize that highly socially skilled individuals will initiate more mentoring relationships. In addition, highly socially skilled individuals have the skills to effectively read, listen, and convey verbal and nonverbal messages (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991). These skills allow them to ask

for assistance at the right time and provide appropriate responses during a social interaction, which can lead to a highly effective mentoring relationship. Hence, I theorize that high socially skilled individuals are more likely to be in a mentoring relationship.

Second, individuals with strong social skill are more likely to be sought out as protégés as people who demonstrate high social skill are perceived to be more competent (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991). In general, there are at least four benefits for mentors when engaging in a successful mentoring relationship (Ragins & Scandura, 1999). First, mentors may become more effective and efficient when they delegate work to protégés. Second, they can rely on protégés for information and support for further advancement in the organization. Third, mentors' reputation may be enhanced when their protégés are successful. Lastly, they may gain satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment from passing down their knowledge to help less experienced colleagues (Bozionelos, 2004). Given the potential benefits of being a mentor, mentors are more likely to choose a protégé with high perceived benefits. Allen and Poteet (1999) found that mentors tend to choose a protégé based on their perceptions of the protégé's ability or potential, and that the ideal qualities of protégés include listening and communication skills, patience, and the ability to read and understand others, that is, higher levels of social skill. Thus, protégés with strong social skill are more likely to attract and be sought out by mentors other than their immediate supervisors. Hence, I theorize that protégés with strong social skill are more likely to have multiple mentors and have mentors from higher organizational levels because these protégés would be expected to provide greater benefits to mentors than would protégés with weak social skill.

*Hypothesis 5a: Protégés with strong social skill are more likely to have multiple mentors than protégés with lower social skill.*

*Hypothesis 5b: Protégés with strong social skill are more likely to have high status mentors than protégés with lower social skill.*

**Social skill and mentoring received.** In general, a mentor provides sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments to their protégés (Allen et al., 2004). The protégés in turn learn about the skills needed for career advancement and are offered the opportunity for challenging assignments, which may lead to promotions and higher compensation (Scandura & Shriesheim, 1994). I theorize that protégés with strong social skill will receive more mentoring because they are able to develop deeper relationships by being a good listener (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991), which is a quality needed for fostering relationship bonds. In addition, protégés with higher levels of social skill are able to provide mentors with interactions that are lively, engaging, and interesting. In return, mentors are more willing to provide career related assistance to individuals with whom they have close relationships. Furthermore, as stated earlier that people with strong social skill are more likely to initiate mentoring relationships, so they are likely to have multiple mentors. Having multiple mentors can in turn increase the amount of mentoring received. Thus, I expect a positive relationship between social skill and the amount of mentoring received.

*Hypothesis 6: Individuals' social skill will be positively correlated with the amount of mentoring they receive.*

**Social skill and social support.** Limited research shows that students with strong social skill tend to have higher number of supportive individuals in their social networks

(Cohen, Sherrod, & Clark, 1986; Riggio et al., 1993). Surprisingly, we know little about the role of social skill in influencing the amount of social support received at the workplace. I extend prior research by examining the relationship between employee social skill and social support received in a work context.

I theorize that highly socially skilled individuals will receive more social support because they are able to develop more intimate and trusting relationships with their colleagues, which can lead to more social support. Furthermore, individuals with strong social skill are able to seek support from colleagues when they in need of support because they have the ability to communicate such needs. Individuals with lower levels of social skill, on the other hand, will receive less social support because of their inability to establish relationship bonds with others at the workplace. Thus, individuals with low social skill are less likely to form effective interpersonal relationships with their colleagues, which can then reduce the amount of social support received.

*Hypothesis 7: Individuals' social skill will be positively related with social support.*

**Social skill and job stress.** I theorize that individuals with strong social skill will experience less job stress because of their skills to effectively send and receive messages and their skills to cope with changing situations. Stress can take place “when one appraises a situation as threatening or otherwise demanding and does not have an appropriate coping response (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Highly socially skilled individuals able to accurately decode verbal messages and judge a situation accurately rather than perceiving a situation that is worse than it is. People with strong social skill are also able to seek help or social support from others, which then leads to lower stress (Cohen &

Wills, 1985), and thus reducing the perceived threats that they feel from a situation. Similarly, highly socially skilled individuals have the ability to obtain necessary work-related information, which can reduce stress that comes with uncertainty or role ambiguity (Schaubroeck, Cotton, & Jennings, 1989; Schuler & Jackson, 1986). In addition, people with high social skill are able to handle hostile work situations because they have the ability to adjust their behaviors to fit in with the changing environment, which is another avenue in which stress can be reduced. Hence, I theorize that individuals with strong social skill may experience lower job stress.

*Hypothesis 8: Individuals' social skill will be negatively correlated with work stress.*

**Social skill and OCB.** Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) are individual discretionary behaviors that are not enforceable by an employment contract or job description; instead the behaviors are a matter of personal choice (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). These discretionary behaviors are valued by organizations because managers are not able to anticipate all the behaviors or activities needed for employees to successfully complete their tasks and have to rely on employees to carry out extra role behaviors (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). In general, there are two broad types of organizational citizenship behaviors: Organizational OCB and Interpersonal OCB (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Organizational OCB includes behaviors that benefit the organization as a whole, such as protecting organizational property and not taking breaks. Interpersonal OCB, on the other hand, includes behaviors that benefit individuals in the organization, such as helping others with heavy work loads and taking time to listen to co-workers' problems (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

I theorize that social skill will play a key role in Interpersonal OCB because social skill facilitates interpersonal effectiveness. In particular, given that individuals with higher social skill are more likeable and are perceived to be more competent (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991), these individuals may receive more requests for assistance from their colleagues. Further, people with strong social skill tend to scan their social environments, and thus are more likely to notice situations when extra role behaviors are needed. Given that individuals with higher social skill tend to present themselves in a socially acceptable manner, they are more likely to either offer help or accept people's requests and perform interpersonal helping. Therefore, I hypothesize that social skills will be positively related to OCB towards individuals, such that higher social skills will lead to higher OCB.

*Hypothesis 9: Individuals' social skill will be positively correlated with OCB.*

In sum, I theorize that social skill leads to several important outcomes, such as mentoring received, social support, work stress, and OCBI. I argued that through effective interpersonal skills, socially effective individuals are able to build pleasant and trusting relationships with others, which can influence the amount of work related support received and work related stress experienced. Although social skill plays an important role in organizational outcomes, social skill by itself does not lead to the highest job outcomes. Hence, I examine factors that moderate the relationship between social skill and job outcomes.

### ***Moderating relationships***

Research shows that social skill by itself does not lead to the best job outcomes (Ferris et al., 2001; Hochwarter et al., 2006; Witt & Ferris, 2003), but we know little

about factors that enhance the effect of social skill on job outcomes. In this study, I examine both individual and environmental factors and how they moderate the relationship between social skill and job outcomes. More specifically, I theorize that role breadth self-efficacy and job interdependence will moderate the relationship between social skill and job performance and OCB.

**Role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE).** Limited research shows that the highest level of job outcomes is reached when individuals have both high social skill and motivation to perform (Witt & Ferris, 2003). I extend the social skill literature by studying the moderating role of role breadth self-efficacy on social skill and job outcomes. Role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) is a proactive cognitive-motivational state that is job specific (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). In particular, role breadth self-efficacy refers to the extent to which people feel confident to perform work activities beyond the job requirements (Parker, 1998), and was found to be positively associated with proactive work behavior (Parker et al., 2006). Although the concept of role breadth self-efficacy is similar to general self-efficacy, role breadth self-efficacy is distinct from general self-efficacy in that it is work specific and is not stable over time.

In general, although I hypothesized (H10) that people with strong social skill will perform more OCB, I expect that the relationship will be stronger when individuals also have high role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE). In other words, simply having the skill to perform helpful behavior is not enough; employees also need to have the motivation to carry out helpful behaviors, such as help their supervisors to train new employees. People with high RBSE have the motivation to perform extra role behaviors and are more

likely to carry out these behaviors. Therefore, I expect role breadth self-efficacy to moderate the relationship between social skill and OCB.

*Hypothesis 10a: Role breadth self-efficacy moderates the positive relationship between social skill and OCB such that the relationship will be stronger with individuals with high role breadth self-efficacy.*

I also expect role breadth self-efficacy to moderate the relationship between social skill and job performance. Although people with high social skill tend to receive higher job evaluations (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991), I theorize that the relationship will be stronger with high role breadth self-efficacy. In particular, highly socially skilled individuals who are also motivated to perform task related extra role behavior are more likely to demonstrate behaviors that lead to organizational effectiveness than those who lack the motivation to enhance their task performance.

*Hypothesis 10b: Role breadth self-efficacy moderates the positive relationship between social skill and job performance such that the relationship will be stronger with individuals with high role breadth self-efficacy.*

**Job interdependence.** A few studies show that contextual factors can also influence the importance of social skill in the workplace. For example, Hochwarter and colleagues (2006) found that high social skill had limited effect on job performance when employees reported high perceived organizational support. Although the ability to effectively interact with others is important, social skill may not have a significant effect on jobs that do not require high job interdependence. Hence, I examine the contextual factor of job interdependence and its interaction effect with social skill on job outcomes. Job interdependence involves close interpersonal interactions for employees, such as

coordinating effort with others, seeking advice from others frequently, and receiving accurate information from others (Pearce & Gregersen, 1991). In particular, job interdependence can moderate the relationship between social skill and job performance, such that when a job involves low interdependence, the social skill level will have a limited effect on job outcomes due to the low need to utilize such skills. However, when a job involves high interdependence, which requires frequent interpersonal interactions, a low level social skill will negatively influence job outcomes, while a high level of social skill will enhance job performance. Hence, I hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 11a: Job interdependence will moderate the positive relationship between social skill and job performance such that the relationship will be stronger with high job interdependence.*

I also expect job interdependence to moderate the negative relationship between social skill and job stress, such that the relationship will be stronger with higher job interdependence. As discussed earlier, social skill can lead to lower job stress as highly socially effective individuals are able to seek important job-related information, ask for assistance when needed, and manage conflicts, which can reduce job-related stress. However, the effect of strong social skill will be minimized when a job is not interdependent because there is less need to engage in tasks that require interactions with colleagues. Social skill will be especially important for a job that is highly interdependent because individuals need to be able to coordinate tasks with others, receive accurate information, and keeping the work environment pleasant. A pleasant and cohesive work environment can enhance job performance and minimize work-related

conflicts, which can in turn reduce job stress. Thus, I expect job interdependence to moderate the relationship between social skill and job stress.

*Hypothesis 11b: Job interdependence will moderate the negative relationship between social skill and job stress such that the relationship will be stronger with high job interdependence.*

In summary, limited research suggests that social skill by itself does not lead to the highest job outcomes and there are situations where social skill may be more or less useful (Witt & Ferris, 2003; Hochwarter et al., 2006). Therefore, in this study I examine factors that moderate the relationship between social skill and job outcomes. In particular, I theorized that high role breadth self-efficacy will moderate the relationship between social skill and job outcomes, such that the relationship will be stronger for individuals with strong social skill than with weak social skill. I also theorized that situational factors, such as job interdependence, can minimize the effect of social skill, especially in situations where jobs are not interdependent. It is when jobs are highly interdependent that social skill will be needed to achieve effective job outcomes.

### ***Career Outcomes***

Lastly, I investigate the relationships between mentoring relationships and career success, although this part of the study will be a replication of prior research. I expect that mentoring received will lead to career success indicators because research suggests that mentoring received leads to both objective and subjective career success in three ways (Allen et al., 2004). First, mentors provide ways in which critical information and knowledge can be transferred to protégés. Second, mentors provide protégés access to social networks that are at a higher hierarchical level. Finally, mentors serve as role

models to protégés for effective professional behavior. Thus, I expect that mentoring received will lead to protégés' career-related advancements. I also expect the number of mentors a protégé has will lead to career success. Limited evidence indicates that people with multiple mentors achieved greater career success (Higgins & Thomas, 2001). Some evidence also suggests that protégés with white male mentors, who are presumably in a higher organizational status, reported higher incomes (Dreher & Chargois, 1998; Dreher & Cox, 1996). Consistent with past research, I theorize that mentoring received, number of mentors, and high status mentors will positively influence career success.

*Hypothesis 12a: Mentoring received will be positively associated with the number of promotions received, total income, and subjective career success.*

*Hypothesis 12b: The number of mentors one has is positively related with the number of promotions received, total income, and subjective career success.*

*Hypothesis 12c: Mentor's organizational status is positively related with the number of promotions received, total income, and subjective career success.*

## CHAPTER 6: METHOD

### *Procedure*

Because the project aimed to examine social skill in the workplace and required supervisors' responses, I sought participation directly from organizations rather than from alumni or students. I did not target any specific industries because the outcome variables in the model, such as social support, are common outcomes that could occur in any industries. Hence, I sent solicitation letters to organizations from different industries. The solicitation letter, which was in an email format, was sent to over 30 organizations explaining what the project entailed. The letter also highlighted potential benefits for organizations that choose to participate in the study. More specifically, I promised to provide each organization a summary report of the results. In addition, I promised to provide each firm a measure of social skill that could be used in their training and development programs.

Out of the thirty organizations that I contacted, eleven of them expressed interest. Some of the organizations participated in the study include an IT consulting firm, the printing service from a large Midwestern university, a textbook wholesaler, a non-profit organization, and a local TV station. I obtained a list of employee information from these firms and used the information to and assign each employee and their supervisor with an identification number. I then stamped all the surveys with identification numbers so that the surveys could be matched once they were returned. Finally, a survey package was put together, which included the survey itself, a letter outlining the importance of participating in the study, and a return envelope. For supervisors, in addition to receiving

the survey, the cover letter, and a return envelope, they also received a University of Missouri logo pen as a token of appreciation.

### *Sample*

A total of 1,423 employee survey packages were distributed and 449 employee responses were returned, resulting in a 32% response rate. However, the actual response rate was difficult to calculate because only a few of the organizations allowed me to distribute the surveys in person; most of the companies distributed the surveys themselves. Hence, it is possible that not all employees received a survey, which would make the actual response rate higher than 32%. In terms of specific response rate from each organization, the numbers varied from 0% to 100%. For example, 136 individuals out of 223 employees completed a survey at a local bank, which was a 57% response rate. A local TV station with 13 employees had a 100% response rate, and no one from a local radio station returned a survey, which was a 0% response rate. A local book distribution center with 880 employees had a surprising low response rate; only 80 individuals returned a survey (9% response rate).

Out of the 449 employee responses received, seven individuals returned a blank survey. Hence, the final sample consisted of 442 employees and 66.8% of them were female, 62.3% were married, and 86.6% were white. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 75 with an average age of 38.6 and reported a wide range of job titles, such as vice president, receptionist, marketing director, employment advisor, child support specialist, IT consultant, web designer, computer operator, loan clerk, cook, dish washer, customer service representative, bindery operator, and account executive. On average, people reported working 41.75 hours per week and have been with their current company for

6.91 years. Most of the respondents worked in the service industry with 500-999 employees and held a staff position (in a support or advisory capacity within the organization).

In terms of supervisor responses, a total of 124 supervisors (57.4% female) participated in the study. The supervisor response rate was even more difficult to calculate because some companies allowed me to distribute the surveys to all the supervisors regardless of whether their direct-reports had filled out a survey, whereas others only allowed me to send surveys to supervisors whose direct-reports had participated in the study. In total, 458 supervisor surveys were returned, resulting in 348 matching surveys.

The participants were asked about their personality, social skill, mentoring relationships, work-related behaviors, and career outcomes. The supervisors were asked to complete a short survey about their direct-reports' OCBI, social skill, and job performance. Most of the measures in the surveys, such as emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, and social support, were based on existing scales. Unless otherwise noted, the respondents used the traditional 5 item Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

### **Employee Survey Measures**

**Social skill.** I used the 19-item social skill measure developed in the prior section to assess employees' skills on *social presentation* and *social scanning*. To assess *social flexibility*, I added four items that were either created by the experts or adapted from the experts' items. The four items were: "I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with," "I am good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations," "I see the need to

change my behavior in different social surroundings,” and “My behavior changes according to the people I am interacting with.” Hence, a total of 23 items were used to measure employees’ overall social skill.

Because four new items were included in the social skill measure, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the overall social skill factor structure. Given that CFA is sensitive to sample size, a sample size of 406 was used (Bentler & Chou, 1987; Stevens, 1996) and a correlation matrix with the 23 social skill items was calculated and input into AMOS for analyses. Initial results show that the 3-factor model had a marginal fit to the data,  $\chi^2 (227, N = 406) = 705.9, p \leq .001$ , GFI = .87, CFI = .85, and RMSEA = .072. Since the model provides a marginal fit to the data, I examined the modification indices to identify problematic items.

The results from AMOS show that item 2 of the social flexibility dimension, which was a new item, “I am good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations,” cross-loaded with both the social scanning and social presentation factors. Because this item appears to capture both the scanning and presentation factors, which does not fit the theoretical framework, I removed the item from the model, and the fit appears to improve slightly,  $\chi^2 (206, N = 406) = 571.9.1, p \leq .001$ , GFI = .88, CFI = .87, and RMSEA = .07.

