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Gender in Job Negotiations: A Two-Level Game

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Gender in Job Negotiations: A Two-Level Game

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Abstract

We propose a two-level-game (Putnam, 1988) perspective on gender in job negotiations. At Level 1, candidates negotiate with the employers. At Level 2, candidates negotiate with domestic partners. In order to illuminate the interplay between these two levels, we review literature from two separate bodies of literature. Research in psychology and organizational behavior on candidate-employer negotiations sheds light on the effects of gender on Level 1 negotiations. Research from economics and sociology on intra-household bargaining elucidates how negotiations over the allocation of domestic labor at Level 2 influence labor force participation at Level 1. In conclusion, we integrate practical implications from these two bodies of literature to propose a set of prescriptive suggestions for candidates to approach job negotiations as a two-level game and to minimize disadvantageous effects of gender on job negotiation outcomes.

Gender in Job Negotiations: A Two-Level Game¹

The gender wage gap has declined in recent decades, but it has not disappeared. There still remains a significant “unexplained” difference in male and female compensation that cannot be accounted for by controlling for human capital factors, such as gender differences in work commitment, education, and experience (O’Neill, 2003) or institutional considerations, such as unionization (Blau & Kahn, 2006). Motivated by this persistent unexplained difference in men’s and women’s work compensation, the U.S. Congress is now debating a bill called the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338 and S.766) that would bolster equal pay and fair labor laws. One action proposed in this legislation is the funding of negotiation training programs for women and girls, presumably because lawmakers believe that gender differences in job negotiation performance are contributing to persistent gender disparities in compensation.

What insights does the literature on gender in negotiation have to offer with regard to how negotiation contributes to or could help diminish gender differences in compensation? We address this question with reviews of two bodies of literature on gender in negotiation—one from psychology and organizational behavior on candidate-employer negotiations and another from economics and sociology on intra-household bargaining. These literatures have flourished independently of one another and offer markedly different perspectives on gender in negotiation. However, we argue that one cannot understand the effects of gender and negotiation on work compensation without recognizing the fundamental interlocks between gender effects in candidate-employer negotiations and gender effects in intra-household bargaining.

¹ This article is an adapted version of “Untapped Potential in the Study of Negotiation and Gender Inequality in Organizations,” which was written by the authors for the forthcoming 2008 *Academy of Management Annals* edited by James Walsh and Arthur Brief.

Two-Level Job Negotiations: Candidates' Negotiations at Work and Home Interlink

In his classic work on the logic of two-level games in diplomacy and domestic politics, Putnam (1988) made the case that diplomatic interactions should be modeled as negotiations interlinked with domestic politics. This two-level-game metaphor was inspired in part by Walton and McKersie's (1965) behavioral theory of negotiation, which had challenged unitary actor models of labor relations. In abstract form, the metaphor of the two-level game was intended to represent a broad array of situations in which, "Negotiators representing two organizations meet to reach an agreement between them, subject to the constraint that any tentative agreement must be ratified by their respective organizations" (Putnam, 1988, p. 435).

This two-level game logic of "domestic" ratification of agreements is widely recognized by negotiation scholars and practitioners alike when the negotiators are representing formal organizations. However, negotiation scholars have largely ignored the structural implications of job candidates' domestic relations when studying negotiations with employers. Akin to the diplomat seeking to reach a trade agreement, job candidates have limits on their "zone of possible agreement" (Lax & Sebenius, 1986) with domestic partners and dependents that place constraints on their zone of possible agreement with current or prospective employers.

With candidate-employer negotiations, there is also a broader shadow of traditional domestic relations to be taken into account, which extends beyond the direct constraints within a candidate's specific situation. As described in the following sections, the traditional division of labor between the sexes—in which women managed the private realm and men the public—continues to have an indirect influence on job negotiation outcomes through sex stereotypes and pay expectations. Traditional gender ideologies also continue to influence the division of

domestic labor—and thereby the constraints of the domestic realm on outside work—even when both women and men are competitively employed.²

In the following section, we describe how the larger structure of gender relations within society influences candidates' negotiations with employers. In the subsequent section, we review literature on how intra-household negotiations over domestic labor influence work outside of the home. In conclusion, we attempt to integrate these two literatures from the practical perspective of a job candidate and propose prescriptive suggestions for approaching job negotiations as a two-level game.

