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Extension request avoidance increases time stress among women

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Abstract

In eight studies using archival data, surveys, and experiments, we identify a novel factor that predicts gender differences in time stress and burnout. Across academic and professional settings, women are less likely to ask for more time when working under adjustable deadlines (Studies 1-4a). Women's discomfort in asking for more time predicts time stress and burnout, controlling for industry, tenure, and delegation preferences (Study 1). Women are less likely to ask for more time to complete their tasks because they hold stronger beliefs that they will be penalized for these requests and are more sensitive to others' feelings and preferences (Studies 1-2c). In contrast, we find no evidence that women are judged more harshly than men (Study 3). We also document a simple organizational intervention: formal processes for requesting deadline extensions reduce gender differences in asking for more time (Studies 4a-5).

Significance Statement

Time stress—the feeling of having too many things to do and not enough time to do them—is a societal epidemic that compromises productivity, physical health, and emotional wellbeing. Women disproportionately experience greater time stress than men. Across eight studies, we illuminate an unexplored explanation for this gender difference. Women avoid asking for more time to complete work tasks, even when deadlines are explicitly adjustable, undermining their wellbeing and task performance. We also shed light on a possible solution: the implementation of formal policies to facilitate deadline extension requests. These findings advance our understanding of the gendered experience of time stress and provide an organizational solution to encourage women to ask for more time when they need it.

Main Text

Introduction

A growing body of research suggests that women experience greater time stress than men: they are more likely to feel like they have too many things to do and not enough time to do them (1). Worldwide, working women report feeling more rushed than men (2, 3) and experience greater stress and anxiety (4, 5). Given the close association between time stress and burnout (6), depression (5), and poor work performance (7), this gender difference in time stress may have implications for gender disparities in work-relevant success and subjective well-being (4, 8, 9).

Gender differences in experienced time stress is partially driven by women having more work than men. At home, working women in heterosexual marriages in the US are the primary managers of domestic life and child-care, completing an average of 8 more hours of chores and childcare each week as compared to men (10–12). During the pandemic, this gender difference has increased substantially, with working women worldwide completing an average of five additional hours of chores and childcare per week than working men (14, 15).

At work, women take on more activities outside of formally defined responsibilities (13), both voluntarily and due to more frequent requests (14). Women have a harder time delegating work tasks to others than men (16). As a result, women end up with a greater task load relative to men, which contributes to the feeling of having too many things to do and not enough time.

The time stress that employed adults experience at work also results from tight deadlines (17, 18). Some deadlines are strict: once an original deadline has passed, taking any action

related to the task is impossible or costly. However, many everyday work tasks are subordinate tasks—smaller actions that must be completed to achieve a larger goal (19), which are less likely to incur deadline adjustment costs. For example, a supervisor may ask an employee to submit an initial draft of a proposal for an event that is happening next month by the end of this week, to build in time to edit and revise the proposal before the final deadline. Initial research suggests that asking for more time on adjustable deadlines at work can reduce feelings of time stress (20). Given the volume of tasks that women disproportionately juggle, requests to extend deadlines could be a particularly useful option for working women.

Encouraging women to ask for more time could also impact women's subjective experience of time constraints. Perceived resource scarcity is not only impacted by objective reality, but also by the extent to which people feel control over their current and future resources (21, 22). Most relevant to the present investigation, the *feeling* of being rushed is often a better predictor of stress, well-being, and work outcomes than the objective amount of time that is available to complete one's tasks (23). Together, these studies suggest that the comfort people feel about asking for more time could reduce feelings of time scarcity, in turn shaping stress and subjective well-being. To the extent that women feel less comfortable asking for more time, they should also experience higher levels of stress and lower levels of well-being.