Next I examined the all negatively worded items in the measure because although negatively worded items may help reduce response bias, they can confuse participants, and sometimes respondents may not even notice that these items are reverse scored (Idaszak & Drasgow, 1987; Netemeyer et al., 2003). In addition, negatively worded items tend to load together, which threatens the dimensionality of the factor structure, which seems to be the case for this sample. Two of the negatively worded items came

from the social presentation dimension and one came from the social scanning dimension. The modification indices show that the three negatively worded items were either cross-loaded with other factors or were highly correlated among one another. For example, item 7 from the *social scanning* factor “I have trouble anticipating people’s reaction” not only cross-loaded with the social flexibility and social presentation factors, it also correlated highly with another negatively worded item from the social presentation dimension. Hence, I removed these items from the measure. The model appears to show good fit to the data after removing the three negatively worded items, such that  $\chi^2 (149, N = 406) = 381.52, p < .001, GFI = .91, CFI = .91, \text{ and } RMSEA = .06$ .

In sum, the results from the confirmatory factor analysis shows that social skill is consists of three factors and the final social skill measure has 19 items ( $\alpha = .86$ ). Social presentation ( $\alpha = .81$ ) and social scanning ( $\alpha = .84$ ) each has eight items whereas social flexibility ( $\alpha = .82$ ) has three items. The results from the correlation matrix show that social presentation is moderately correlated with social scanning ( $r = .48, p \leq .000$ ) and less strongly correlated with social flexibility ( $r = .13, p \leq .008$ ). Social scanning and social flexibility are correlated, although the relationship is not very strong ( $r = .18, p \leq .000$ ). The low correlation though is consistent with past findings that the sub-skills of social skill are not necessarily highly correlated (i.e., Riggio, 1989).

**Ferris et al.’s Social skill.** In addition to assessing people’s social skill with the newly created social skill measure, Ferris et al.’ (2002) 7-item social skill measure was also included in the survey for construct validation purpose ( $\alpha = .77$ ).

**Emotional intelligence.** Law et al.'s (2004) 16-item EI measure was used ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Sample items include "I have good understanding of my own emotions" and "I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them."

**Self-monitoring.** Self-monitoring was measured using Gangestad and Snyder's (1985) 18-item measure, which is the most widely used scale in studies examining self-monitoring (Day et al., 2002) ( $\alpha = .81$ ). Some of the items are: "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people," "I would probably make a good actor," and "I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting."

**Neuroticism.** Neuroticism items from the International Personality and Item Pool were used to measure neuroticism ( $\alpha = .86$ ). The 10-item measure includes both positively and negatively worded items, such as "I have frequent mood swings," "I seldom feel blue," and "I am not easily bothered by things." The items can be found under the label of "Emotional instability."

**Extraversion.** I used Goldberg's (1999) 10-item measure ( $\alpha = .90$ ). Sample items include "I am the life of the party," "I feel comfortable around people," and "I tend to start conversations."

**Mentoring characteristics.** The mentoring outcomes assessed include: the number of mentors, the highest organization level of mentors (*High status mentors*), and mentoring received, and before asking the participants about their mentoring experience, the definition of a mentor was provided (see Exhibit G in the appendix). Respondents were provided with the following definition: "Often, we have a number of people in our work life who have been facilitating our career development. Please name the people who have contributed the most to your professional growth and development – the people

who acted to help your career by speaking on your behalf, providing you with information, resources, career opportunities, advice, psychosocial support, or any sort of assistance (i.e., Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001).” Respondents were then asked to estimate how many mentors they have had so far and complete a table to list up to five of their mentors and their mentors’ characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, and age. On average, people reported having 1.01 mentors (SD = 0.60).

For the *high status mentors* variable, I asked the respondents to list the number of organizational levels their mentors are above them (i.e., Seibert et al., 2001). I then computed the variable based on the highest organizational level reported by the participants. For example, if a participant listed three mentors and the highest number of organizational levels above the participant was four, then “Highest Level Mentor” variable would have a value of four. The variable underwent a log transformation because the data were not normally distributed. The results from the correlation analysis show that the participants had more peer mentors because the mean organizational level is less than one (M = 0.71, SD = .58).

**Mentoring received.** I used Dreher and Ash’s (1990) global measure of mentoring received to assess participants’ general mentoring experiences (18 items,  $\alpha = .92$ ). Participants were asked whether people in their developmental network have, for example “Given or recommended you for challenging assignments that present opportunities to learn new skills?” and “Shared personal experiences as an alternative perspective to your problems?” In general, respondents received a moderate amount of mentoring assistance from multiple mentors (M = 3.66, SD = .67).

Although the global mentoring received construct is often examined in the mentoring research, the construct can be further divided to two sub categories: career mentoring received and psychosocial mentoring received. Following Turban and Dougherty's (1994) work, I conducted a principle component analysis with Varimax rotation to obtain measures of the two functions. I constrained the model to a 2-factor solution and used a cut-off of greater than .50 on the factor. The results from the principle component analyses show that career mentoring received is consisted of 6 items (items 1-4, 7-8,  $\alpha = .87$ ), whereas psychosocial mentoring received is consisted of 10 items (items 9-18,  $\alpha = .88$ ). Although not hypothesized, I plan to test the relationships between social skill and the two mentoring functions in the later section.

**Social support.** A slightly modified version of Caplan, Cobb, French, Van Harrison, & Pinneau's (1980) social support measure was used ( $\alpha = .75$ ). Respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed with the following questions about their co-workers: 1) How much do they go out of their way to do things to make your work life easier for you? 2) How easy is it to talk to them? 3) How much can these people be relied on when things get tough at work? 4) How willing are they to listen to your personal problems? The anchor for this measure is different from other measures in the survey, where 0 is "Don't have any such person," 1 is "Not at all," 2 is "A little," 3 is "Somewhat," while 4 is "Very much."

**Job-related tension-anxiety.** Dougherty and Pritchard's (1985) 5-item version of the job-related tension anxiety scale was used ( $\alpha = .63$ ) to measure job stress. The items are: "I often feel nervous or jumpy on my job," "I almost never feel any tension while on the job," "The pressure generated by my job rarely interferes with my

enjoyment of recreational activity,” and “Concern for my future career causes me to feel stress or pressure.”

**Role breadth self-efficacy.** A short version of Parker’s (1998) 10-item measure was used ( $\alpha = .90$ ). In particular, the first five items from the measure were chosen to capture this construct. The measure asks the respondents how confident they would feel about 1) Analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution. 2) Representing their work area in meetings with senior management. 3) Designing new procedures for their work area. 4) Making suggestions to management about ways to improve the working of their section. 5) Contributing to discussions about the company’s strategy.

**Job interdependence.** Pearce and Gregersen’s (1991) job interdependence items were used (5 items,  $\alpha = .75$ ). The items were: “I work closely with others in doing my work,” “I frequently must coordinate my efforts with others,” “My own performance is dependent on receiving accurate information from others,” “The way I perform my job has a significant impact on others,” and “My work requires me to consult with others fairly frequently.”

**Objective career success.** Career success was measured through total income and promotions. Total income is considered an objective indicator because studies show that it tends to correlate highly with company data (Turban & Dougherty, 1994). Promotions are defined as more than one of the following changes in the participants’ status: 1) changes in offices, 2) significant increases in annual salary, 3) qualifying for a company incentive plan, 4) significant changes in the scope of the job, and 5) changes in the level in the company (Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1991). On average, people reported having 3.9 promotions and earned \$32,934.80

annually. I log transformed total income and promotions to produce normally distributed data.

**Subjective career success.** A modified scale from Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley's (1990) 3-item measure was used ( $\alpha = .75$ ). The questions are: "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals," "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my income." "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills."

**Control variables.** Age, gender, marital status, work hours, socio-economic status, job function (line or staff), job tenure (in month), organization size, and industry were used as control variables because evidence indicates they are related to career success (i.e., Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1992). Note that although full-time work experience tends to be related to career success, it was not controlled because it is highly correlated with age at  $r = .88$ . Socio-economic level (while growing up) was measured by asking the respondents to circle: 1 for upper class, 2 for upper middle class, 3 for middle class, 4 for working class, 5 for working poor (below mainstream America in living standard), and 6 for underclass (depending on welfare system for sustenance) (Dreher, Dougherty, & Whitely, 1985). The measure was reversed coded such that 6 represents upper class and 1 represents underclass. In terms of organization size, participants were also asked to select: 1 for 50 employees or less, 2 for less than 100 employees, 3 for less than 500 employees, 4 for less than 1,000 employees, 5 for less than 5,000 employees, 6 for less than 10,000 employees, 7 for less than 50,000 employees, and 8 for over 50,000 employees. The variable "industry" was created with '1' being service and '2' being government/non-profit because all of the participating

organizations were either in a service-oriented industry (i.e., food service, real estate, and banking) or government/non-profit (i.e., prosecuting attorney's office). The correlation analysis also shows that these control variables significantly correlated with other antecedent and proximal outcome variables in the study. Hence, all nine variables are controlled when conducting the analyses.

### **Supervisor Survey Measures**

**Social Skill.** I prepared a short version of the social skill measure for the supervisors to rate their employees' social skill. On each survey that the supervisors received, the supervisors saw their direct-report's name (one survey per direct-report), and were given the following instruction: "From your observation about your direct-report, how strongly do you agree with the following statements about your direct report?"

The 14-item supervisor-rated social skill measure ( $\alpha = .93$ ) is significantly and positively correlated with the employees' social skill measure, but the correlation is low ( $r = .18, p \leq .001$ ). The low correlation between the two measures suggests that they are two different constructs, perhaps due to the fact that some of the social scanning and social flexibility behaviors were more difficult for supervisors to observe. Hence, this variable should be treated as supervisor's perception of employees' social skill rather than an objective measure of employees' social skill. See Exhibit H for a copy of the supervisor survey.

**OCB.** Supervisors evaluated their direct-reports' interpersonal organizational citizenship behaviors by answering six questions developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) ( $\alpha = .88$ ). Supervisors were asked how strongly they agree with the following

statements about their direct report: “Help others who have been absent,” “Helps others who have heavy work loads,” “Assists supervisor with their work (when not asked),” “Takes time to listen to co-workers’ problems and worries,” “Goes out of way to help new employees,” and “Passes along information to coworkers.”

**Job performance.** Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez’s (1998) three item measure was used ( $\alpha = .91$ ). In particular, supervisors were asked to rate their subordinates on their “overall performance in the tasks associated with his/her job,” “quantity of work” and “quality of work.” Supervisors were provided a scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being “Needs improvement” and 5 being “Excellent.”

## CHAPTER 7: ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables in the study are presented in Table 6. Initial evidence appears to support most of the hypotheses using self-rated social skill. More specifically, hypotheses 1 through 4 were supported, such that emotional intelligence ( $r = .59, p \leq .001$ ), self-monitoring ( $r = .35, p \leq .001$ ), and extraversion ( $r = .53, p \leq .001$ ) were positively correlated with social skill, while neuroticism ( $r = -.16, p \leq .001$ ) was negatively related with social skill. Social skill was also positively related with the number of mentors (H5b) ( $r = .16, p \leq .01$ ) and the amount of mentoring received (H6) ( $r = .36, p \leq .001$ ). In terms of organizational related outcomes, people with stronger social skill received more social support (H7) ( $r = .16, p \leq .001$ ) and performed more interpersonal related organizational citizenship behaviors (H9) ( $r = .13, p \leq .05$ ). Although not hypothesized, social skill was found to be positively related with job performance ( $r = .12, p \leq .05$ ), numbers of promotions ( $r = .13, p \leq .05$ ), and subjective career success ( $r = .11, p \leq .05$ ). However, social skill was not correlated with job stress (H8) and high status mentor (H5c).

Turning to the relationships between Ferris et al.'s (2001) global measure of social skill and the proposed variables, the correlation analysis shows that emotional intelligence ( $r = .52, p \leq .001$ ), self-monitoring ( $r = .37, p \leq .001$ ), neuroticism ( $r = -.21, p \leq .001$ ), extraversion ( $r = .50, p \leq .001$ ) all significantly correlated with Ferris et al.'s (2001) measure. It was also significantly correlated with numbers of mentors (H5b) ( $r = .23, p \leq .001$ ), amount of mentoring received (H6) ( $r = .27, p \leq .001$ ), and social support (H7) ( $r = .11, p \leq .05$ ). However, Ferris et al.'s (2001) social skill was not significantly correlated with supervisors' ratings of OCBI (H9), job performance, and the

number of promotions, whereas the newly developed global social skill was related with these outcomes.

### **Individual Antecedents and Social Skill**

As shown in the correlation matrix, hypotheses 1 through 4 are supported using self-rated social skill. However, the results show that extraversion is the only personality variable that significantly correlated with supervisor-rated social skill ( $r = .12, p \leq .05$ ). Emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, and neuroticism were not correlated with supervisor-rated social skill. I conducted additional tests to test the effects of all four antecedents on social skill controlling for age, gender, job tenure, marital status, socio-economic status, job function, organization size, work hours, and industry. The results show that the four antecedents produced a significant increase in the amount of variance explaining employees' self-rated social skill above and beyond the control variables ( $\Delta R^2 = .489, p \leq .001$ ). However, the four individual difference variables did not produce a significant increase in the amount of variance explaining supervisor-rated social skill. In general, hypotheses 1-4 are supported with self-rated social skill (see Table 7) and not supported with other-rated social skill.

Table 6  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the Hypothesized Variables

	Mean	s.d.	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Control Variables</b>															
1 Gender <sup>a</sup>	1.34	0.47	432												
2 Age	38.57	12.79	424	-.03											
3 Work hours	41.75	9.08	426	.18**	.13**										
4 Job tenure	83.26	96.9	431	-.11**	.51**	.05									
5 Marital status <sup>b</sup>	1.38	.49	428	.03	-.10*	-.05	-.11*								
6 Socio-economic status <sup>c</sup>	3.50	.95	425	.05	-.10*	.04	-.08	.00							
7 Lines vs. Staff <sup>d</sup>	1.85	.35	428	-.17**	-.02	-.22**	-.08	.13**	-.11*						
8 Organization size <sup>e</sup>	4.51	1.43	437	-.04	-.03	-.12*	.124*	.01	-.04	-.06					
9 Service vs. Government <sup>f</sup>	1.19	.39	430	-.12*	.12*	.05	.03	-.09	-.03	.05	-.62**				
<b>Social Skill</b>															
10 Social Skill	3.80	0.43	441	-.01	-.16**	.15**	-.14**	-.00	.14**	-.05	-.09	.07			
11 Social Presentation	3.95	0.53	441	.03	-.14**	.14**	-.22**	.05	.13**	.01	-.12*	.05	.81**		
12 Social Scanning	3.72	0.55	441	-.06	-.09	.10*	-.05	.01	.11*	-.08	-.05	.08	.84**	.48**	
13 Social Flexibility	3.60	0.81	441	.02	-.13*	.06	-.02	-.10*	.04	-.05	-.02	.00	.46**	.13**	.18**
14 Social Skill (Ferris et al)	3.34	0.55	438	.02	-.14**	.16**	-.15**	.06	.14**	-.08	-.05	.00	.69**	.58**	.60**
<b>Individual Differences</b>															
15 EI	3.87	0.49	441	-.02	.01	.13**	-.04	.03	.10*	-.04	-.00	.01	.59**	.50**	.55**
16 Self-Monitoring	2.84	0.50	434	.26**	-.28**	.04	-.22**	.01	.10*	-.08	-.12*	-.04	.35**	.33**	.12*
17 Neuroticism	2.67	0.64	434	-.13**	-.06	-.07	.07	-.00	-.12*	.04	-.09	.12*	-.16**	-.26**	-.12*
18 Extraversion	3.26	0.71	439	.06	-.26**	.03	-.22**	.01	.20**	-.03	-.02	-.03	.53**	.63**	.28**
19 Role breadth self-efficacy	3.68	0.71	437	.14**	.05	.17**	.02	-.05	.03	-.13**	-.15**	.05	.34**	.35**	.23**
<b>Mentoring Characteristics</b>															
20 High Status Mentor	0.71	0.58	302	-.02	-.06	-.05	-.06	.06	-.04	.09	.18**	-.11	.02	.02	-.01
21 # of Mentors	1.01	0.80	366	.06	-.13**	.11*	-.12*	-.03	-.02	.05	.03	-.13	.16**	.19**	.11*
22 Mentoring Received	3.66	0.67	367	.02	-.01	.07	.03	-.12*	.19**	-.17**	-.04	.05	.36**	.30**	.30**
<b>Organizational Variables</b>															
23 Social Support	3.11	0.67	437	-.11*	.09*	-.02	.09*	-.12*	.08	-.04	.07	.01	.16**	.19**	.10*
24 Job Stress	2.73	0.68	438	.04	-.00	.16**	.07	-.02	.01	-.09	-.04	.06	-.06	-.10*	-.06
25 OCB	3.83	0.72	434	-.15**	-.00	.17**	.08	-.16**	.04	-.11	-.11*	.14**	.13**	.08	.11*
26 Job Performance	3.93	0.84	432	-.11*	-.01	.08	.12*	-.15**	.09	-.08	-.11*	.18**	.12*	.06	.12*
<b>Career Success</b>															
27 Promotions	1.21	0.76	313	-.03	.19**	.24**	.14**	-.20**	.06	-.20**	.05	.06	.13**	.15**	.01
28 Total Income	10.27	0.52	383	.18**	.27**	.31**	.34**	-.31**	.12*	-.45**	-.10	.17**	.07	.06	.02
29 Career Satisfaction	3.32	0.83	438	-.01	.10*	.09*	.16**	-.03	.06	-.12*	.04	.04	.11*	.11*	.08

Table 6 (continue)  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the Hypothesized Variables