Level 1: Gender Effects on Candidate-Employer Negotiations

Field research on job negotiations at organizational entry suggests that male managers and professionals tend to negotiate higher starting pay than their female peers (Bowles & McGinn, 2005; Brett & Stroh, 1997; Dreher & Cox Jr, 2000; Gerhart, 1990)—with some exceptions in which no gender differences are found (O'Shea & Bush, 2002; Seidel, Polzer, & Stewart, 2000). These findings are consistent with reviews of the literature on gender and negotiation more broadly, which report an overall—if somewhat inconsistent—tendency for negotiation outcomes to favor men over women in terms of economic payoffs (Kray & Thompson, 2005; Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999).

² It is important to recognize that traditional gender ideologies also influence the distribution of paid labor between men and women within organizations and that the sex segregation of women in lower paying occupations constrains their bargaining power in negotiations over household labor (Goldin, 1990; Reskin, 1984). For the purposes of this article, we focus on job negotiations at the individual level, which generally do not affect these structural factors.

Some research suggests that gender differences in starting pay are due to a greater propensity by men than women to negotiate initial offers (Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Small, Gelfand, Babcock, & Gettman, 2007). (See also article by Greig in this volume on career advancement and the propensity to negotiate.) Other research finds no gender differences in the propensity to negotiate salary (Bohnet & Greig, 2007; Gerhart & Rynes, 1991a),³ and ties women's lower salary outcomes to gender differences in negotiation performance (Barron, 2003; Gerhart & Rynes, 1991a; Stevens, Bavetta, & Gist, 1993).

Ambiguity Moderates Gender Effects in Negotiation

One situational factor that moderates gender differences in salary outcomes at organizational entry is the degree of ambiguity for candidates about the negotiating range and appropriate standards of compensation. Bowles et al. (2005) analyzed job search and outcome data across 13 industries for 525 graduating MBA students, controlling for a wide array of potential salary predictors on which men and women might differ (e.g., pre-MBA salary, number of job offers, dual-career concerns, etc.). Informed by career services professionals in three other MBA programs, the industries were divided into high and low ambiguity contexts, based on whether MBAs were likely to be well informed about how much to ask for in salary negotiations in each industry. There was no significant difference in the variance or mean of salaries in the high as compared to low ambiguity industries. Separating by industry ambiguity, Bowles and colleagues found no significant gender differences in negotiation outcomes in those industries in which MBA students had relatively good information about appropriate salary standards.

³ Survey research suggests that women may have a greater preferences for negotiation than men when it comes to decision-making over job components, such as work and travel schedules, which impinge directly on household responsibilities (Bohnet & Greig, 2007).

However, in those industries in which salary standards were ambiguous, women accepted salaries that were ten percent lower on average than the men's. Bowles and colleagues demonstrated in follow-on experimental studies that decreased ambiguity with regard to the standards for negotiated agreement decreases the potential for gender to influence negotiation outcomes and does so without reducing the variance in negotiation outcomes within the low as compared to high ambiguity conditions.

In addition to providing insight into gender differences in salary outcomes, the research by Bowles et al. (2005) may also help to explain why gender differences in compensation have been found to be greater in less formalized categories of compensation, such as bonuses (Elvira & Graham, 2002) and equity (Lyness & Thompson, 1997) as compared to base salary. Bowles and colleagues propose that, in the absence of clear standards for agreement, parties search mental schema, past experience, and the negotiating context for cues for how to enact the negotiation. If negotiators carry gendered associations (e.g., sex stereotypes) to the table or if the context of the negotiation is gendered (e.g., male dominated organization), then greater ambiguity allows more potential for those gendered associations or the gendered context to influence negotiation performance. In other words, ambiguity itself does not cause gender effects, but it opens the door for mental schema and situational factors to trigger gender effects.