We propose that women could be especially likely to avoid requesting extensions due to heightened interpersonal concerns. Women tend to be more relationally oriented and sensitive to the needs of other people as compared to men (24, 25). Women often endorse more relationally oriented traits, such as sacrificing their own needs to attend to the needs of others, both voluntarily and in response to social pressure (13, 14, 26). Relationally oriented individuals tend to be more attuned to social costs, which can deter such individuals from requesting additional resources, such as monetary compensation (27, 28). We predict that women's greater relational orientation may be linked to perceiving greater impression costs related to appearing like a competent and committed worker. Due to these concerns, women should be less willing to make extension requests than men, further exacerbating their feelings of time stress.

We further propose a means to alleviate women's discomfort towards making extension requests at work: introducing formal policies for requesting an extension. Prior research finds evidence that women perceive greater social costs for initiating salary negotiations than men when norms about making these requests are ambiguous (29). Yet, removing ambiguity can reduce gender differences in negotiation. For example, in one field experiment with 2,500 job-seekers, women were equally as likely to negotiate their salary as men when the job posting mentioned an explicit policy about wage negotiations (30). Building on this research, we propose that reducing ambiguity by establishing a formal policy around extension requests could mitigate the proposed gender differences in asking for more time on adjustable deadlines at work.

Overall, women's greater experience of time stress on a daily basis contributes to gender disparities in workplace success and personal wellbeing (2). In contrast to prior research, which has identified how gender differences contribute to women's greater task load relative to men (e.g., 14, 16), the current research investigates a previously unstudied contributor to women's experience of time stress at work: their reluctance to ask for more time. While prior research has examined gender differences in the propensity to negotiate financial compensation, little is known about when or why women may attempt to negotiate for more time. We propose that compared to men, women will feel less comfortable asking for more time, as they believe it will lead to greater interpersonal costs, affecting their task performance and wellbeing. It is possible

that women might objectively incur greater costs for requesting an extension (29); however, we predict that these costs will be overestimated by women due to higher interpersonal sensitivity.

To explore these hypotheses, we conducted eight studies (including three pre-registered studies) using a variety of methods including two field studies and recruited a total of 5,142 working adults and students. See Table 1 for sample demographics. In Study 1, we surveyed working adults to explore the existence and consequences of gender differences in comfort towards requesting extensions on adjustable deadlines. In Studies 2a-c, we investigated whether gender differences in relational orientation and perceived social costs explained women's lower willingness to request extensions on adjustable deadlines. In Study 3, we examined whether women actually experience higher social costs. Finally, in Studies 4a-5, we tested whether formal organizational policies reduce gender differences in the willingness to request deadline extensions. Across studies, we explore how gender differences in attitudes toward extension requests shape the experience of time stress and task performance, identify the causes of these attitudes, and test a theoretically-relevant intervention designed to promote a more equitable experience of work-relevant deadlines.

Materials, data, and code for all studies are available on the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/6zdsw/?view_only=dd1053834cd346419d7f1691bcb36a54).

Results

Study 1. Survey of working adults. We first examined whether employed women feel less comfortable requesting deadline extensions on adjustable deadlines at work than men, and whether this difference partially explains women's greater time stress and burnout, controlling for variables that could otherwise explain this relationship.

We recruited adults located in the US who worked at least 21 hours a week outside of home and indicated "yes" to the question "In your main job, do you have people whom you can delegate your tasks to?" ($N = 575$; 42.1% female). All respondents answered the question, "In general, how comfortable do you feel making extension requests for adjustable deadlines at work?" and reported their experience of time stress and burnout. In addition, respondents reported factors that could vary across gender and shape both time pressure and comfort with requesting deadline extensions, such as attitudes toward delegating tasks (16), industry, tenure, age, marital status, and race.¹