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
14 Social skills (Fornis et al)	.23**															
<b>Individual Differences</b>																
15 EI	.14**	.52**														
16 Self-Monitoring	.38**	.37**	-.00													
17 Neuroticism	.13**	-.21**	-.42**	.07												
18 Extraversion	.21**	.50**	.22**	.61**	-.19**											
19 Role breadth self-efficacy	.12**	.38**	.34**	.21**	-.26**	.30**										
<b>Mentoring Characteristics</b>																
20 High Status Mentor	.05	.00	.05	-.02	-.00	.01	-.00									
21 # of Mentors	.02	.23**	.16**	.16**	-.13**	.15**	.20**	.22**								
22 Mentoring Received	.18**	.27**	.30**	.06	-.12*	.20**	.27**	.03	.18**							
<b>Organizational Variables</b>																
23 Social Support	.02	.11*	.21**	.01	-.17**	.19**	.24**	-.06	.06	.28**						
24 Job Stress	.07	-.05	-.18**	.07	.48**	-.09*	-.15**	-.02	-.03	-.01	-.21**					
25 OCB	.12*	.01	-.01	.03	.08	.07	.18**	-.00	.05	.31**	.25**	-.02				
26 Job Performance	.07	.03	.07	-.04	.02	.03	.20**	-.02	-.06	.26**	.17**	.02	.71**			
<b>Career Success</b>																
27 Promotions	.16**	.09	.15**	.04	-.09	.12*	.22**	-.01	.11*	.16**	.21**	.00	.23**	.18**		
28 Total Income	.10	.08	.08	.06	-.07	.09*	.24**	-.13**	-.03	.24**	.13**	.10*	.26**	.32**	.38**	
29 Career Satisfaction	.03	.14**	.28**	-.06	-.19**	.01	.17**	.01	.10*	.19**	.27**	-.15**	.06	.10*	.24**	.15**

Note. \*1 = female; 2 = male. <sup>a</sup>1 = married; 2 = single. <sup>b</sup>1 = underclass; 2 = working class; 3 = working poor; 4 = middle class; 5 = upper middle; 6 = upper class. <sup>c</sup>1 =

line; 2 = staff. <sup>d</sup>1 = 1-50; 2 = 51-99; 3 = 100-499; 4 = 500-999; 5 = 1000 - 4999; 6 = 5000-9999; 7 = 10,000 - 49,999; 8 = 50,000 +. <sup>e</sup>1 = service; 2 = government/non-

profit. \*  $p < 0.1$ . \*\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 7

*Regression Results of Individual Antecedents on Social Skill*

Predictor	Self-rated SS		Supervisor-rated SS	
	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	B	$\Delta R^2$
<b>Step 1</b>		.069**		.016
Male	-.061		-.121	
Age	-.068		.027	
Job tenure	-.139*		-.020	
Work hours	.148**		.130*	
Married	-.005		-.179**	
Socio-economic status	.112*		.059	
Staff (vs. Line)	-.020		-.105 <sup>+</sup>	
Organization size Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	-.011 .038		-.107 -.013	
<b>Step 2</b>		.489***		.021
Emotional intelligence	.557***		.021	
Self-monitoring	.124*		.016	
Neuroticism	.141**		.009	
Extraversion	.368***		.125*	
Full Model $R^2$	.558***		.113	
<i>N</i>	391		286	

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Social Skill and Mentoring Relationship**

Next, I examined the relationships between social skill and mentoring characteristics (see Table 8). To recap, I theorized that people with stronger social skill are more likely to be involved in a mentoring relationship because of their ability to effectively present themselves and communicate with others. More specifically, I expected people with strong social skill to have more mentors and more high status mentors. The regression analysis, controlling for age, gender, marital status, work hours, socio-economic status, job function, job tenure, organization size, and industry, shows that the relationship between social skill and the number of mentors was supported using

self-rated social skill ( $\beta = .145, p \leq .01$ ). Hence, hypothesis 5a is supported.

Nevertheless, the relationship was not supported when using supervisors' rating of employee social skill. In terms of hypothesis 5b, the results show that people with stronger social skill did not have more high status mentors. The same pattern was found using supervisors' rating of employee social skill. Therefore, hypothesis 5b is not supported.

Next, I examined the relationship between social skill and mentoring received (H6). In general, I theorized that people with strong social skill are able to produce a more enjoyable relationship and are better at asking for developmental assistance. Hence, they are more likely to receive more mentoring assistance compared to individuals with lower social skill. The results support the hypothesis with both employees' own rating of social skill ( $\beta = .317, p \leq .001$ ) and supervisors' rating of such skill ( $\beta = .179, p \leq .01$ ). Table 8 provides a summary of the regression results. In general, the regression analyses show that social skill explained unique variance explaining the number of mentors (H5a) and mentoring received (H6).

Table 8

*Regression Results of Social Skill on Mentoring Characteristics*

Predictor	H5a Number of Mentor		H5b High Status Mentors		H6 Mentoring Received	
	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS
	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	$\beta$
Gender	.023	.042	-.004	.042	-.011	-.051
Age	-.077	-.099	-.004	-.059	-.003	.036
Job tenure	-.071	-.104	-.088	-.089	.066	.038
Work hours	.159**	.169*	-.015	.018	.001	.033
Married	-.050	.016	.050	.058	-.059	-.008
Socio-economic status	-.048	-.061	-.034	-.015	.150**	.233***
Staff (vs. Line)	.102 <sup>+</sup>	.035	.084	.056	-.109*	-.073
Organization size	-.042	-.045	.202**	.085	.013	.016
Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	-.182**	-.146	.000	-.105	.015	.037
Social skill	.145**	.037	.062	.016	.317***	.179**
Full Model $R^2$	.097***	.078*	.058 <sup>+</sup>	.056	.136***	.114**
$N$	339	242	285	201	337	243

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Social Skill and Work-Related Outcomes**

I theorized that social skill will be positively associated with work-related outcomes and more specifically, social support received, job stress experienced, and organizational citizenship behaviors (see Table 9). Controlling for gender, age, job tenure, work hours, marital status, socio-economic status, job function, organization size, and industry, I found that people with strong social skill received more social support from their co-workers ( $\beta = .180, p \leq .001$ ). The same relationship was also supported using supervisors' rating of employee social skill ( $\beta = .126, p \leq .05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 7 is supported. For hypothesis 8, I expected that people with strong social skill would experience less job stress. Nevertheless, hypothesis 8 is not supported with both the employees' self-rating of social skill and supervisors' rating of social skill.

Finally, I expected that people with strong social skill would perform more organizational citizenship behaviors. The regression analyses indicate that social skill is positively related with employees' engagement in OCB. The results were significant with both employees' self-rating of social skill ( $\beta = .122, p \leq .01$ ) and supervisors' rating of social skill ( $\beta = .661, p \leq .001$ ). Hence, hypothesis 9 is fully supported. The analyses show that social skill is related with social support received and organizational citizenship behavior. However, social skill is not correlated with job stress.

Table 9

*Regression of Results of Social Skill on Social Support, Job Stress, and OCBI*

Predictor	H7 Social support		H8 Job stress		H9 OCBI	
	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS
Gender	$\beta$ -.056	$\beta$ -.052	$\beta$ .006	B .028	$\beta$ -.148*	$\beta$ -.068
Age	.092	.057	-.113 <sup>+</sup>	-.107	-.136*	-.169**
Job tenure	.046	.072	.105 <sup>+</sup>	.107	.215**	.211***
Work hours	-.058	-.069	.168**	.112 <sup>+</sup>	.043	-.025
Married	-.083 <sup>+</sup>	-.095	.017	.006	-.104 <sup>+</sup>	.009
Socio-economic status	.079	.125*	.017	-.020	.031	.005
Staff (vs. Line)	-.020	.020	-.056	-.116 <sup>+</sup>	-.095	-.031
Organization size Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	.117 <sup>+</sup>	.018	-.014	.019	-.110	-.031
Social skill	.180***	.126*	-.084	-.012	.122*	.661***
Full Model $R^2$	.074**	.068*	.053*	.048	.108***	.493***
$N$	394	288	394	290	308	290

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Moderating Analyses**

Although social skill is related with some of the work-related outcomes, such as mentoring received, I theorized that social skill by itself will not lead to the most optimal

outcome. In particular, I hypothesized that role-breadth self-efficacy, which is the degree to which one feels confident about carrying out extra-role work behaviors, would moderate the relationship between social skill and organizational outcomes. More specifically, I theorized that role breadth self-efficacy would moderate the positive relationship between social skill and organizational citizenship behaviors, such that the relationship would be stronger for individuals with high role breadth self-efficacy (H10a). I also theorized that role-breadth self-efficacy would moderate the positive relationship between social skill and job performance, such that the relationship would be stronger for individuals with high role breadth self-efficacy (H10a).

I followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach to test the moderating effects, which involves the significance testing of an interaction term. Moderation exists when the interaction term significantly predicts the dependent variable when both the predictor and the moderator are controlled. To test the moderating effect, I first centered social skill and role breadth self-efficacy to reduce the correlation between the variables and then multiplied the two centered variables to create the interaction term. I then entered role breadth self-efficacy, social skill, and the interaction term into the regression model in addition to the nine control variables to test whether or not the interaction term would significantly predict the outcome. The results (see Table 10) show that the interaction term of role breadth self-efficacy and self-rated social skill was not significant. Therefore, the results suggest that role breadth self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between self-rated social skill and organizational citizenship behaviors.

I performed another set of regression analysis to examine the interaction term of role breadth self-efficacy and supervisor-rated social skill and the interaction term was

marginally significant at a  $p \leq .10$ . The graphical depiction of the relationship, nevertheless, shows that the relationship between social skill and organizational citizenship behaviors is stronger for individuals with low role breadth self-efficacy rather than with high role breadth self-efficacy (see Figure 2). Hence, hypothesis 10a is not supported.

*Table 10*  
*The Moderating Role of RBSE on Social Skill and Job Outcomes*

Predictor	H10a OCBI		H10b Job performance	
	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS
	B	$\beta$	$\beta$	B
Age	-.141*	-.166**	-.190*	-.191**
Gender	-.159**	-.070	-.113 <sup>+</sup>	-.042
Job tenure	.208**	.211**	.233**	.224***
Work hours	.035	-.037	.046	-.014
Married	-.102	.009	-.109 <sup>+</sup>	-.037
Socio-economic status	.028	.010	.096 <sup>+</sup>	.069
Staff (vs. Line)	-.088	-.028	-.036	.009
Organization size Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	-.093	-.027	-.088	-.035
Social skill	.067	.627***	.050	.525***
RBSE	.150*	.098*	.158**	.088 <sup>+</sup>
Social Skill*RBSE	-.037	-.079 <sup>+</sup>	-.031	-.097*
Full Model $R^2$	.128***	.507***	.138***	.413***
$N$	307	290	305	288

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

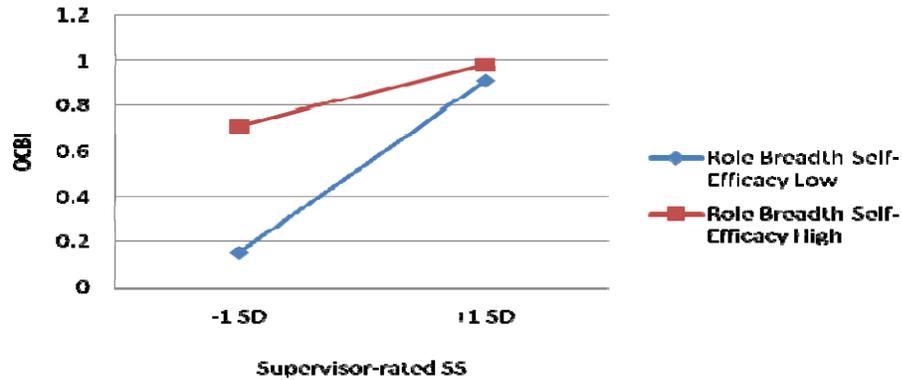


Figure 2. Hypothesis 10a: the moderating role of role breadth self-efficacy on the relationship between supervisors' rating of social skill and OCB.

Next, I examined the moderating role of role breadth self-efficacy on the relationship between social skill and job performance. The results show that the interaction term was significant only when using supervisor-rated social skill ( $\beta = -.094$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ). However, the graph (see Figure 3) shows that the effect between social skill and job performance was stronger for people with low role breadth self-efficacy than with for people with high role breadth self-efficacy. Hence, hypothesis 10b is also not supported.



Figure 3. Hypothesis 10b: the moderating role of role breadth self-efficacy on the relationship between supervisors' rating of social skill and job performance.

Turning to hypotheses 11a and 11b, I theorized that job interdependence would moderate the relationship between social skill and job outcomes. In particular, I hypothesized that the relationship between social skill and job performance would be stronger for individuals with high job interdependence (H11a) and the negative relationship between social skill and work stress would be stronger for people with high job interdependence (H11b).

The results show that the interaction term for supervisor-rated social skill and job interdependence was significant ( $\beta = -.094, p \leq .05$ ). However, the graph (see Figure 4) shows that the effect between social skill and job performance was stronger for individuals with low job interdependence. Therefore, hypothesis 11a is also not supported. In terms of hypothesis 11b, the results show that job interdependence did not moderate the relationship between social skill and work stress. Hence, hypothesis 11b is not supported (see Table 11).



Figure 4. Hypothesis 11a: the moderating role of job interdependence on the relationship between supervisors' rating of social skill and job performance.

Table 11

*The Moderating Role of Job Interdependence on Social Skill and Job Outcomes*

Predictor	H11a Job performance (H11a)		H11b Job stress (H11b)	
	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS	Self-rated SS	Supervisor-rated SS
	B	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
Age	-.194**	-.218***	-.115 <sup>+</sup>	-.106
Gender	-.104 <sup>+</sup>	-.036	.004	.026
Job tenure	.236***	.230***	.104 <sup>+</sup>	.106
Work hours	.046	-.013	.166**	.111 <sup>+</sup>
Married	-.107 <sup>+</sup>	-.028	.016	.005
Socio-economic status	.095 <sup>+</sup>	.066	.014	-.023
Staff (vs. Line)	-.040	.008	-.056	-.115 <sup>+</sup>
Organization size	-.109	-.042	-.014	.021
Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	.075	.099	.073	.109
Social Skill	.094	.551***	-.086	-.011
Job Interdependence	.085	.093 <sup>+</sup>	.022	.011
Social Skill* Job interdependence	-.005	-.094*	.019	.018
Full Model $R^2$	.123***	.412***	.054*	.048
$N$	305	288	394	290

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Career Success Outcomes**

Although research shows that mentoring relationships and mentoring received have positive influence on career success, little is known about the effect of mentors' organizational status on career success. Hence, I extended the mentoring literature by studying the relationship between mentor's organizational status and career success (H12c). I also examined the relationships between mentoring received (H12a) and the number of mentors (H12b) on career success, which are replications of prior studies (see Table12).

Controlling for the nine individual and organizational variables, I studied the effect of mentoring received on the three career success indicators. Consistent with past

findings, mentoring received is significantly correlated with total income ( $\beta = .117, p \leq .01$ ), career satisfaction ( $\beta = .150, p \leq .01$ ), and only marginally correlated with numbers of promotions  $\beta = .117, p \leq .10$ ). Hence, hypothesis 12a is supported (see Table 12).

Next, I examined the effect of number of mentors on career success. The regression analysis controlling for age, gender, job tenure, work hours, marital status, socio-economic status, job function, organization size, and industry show that number of mentors is related with career satisfaction ( $\beta = .143, p \leq .05$ ) and is marginally associated with number of promotions ( $\beta = .116, p \leq .10$ ). How many mentors one has was not related with total income. Thus, hypothesis 12b receives mixed support (see Table 13).

Table 12

*Regression Results of Mentoring Received on Career Success*

Predictor	Hypothesis 12a Mentoring received		
	Numbers of promotions	Total income	Career satisfaction
	B	$\beta$	$\beta$
Age	.173*	-.006	.025
Gender	-.047	.101*	.023
Job tenure	.016	.260***	.138*
Work hours	.153*	.382***	.095 <sup>+</sup>
Married	-.116 <sup>+</sup>	-.137**	.021
Socio-economic status	.051	.135**	.056
Staff (vs. Line)	-.115 <sup>+</sup>	-.298***	-.078
Organization size	.060	.000	.075
Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	.061	.127*	.085
Mentoring received	.117 <sup>+</sup>	.117**	.150**
Full Model $R^2$	.148***	.550***	.086**
<i>N</i>	267	306	335

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 13

*Regression Results of Number of Mentors on Career Success*

Predictor	Hypothesis 12b Numbers of mentors		
	Numbers of promotions	Total income	Career satisfaction
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>			
Age	.176*	.003	.032
Gender	-.059	.091*	.014
Job tenure	.030	.254***	.152*
Work hours	.130*	.393***	.070
Married	-.120*	-.145***	.036
Socio-economic status	.065	.151***	.075
Staff (vs. Line)	-.142*	-.314***	-.103 <sup>+</sup>
Organization size Government/Non profit (vs. Service)	.063	.006	.084
Numbers of mentors	.116 <sup>+</sup>	-.014	.143*
Full Model $R^2$	.145***	.546***	.079**
$N$	267	310	337

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Finally, I examined the effect of high status mentors on career success. The results show that having high status mentors did not correlate with promotions, career satisfaction, and total income. Hence, hypothesis 12c is not supported.

In summary, and as indicated in Table 14, supervisor-rated social skill show different results when it comes to the antecedents of social skill. Nevertheless, the results show some interesting cross-level effects. For example, supervisor-rated social skill was significantly related with mentoring received and social support, which were two outcome variables rated by the employees. Self-rated social skill was also positively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance, which were

rated by the supervisors. The moderating hypotheses are partially supported using supervisor-rated social skill, although the effects were not expected.