How Gender Shapes Candidates' Negotiations with Employers

We observe two primary mechanisms through which gender influences candidates' negotiations with employers: sex stereotypes and pay expectations. Both relate back to the traditional division of labor between the sexes. Because men have traditionally managed the public realm and women the private in our culture, men tend to hold higher social and economic status within the broader society than women (Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004). Commensurate with

their greater social and economic status, men are expected to be more competent, forceful, and in charge than women (Conway, Pizzamiglio, & Mount, 1996; Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Hoffman & Hurst, 1990; Jackman, 1994). They are also mentally associated with higher pay than women (Belliveau, 2005; Major & Konar, 1984; Ostroff & Atwater, 2003; Rynes, Rosen, & Mahoney, 1985). These general relationships between gender and status within our society influence the specific circumstances of job negotiations by informing expectations of how male and female candidates *will* and *should* behave in job negotiations and what types of outcomes (e.g., compensation) they are likely to attain.

Descriptive and Prescriptive Sex Stereotypes. Descriptive sex stereotypes inform expectations about how men and women will behave or perform in different situations (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly, 1987). For instance, men are generally perceived to have an advantage in negotiations over women because they are expected to be more effective at asserting their self-interest and claiming value for themselves, whereas women are expected to act in a more yielding and agreeable and less effective manner in terms of individual performance (Kray, Thompson, & Galinsky, 2001). Simple awareness of such descriptive sex stereotypes can influence negotiation performance through a dynamic of fulfilled expectations.

Drawing inspiration from research on stereotype threat (Steele, 1997), Kray et al. (2001) showed that exposing negotiators to sex stereotypes favoring male performance in an implicit manner (i.e., below the level of conscious awareness) and telling them that their negotiation performance would be evaluative of their general negotiation ability increased the male advantage in negotiation performance in mixed-sex pairs. As Steele describes, subtle awareness of negative stereotypes about the performance abilities of one's group in a domain of personal

importance—such as female managers in compensation negotiations—hangs like “a threat in the air” that mentally taxes the individual and undermines performance (Steele, 1997).

Prescriptive sex stereotypes—often referred to as “gender roles” (Eagly, 1987)—inform evaluations of what is attractive or appropriate behavior by men and women (Burgess & Borgida, 1999). Prescriptive sex stereotypes make attempting to negotiate for higher compensation a more socially risky endeavor for women than for men, because people not only expect that women *will* be more agreeable and other-oriented than men, they also believe women *should* behave in that manner (Wade, 2001). Bowles, Babcock and Lei (2007) demonstrated in a series of experiments that evaluators were significantly less inclined to work with a woman who initiated compensation negotiations as compared to one who did not, because they found her overly demanding and lacking in niceness. They showed further that this social risk of negotiating for higher compensation was greater for women than for men, particularly with male evaluators. In a final study, they asked participants to put themselves in the position of the candidate in the same scenario in which previous participants had evaluated candidates. They found that women were significantly less inclined than men to initiate compensation negotiations under those circumstances in which they faced a consistently higher social risk (i.e., with male evaluators). This research shows that it is reasonable for women at times to be more reticent than men to ask for higher pay, because they have to weigh relatively greater social risks against the economic benefits of initiating negotiation.