As predicted, women felt less comfortable making extension requests on adjustable deadlines at work, $\beta = -0.38$, $P < 0.001$, 95% CI (-0.55, -0.21). Consistent with prior research, women felt less comfortable delegating tasks than men (16). Women also had greater tenure in their workplaces, were older, and were more likely to be married compared to men (See SI Appendix, Table S4). There were no gender differences in the likelihood of working in a highly time-pressed industry (see SI Appendix). The gender difference in comfort with requesting extension requests held controlling for this key set of covariates, $\beta = -0.40$, $P < 0.001$, 95% CI (-0.56, -0.23). As indicated by the confidence intervals that crossed 0, our effect was not moderated by working in an industry where employees typically reported higher levels of time pressure² $\beta = 0.11$, $P = 0.505$, 95% CI (-0.22, 0.45) or job tenure, $\beta = 0.02$, $P = 0.803$, 95% CI (-0.14, 0.18).³ These results provide evidence for gender differences in comfort with requesting

¹ See Supporting Information for the means, standard deviations, and correlation of all variables.

² See Supporting Information for a discussion on how we derived highly time-pressed industries.

³ See Supporting Information for a table of regression outputs.

deadline extensions that are not explained by differences in related constructs, such as the industry men and women are part of, their comfort with delegating tasks, or their tenure.

Mediation analysis revealed that women's greater experience of time pressure was explained by their greater discomfort with requesting extensions on adjustable deadlines at work (Figure 1). Consistent with prior research, women reported feeling more time pressed compared to men, controlling for our set of key covariates, $\beta = 0.24$, $P = 0.006$, 95% CI (0.07, 0.41). Consistent with our theorizing, including comfort with adjusting deadlines as a mediator weakened the effect of gender on time pressure (from $\beta = 0.24$, $P = 0.004$ to $\beta = 0.20$, $P = 0.026$). Bootstrap mediational analysis using 5,000 simulations confirmed that this indirect effect was significant, 95% CI (0.005, 0.09).

Consistent with prior research (e.g., 4,5), women reported experiencing more burnout than men, $\beta = 0.27$, $P = 0.001$, 95% CI (0.11, 0.44). A serial mediation analysis using the lavaan package in R (30) revealed that this difference was partially explained by women's greater experience of time pressure (from $\beta = 0.27$, $P = 0.001$ to $\beta = 0.21$, $P = 0.015$), 95% CI IDE (0.05, 0.30), which in turn was explained by their discomfort with requesting extensions for adjustable deadlines (from $\beta = 0.27$, $P = 0.001$ to $\beta = 0.11$, $P = 0.158$), 95% CI IDE (0.004, 0.14). Taken together, Study 1 suggests that women feel less comfortable asking for extensions on adjustable deadlines at work, which contributes to their greater experience of time pressure and burnout.

Studies 2a-c. Simulated workplace interaction with a supervisor. In Studies 2a-c, we explored why women feel less comfortable requesting deadline extensions. Building on past research (19), we examined whether women (vs. men) were more likely to believe that requesting a deadline extension affected their appearance as a competent and committed worker.

Across Studies 2a-2c, participants imagined that they were assigned to submit a proposal for an upcoming event that was due the following day. They imagined that they were feeling highly pressed for time and could ask for an extension to their direct supervisor. Based on this imagined interaction, participants answered how comfortable they would feel requesting an extension in this situation. Participants completed six statements predicting how the extension request might impact their image as a competent and committed worker (e.g., "Asking for more time, relative to not asking, will make my supervisor see me as" using a scale ranging from -3 (*much less competent*) to +3 (*much more competent*)). We also measured participants' relational orientation using a validated scale that included items such as "When making a decision, I take other people's needs and feelings into account" (25).

It is possible that women's greater discomfort, in part, reflects women occupying lower status positions in their workplace (32, 33). To explore this possibility, in Study 2b, we measured men and women's comfort with requesting extensions to same-status colleagues (vs. higher-status supervisors) in a simulated work experience. It is also possible that the women in Study 1 reported feeling less comfortable requesting extensions than men because many supervisors in the workplace tend to be men. People tend to feel more comfortable making requests to targets who are similar to them (34). For example, employees are more likely to seek help from work colleagues of the same race (35). Similarly, women may be equally willing to request an extension when their supervisor is a woman. To explore this possibility, in Study 2c we measured men and women's comfort with requesting extensions to a male or female supervisor.