Table 14

*Summary Table of the Results*

No.	Hypotheses	(1) Self-rated (2) Supervisor-rated Social Skill
1	Emotional intelligence is positively correlated with social skill	(1) Supported (2) Not supported
2	Self-monitoring is positively correlated with social skill	(1) Supported (2) Not supported
3	Neuroticism is negatively correlated with social skill	(1) Supported (2) Not supported
4	Extraversion is positively correlated with social skill	(1) Supported (2) Supported
5a	Protégés with strong social skill are more likely to have multiple mentors than protégés with lower social skill	(1) Supported (2) Not supported
5b	Protégés with strong social skill are more likely to have high status mentors than protégés with lower social skill	(1) Not supported (2) Not supported
6	Individuals' social skill will be positively correlated with the amount of mentoring they receive	(1) Supported (2) Supported
7	Individuals' social skill will be positively related with social support	(1) Supported (2) Supported
8	Individuals' social skill will be negatively correlated with work stress	(1) Not supported (2) Not supported
9	Individuals' social skill will be positively correlated with OCBI	(1) Supported (2) Supported
10a	Role breadth self-efficacy moderates the positive relationship between social skill and OCBI, such that the relationship will be stronger with individuals with high role breadth self-efficacy	(1) Not supported (2) Not supported
10b	Role breadth self-efficacy moderates the positive relationship between social skill and job performance, such that the relationship will be stronger with individuals with high role breadth self-efficacy	(1) Not supported (2) Not supported
11a	Job interdependence will moderate the positive relationship between social skill and job performance, such that the relationship will be stronger with high job interdependence	(1) Not supported (2) Not supported
11b	Job interdependence will moderate the negative relationship between social skill and work stress, such that the relationship will be stronger with high job interdependence	(1) Not supported (2) Not supported
12a	Mentoring received will be positively associated with the number of promotions received, total income, and subjective career success.	Supported
12b	The number of mentors one has is positively related with the number of promotions received, total income, and subjective career success.	Supported with career satisfaction and promotions
12c	Mentor's organizational status is positively related with the number of promotions received, total income, and subjective career success.	Not supported

## **Additional Analyses**

The results from the regression analyses show that social skill is a vital contributor to many organizational outcomes. In particular, social skill is found to positively influence social support, mentoring received, organizational citizenship behaviors, and job performance, which then have a positive impact on career success. The importance of social skill highlights the need for us to understand the construct even better. For example, is the global approach of social skill more useful than the sub-dimensional approach? Does social skill mediate the relationship between personality and organizational outcomes, such as mentoring received? I performed additional analyses to address these questions. To answer the first question, I conducted a usefulness analysis to examine whether the higher order construct is more effective than the sub-dimensional approach in predicting work-related outcomes. Next, to understand both theoretically and empirically the role of social skill in career success, I examined a path model that looks at how social skill mediates the relationship between personality and mentoring received, and how mentoring received mediates the relationship between social skill and career success.

**Global Approach vs. Sub-Dimensional Approach.** Although the present study conceptualized social skill as a higher order construct that consists of several sub-factors, it is not clear if the global approach is the most effective approach. Hence, in this section, I performed additional analyses to compare whether the global approach or the sub-dimensional approach is more effective in predicting important organizational outcomes. I used self-rated social skill instead of supervisor-rated social skill to perform the

analyses because self-rated measure was a full measure of social skill, which provides a better assessment of one's social skill.

Before reporting the findings from the additional analyses, I first discuss initial results from the correlation matrix. The correlation analysis (see Table 15) shows that the global social skill measure (denoted as GS) and the sub-skills are significantly correlated with the four individual characteristics, which include emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, neuroticism, and extraversion. Interestingly, instead of having a negative relationship with neuroticism, social flexibility is the only sub-skill that positively correlates with neuroticism ( $r = .13, p \leq .01$ ). The pattern is unexpected because people who are neurotic tend to show poor emotional adjustment, which suggests that they would be less flexible.

The correlation matrix shows that in general, global social skill is more consistently correlated with many of the mentoring, job, and career success outcomes. Nevertheless, the relationships between the individual sub-skills and work-related outcomes are not consistent. For example, the global social skill measure is significantly related with social support ( $r = .16, p \leq .01$ ), but only social flexibility ( $r = .19, p \leq .01$ ) and social scanning ( $r = .10, p \leq .05$ ) are significantly associated with social support. In terms of organizational citizenship behaviors, the global social skill is significantly correlated with it, but only social scanning ( $r = .161, p \leq .05$ ) and social flexibility ( $r = .12, p \leq .05$ ) are related with organizational citizenship behaviors. Finally, the global social skill is related with job performance ( $r = .12, p \leq .05$ ), whereas only one out of the three sub-skills is correlated (social scanning:  $r = .11, p \leq .05$ ). In terms of job stress, global social skill did not show a significant correlation, but social presentation had a

significant negative relationship with it ( $r = -.10, p \leq .05$ ). Finally, the global social skill is significantly correlated with the number of promotions ( $r = .13, p \leq .01$ ) and career satisfaction ( $r = .11, p \leq .05$ ), but only social presentation ( $r = .15, p \leq .05$ ) and social flexibility ( $r = .16, p \leq .01$ ) are significantly correlated with the number of promotions (and only social presentation is significantly related with career satisfaction ( $r = .11, p \leq .05$ )). In general, the results from the correlation analyses suggest that the global measure seems to be a better predictor of work-related outcomes.

Table 15

*Correlation Matrix for Sub-Skills*

	GS	SP	SS	SF
<b><u>Antecedents</u></b>				
Emotional intelligence	.59**	.50**	.55**	.14**
Self-monitoring	.35**	.33**	.12*	.38**
Neuroticism	-.16**	-.26**	-.12*	.13**
Extraversion	.53**	.63**	.28**	.21**
<b><u>Mentoring characteristics</u></b>				
High status mentors	.02	.02	-.01	.05
Number of mentors	.16**	.19**	.11*	.02
Mentoring received	.36**	.30**	.30**	.18**
<b><u>Job variables</u></b>				
Social support	.16**	.19**	.10*	.02
Job stress	-.06	-.10*	-.06	.07
OCBI	.13**	.08	.11*	.12*
Job performance	.12*	.06	.12*	.07
<b><u>Career success</u></b>				
Number of promotions	.13**	.15**	.01	.16**
Total income	.07	.06	.02	.10
Career satisfaction	.11*	.11*	.08	.03

+  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Usefulness Analysis.** Usefulness analysis is conducted to study whether a global construct should be used as opposed to individual sub-facets (i.e., Judge, Erez, Bono, &

Thoresen, 2003; Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007). More specifically, the results from the analyses can demonstrate the incremental validity of the global construct beyond the sub-facets in predicting variance in outcomes (Luthans et al., 2007). In this case, the results from the analysis will be used to show if the global social skill is a better measure in predicting important work-related outcomes than the three individual sub-skills.

To conduct the analysis, I first entered each sub-skill into a regression model to predict an outcome variable; I then entered the global social skill to determine the increase in multiple correlation values. Next, I reversed the order by first entering the global social skill into the model and then entering each of the sub-skills to predict a particular outcome variable. The results are presented in Table 16, where 1 denotes the variable that was entered first and 2 denotes the variable that entered last. As can be seen in Table 17, in eight out of 15 instances the global social skill adds unique variance above and beyond the individual sub-skills in predicting the number of mentors, mentoring received, social support, organizational citizenship behaviors, and job performance. However, only two out of 15 instances that the sub-skills add unique variance above and beyond global social skill in predicting the same outcomes.

A closer examination of the results (see Table 16) shows that the three individual sub-skills did not predict organizational citizenship behaviors, whereas the global social skill did. Furthermore, the results from the analysis reveal that social scanning and social flexibility did not add unique variance in predicting any of the outcome variables. In terms of social presentation, the table shows that global social skill provided unique variance above and beyond social presentation in predicting mentoring received and job

performance, whereas social presentation provided unique variance above and beyond the global social skill in associating with the number of mentors and social support. In general, the results from the usefulness analyses show that the global social skill measure is more consistently associated with all the outcome variables compared to the individual sub-skills and that the global social skill approach should be used rather than sub-skills approach. Because the global approach is found to be more useful, it will then be used in the structural model to examine the mediating role of social skill between personality and career success.

Table 16

*Usefulness Analyses of Global Social Skill Compared To Sub-Skills*

	Number of Mentors	Mentoring Received	Social Support	OCBI	Job Performance
1. Social Presentation	.19**	.30**	.19**	.09	.05
2. Global Social Skill	.00	.06**	.00	.04	.07*
1. Global Social Skill	.16**	.36**	.16**	.13*	.11*
2. Social Presentation	.03*	.00	.03*	.00	.01
1. Social Scanning	.11*	.30**	.10*	.09	.12
2. Global Social Skill	.05*	.06**	.07**	.03	.01
1. Global Social Skill	.16**	.36**	.16**	.13*	.11*
2. Social Scanning	.01	.00	.01	.00	.01
1. Social Flexibility	.02	.18**	.02	.11	.05
2. Global Social Skill	.15**	.18**	.14**	.03	.05
1. Global Social Skill	.16**	.36**	.16**	.13*	.11*
2. Social Flexibility	.02	.00	.01	.01	.00

*Note.* Table entries are multiple correlations (Multiple *R*). Numbers in stage 2 are change in multiple correlations ( $\Delta R$ ). OCBI = Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Interpersonal.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

**Structural Equation Modeling.** In addition to testing the relationship between sub-skills and outcomes, I also tested a structural model of a subset of the hypothesized relationships that explores the mentoring process. The mentoring relationship is important because it is positively associated with protégés' career success and well-being (Allen et al., 2004); therefore, the management of such relationships is critical especially in the global and knowledge economy. However, despite the large body of literature on mentoring and career success little is known about the precursors of mentoring received. Therefore, the goal of this analysis is to advance our understanding of the mentoring process. Given that a mentoring relationship involves close interpersonal interactions, Kram (1985), in her seminal work, suggested that interpersonal skills, such as social skill, may influence how mentoring relationships are developed. Nevertheless, the central role of social skill in a mentoring relationship has received limited attention. Hence, the goal of the analysis is to explore the relationship between personality and career success and investigated the mediating influence of both social skill and mentoring received. In doing so, I not only build on Kram's (1985) neglected suggestions to understand the role of interpersonal skills in mentoring relationships, I also address calls in the literature to study the role of personality in mentoring relationships (Turban & Lee, 2007) and in career success (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005). Figure 5 presents a graphical overview of the proposed model.

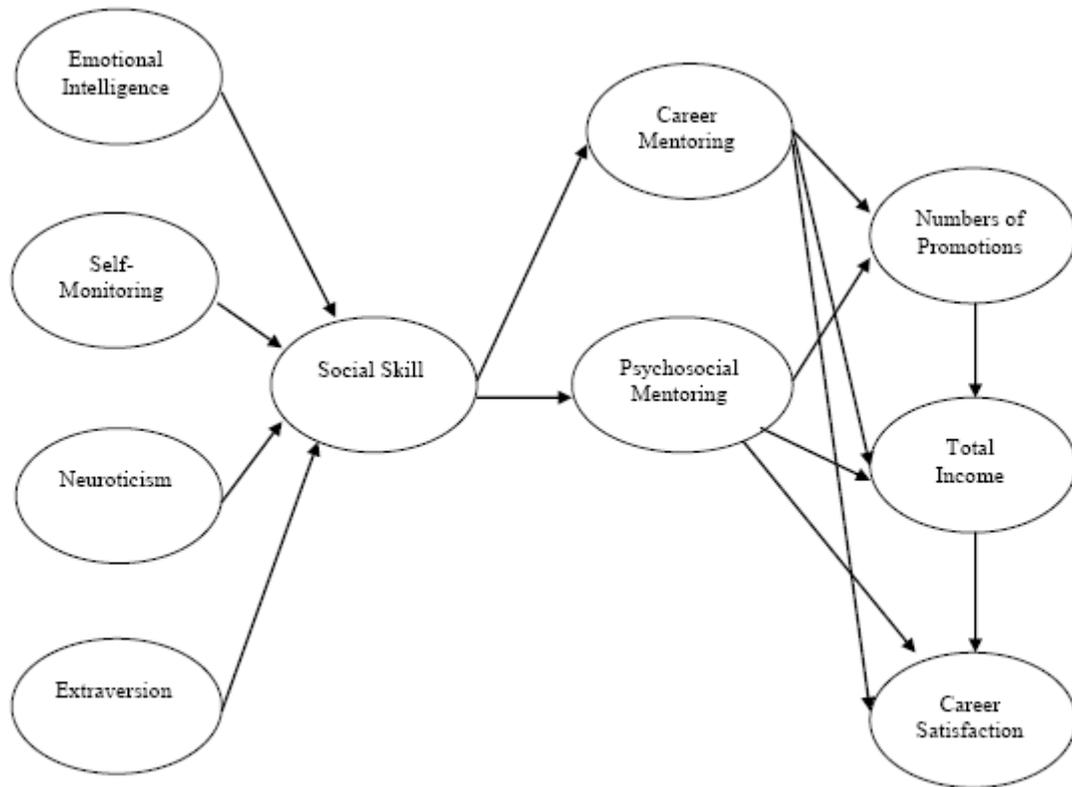


Figure 5. Hypothesized structural model.

Note. The personality variables are allowed to correlate with each other.

I used structural equation modeling to test a path model that consists of personality<sup>1</sup>, social skill, mentoring received (career and psychosocial mentoring), and career success, operationalized as promotions, income and career satisfaction. More broadly, I expected that personality will have a positive influence on social skill, which will subsequently influence the amount of mentoring received, and that mentoring received will have a direct influence on career success, such that people who receive more mentoring are more likely to achieve better career success outcomes. Thus, I proposed a comprehensive model of antecedents and outcomes of social skill. I also extended both the personality and mentoring literatures by examining the mechanism

<sup>1</sup> Although the use of a self-rated emotional intelligence measure has shown adequate reliability and validity, EI is considered as a personality variable in this set of analyses because it was self-assessed rather than scored objectively using answers predetermined by experts.

through which personality leads to career success using mentoring received as one of the mediating variables. My hypothesized model includes several additional paths, which are tangential to the study, and thus are mentioned briefly. In particular, I expected the number of promotions received to positively influence total income and career satisfaction and that total income will have a positive influence on career satisfaction. I also allowed the personality variables to correlate with one another although because these relationships are not the focus of the study, these paths are not shown in the figure.

Structural equation modeling simultaneously tests the individual hypothesized relationships and provides an overall assessment of the proposed model to that data. Because the study is exploratory in nature and the sample size is only in the 200 range, I decided to test a path model rather than a full structural model with indicators. To test the hypothesized model, I created a partial correlation matrix, controlling for age, gender, job tenure, work hours, marital status, job function, industry, organization size, and socio-economic status, which was then input into AMOS 7 for analyses (e.g., Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002).

As shown in Table 17, the results indicate that the hypothesized model fit the data quite well  $\chi^2(24, N = 247) = 50.65, p \leq .001, CFI = .95, TLI = .90,$  and  $RMSEA = .07$ . More specifically, the four personality variables are related with social skill and social skill is positively associated with mentoring received, which was measured with career mentoring and psychosocial mentoring received. Finally, the results also show that career mentoring received is associated with the three career success indicators, whereas psychosocial mentoring received is not related with any of the career success variables. Although, in general, the results provide strong support for the hypothesized model, other

theoretically relevant models may fit better than the proposed model. Hence, I investigated several theoretically alternative models nested within the hypothesized model to examine whether personality variables and social skill have direct effects on mentoring received and career success in addition to the indirect effects.

Limited research suggests that protégés' personality characteristics have an influence on the amount of mentoring received (i.e., Bozionelos, 2004). Therefore, in alternative model 1, I tested the direct relationship between personality and mentoring received by adding direct paths from the four personality variables to two mentoring received indicators. As shown in Table 17, the alternative model provided a better fit to the data  $\Delta\chi^2(8, N = 247) = 23.54, p \leq .005$  as shown by the significant reduction in chi-square. The significance of the change in chi square suggests that personality variables have a direct influence on mentoring received above and beyond the effect of social skill. However, a closer examination of the results reveals that the only significant path is the path from emotional intelligence to career mentoring received. Hence, the results suggest that except for emotional intelligence, personality variables, such as self-monitoring, neuroticism, and extraversion, do not have direct effects on career mentoring received in addition to the effects through social skill.

Based on prior evidence that stable personality traits have an effect on career success (Ng et al., 2005), I examined whether personality has a direct effect on career success above and beyond the effect of social skill and mentoring received (Alternative 2). A total of 12 paths were added from the four personality variables to the three career success indicators. Although the chi square decreased from 50.65 to 29.77, the change in chi square was not significant, which shows that the alternative model did not provide a

better fit to the data  $\Delta\chi^2 (12, N = 247) = 20.88, ns$ . Such results indicate that personality does not have a direct effect on career success in addition to the effects through social skill and the two mentoring received indicators.

Next, I examined if social skill has a direct effect on career success above and beyond the effect of mentoring received. More specifically, I tested alternative model 3, which includes three additional paths from social skill to the three career success indicators. The results show that the model did not result in a significant reduction in chi square  $\Delta\chi^2 (3, N = 247) = 0.28, ns$ , indicating that alternative model 3 did not provide a better fit to the data than the hypothesized model. Such results suggest that the effect of social skill does not have a direct effect on career success in addition to the effects through mentoring received.