Pay Expectations. Another factor that contributes to gender differences in the outcomes of candidate-employer negotiations is differential pay expectations for male and female candidates. Numerous studies show that women tend to have lower pay expectations than men (e.g., Callahan-Levy & Messe, 1979; Crosby, 1982; Jost, 1997; Major & Konar, 1984; Major,

McFarlin, & Gagnon, 1984; Rizzo & Zeckhauser, 1999). Research on the entitlement effect shows that, in surveys, women tend to report lower career-entry and career-peak salary expectations than men (Major & Konar, 1984) and that, in laboratory research, women tend to pay themselves less for equivalent labor and work longer with fewer errors for equivalent pay than men (Major, McFarlin et al., 1984). Major and colleagues explain this effect as a reflection of gender differences in compensation within the larger society. Because both men and women tend to compare themselves to same-gender others, men derive their compensation standards from a better paid population than do women (Major & Forcey, 1985; McFarlin, Frone, Major, & Konar, 1989). When there is low ambiguity about appropriate pay standards and men and women have the same information, the entitlement effect dissipates (Major, McFarlin et al., 1984).

In general, negotiation research shows that prenegotiation expectations are highly predictive of negotiation outcomes (Zetik & Stuhlmacher, 2002). Some researchers have examined specifically how gender differences in salary aspirations relate to job negotiation behavior and performance. Multiple studies replicate the pattern of results observed in entitlement effect research, with women reporting lower pay aspirations than men entering negotiations and, as a result, negotiating less assertively (Barron, 2003; Kaman & Hartel, 1994; Major, Vanderslice, & McFarlin, 1984; Stevens et al., 1993). (See also Eckel, de Oliveira and Grossman in this volume on gender and the willingness to accept offers in the Ultimatum Game.)

Both field and experimental research indicates further that those distributing compensation offer more money to men than women, presumably in anticipation that women will be willing to settle for less (Belliveau, 2005; Solnick, 2001; Solnick & Schweitzer, 1999). Congruently, Rynes, Rosen and Mahoney (1985) found in a field survey of more than 1,500 managers, compensation administrators, and union officials, that more than 44 percent of those

questioned rated women's willingness to work for less money than men to be a "very" or "extremely" important cause of the gender pay gap (Gerhart & Rynes, 1991b).

Summary

Even when we treat Level 1 negotiations between candidates and employers as independent of candidates' domestic relations, the penumbra of the traditional division of labor between the sexes still casts a clear mark. Sex stereotypes motivate gender differences favoring men in job negotiation performance through a combination of fulfilled expectations of male superiority in negotiating ability and gendered social norms with regard to appropriate negotiating behavior. Reflecting and reinforcing men's higher economic status, differential pay expectations for men and women also influence the outcomes of job negotiations, because they color the negotiation aspirations of both candidates and employers.

Level 2: Gender Effects on Intra-household Bargaining

Differences between men's and women's outcomes in job negotiations also reflect the gendered allocation of tasks and responsibilities within households. Alternatives, preferences, constraints, and outcomes in "public" negotiations at work are interwoven with alternatives, preferences, constraints, and outcomes in "private" negotiations at home (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005; Hochschild, 1997).

In spite of significant increases in women's participation in paid employment, the most intractable barrier to gender equality in the workplace remains the inequitable distribution of household labor (Becker, 1985). As women have increased the number of hours in paid work outside the home, men have increased the time spent on household labor, but working women still carry a disproportionately heavy load of household tasks relative to working men (Bartley et al., 2005; Berk & Berk, 1983; Blair & Lichter, 1991; Hochschild, 1990). Gender inequality in

earnings reflects the fact that greater responsibility at home is significantly related to lesser earnings at work (Becker, 1985; Hersch & Stratton, 1994). Research in economics and sociology offers complementary explanations for this recursive dynamic.

Bargaining Power

Economists assert that outcomes in intra-household bargaining reflect earning power outside the home (Hersch & Stratton, 1994; Manser & Brown, 1980). In the economists' bargaining power model, the power held by either spouse in negotiations at home is a function of the value one can achieve in negotiations outside the household (Doss, 1996). Supporting this view, studies have shown that changes in men's and women's relative earning power on the job market affects the allocation of tasks within the household. Both men and women reduce their payoffs in the workplace as they take on responsibility within the household, but these negative payoffs disproportionately affect women (Mahoney, 1995).