In Study 2a, we recruited an online panel of employed adults located in the US ($N = 651$; 51.8% female) to complete the study procedures described above. This study was pre-registered (<http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=vk5vn4>).

Consistent with Study 1, women felt less comfortable requesting a deadline extension than men, $d = -0.24$, $P = 0.002$, 95% CI (-0.40, -0.09). Yet, women perceived the deadline as equally adjustable and the extension as equally helpful (see SI Appendix). Women's greater discomfort with requesting a deadline extension was robust controlling for these preregistered covariates, $\beta = -0.38$, $P < 0.001$, 95% CI (-0.60, -0.15).

Women expected that requesting a deadline extension would result in greater impression costs toward being seen as a committed and competent worker, $d = 0.26$, $P = 0.001$, 95% CI (0.12, 0.43). These impression concerns partially explained women's greater discomfort with requesting an extension, even after controlling for perceptions of deadline adjustability and the perceived helpfulness of receiving an extension. Including impression concerns as a mediator weakened the effect of gender on the level of comfort with adjusting deadlines (from $\beta = -0.21$, $P = 0.001$ to $\beta = -0.11$, $P = 0.054$). Bootstrap mediational analysis using 5,000 simulations confirmed that this indirect effect was significant, 95% CI IDE (0.05, 0.17).

Next, we explored whether women's relational orientation explained their perception of greater impression costs resulting from asking for more time. Consistent with prior research, women scored higher in relational orientation than men, $d = 0.42$, $P = 0.001$, 95% CI (0.27, 0.58) (24, 25). A path analysis using bootstrap estimation revealed a significant serial mediation. Women's higher relational orientation partially explained their perception of greater impression costs relative to men (from $\beta = 0.27$, $P = 0.001$ to $\beta = 0.23$, $P = 0.004$), 95% CI IDE (0.006, 0.08). Including the hypothesized serial mediation path of perceived impression costs via relational orientation significantly weakened the effect of gender on extension request comfort (from $\beta = -0.21$, $P = 0.001$ to $\beta = -0.09$, $P = 0.139$), 95% CI IDE (0.0009, 0.04).

Overall, Study 2a suggests that women—due to their greater relational orientation—hold stronger beliefs than men that requesting an extension will be costly for their image as a committed and competent worker. As a result, women feel less comfortable requesting extensions on adjustable deadlines at work compared to men (Figure 2). These findings held regardless of the lower vs. higher work status of the female employee (Study 2b) or the gender of the manager (Study 2c; see Figure 3 and SI Appendix). Thus, women's greater discomfort with requesting extensions in Studies 1 and 2a were likely not driven by women occupying lower status positions in the workplace than men or disproportionately working with male supervisors.

Study 3: Simulated supervisor perspective. Prior research suggests that people sometimes judge women who use flexible work options as less committed to their workplaces as compared to men (36, 37). Thus, it is possible that women's impression concerns are grounded in reality. To investigate this question, we recruited 872 employed adults located in the US, who work with at least three direct reports. This study was pre-registered (<https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=9n2gx3>).

Participants took on the role of the supervisor and imagined themselves in the scenario from Studies 2a-2c. To enhance the ecological validity of our design, participants imagined being a manager and having this interaction with a direct report that they actually worked with at their current jobs. Participants imagined assigning one of their direct reports (randomly selected among three direct reports that they had most recently started working with) to complete a task that was due the next day, and the direct report requested a deadline extension. Then, participants reported how the extension request impacted their evaluation of the direct report's competence and commitment using six statements adapted from Study 2a (e.g., "The direct report's asking for more time, relative to not asking, made me see him/her as" using a scale ranging from -3

(*much less competent*) to +3 (*much more competent*). We created a composite measure of supervisor evaluation by taking the average of the six items ($\alpha = 0.95$).