Finally, I tested alternative model 4 to examine whether the paths from personality to social skill are needed. More specifically, I removed the four paths from personality to social skill and added eight paths from personality to the two mentoring received variables. In other words, the alternative model 4 examines whether personality has a direct effect on mentoring received without influencing social skill. The removal of the four paths from personality to social skill and the addition of eight paths from personality to mentoring received resulted in a significant increase in chi square from 50.65 to 179.36, which indicates that the data fit the alternative model worse than the hypothesized model  $\Delta\chi^2 (4, N = 247) = 128.71, p \leq .001$ . Thus, the results suggest that social skill need to be taken into account to understand the influence of personality on mentoring received.

Although the hypothesized model fits the data relatively well, results from alternative models show that emotional intelligence has a direct effect on career mentoring received beyond the effect through social skill. In addition, the results indicate that psychosocial mentoring received does not contribute to career success and that total income is not related with career satisfaction. Hence, I tested a final model that includes a direct path from emotional intelligence to career mentoring received and without the paths that were not significant (see Figure 6). More specifically, the paths removed include three paths from psychosocial mentoring received to the three career indicators, one path from total income to career satisfaction, and three correlation paths among the personality variables. Thus, in total, one path was added and seven paths were removed, resulted in change of six degrees of freedom. The results show that the model fit the data well  $\chi^2(30, N = 247) = 52.71, p \leq .006, CFI = .95, TLI = .93, \text{ and } RMSEA = .06$ .

Table 17  
*Summary of the Model-Fit Statistics*

Model	$\chi^2$	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	$\chi^2 \Delta$	df $\Delta$	p
Hypothesized model	50.65	24	.95	.90	.07	-	-	-
Alternative 1. Adding paths from personality to mentoring received	27.11	16	.98	.94	.05	23.54	8	$p \leq .005$
Alternative 2. Adding paths from personality to career success	29.77	12	.96	.87	.08	20.88	12	ns
Alternative 3. Adding paths from social skill to career success	50.37	21	.94	.87	.08	0.28	3	ns
Alternative 4. Removing paths from personality to social skill and adding paths from personality to mentoring received	179.36	20	.68	.27	.18	128.71	4	$p \leq .001$
Final model	52.71	30	.95	.93	.06	-	-	-

*Note.* Mentoring received was measured with career mentoring received and psychosocial mentoring received. Career success was measured with number of promotions, total income, and career satisfaction.

Figure 6 shows that the effect of personality on mentoring received is mediated through social skill. Emotional intelligence, on the other hand, has a direct effect on career mentoring above and beyond the effect of social skill. The results suggest that emotional intelligence may be a broader construct than social skill such that it involves additional element that is not captured by the social skill construct, such as the ability to motivate oneself. Interestingly, psychosocial mentoring was not significantly related with any of the career success indicators, which shows that career mentoring is a better predictor of both objective and subjective career success.

Although this final model may have capitalized on chance, it is still consistent with my initial model that social skill serves as a mediator between personality and career outcomes. The theoretical model extends the literature by examining the process through which personality leads to career success. In addition, the model provides a useful framework for researchers interested in how social skill influences career success. Nevertheless, caution in interpreting the results is needed because this final model may have capitalized on chance.

In summary, the results from the third study and the two additional analyses demonstrate the importance of social skill in workplace. More specifically, the findings show that social skill is associated with personality and important outcomes. Further, the results from the structural equation modeling show that social skill mediates the relationship between personality and career mentoring received, while career mentoring received mediates the relationship between social skill and career success. Finally, the usefulness analysis supports the notion that social skill should be examined as a higher-order construct when predicting global outcomes. In general, the findings from the

current study show that social skill plays a critical role in the workplace. I discuss more specifically the implications and limitations of the results in the next chapter.

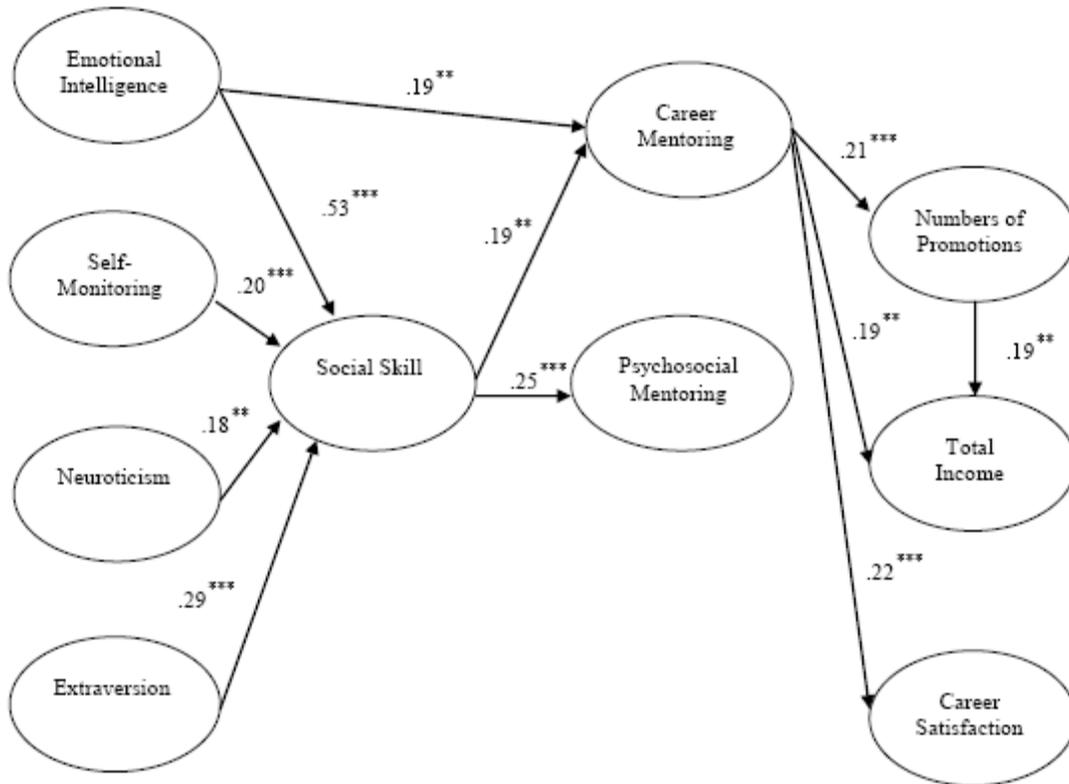


Figure 6. Final model with significant paths. \*  $p < 0.1$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .  
 Note. Emotional intelligence is allowed to correlate with neuroticism and extraversion. Self-monitoring is also allowed to correlate with extraversion.

## **CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Although changes in organizational structures have heightened awareness of social skill in career outcomes, surprisingly little research has investigated the role of social skill in the workplace. What is more, given the variability in how social skill is defined across disciplines, there is limited consensus regarding how social skill should be defined and measured. Hence, the goal of the present study was to advance the social skill literature by addressing the following research questions: (1) What is social skill and how does it differ from other conceptually similar constructs? (2) What are the precursors and outcomes of social skill? (3) How should social skill be operationalized? By answering these questions, the study addresses calls for a coherent social skill construct and for research on the effect of social skill on job outcomes (Ferris et al., 2002). Research in social skill is evolving and this study is one of the first to systematically examine the social skill literature and propose a social skill framework and measure. More specifically, I performed a critical review of the social skill literature to identify common themes among the existing social skill frameworks. Based on the commonalities uncovered, I was then able to define social skill and propose a theoretically driven social skill framework. I also created a social skill measure and conducted two empirical studies to test the construct validity of the scale. Finally, I surveyed employees from various industries to examine the antecedents and outcomes of social skill.

The findings from the study contribute to the social skill literature in many ways. First, an encompassing social skill framework is theorized. The framework identifies critical sub-facets of social skill, which contributes to our knowledge of what social skill

entails. Second, a new social skill measure is created, which captures the proposed framework. Lastly, the antecedents and outcomes of social skill are identified. In general, the findings show that social skill plays a critical role in work-related outcomes and should be valued. In the next section, I will discuss the findings and highlight the implications of the results. I will also discuss potential limitations of the study and propose future research directions.

### **The Social Skill Framework and Measure**

One of the major purposes of this study was to examine the definition and framework of social skill. The literature showed that there is not an agreed-upon definition of social skill. Moreover, although scholars tend to agree that social skill is multidimensional, there is little consensus regarding what constitutes effective social skill. In my review of key social skill frameworks from several fields, I found that social skill can be broadly defined as situationally appropriate behavior used to obtain social goals. Further, in order to act in a situationally appropriate manner three sub-skills are needed: social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility. These three sub-skills, together, allow an individual to present a favorable social self, to understand social surroundings, and to adjust social behaviors to achieve social goals. All three skills are vital to achieve socially effective behaviors, and thus social skill is conceptualized and examined as a higher-order construct with distinct sub-skills.

Based on the social skill framework theorized, I developed a scale to capture the proposed social skill framework. More specifically, several studies were conducted to create and validate the measure. The first study, which involved an expert review of the initial items, produced a 30-item social skill measure. A second study was then

conducted to examine the psychometric properties of the measure. The results show that the new measure provides sound discriminant and convergent validity in that it was only moderately correlated with self-monitoring and extraversion and was highly correlated with Ferris et al.'s (2001) global social skill measure.

Although the measure shows sound validity and reliability, the results from the second study suggested that social skill is only a two-factor model. In particular, six of the ten social flexibility items loaded on the social presentation factor, while two items cross-loaded with another factor. The two remaining items were found to be negatively correlated with each other even though the two items were not negatively worded. Hence, none of the social flexibility items from the scale validation study were retained. A close examination of the social flexibility items reveals that the ten items used in the scale validation study focused on the presentation of a flexible behavior, such as "I act cheerfully when needed" and "I put on a smile even when I am upset," rather than on flexibility of behavior. In other words, the ten items appear to measure appropriate social behaviors rather than how flexible one behaves. The finding explains why most of the social flexibility items loaded on the social presentation factor.

To enhance the social flexibility measure, I created four new social flexibility items and tested their psychometric properties in the third study. The new set of the social flexibility items, such as "My behavior changes according to the people I am interacting with," was behavior-oriented and thus was more appropriate to capture the social flexibility dimension. The results show that only one of the four new items created had to be removed because it cross-loaded with two sub-factors. Although the newly tested social flexibility measure provides sound validity and reliability, it is unclear if the

measure has adequately captured the social flexibility dimension. Hence, caution in using this subscale is warranted. Future research can examine additional social flexibility items that focus more on the skill to modify behaviors rather than on specific outcomes of social flexibility. Items such as “I often behave as a situation demands,” “I am good at adapting to a variety of social situations,” and “I act the same way in every social situation (reverse scored)” appear to tap into the behavior of being flexible and can be used to capture the social flexibility dimension.

The results from the third study show that the three-factor social skill measure and Ferris et al.’s (2001) measure were highly correlated. Not surprisingly, the two measures exhibit similar relationships with some of the personality variables. For example, the new social skill measure was positively correlated with self-monitoring at .37, whereas Ferris et al.’s (2001) measure was correlated with self-monitoring at .35. The relationships between the two social skill measures and mentoring characteristics also exhibited similar patterns such that both social skill measures were positively correlated with number of mentors and mentoring received. However, the results show that organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance, which were rated independently by supervisors, were positively associated only with the new social skill measure but not with Ferris et al.’s (2001) global measure. The new measure was also positively and significantly related with number of promotions, which is an objective and verifiable measure, but the same relationship was not significant with Ferris et al.’s (2001) measure. Hence, the results suggest that the new social skill measure may provide better predictive validity than Ferris and colleagues’ (2001) measure, at least for some outcomes. Further, the new measure allows for the measurement of social skill at both

the global and sub-skill levels, which is not feasible with Ferris et al.'s (2001) measure. The global measure developed can be used to test more global outcomes while the sub-dimensions can be used to test more fine-grained outcomes. In general, the results show that although the two measures were highly correlated, they show somewhat different predictive validity and functionality.

In summary, the newly developed social skill measure appears to be an effective measure and may have stronger predictive validity than Ferris et al.'s (2001) social skill measure for some outcomes. Further, the new measure extends the literature by allowing the measurement of social skill at both the global and sub-dimensional levels. Nevertheless, more social flexibility items should be examined to better capture the social flexibility dimension.

### **Personality and Social Skill**

The findings provide new insight into the relationship between personality and social skill. Although social skill is conceptualized as a learnable behavior, limited research shows that people with certain personality characteristics tend to report higher social skill (i.e., Riggio, 1986). The present study extends the literature by studying the effects of personality on social skill. More specifically, the results from regression analyses show that emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, and extraversion are positively related to social skill. In other words, individuals that have the ability to properly control and understand emotions, are predisposed to monitor their social images, and are out-going tend to have strong social skill. Further, and as predicted, the results show that neuroticism and social skill are negatively correlated.

Even though the results show that social skill is associated with personality characteristics; however, the process through which personality leads to social skill is unclear. One possible mechanism is that people with certain personality characteristics may engage in activities that enhance their social skill. For example, research shows that extraverts are active, motivated, and these individuals tend to engage in professional and developmental activities (Major et al., 2006; Forret & Dougherty, 2001), which can provide extraverts with opportunities to practice and enhance their social skill. Similarly, high self-monitors tend to initiate more mentoring relationships, which can in turn enhance someone's social skill through role-modeling or coaching. Hence, future research can explore the situational mediators through which personality leads to social skill.

Future research can also investigate the effect of motivational factors on the social skill learning process. Self-determination theory suggests that how strongly individuals identify with a behavior can influence the overall quality of the action (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sheldon, 2004). Not surprisingly, people with an intrinsic motivation were found to have greater persistence, better conceptual understanding, and higher quality learning (Reeve, 2005). Therefore, I expect motivation will play a critical role in the social skill learning process such that the more identified one is with learning social skill, the stronger one's social skill will be. Specifically, I expect that when someone with an intrinsic motivation toward learning social skill, they will exert more effort to acquire the skill because they enjoy and value such skill. People with an extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, engage in the learning process because of external factors, such as job requirements, and may only learn the bare minimum to

satisfy their employers, which does not lead to the highest quality of learning. The results provide two practical implications for organizations interested in increasing employees' social skill. First, the training program should stress the practicality of acquiring such skill, so that the trainees understand the benefits associated with having strong social skill. Second, organizations can make the training program fun, so that the employees will enjoy the learning process and be more persistent in developing their social skill.

In addition to examining personality factors, social factors, such as role models' social skill, should also be studied because social skill can be shaped through socialization and role-modeling (Segrin & Givertz, 2003; Trower et al., 1978). Scholars suggested that social skills modeled by the parents can have a major influence on the level of the child's social skill (Burns & Farina, 1984; Peterson & Leigh, 1990), but one study found that parents' social skill did not significantly predict children's social skill (Segrin, 1994). One explanation offered by the author was that the participants, who were college students, may have been away from home for several years and may have acquired new role models who then influenced the development of social skill. For working adults, their social skills may be influenced more heavily by the social skill level of those whom they model, such as their peers or mentors, because individuals may spend more time with their peers and tend to model their mentors. Hence, future research should investigate the role of peers' or mentors' social skill on one's social skill. The results from such investigation can shed some light on the benefits of developmental relationships.

In general, the findings from the present study show that social skill is related with personality characteristics, such as self-monitoring and extraversion. However, we know very little about the process through which personality leads to the development of social skill. I proposed that situational mediators, such as motivational factors and social factors should be examined to provide a more holistic view on how social skill is learned. In addition to studying the precursors of social skill, the second phase of the study also examined the relationships between social skill and job outcomes. The results and implications are discussed below.

### **Outcomes of Social Skill**

I extended the literature by studying the relationship between social skill and work outcomes. To minimize common method biases (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), I asked supervisors to rate their employees' job performance and organizational citizenship behaviors, and the results in general show that strong social skill contributes to positive job outcomes. More specifically, the results suggest that social skill leads to the number of mentoring relationship, mentoring received, social support, and organizational citizenship behaviors.

The findings from the regression analyses show that people with strong social skill receive more mentoring. More specifically, the results show that socially skilled individuals have more mentors and receive more career and psychosocial mentoring. The findings extend the mentoring literature by studying the influence of social skill on mentoring outcomes. Notably, people who receive more mentoring may have stronger social skill, thus suggesting a bi-directional relationship. Future research might measure a protégé's social skill in different stages of a mentoring relationship, such as in the

beginning stage, mid stage, and final stage, to examine whether social skill is increased through a mentoring process.

Hypothesis 5b, which theorized a positive relationship between social skill and high-status mentors, was not supported. The result, instead, suggests that socially skilled individuals do not have higher status mentors. One plausible explanation is that high ranking managers may have limited time and effort to provide mentoring assistance. Therefore, even if these high-ranking managers have the desire to mentor individuals that are able to provide them with a more pleasant interaction, they may not be able to due to the amount of responsibilities they have. Another possible explanation is that people from the lower organizational levels may have limited contact with people from higher organizational levels, which can reduce the opportunity to meet and subsequently develop mentoring relationships with high-status mentors. Finally, it is possible that many of the participants are already in a high-ranking position and have limited number of high-status mentors to choose from, which might skew the results. In general, the results show that having strong social skill alone is not enough to establish mentoring relationships with individuals from higher organizational levels. Future research can study mediating factors between social skill and high-status mentors. For example, people with high social skill may attend more company-sponsored events, which can increase the opportunities of meeting high-status mentors.

The positive relationship between social skill and social support was supported. The results show clearly that social skill has a positive impact on the relationship between employees and their colleagues. More specifically, people who are able to effectively communicate with peers and present themselves favorably receive more social support,

such that they receive more help from coworkers with tough assignments or are able to find coworkers to listen to their problems.