Hersch and Stratton (1994) also show that women tended to marry men with greater earning power at the time of marriage, and the unequal distribution of household work between spouses reflects this unequal earning power. When household partners base intra-household allocations of tasks and responsibilities on earning power, the partner viewed as having lower potential grows increasingly less fit for the workforce by dedicating time and attention to the home, while the partner viewed as having greater potential grows increasingly more fit for the workforce by focusing on education and experience. This creates a self-fulfilling cycle in which the partner with less earning power at the beginning of the marriage, usually the woman, realizes an increasing relative disadvantage in the labor force. Research on intra-household bargaining power concludes that even the anticipation of greater household responsibilities affects women's

human capital investment decisions and career outcomes (Becker, 1985; Hersch & Stratton, 1994).

Gender Ideology

While acknowledging economists' arguments that outside earning potential affects behavior at home, sociologists assert that socially constructed gender ideology is the fundamental driver of behavior and outcomes in intra-household negotiations (Berk & Berk, 1983; Parkman, 2004). Supporting the gender ideology view, studies have shown how social norms across cultures and time guide the allocation of household tasks (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003; Strober & Chan, 1998). In both economics and sociology, men and women are seen as actively negotiating household responsibilities, but gender inequities are more malleable in the bargaining power model than they are in the gender ideology model.

Empirical work on gender ideology suggests that the bargaining power model is incomplete because it fails to incorporate the effects of gendered social norms (Blair & Lichter, 1991; Kamo, 1988; Parkman, 2004). As women increase their earnings outside the home, men take on more responsibilities at home, but women continue to spend a disproportionate amount of time on household tasks regardless of their contribution to household income (Bartley et al., 2005). In short, social norms around gender roles trump the effects of wives' outside earnings (DeMaris & Longmore, 1996). For example, research on Israeli couples with children suggests that women's part-time participation in the external labor market actually reinforces, rather than mitigates, traditional allocations of household labor (Stier & Lewin-Epstein, 2000). Cross cultural research suggests that these effects are moderated by national culture. Strober and Chan (1998) studied high-earning dual-career couples in the U.S. and Japan. Over 40 percent of the U.S. couples in their sample reported roughly equal shares of household tasks for husbands and

wives, but this rate was below 15 percent in Japanese households with the same income structure. Other research conducted in the U.S. found that working women's time on household tasks drops not solely as a result of men's increasing their time on these tasks, but as a result of more money spent on dining out and external sources of household help (Cohen, 1998). Strober and Chan conclude that: "changes in societal ideology are a prerequisite for changes in behavior, even for highly educated couples, and even when women have some economic bargaining power" (1998: 122).

Women also appear to be maintaining traditional household roles in addition to their increased participation in the workplace, in part to compensate for deviating from traditional gender roles in employment (Bittman et al., 2003; Court, 1997). Men may also act in a similar fashion. Exploring men's relative under-participation in household labor when their earnings drop below their female partner's earnings, Brines (1994) argues that men "do gender" (West & Zimmerman, 1987) at home by maintaining traditionally gendered roles in household tasks as a way of compensating for not maintaining the stereotypical male role in contribution to household income. Dixon and Wetherell (2004) suggest that persistent gender inequalities within households reflect a gendered sense of fairness in close relationships. Supporting this view, both men and women appear willing to take on household tasks traditionally done by the other, but they are less likely to relinquish tasks that are gender-consistent (Hiller & Philliber, 1986). As a result, women may be more willing to add tasks such as home repair than they are to give up tasks such as cooking and childcare (Parkman, 2004). Studying Northern Irish farmers' wives working outside the farm to supplement farm income, Kelly and Shorthall conclude that in order to fully understand intra-household bargaining "cognizance must be taken of historical context, power and gender relations, and bonds of affection" (2002: 341).