Even though hypothesis 8, which theorized a negative relationship between social skill and job stress, was not supported, the correlation pattern suggests that social skill has an indirect effect on job stress through social support. The correlation results show that people who have strong social skill tend to have more social support, which in turn is negatively related with job stress. One plausible explanation is that job stress can come from work over-load, which is unrelated to interpersonal relationships. Work over-load, however, can be reduced through colleagues' help, which can reduce the job stress experienced. Consequently, social skill by itself does not have a direct relationship with job stress. Another plausible explanation is that the job stress measure has less than adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .63$ ), which may have reduced the ability to find effect.

The study also extends the organizational citizenship behavior literature by studying the role of social skill in organizational citizenship behaviors. Given that people with strong social skill are more likeable and are perceived to be more competent (Riggio & Zimmerman, 1991), I expected these individuals to receive more requests from their colleagues for assistance. In addition, given that they are able to decode non-verbal messages, highly socially skilled individuals are more likely to notice situations when extra-role behaviors are needed. Instead of using a self-rated organizational citizenship behavior score, organizational citizenship behavior ratings from supervisors were used to test the relationship between self-rated social skill and other-rated organizational citizenship behaviors. The results support my expectation that social skill indeed has a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviors. The finding has practical

implications for organizations interested in increasing organizational effectiveness because social skill can be trained, which can in turn lead to more helpful behaviors. For example, the training of social skill can help employees become more aware of their social environment and thus detect situations when extra role behaviors are needed.

In general, the results show that social skill plays a critical role in work-related relationships, but we know little about how others' social skill might influence the outcomes examined in the study. For example, although mentoring is a dyadic relationship, the present study only examined protégés' social skill and their perceptions of mentoring received. Future studies can study how mentors' social skill influences protégés' perception of mentoring received. Potential moderators should also be examined. For instance, general mental ability may moderate the relationship between social skill and mentoring received because people with higher general mental ability tend to be better performers (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998), which can increase their likeability by the mentors. Hence, the higher one's general mental ability is, the stronger will be the relationship between social skill and mentoring benefits received. The results can help us understand factors leading to mentoring received and more powerful mentors.

Social skill can shape the relationship between leaders and their subordinates, which can in turn influence career success. Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory suggests that the relationship between a leader and a follower can influence organizational outcomes (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Cashman, 1975). Given that people with strong social skill are able to cultivate more intimate interpersonal relationships, subordinates with strong social skill may have better relationships with their supervisors, which can in turn influence the resources they receive from their

leaders. Hence, future research might study how leaders' social skill influences their relationships with their subordinates and subsequent organizational outcomes, such as job performance or organizational commitment.

The role of social skill in the job search process should also be explored because job search involves interpersonal interactions, especially during the information seeking and interviewing process. Socially skilled individuals have the ability to convey essential information and seek out important information, which can in turn influence the career advice received regarding how to obtain a desire job. In addition, people with strong social skill are able to present a more favorable self-image during a job interview, which can positively influence the job search outcome. Therefore, the direct influence of social skill on job search should be examined.

Social skill is not only important in a face-to-face relationship, it can also play a role in virtual work environment, such as in virtual teams, although the specific sub-skills needed to achieve social effectiveness may be different. Virtual teams are becoming increasingly popular due to globalization and technological advancements (Kirkman, Rosen, Gibson, Tesluk, & McPherson, 2002). There are many advantages for utilizing virtual teams, such as increased knowledge sharing and improved organizational performance, but there are also challenges, such as the difficulty in building effective working relationships (Furst, Reeves, Rosen, & Blackburn, 2004). Although technical skills (i.e., computer skills) are important for virtual team members, interpersonal skills are also critical because similar to a regular team, virtual team members need to communicate and provide feedback to one another (Kirkman et al., 2002). Therefore, the skill to maintain a cohesive team environment is important in a virtual environment.

Nevertheless, it is less clear if the importance of each of the sub-skills is the same as in a regular team. People in virtual teams have less face-to-face interactions, which limits the observation of non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions. For this reason, the skill of reading between the lines may become even more important for virtual team members. Further, virtual team members often reside in different parts of the world and can have a different understanding regarding appropriate social behaviors. Consequently, people may demonstrate behaviors that are perceived as different or strange by their teammates. Social presentation and social flexibility skills, in such a case, may be especially critical because individuals first need to exhibit a poised social exterior. They then need to be flexible and quick in making a comment that can dissolve a potentially awkward moment. In general, how important each sub-skill is may be different for a virtual environment. Therefore, future research can study more specifically the role of each of the sub-skills in the effectiveness of a virtual work team.

Related, cross-cultural implications should be examined because the social skill framework and measure developed in this study are based on American samples. Social skill in a different culture may consist of different sub-skills. For instance, Japanese employees are sometimes expected to go to a bar and drink after work hours and people that do not go can be considered as outsiders, which can negatively influence their career success. Consequently, being able to participate and excel in social activities, such as playing cards or golfing, can be important for people from collectivist cultures because people develop close bonds through group events. Similarly, in a culture that values and uses humor, the skill to deliver humorous comments at appropriate moments can become a critical sub-skill of social skill. In general, the skill to excel in social relationships can

be influenced by what is valued by the members in a society; therefore, I encourage researchers to examine sub-skills that are idiosyncratic to each culture.

Thus far, studies have shown that strong social skill is important and can lead to career benefits. However, it is less clear if having too much social skill can be detrimental. For example, although proactive behavior in general leads to positive organizational outcomes (i.e., Chan & Schmitt, 2005; Crant, 1995), more recent research shows that people with poor situational judgment effectiveness and high proactive personality can result in maladaptive outcomes (Chan, 2006). Future research might investigate if too much of one sub-skill can lead to negative outcomes. For example, can individuals focus too much on presenting appropriate social behaviors and on fitting into a social situation than on achieving organizational goals? Future research can investigate if too much of one skill can lead to negative outcomes for employees.

In summary, the results from the study show that socially skilled individuals have more mentors, receive more mentoring and social support, and perform more organizational citizenship behaviors. These are important outcomes because they are associated with better career success and organizational effectiveness. Even though social skill appears to play an influential role on job outcomes, it is less known under what situation social skill would be more or less important. For this reason, the study also investigated the interaction effects of both personal and organizational factors on the relationship between social skill and job outcomes. I discuss the results and implications in the next section.

## **Interaction Relationships**

The results from the moderating analyses suggest that the relationships between supervisor-rated social skill and both organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance are dependent on the level of role breadth self efficacy. Contrary to the hypotheses, the findings show that role breadth self-efficacy is more important to organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance among employees with low social skill rather than employees with high social skill. In other words, the data show that strong role breadth self-efficacy compensates for weak social skill when it comes to organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance.

One plausible explanation for the relationship is that although people with low social skill and high role breadth self-efficacy may not be able to effectively interact with others, they are still able to engage in behaviors that are perceived to be helpful and essential to the completion of a job. Research suggests that individuals tend to engage in behaviors that they believe they have the ability to perform successfully (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, individuals with higher levels of role breadth self-efficacy are likely to perform tasks that are helpful to the organization even with low social skill. The findings suggest that having low social skill is not detrimental as long as someone has high role-breadth self-efficacy. Role breadth self-efficacy, just as social skill, can be enhanced through proper training. Therefore, in addition to training for social skill, organizations can also focus on the improving employees' confidence in carrying out job-related extra role behaviors.

I also examined the interaction between social skill and job interdependence on job performance and the results show that the relationship between supervisor-rated

social skill and supervisor-rated job performance is dependent on the level of job interdependence. The findings suggest that job interdependence is more important to job performance among employees with low social skill rather than employees with high social skill, which was also contrary to what was hypothesized. One explanation for the relationship is that people with poor social skill may rely on their co-workers to carry out tasks that require more social interactions while they focus on more technical part of the task. Consequently, high job interdependence can compensate for weak social skill when it comes to job performance.

In sum, the interaction analyses show that having low social skill does not always contribute to poor job outcomes if one also possess high role breadth self-efficacy or has a job that is highly interdependent. The two moderating factors examined are adjustable, so organizations might work on increasing the role breadth self-efficacy of individuals with poor social skill or assign them to jobs that are highly interdependent.

### **Exploring the Social Skill Construct and Its Mediating Role**

In addition to the hypothesized analyses, I utilized the data to explore two additional and important questions: “How should social skill be operationalized?” and “What is the mediating role of social skill between personality and career outcomes?” I performed two sets of analyses to answer these questions. In the first analysis, I conducted a usefulness analysis to test if social skill should be studied as a higher-order construct or as three separated skills. The results suggest that social skill should be treated as a higher-order construct when examining more general job outcomes. The second set of analyses was performed to examine the mediating role between social skill and mentoring received and career success. Although the results from the earlier

regression analyses show that social skill is associated with personality and work-related characteristics, we know very little about the mediating role of social skill between personality and work characteristics and career outcomes. Hence, I proposed and studied an overall model of the antecedents and outcomes of social skill. The hypothesized model was supported and results show that social skill plays an important role between personality and career success.

The results from the usefulness analyses provide preliminary support for social skill as a higher-order construct. Although researchers conceptualized social skill as a higher-order construct, less is known about if social skill should be examined from a global approach or sub-skill approach. This study extends the literature by studying empirically how social skill should be operationalized. In general, the results from the usefulness analyses show that the global social skill relating to the criteria better than each of the three individual sub-skills. The findings suggest that all three skills are needed to cultivate effective interpersonal interactions, which then enhance job performance and other general job related outcomes. The results is consistent with past research that more complex or broad constructs should be used to measure more general outcomes, such as job performance (i.e., Hogan & Roberts, 1996). Future research might examine whether each of the sub-skills may influence more fine-grained job outcomes. For example, social flexibility may be a more effective variable than the global measure when examining how fast one adjusts to a new work team. The knowledge generated from such studies can help us understand how each skill can be utilized and trained.

The purpose of the second analysis was to advance our understanding of social skill by proposing a comprehensive model that examines both the antecedents and self-reported outcomes of social skill. Because social support and number of mentors were correlated with mentoring received, I only investigated mentoring received. Following previous literature, I conceptualized mentoring received to have two sub-factors: career and psychosocial (Turban & Dougherty, 1994). More specifically, I examined the relationship between personality and career success and investigated the mediating influence of both social skill and mentoring received. As such I address calls in the literature to study the role of personality in mentoring relationships (Turban & Lee, 2007) and in career success (Ng et al., 2005).

The results from the structural equation modeling analyses show that social skill mediates the relationship between personality and career success. Personality variables are conceptualized as stable traits that guide people's behavior and attitudes throughout their careers (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999; Turban & Dougherty, 1994) and the career literature suggests that people who take responsibility for their own development tend to be more successful at work (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Similarly, evidence indicates that personality traits influence career outcomes through individuals engaging in proactive behavior (Seibert et al., 2001), such as enhancing one's social skill. Thus, stable traits, such as self-monitoring and extraversion, would have a significant effect on the mentoring process. As expected, the results from the structural equation modeling show that personality indirectly relates to mentoring received through social skill and that career mentoring received mediates the relationship between social skill and career outcomes.

Interestingly, psychosocial mentoring, which includes role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship, was not related to any of the career outcome indicators. The lack of relationship may be because psychosocial functions are aimed to enhance and develop protégés' inner growth, which promote higher self-esteem (Allen et al., 2004). Individuals receiving psychosocial support may feel better about themselves as a person and may experience less job stress because of the support that they receive, but the support received is not enough to lead to career benefits, such as promotions or higher salary.

In summary, although the present study addresses the questions regarding what social skill is and its relationship with work-related outcomes, there remain questions about how social skill is acquired. In addition, we know very little about situations or conditions in which social skill would have the most influence. Hence, I hope more studies will be conducted on social skill to uncover the social skill learning process and factors that can either enhance the need of social skill or even conditions in which social skill might not be important.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Although the present project provided answers to some important questions regarding social skill, it is not without limitations. One limitation is the reliance on surveys at a single point in time for data collection, which may result in common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Nevertheless, I tried to address the issue by including both objective and verifiable data, such as numbers of promotions and total income. Furthermore, I secured pair-responses for some of the job outcomes, such as job performance, which were rated by supervisors.

Because self-rated measures of social skill may potentially be influenced by perceptual biases, I obtained an independent measure of social skill by asking the supervisors to rate their employees' social skill. Nevertheless, the correlation between the self-rated social skill and supervisor-rated social skill is low.

The weak relationship found in the present study may be explained by several reasons. First, supervisors may not be the best candidate to provide an individual assessment of their employees' social skill because they may have limited interactions with their direct-reports, which can then limit their ability to provide an objective assessment of their direct-reports' social skill. Second, some of the social skill behaviors although trainable are less observable (i.e., some of the social scanning behaviors), which can influence the rating. Research on leader-member exchange shows that subordinates and their leaders' perceptions on the quality of their relationships are only moderately correlated, thus suggesting that the two measures are independent constructs (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Hence, in this study, supervisor-rated social skill should not be considered as an objective measure of an employee's social skill. Future research might recruit peers to provide a second rating of social skill because in general individuals spend more time with their peers than supervisors. Further, peers are able to observe a wide range of behaviors because employees may engage in more impression management behaviors in front of their supervisors. Therefore, peers should be used to provide a more objective measure of social skill.

A second limitation of the present study is with the sample. The participants in the scale development study were all students, who were predominantly White, which may limit the generalizability of the results across races or groups. Furthermore, I was

only able to secure participants from the service or government/non-profit industry, with no one from the manufacturing industry. Therefore, future research may recruit a more diverse set of individuals, such as working adults with different ethnic background and from a variety of job functions, to participate in the study.

Another limitation is the cross-sectional design of the study, which undermines the ability to draw strict causal conclusion. Nevertheless, literature suggests that personality variables are stable over time; therefore, it is unlikely that social skill or mentoring characteristics would influence personality variables. Nevertheless, it was possible that mentoring received could have been a precursor of social skill, such that people who received more coaching from their mentors had stronger social skill, rather than that people who had strong social skill received more mentoring.

Finally, when assessing emotional intelligence, a self-rated emotional intelligence measure was used. Although Law et al.'s (2004) measure provides sound reliability and validity, it is not clear if the self-rated emotional intelligence measure is the best measure to capture one's emotional intelligence. Typically, intelligence tests have right or wrong answers that are predetermined by a group of experts; therefore, future research might utilize a more objective emotional intelligence measure, such as the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (Mayer et al., 2000), to evaluate respondents' emotional intelligence.

In summary, the study is not without limitations, and researchers interested in investigating the social skill construct could collect data in two time points to minimize common method variance and causality issues. Researchers could also investigate other individual precursors in discovering factors that influence employees' social skill. In

addition, when examining mentoring relationships, a cross-dyadic design may provide a more comprehensive view about how mentoring is received and provided.

### **Practical Implications**

The results from the present study have several practical implications. First, the present study sheds some light on how social skill should be defined, which can be used to train social skill. Second, this research provides insight into the benefits of having strong social skill. In particular, the results from the present study shows that people with strong social skill receive more mentoring benefits, perform more organizational citizenship behaviors, and have better career outcomes. Another practical implication from the present study is that social skill is important regardless of job titles or industries because social interaction is unavoidable. The results also provide practical implications for organizations interested in increasing employees' social skill because social skill, unlike personality characteristics, can be trained. Below I discuss some of my thoughts on how social skill can be trained.

Social skill can be learned through the training of social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility. Social presentation involves the skill to understand proper social rules and present oneself in a socially appropriate manner. Such skill will enable the trainees to understand appropriate cultural norms and to behave in a way that is acceptable by people within a particular culture. To acquire the second skill, which involves the skill to actively scan one's social environment, employees can be trained to pay attention to non-verbal messages during a social interaction and understand what different non-verbal cues mean. In other words, employees should learn that the understanding of verbal messages is not enough for effective social interactions. Finally,

organizations can enhance employees' social flexibility skill, which involves the skill to adjust one's behaviors to fit in different social situations. This skill is important because interpersonal interactions are not static over time and different social situations will require different social behaviors. This skill also needs to be used in conjunction with social scanning because it is through the information that acquired during social scanning, one can know if and when they need to change their behaviors. Trainers can provide pre-developed scenarios for the trainees so that they know under what situations they will need to adjust their behaviors and how the behaviors should be adjusted.

In conclusion, the present study provides a more holistic view of the social skill construct. Nevertheless, there are some unanswered questions that can be further explored. For example, what are some of the individual antecedents of social skill, such as childhood experience? What are some other job outcomes social skill may influence? Would social skill be able to influence leader-member exchange or job search success? How can strong or weak social skill influence virtual team performance? Are there other moderators that we should examine? Finally, is the framework of social skill going to be similar in non-western cultures? These are interesting and important and I hope the present study will stimulate more work on how social skill enhances both individual and organizational success.

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## APPENDIX

### Exhibit A: Expert Review Inquiry Correspondence

February 18, 2007

Dear colleagues,

I need your help! I am developing a new social skill measure as part of my dissertation and am in need of your help with the first phase of the scale development process. The questionnaire should take you no more than 15 minutes to complete and your input will be greatly appreciated!

There are two tasks involved in the questionnaire. The first task asks you to brainstorm items that you believe represent the social skill construct, while the second task asks you to sort statements into groups. In order for this exercise to work, I am asking you not to turn to page 2 before you complete the first task.

The questionnaire is designed in such a way that you can fill out the questionnaire directly on the Word document attached. When you are done, please save the document and email me the completed survey as an attachment. It would be great if you could email me back the questionnaire before Tuesday, February 27. I will also send out an email reminder a few days before the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Feel free to contact me at [ywqhd@mizzou.edu](mailto:ywqhd@mizzou.edu) or 489-6881 if you have any questions or suggestions.

Thank you in advance for your help and have a great day!

Sincerely,

Sharon Wu

Sharon Y. Wu  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri  
355 Cornell Hall  
Columbia, MO 65211-2600  
(573) 882-5929  
[ywqhd@mizzou.edu](mailto:ywqhd@mizzou.edu)

## Exhibit B: Social Skill Questionnaire

**Task 1:** Below you will find definitions of the three sub-skills of social skill. Please read each definition carefully and think of **at least two** statements that you believe best represent people with either high or low amount of that particular skill based on the definition. For example, for someone with low social presentation, you may have an item that says “I don’t know how to adequately express myself in a social situation.”

**Social presentation** involves the skill to understand and play proper social roles. More specifically, an individual with high social presentation skill is able to appropriately present both verbal and nonverbal messages according to their social roles and social norms.

Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

Item 4:

**Social scanning** involves the capability to accurately sense and interpret verbal and nonverbal messages from others. Someone who is socially sensitive is able to correctly read and understand people’s verbal and nonverbal messages.

Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

Item 4:

**Social flexibility/adaptability** involves the skill to adjust one’s behavior to fit in any social situation. In particular, an individual who is socially flexible is able to regulate their behavior to fit in their social surrounding.

Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

Item 4:

**Task 2:** This task asks you to sort the following statements into different groups based on the definitions provided. If you don't think the statement fits any of the three groups or are unsure, please select "Not sure." There will be an arrow to the far right of the item and when you click on it, you will see the three dimensions and the not sure choice for you to categorize the items.

**Social presentation** involves the skill to understand and play proper social roles. An individual with high social presentation skill is able to appropriately present both verbal and nonverbal messages according to their social roles and social norms.

**Social scanning** involves the capability to accurately sense and interpret verbal and nonverbal messages from others. Someone who is socially sensitive is able to correctly read and understand people's verbal and nonverbal messages.

**Social flexibility** involves the skill to adjust one's behavior to fit in any social situation. An individual who is socially flexible is able to regulate their behavior to fit in their social surrounding.

Statement	Group
1. I behave according to social norms	Select
2. I am able to read people well	Select
3. I have trouble interacting with people at workplace	Select
4. I don't know how to "read between the lines"	Select
5. People tell me that I have good manners	Select
6. I am able to fit in any social situation well	Select
7. I know when people are upset	Select
8. I understand proper social rules	Select
9. I can't tell if someone is telling a lie	Select
10. I don't how to socialize with people that I just met	Select
11. I rarely pay attention to people's body language	Select
12. I have trouble interacting with people at workplace	Select
13. I rarely say hi to my coworkers	Select
14. I am not good at sensing what other people are feeling	Select
15. I am able to adjust my behavior quickly	Select
16. I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them	Select
17. I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior	Select
18. I can express my ideas easily	Select
19. I know how to handle just about any social situation	Select
20. I behave according to my mood	Select
21. I don't know how to handle unexpected situations	Select
22. I put on a smile even when I am upset	Select
23. I know the right things to say in a social situation	Select
24. I have trouble getting my message across	Select
25. People tell me that I am not flexible (behavior wise)	Select
26. I have trouble anticipating people's reaction	Select
27. I act cheerfully when needed	Select
28. I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting	Select
29. I can start a pleasant conversation	Select
30. Sometimes I don't understand why people react the way they do	Select
31. I tend to make social errors	Select
32. I know when people enjoy the conversation	Select
33. I have trouble engaging in conversations with people who have different backgrounds	Select
34. I don't know what to say when I am in a unfamiliar social situation	Select

## Exhibit C: Social Skill Items Generated from Experts

### **Social Presentation**

1. I am confident in my ability to present myself in a socially appropriate manner
2. I have difficulty behaving in a manner expected of me (reverse score)
3. I have little difficulty using appropriate words while interacting with people
4. People often say that I am good at expressing myself
5. I try to make eye contact when making conversation
6. I smile and nod to show my interest in others
7. I tell jokes that others find inappropriate (reverse score)
8. I disclose personal information about myself that makes others uncomfortable (reverse score)
9. I often arrive at social functions only to realize that I am inappropriately dressed.
10. People often ask me to adjust my speaking volume at social functions
11. More than one person has told me I need to bathe more often
12. My boss has told me at least once that I need to get a haircut before an important meeting
13. It always takes me a minute to find the right word
14. It is very easy for me to carry a conversation with others
15. I find it difficult to open up a conversation with strangers
16. I am very good at presenting myself in social interactions
17. I am well aware of how to present myself in social situations
18. I know how to behave properly in my interactions with others
19. I make a good impression at social gatherings
20. I am able to behave appropriately in any social situation
21. I can express myself clearly and easily in most social situations
22. I understand my roles are different in social contexts (e.g., in office, at home, in classroom, etc.)
23. I can initiate a pleasant small talk with people when I want to
24. I have difficulty in communicating with others in a social setting
25. I use facial expressions to adequately convey my opinion when communicating
26. I often feel uncertain as to what is the right thing to say in a social setting
27. I often feel uncertain as to what expressions I should display in a social setting
28. I often feel that others do not know how to interpret my facial expressions
29. I often feel that others do not know how to interpret my behaviors
30. I am able to present myself well in a social situation
31. I understand my social role at work
32. I don't understand how to present my ideas well at work
33. People say I do not have any social skills

### **Social Scanning**

1. I understand what people really mean
2. I have difficulty knowing exactly what people really mean (reverse score)
3. I can detect people's emotions easily in most situations
4. I have little difficulty interpreting other people's facial expressions
5. I can tell when someone is upset by their eyes
6. I can tell when someone is upset by subtle changes in their tone of voice
7. If I see someone becoming uncomfortable at being the center of attention, I try to divert attention away from them
8. I think that what someone says is more important than the way they say it (reverse score)
9. People get angry with me because I don't understand subtly
10. I often do not realize people are angry at me until it is too late
11. I often realize that a person has been "flirting" with me only after a third party mentions it

12. I am good at “reading” other people and knowing how they feel even if they have not verbalized their feelings
13. I can often sense when something is wrong in the life of a friend before they mention the problem
14. I can always figure out what others people want to tell me before they are finished
15. I find it easy to tell the emotions of others
16. I am very good at understanding social rules and norms
17. I am usually able to understand how I am expected to behave in a particular situation
18. I read people well
19. I am able to understand another person’s underlying meaning in conversation
20. I can easily sense whether the others are interested in or are bored with my talking
21. I often attune to other people’s emotions and tend to adjust my behaviors accordingly
22. I modify my conversation based on cues I receive from the audience
23. I often embarrass myself by speaking too much
24. I often get into awkward situations because I fail to notice people’s cues
25. I am confidence in my ability in interpret verbal messages from others
26. I am confidence in my ability in interpret non-verbal messages from others
27. In a social setting I often struggle with interpreting others’ non-verbal cues
28. I can tell when someone is upset by their body language
29. I can feel when someone is upset
30. I am oblivious to nonverbal messages
31. I think people should say what they mean, instead of relying on nonverbal messages

### **Social Flexibility**

1. I understand how I should behave in most situations
2. I often am unsure what type of behavior is expected of me (reverse score)
3. I feel helpless while interacting with people from different backgrounds
4. I do not see the need to change my behavior in different social surroundings
5. Interacting with unfamiliar people makes me nervous
6. I know what to say in front of different people
7. I like listening to other people’s stories as much as telling my own
8. I get upset when there are more people at a function than I expected
9. I enjoy spontaneity in social settings
10. I don’t like to change my behavior to suit others
11. I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with
12. I behave differently around my friends than with my co-workers
13. I behave differently around my peers than with my superiors
14. I feel equally comfortable in a meeting wearing business attire or dancing atop a table at a party with a lampshade on my head
15. I am good at adjusting my behaviors to fit in various situations
16. I do not know what to do when I am surrounded by strangers
17. I am good at behaving as a situation demands
18. I believe it is important to be flexible in your behavior depending on who you are interacting with
19. I am good at adapting to a variety of social situations
20. I fit in with just about any crowd
21. While I am with my coworkers, my behaviors (verbal and physical) are different from my behaviors when I am with family
22. I have trouble in ingratiating people with higher social status unless I truly admire that person

23. I am not very good at hiding my emotions. When I think a person is disgusting, I show him/her a disgusting face. When I truly admire or like someone, I tend to go overboard praising him/her
24. I often bore people with my conversation
25. I feel confident in my ability to adopt my behavior according to the social context I am in
26. I feel that I can socialize well with different kinds of people in different kinds of settings
27. I am able to adjust my behavior depending upon the social situation
28. I realize that certain social situations require different behaviors
29. I think people should be the same in every situation
30. I interact the same in almost every situation

## Exhibit D: Expert Review Results

	Statement	Dimensions	Results
1.	I behave according to social norms	SP	72.7%
2.	I am able to read people well	SS	100%
3.	I have trouble interacting with people at workplace	SP	27.3%
4.	I don't know how to "read between the lines"	SS	100%
5.	People tell me that I have good manners	SP	100%
6.	I am able to fit in any social situation well	SF	100%
7.	I know when people are upset	SS	100%
8.	I understand proper social rules	SP	63.6%
9.	I can't tell if someone is telling a lie	SS	91%
10.	I don't know how to socialize with people that I just met	SF	73%
11.	I rarely pay attention to people's body language	SS	100%
12.	I have trouble interacting with people at workplace	SP	27.3%
13.	I rarely say hi to my coworkers	SP	72.7%
14.	I am not good at sensing what other people are feeling	SS	100%
15.	I am able to adjust my behavior quickly	SF	100%
16.	I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them	SS	100%
17.	I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior	SS	100%
18.	I can express my ideas easily	SP	91%
19.	I know how to handle just about any social situation	SF	91%
20.	I behave according to my mood	SP	64%
21.	I don't know how to handle unexpected situations	SF	100%
22.	I put on a smile even when I am upset	SF	9%
23.	I know the right things to say in a social situation	SP	64%
24.	I have trouble getting my message across	SP	100%
25.	People tell me that I am not flexible (behavior wise)	SF	100%
26.	I have trouble anticipating people's reaction	SS	100%
27.	I act cheerfully when needed	SF	64%
28.	I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting	SS	100%
29.	I can start a pleasant conversation	SP	91%
30.	Sometimes I don't understand why people react the way they do	SS	91%
31.	I tend to make social errors	SP	64%
32.	I know when people enjoy the conversation	SS	100%
33.	I have trouble engaging in conversations with people who have different backgrounds	SF	82%
34.	I don't know what to say when I am in a unfamiliar social situation	SF	82%

SP = Social Presentation  
SS = Social Scanning  
SF = Social Flexibility/Adaptability

Exhibit E: Social Skill Measure (After Expert Review)

**Social presentation: the skill to understand proper social rules and present oneself (both verbally and non-verbally) in a way that is socially appropriate.**

1. People tell me that I have good manners (100%)
2. I have trouble getting my message across (100%)
3. I can express my ideas easily (91%)
4. I can start a pleasant conversation (91%)
5. I have little difficulty using appropriate words while interacting with others
6. People often say that I am good at expressing myself
7. I often feel uncertain as to what is the right thing to say in a social setting
8. I am very good at presenting myself in a social situation
9. I often feel uncertain as to what expressions I should display in a social setting
10. I am well aware of how to present myself in social interactions

**Social flexibility: the skill to smoothly adjust one's verbal and nonverbal behavior to fit in any social interaction.**

1. I am able to fit in any social situation well (100%)
2. I am able to adjust my behavior quickly (100%)
3. I don't know how to handle unexpected situations (100%)
4. People tell me that I am not flexible behavior wise (100%)
5. I know how to handle just about any social situation (91%)
6. I am able to engage in conversations with people who have different backgrounds
7. I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with
8. I am not good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations
9. I fit in with just about any crowd
10. I don't change my behavior to suit different social situations

**Social scanning: the skill to actively scan and accurately interpret both verbal and nonverbal messages from others.**

1. I am able to read people well (100%)
2. I don't know how to "read between the lines" (100%)
3. I know when people are upset (100%)
4. I can usually tell if someone is lying
5. I am good at sensing what other people are feeling (100%)
6. I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them (100%)
7. I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior (100%)
8. I have trouble anticipating people's reaction (100%)
9. I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting (100%)
10. I know when people enjoy the conversation (100%)

## Exhibit F: Pilot-Testing Survey

### Consent to Participate in Research

Thank you for participating in this research project! By providing your Pawprint ID below, you consent to participate in this study and understand the following:

**PROJECT BACKGROUND:** This project involves gathering information on students' attitudes and beliefs about themselves.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study is to evaluate factors associated with effective social abilities.

**VOLUNTARY:** The survey is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question or choose to withdraw from participation at any time without any penalty. Your grade will not be affected if you choose not to participate or if you choose to withdraw from the project at any time.

**WHAT DO YOU DO?** Click on the link that is provided at the end of the page and complete the survey, which should take approximately 15 minutes or less to complete.

**BENEFITS:** Your participation will help us understand how people interact in a social situation and you will receive extra credit from your instructor for your participation.

**RISKS:** This project does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your confidentiality will be maintained in that no individual information will be reported. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please feel free to contact the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585. Thank you in advance for participating in this study. If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

Sharon Wu  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
573-882-5929  
[ywqhd@mizzou.edu](mailto:ywqhd@mizzou.edu)

Dr. Daniel Turban  
Chair and Professor of Management  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
573-882-0305  
[turband@missouri.edu](mailto:turband@missouri.edu)

Please type your Pawprint ID below if you agree to participate in the study.  
The Pawprint ID is needed for extra credit purpose only.

---

Please click on the "Complete Survey" button below. It will direct you to the project survey.

<http://business.missouri.edu/asp/survey/takeSurvey.asp?surveyID=306> (link to the consent form)

<http://business.missouri.edu/asp/survey/takeSurvey.asp?surveyID=307> (link to the actual survey)

### Project Survey

**Instructions.** On this and the following pages you will see statements indicating how people might think about their life, work, behaviors, and attitudes. Please read each statement carefully and use the rating scale associated with the item. Some questions may seem similar, but please answer each question because we need to ask about an idea in several ways to make sure we understand your beliefs about it. Please be completely honest in your responses, and realize that there are no right or wrong answers. All information you provide will remain anonymous.

**Thank you for your participation!**

#### SECTION I.

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about yourself.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree
1. People tell me that I have good manners .....	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have trouble getting my message across.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. I can express my ideas easily.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can start a pleasant conversation.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have little difficulty using appropriate words while interacting with others.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. People often say that I am good at expressing myself .....	1	2	3	4	5
7. I often feel uncertain as to what is the right thing to say in a social setting...	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am very good at presenting myself in a social situation.....	1	2	3	4	5
9. I often feel uncertain as to what expressions I should display in a social setting.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am well aware of how to preset myself in social interactions .....	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am able to fit in any social situation well .....	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am able to adjust my behavior quickly.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. I don't know how to handle unexpected situations.....	1	2	3	4	5
14. People tell me that I am not flexible behavior wise .....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know how to handle just about any social situation .....	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am able to engage in conversations with people who have different backgrounds .....	1	2	3	4	5
17. I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with.....	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations .....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I fit in with just about any crowd .....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I don't change my behavior to suit different social situations .....	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am able to read people well .....	1	2	3	4	5
22. I don't know how to "read between the lines".....	1	2	3	4	5
23. I know when people are upset.....	1	2	3	4	5
24. I can usually tell if someone is lying.....	1	2	3	4	5
25. I am good at sensing what other people are feeling .....	1	2	3	4	5
26. I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them.....	1	2	3	4	5
27. I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior.....	1	2	3	4	5
28. I have trouble anticipating people's reactions.....	1	2	3	4	5
29. I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting.....	1	2	3	4	5
30. I know when people enjoy the conversation.....	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about yourself.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree
1. I am the life of the party.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel comfortable around people.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. I tend to start conversations.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. I talk to a lot of different people at parties.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. I don't mind being the center of attention.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. I don't talk a lot.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. I tend to keep in the background.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have very little to say.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. I don't like to draw attention to myself.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am quiet around strangers.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe.....	1	2	3	4	5
14. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people.....	1	2	3	4	5
16. I would probably make a good actor.....	1	2	3	4	5
17. In a group of people, I am rarely the center of attention.....	1	2	3	4	5
18. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am not always the person I appear to be.....	1	2	3	4	5
21. I would not change my opinion (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favor.....	1	2	3	4	5
22. I have considered being an entertainer.....	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.....	1	2	3	4	5
24. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.....	1	2	3	4	5
25. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going.....	1	2	3	4	5
26. I feel a bit awkward in public and do not show up quite so well as I should.....	1	2	3	4	5
27. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for the right end).....	1	2	3	4	5
28. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.....	1	2	3	4	5
29. I find it easy to put myself in the position of others.....	1	2	3	4	5
30. I am keenly aware of how I am perceived by others.....	1	2	3	4	5
31. In social situations, it is always clear to me exactly what to say and do.....	1	2	3	4	5
32. I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others.....	1	2	3	4	5
33. I am good at making myself visible with influential people in my organization.....	1	2	3	4	5
34. I am good at reading others' body language.....	1	2	3	4	5
35. I am able to adjust my behavior and become the type of person dictated.....	1	2	3	4	5

by any situation.....