Summary

In sum, part of the recursive dynamic between job negotiations and intra-household bargaining is directly tied to maximizing household earning potential—partners with greater perceived potential earnings (typically men) take on less responsibility at home. But allocations of household labor also reflect traditional gender roles and ideologies within families and social cultures. Embracing gender ideologies with regard to division of household labor influences job negotiation aspirations. Even before a woman has a partner to negotiate with, she might prioritize a flexible work schedule over money in anticipation of being a mother with a husband working out of the home, carrying the load of household labor that traditionally accompanies this household arrangement. Together, bargaining power and gender ideology result in different outcomes for men and women at home, and the resulting allocations of domestic roles and responsibilities affect negotiations for jobs and compensation outside the home.

Reducing Gender Inequalities in Job Negotiations: Prescriptions in Two-level Games

Recognizing the two-level structure of job negotiations leads to a fuller and more integrative set of considerations than is evident from either level alone. In conclusion, we offer the following suggestions for approaching job negotiations as a two-level game and for minimizing disadvantageous effects of gender on job outcomes. Because the interplay between these two realms is deeply personal and idiosyncratic to the life circumstances of each candidate, our prescriptions, necessarily, point more to paths for critical inquiry than concrete answers.

Avoid the Fixed-Pie Bias

In Putnam's original formulation of the two-level game, he conceptualized the bargaining zone at each level as a "win-set" with agreement at one level contingent on an accompanying agreement at the other level: "Thus, agreement is possible only if win-sets overlap, and the larger

each win-set, the more likely they are to overlap” (1988: 358). As described above, candidates with greater domestic constraints find their potential “win-set” for agreement with employers constrained. It is straightforward with this logic in mind to imagine the array of potentially competing tradeoffs candidates may be required to make to achieve agreement across the two levels—ranging from conflicting work and childcare schedules to limitations on the geographic location of work and home.

What requires more imagination and negotiating skill is identifying those points of agreement that “create value” (Lax & Sebenius, 1986) across the levels. Negotiators commonly succumb to a “fixed-pie” bias that focuses them on distributive tradeoffs and blinds them from recognizing solutions for making all parties better off (Bazerman & Neale, 1983). In the case of job negotiations, traditional work structures—which are premised on the male breadwinner model (Acker, 1990; Danieli, 2006)—and gender ideologies with regard to the division of household labor may further reinforce this natural tendency to see competing problems before cooperative solutions across the two levels. Women, especially, may perceive their roles at work and home as competing (Biernat & Wortman, 1991) and have to resist engrained assumptions to negotiate creatively with role senders at home and work to enhance the value of their contributions in both realms (Hall, 1972).

One simple example of this is flexible work schedules that alleviate direct timing conflicts between role demands from home (e.g., caregiving) and organizational work, so that the employee can contribute more hours to the organization and more income to household earnings. Job candidates can realize these types of mutually beneficial solutions if they work actively with domestic partners and employers to identify options for creating value across both levels of negotiation. As Putnam argues in abstract yet provocative terms, “clever players will spot a move

on one board that will cause realignments on other boards that will enable them to achieve otherwise unattainable objectives” (1988: 354). The challenge is spotting such moves.

Reduce Ambiguity

As described above, reducing ambiguity reduces the potential for gender to influence negotiation outcomes. One way to beat gendered pay expectations is by collecting the best information available about appropriate compensation standards. However, candidates should be wary of the potential for gender bias in the search for information itself. For instance, two factors that collude to lead men and women to different information about appropriate compensation standards are (1) systematic differences in men’s and women’s social networks (Brass, 1985; Ibarra, 1992) and (2) the tendency to compare oneself to similar others (Crosby, 1982; Major & Konar, 1984; Shah, 1998). Women tend to have more gender diverse social networks than men, but they still tend to be less well connected to networks of men in their workplace than are men. Because those who control resources within organizations tend to be men, these gender differences in social network configuration put women at a disadvantage in terms of gaining career-related resources and information (Brass, 1984, 1985; Ibarra, 1992). Women should also be aware of the tendency to compare oneself to similar others, because information on other women’s compensation or even on others more generally in female-dominated work areas or occupations is likely to suggest lower compensation standards than more gender-mixed comparisons (Crosby, 1982; Major & Forcey, 1985; Ostroff & Atwater, 2003). Getting the most advantageous comparison information may, therefore, require reaching beyond one’s most immediate information sources to gain a broader diversity of perspectives.