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about yourself and life.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree
1. In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am satisfied with my life.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have good understanding of my own emotions.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. I really understand what I feel.....	1	2	3	4	5
9. I always know whether or not I am happy.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am a good observer of others' emotions.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.....	1	2	3	4	5
14. I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I always tell myself I am a competent person.....	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am a self-motivating person.....	1	2	3	4	5
17. I would always encourage myself to try my best.....	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am quite capable of controlling my emotions.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.....	1	2	3	4	5
21. I have good control of my emotions.....	1	2	3	4	5
22. I like to juggle several activities at the same time.....	1	2	3	4	5
23. I would rather complete an entire project everyday than complete parts of several projects.....	1	2	3	4	5
24. I believe people should try to do many things at once.....	1	2	3	4	5
25. When I work by myself, I usually work on one project at a time.....	1	2	3	4	5
26. I prefer to do one thing at a time.....	1	2	3	4	5
27. I believe people do their best work when they have many tasks to complete.....	1	2	3	4	5
28. I believe it is best to complete one task before beginning another.....	1	2	3	4	5
29. I believe it is best for people to be given several tasks and assignments to perform.....	1	2	3	4	5
30. I seldom like to work on more than a single task or assignment at the same time.....	1	2	3	4	5
31. I would rather complete parts of several projects every day than complete an entire project.....	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION II. Background Information.**

**Please circle you major:**

Accounting	Economics	Finance & Banking	International Business	Management	Marketing	Other
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.

**Sex:** 1. Female                      2. Male

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your ethnic Background?**

African American/Black	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Caucasian/White	Latino/Hispanic	Other
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.

**What is your current grade point average (please round it to the tenth decimal, e.g., 3.4):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**How much full time work experience (in month) do you have?** \_\_\_\_\_ months

**What is your birth order?** (If you are the second oldest child out of four siblings, then you would put 2 out of 4 below or if you are the only child, then you would put 1 out of 1)

I am \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ siblings

**The next four questions ask about your extra-curricular activities. Please choose (0) if you are not involved in any organizations.**

1) In how many organizations (professional associations, fraternities, sororities, etc.) are you a member?

\_\_\_\_\_

2) In how many of these organizations do you hold a position as president? \_\_\_\_\_

3) In how many of these organizations do you hold a position as vice president? \_\_\_\_\_

4) In how many of these organizations do you hold a position as chair of an important committee?

\_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**

## Exhibit G: Employee Survey

**PROJECT BACKGROUND:** This research project involves surveying employees at various organizations in Missouri. The purpose is to understand how individuals' work-related behaviors influence their careers and work related outcomes.

**VOLUNTARY:** Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative ramifications on your job performance or opportunities for job advancement. You may choose to skip any question you desire, although it is most helpful to us if you answer every question. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete and you have to be 18 or older to participate.

**BENEFITS:** Your participation in this research project will provide information about how employees' work-related behaviors influence their careers and work attitudes. Such information will, hopefully, provide benefit to organizations' training and development programs. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to participate in the study by filling out the survey.

**RISKS:** This project does not entail any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life.

**INSTRUCTION:** When you are done with the survey, please seal it in the envelope provided and mail it directly to Sharon Wu at the University of Missouri for data analyses.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your confidentiality will be maintained and individual information will NOT be reported. Rather, we will report analyses of aggregated data. Ms. Wu and Professor Turban will maintain the data on their computers. No one at your organization will have access to the individual data.

We have provided two copies of this form. Please sign this form and return it to us with your completed survey and keep the loose form for your records. Thank you for your participation!

(Please print your name) \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form I state that I understand the above. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please feel free to contact the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585. Thank you in advance for participating in this study. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Professor Daniel B. Turban at 572-882-0305 or [Turban@missouri.edu](mailto:Turban@missouri.edu) or Ms. Sharon Wu at 573-882-5929 or [ywqhd@mizzou.edu](mailto:ywqhd@mizzou.edu). Thank you!

## Employee Attitude Survey

On the following pages you will see statements indicating how people might think about their careers, behaviors, and attitudes. Please read each statement carefully and use the rating scale associated with the item. Some questions may seem similar, but please answer each question because we need to ask about an idea in several ways to make sure we understand your beliefs about it. Please be completely honest in your responses, and realize that there are no right or wrong answers. All information you provide will remain confidential. This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Thank you for taking your time to participate in this study.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

1. I have trouble getting my message across	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can start a pleasant conversation	1	2	3	4	5
3. People often say that I am good at expressing myself	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am very good at presenting myself in a social situation	1	2	3	4	5
5. I often feel uncertain as to what expressions I should display in a social setting	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am well aware of how to present myself in social situations	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am able to adjust my behavior quickly	1	2	3	4	5
8. I know how to handle just about any social situation	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am able to engage in conversations with people who have different backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
10. I fit in with just about any crowd	1	2	3	4	5
1. I am able to read people well	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know when people are upset	1	2	3	4	5
3. I can usually tell if someone is lying	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am good at sensing what other people are feeling	1	2	3	4	5
5. I seem to know people's true feelings no matter how hard they try to hide them	1	2	3	4	5
6. I pay close attention to people's nonverbal behavior	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have trouble anticipating people's reactions	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am able to accurately assess someone's general character upon the first meeting	1	2	3	4	5
9. I know when people enjoy the conversation	1	2	3	4	5
1. I often adapt my behavior based on the group I am with	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am good at adjusting my behavior to fit in various situations	1	2	3	4	5
3. I see the need to change my behavior in different social surroundings	1	2	3	4	5
4. My behavior changes according to the people I am interacting with	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have a good understanding of my own emotions	1	2	3	4	5
7. I really understand what I feel	1	2	3	4	5
8. I always know whether or not I am happy	1	2	3	4	5
9. I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am a good observer of others' emotions	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others	1	2	3	4	5

12. I have a good understanding of the emotions of people around me	1	2	3	4	5	
13. I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1	2		3	4		5
1. I always tell myself I am a competent person	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I am a self-motivating person	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I would always encourage myself to try my best	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally	1	2	3	4	5	
5. I am quite capable of controlling my emotions	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry	1	2	3	4	5	
7. I have good control of my emotions	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people	1	2	3	4	5	
2. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information	1	2	3	4	5	
5. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I would probably make a good actor	1	2	3	4	5	
7. In a group of people, I am rarely the center of attention	1	2	3	4	5	
8. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons	1	2	3	4	5	
9. I am not particularly good at making other people like me	1	2	3	4	5	
10. I am not always the person I appear to be	1	2	3	4	5	
11. I would not change my opinion (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favor	1	2	3	4	5	
12. I have considered being an entertainer	1	2	3	4	5	
13. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting	1	2	3	4	5	
14. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations	1	2	3	4	5	
15. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going	1	2	3	4	5	
16. I feel a bit awkward in public and do not show up quite so well as I should	1	2	3	4	5	
17. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for the right end)	1	2	3	4	5	
18. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I have frequent mood swings	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I get stressed out easily	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I worry about things	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I panic easily	1	2	3	4	5	
5. I am filled with doubts about things	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I seldom feel blue	1	2	3	4	5	
7. I am relaxed most of the time	1	2	3	4	5	
8. I am not easily bothered by things	1	2	3	4	5	
9. I feel comfortable with myself	1	2	3	4	5	
10. I don't worry about things that have already happened	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I am the life of the party	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I feel comfortable around people	1	2	3	4	5	

3. I tend to start conversations	1	2	3	4	5				
4. I talk to a lot of different people at parties	1	2	3	4	5				
5. I don't mind being the center of attention	1	2	3	4	5				
6. I don't talk a lot	1	2	3	4	5				
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Neutral</b>		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>		
1	2		3		4		5		
1. I tend to keep in the background	1	2	3	4	5				
2. I have very little to say	1	2	3	4	5				
3. I don't like to draw attention to myself	1	2	3	4	5				
4. I am quiet around strangers	1	2	3	4	5				
5. I work closely with others in doing my work	1	2	3	4	5				
6. I frequently must coordinate my efforts with others	1	2	3	4	5				
7. My own performance is dependent on receiving accurate information from others	1	2	3	4	5				
8. The way I perform my job has a significant impact on others	1	2	3	4	5				
9. My work requires me to consult with others fairly frequently	1	2	3	4	5				
10. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals	1	2	3	4	5				
11. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income	1	2	3	4	5				
12. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills	1	2	3	4	5				
1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life	1	2	3	4	5				
2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful source for constructive change	1	2	3	4	5				
3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality	1	2	3	4	5				
4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it	1	2	3	4	5				
5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen	1	2	3	4	5				
6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition	1	2	3	4	5				
7. I excel at identifying opportunities	1	2	3	4	5				
8. I am always looking for better ways to do things	1	2	3	4	5				
9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen	1	2	3	4	5				
10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can	1	2	3	4	5				
1. I find it easy to put myself in the position of others	1	2	3	4	5				
2. I am keenly aware of how I am perceived by others	1	2	3	4	5				
3. In social situations, it is always clear to me exactly what to say and do	1	2	3	4	5				
4. I am particularly good at sensing the motivation and hidden agendas of others	1	2	3	4	5				
5. I am good at making myself visible with influential people in my organization	1	2	3	4	5				
6. I am good at reading others' body language	1	2	3	4	5				
7. I am able to adjust my behavior and become the type of person dictated by any situation	1	2	3	4	5				
8. I often feel nervous or jumpy on my job	1	2	3	4	5				
9. I almost never feel any tension while on the job	1	2	3	4	5				
10. The pressure generated by my job rarely interferes with my enjoyment of recreational activity	1	2	3	4	5				
11. Problems associated with work have kept me awake at night	1	2	3	4	5				
12. Concern for my future career causes me to feel stress or pressure	1	2	3	4	5				

1. I am confident in representing my work area in meetings with senior management	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am confident in designing new procedures for my work area	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am confident in making suggestions to management about ways to improve the working of my section	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am confident in contributing to discussions about the company's strategy	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am confident in analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution	1	2	3	4	5

Please use the following scale to answer the next four questions about your co-workers.

Don't have any such person	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
0	1	2	3	4

1. How much do your co-workers go out of their way to do things to make your work life easier for you?	0	1	2	3	4
2. How easy is it to talk with your co-workers?	0	1	2	3	4
3. How much can your co-workers be relied on when things get tough at work?	0	1	2	3	4
4. How much are your co-workers willing to listen to your personal problems?	0	1	2	3	4

Often, we have a number of people in our work life who have been facilitating our career development. Please name the people who have contributed the most to your professional growth and development – the people who acted to help your career by speaking on your behalf, providing you with information, resources, career opportunities, advice, psychological support, or any sort of assistance.

Please estimate how many such individuals you have had so far: \_\_\_\_\_

You may include as few or as many as you wish up to 5 individuals and answer the questions about each person. Please use the code on the side to answer their gender, ethnicity, and age.

Code	
<b>Gender</b>	
1 = Male	2 = Female
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
1 = African American	
2 = Native American	
3 = Asian/Pacific Islander	
4 = Caucasian	
5 = Latino/Hispanic	
6 = Other	
<b>Age</b>	
1 = Younger than you by more than 6 years	
2 = Your age +/- 5 years	
3 = Older than you by more than 6 years	

Initials	Gender (use code)	Ethnicity (use code)	Age (use code)	# of levels below top management	# of levels above you
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

Not at all		To some extent		To a large extent
1	2	3	4	5

he following questions ask about the individuals you listed above, please think about the extent to which the individuals listed above have.....

1. Given or recommended you for challenging assignments that present opportunities to learn new skills?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Given or recommended you for assignments that required personal contact with managers in different parts of the company?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Given or recommended you for assignments that increased your contact with higher level managers	1	2	3	4	5
4. Given or recommended you for assignments that helped you meet new colleagues?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Helped you finish assignments/tasks or meet deadlines that otherwise would have been difficult to complete?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Protected you from working with other managers or work units before you knew about their likes/dislikes, opinions on controversial topics, and the nature of the political environment?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Gone out of their way to promote your career interests?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Kept you informed about what is going on at higher levels in the company or how external conditions are influencing the company?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Conveyed empathy for the concerns and feelings you have discussed?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Conveyed feelings of respect for you as an individual?	1	2	3	4	5
11. Encouraged you to talk openly about anxiety and fears that detract you from your work?	1	2	3	4	5
12. Shared personal experiences as an alternative perspective to your problems?	1	2	3	4	5
13. Discussed your questions or concerns regarding feelings of competence, commitment to advancement, relationships with peers and supervisors or work/family conflicts?	1	2	3	4	5
14. Shared history of their career with you?	1	2	3	4	5
15. Encouraged you to prepare for advancement?	1	2	3	4	5
16. Encouraged you to try new ways of behaving on the job?	1	2	3	4	5
17. Served as a role model?	1	2	3	4	5
18. Displayed attitudes and values similar to your own?	1	2	3	4	5

**You and Your Career History.** To help us understand your perspective we ask the following questions about you, your job, and your career history.

- How many levels below are you from the top management (i.e. CEO)? \_\_\_\_ level (s)
- How much full-time work experience do you have? \_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_ months
- How long have you been with your current company? \_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_ months
- How many different organizations have you worked for since graduation from your highest degree? \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you not worked on a full-time basis for a period of time since entering the full-time workforce?
  - No
  - Yes – What period (approximate month and year) From \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_  
Month Year Month Year

6. I would place my family (when I was growing up) in the following socio-economic level: Please circle one.

1. Upper class – The social elite. Income mostly from earned or inherited assets.
2. Upper middle – Upper managers, professionals, medium size business owners; college educated; family income nearly twice the national average.
3. Middle class – Middle level white-collar, top level blue-collar; education past high school; income somewhat above national average.
4. Working class – Middle level blue-collar, lower level white-collar; income slightly below the national average.
5. Working poor – Below mainstream America in living standard, but above the poverty line; low paid service workers, operatives; some high school education.
6. Underclass – Depending primarily on welfare system for sustenance; living standard below poverty line; not regularly employed; low level of schooling.

7. How large is the organization for which you currently work?

- |                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 1-50 employees    | 5. 1000-4999 employees     |
| 2. 51-99 employees   | 6. 5000-9999 employees     |
| 3. 100-499 employees | 7. 10,000-49,999 employees |
| 4. 500-999 employees | 8. 50,000 + employees      |

8. What is your current position? Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Gender: 1. Female 2. Male

10. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Marital status: 1. Married/cohabiting 2. Single

12. Ethnic background:

- |                     |                    |                           |              |                     |                |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. African American | 2. Native American | 3. Asian/Pacific Islander | 4. Caucasian | 5. Latino /Hispanic | 6. Other _____ |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|

13. Does your position have direct responsibility and authority for the main activity of the organization (Line position) or are you in a support or advisory capacity within your organization (Staff position)?

1. Line 2. Staff

14. How many hours a week do you work, including hours spent outside the office? \_\_\_\_\_ hours

15. Promotions: include more than one of the following changes in your status:

- \*Change in offices and or type of furniture/décor in the office
- \*Significant increases in your annual salary due to the promotion
- \*Qualifying for a company bonus/incentive stock plan
- \*Significant changes in the scope of responsibilities of your job
- \*Changes in the level in the company (e.g., non-manager to first level manager)

Using the above definition of a promotion, please indicate the number of promotions you have received in your career since you enter the full-time workforce. \_\_\_\_\_ of promotions

16. Salary:

a. Current annual salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

b. Total income from present employer (including salary, commissions, bonuses, etc.): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your participation!**

## Exhibit H: Supervisory Survey

**Instructions:** This survey assesses the extent to which your direct report engages in certain behavior at work. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible. There are no right or wrong answers and all information you provide will remain confidential. Your individual answer will NOT be shown to anyone other than the researcher. We ask that you complete one survey for each of your direct report up to a maximum of five.

Your direct report's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

From your observation about your direct report, how strongly do you agree with the following statement about your direct report?

My direct report.....					
1. Helps others who have been absent	1	2	3	4	5
2. Helps others who have heavy work loads	1	2	3	4	5
3. Assists supervisor with their work (when not asked)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Takes time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries	1	2	3	4	5
5. Goes out of way to help new employees	1	2	3	4	5
6. Passes along information to co-workers	1	2	3	4	5
1. Can start a pleasant conversation	1	2	3	4	5
2. Is very good at presenting themselves in a social situation	1	2	3	4	5
3. Is well aware of how to present themselves in social situations	1	2	3	4	5
4. Is able to adjust their behavior quickly	1	2	3	4	5
5. Knows how to handle just about any social situation	1	2	3	4	5
1. Adapts behaviors based on the group they are with	1	2	3	4	5
2. Is good at adjusting their behaviors to fit in various situations	1	2	3	4	5
3. Sees the need to change their behaviors in different social surroundings	1	2	3	4	5
4. Changes their behaviors according to the people they are interacting with	1	2	3	4	5
1. Often adapts their behavior based on the group they are with	1	2	3	4	5
2. Is good at adjusting their behavior to fit in various situations	1	2	3	4	5
3. Doesn't change their behavior to suit others	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knows what to say in front of different people	1	2	3	4	5
5. Is able to behave as situations demand	1	2	3	4	5
Needs improvement	2	Satisfactory	4	Excellent	
1		3		5	
Please rate your direct report's performance					
1. Overall performance in the tasks associated with your direct report's job	1	2	3	4	5
2. Quantity of work	1	2	3	4	5
3. Quality of work	1	2	3	4	5

## VITA

The author was originally from Taiwan and has been in the US since junior high school. Given that she has been in the US for over half of her life, she considers herself as a bi-cultural individual, someone who knows both the Chinese and the western cultures at an intimate level. She attended University of Minnesota – Twin Cities for her undergraduate work, Southern Illinois University for her master’s study, and University of Missouri – Columbia for her doctorate. She is interested in the field of organizational behavior and especially in social skill. She hopes to utilize the knowledge obtained from her research to help train and facilitate social skill in the workplace.