Another approach to reducing ambiguity involves thinking carefully about one’s personal preferences for how to manage domestic and organizational role demands and actively

investigating potential options at home and work for achieving those aspirations. For instance, some of the traditionally unquestioned job features (e.g., “face time”) that create zero-sum conflicts across the two levels are highly ambiguous in terms of their value to organizations and to careers. Candidates can benefit from investigating the organizational meaning and contribution of potentially constraining job attributes, because greater clarity could illuminate creative alternatives for better serving one’s role demands at both levels—and oneself.

Use Awareness of Gender Bias

Stereotypes and other gender biases are most insidious when they are harbored below the level of the conscious awareness. When bias is made explicit, people can rebel against it, whereas subtle associations influence behavior in less controllable ways (Kray, Galinsky, & Thompson, 2002; Kray et al., 2001; Steele, 1997). Candidates may benefit from making themselves more explicitly self-aware about how gender influences their home and work environment, so that they can make more conscious choices about how gender influences their preferences and behavior or not.

Female candidates can also think strategically about how they self-present in compensation negotiations in order to minimize the social risks of asking for higher pay. For instance, research on gender and social influence shows that women are more persuasive when they simultaneously communicate the social as well as competent sides of their personality (Carli, LaFleur, & Loeber, 1995). Similarly, new research on gender in negotiation suggests that women can overcome the social risks of initiating compensation negotiations if they frame their request in a way that communicates their concern for maintaining good relationships within the organization (Bowles & Babcock, 2008). There are, however, no “one size fits all” solutions for how women should behave in job negotiations. Some women are likely to find such behavior

manipulation uncomfortably inauthentic. Moreover, behavioral norms vary across organizations. Women should judge for themselves what they think will work best within their particular organizational circumstances, but they are likely to benefit—even more so than men—from consciously weighing the potential social, as well as economic, implications of their strategic choices.

Find the Right Partners

Ultimately, the challenge is finding the right partners with whom to negotiate across levels, and there is encouraging evidence that employers are coming to recognize candidates' two-level job negotiation game. For example, Deloitte Touche USA endured years of often-unsuccessful job negotiations with professionals whose lives were incompatible with the traditional work schedule involved in big-firm consulting. Gradually, due to employee and client demands, they came to see the need to accommodate their employees' two-level negotiations. The result was a fundamental change in the way professionals in the firm manage their careers. The firm identified four dimensions of career progression—role, pace, location and schedule, and workload—and now works with their employees to build careers that are dynamically customized around these four dimensions as the professional's preferences change with changes in life outside work. Deloitte considers “Mass career customization,” as they call the program, critical to their adaptability and viability as an organization (Benko & Weisberg, 2007).

Scholars studying contemporary career paths too describe how managers and professionals are playing a more influential role in the shaping of their personal career trajectories than was the case in the past when firm loyalty was more prevalent—and justified (Arthur, Inkson, & Pringle, 1999; Arthur & Rousseau, 2001). In her book on “I-Deals,” Rousseau (2005) documents an array of idiosyncratic work arrangements that employers work

out with candidates to attract and maintain talent in their organizations. Talented job candidates have reason to be optimistic about finding negotiating partners that will work with them to identify creative solutions to their two-level job negotiation dilemmas.

Conclusion

The effects of gender on job negotiations are best understood if negotiations at work are viewed as a two-level game in which candidates' job outcomes are the product of negotiations with domestic partners as well as prospective employers. Separate bodies of research on gender in candidate-employer negotiations and on gender in intra-household bargaining offer complementary insights into these two levels of negotiation. Taking stock of the practical implications of this literature may help candidates overcome disadvantageous effects of gender on job negotiations and facilitate the creation of greater value for their employers, their domestic partners and themselves.

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