Supervisors evaluated female and male employees who requested a deadline extension as equally competent and motivated, $d = -0.05$, $P = 0.418$, 95% CI (-0.19, 0.08). To examine how strongly our data supported the null (vs. alternative) hypothesis, we compared supervisor ratings by employee gender using the Bayesian t-test with an uninformative prior (38, 39)⁴. This resulted in a Bayes Factor of 0.105, revealing moderate support for the null hypothesis (40). These results suggest that contrary to female employee's expectations, supervisors do not disproportionately judge women more negatively for requesting an extension on tight yet adjustable deadlines.

We also explored whether supervisors were more likely to attribute female employee's extension requests to a lack of commitment or competence, by asking supervisors to indicate why they believed the employee requested an extension. Supervisors were no more likely to attribute a female employee's extension request to lack of commitment or family issues compared to a male employee's extension request (Table 2).

Contrary to female employee's expectations, Study 3 suggests that supervisors do not disproportionately judge women more negatively for requesting an extension at work. We also replicated this finding in the context of a non-hypothetical, interactive task in a preregistered exploratory analysis of an experimental study conducted for a different purpose (see SI Appendix, Supplemental Study A). To illustrate the methods of this study, online workers were matched with a male or female direct report and assigned a writing task with a three-minute deadline. Halfway through the task, the direct report requested more time to work on the task. Comparing managers' evaluations of the competence and motivation of their direct reports revealed no difference by employee gender, adding further support for our finding in Study 3.

Study 4a: Classroom with no formal policy. Ambiguity can reduce women's willingness to negotiate for more money (29). Thus, we examined whether ambiguity also shaped women's willingness to ask for more time, with consequences for performance. We explored this possibility in a college setting, which closely mirrors early workplace experiences and outcomes (41). The data was collected in a setting where deadlines could be adjusted through an informal process: directly asking their professor. Focusing on an academic setting allowed us to examine a consequential objective performance outcome: assignment grades.

We analyzed the performance of 103 college students who were enrolled in an undergraduate business course at a university located in the Midwest of the USA on an assignment with an adjustable deadline (57.28% female). The sample size allowed us to detect a minimum effect of $w = 0.23$ in a chi-square test with 80% power.

All students were given one week to submit a discussion paper worth 20% of their grade. When the paper was assigned in class, the professor informed students that if they needed more time, they could email the professor to request an extension without penalty. The same information was reiterated on the syllabus (see SI Appendix). Male students were more than twice as likely as female students to request an extension for the assignment (15.3% of female vs. 36.4% of male students), $\chi^2(1) = 6.11$, $P = 0.013$, $w = 0.24$. Students who asked for more time performed better on the assignment as rated by a teaching assistant blind to the student's identity and research hypotheses, $\beta = 0.86$, $P < 0.001$, 95% CI (0.42, 1.31). Students' grades ranged between 20 (66.67%) to 30 (100.00%) points, with a median grade of 28 (93.33%). We estimated how requesting an extension impacted student's predicted assignment scores, controlling for

⁴ A Bayes t test provides a Bayes factor which assesses the strength of the evidence in favor of one hypothesis (the null) over the alternative.

their grades in the class prior to the assignment. A linear regression revealed that on average, students who asked for more time experienced an 8.2% increase in their assignment grade than what was expected from their class performance prior to the assignment (Estimated marginal means from 26.8 to 29.0; see SI Appendix for regressions). Thus, in contexts without a formal policy about requesting a deadline extension, female students were 33% more likely to forgo the opportunity to request an extension on an adjustable task deadline than male students, which compromised their performance.

Study 4b: Online courses with formal policy. We then examined male and female students' tendency to request extensions on assignments in an online educational setting where deadlines could be extended using a formal process. We analyzed anonymous data of students' extension requests provided by an online university ($N = 767$; 53.3% female). This institution had a formal policy for extension requests—all students were entitled to four 24-hour assignment extensions per semester, which could be requested using an online form.

We compared the rate of requesting extensions during the 2018-2019 academic year between male and females, across all of the courses in which they were enrolled. In line with our theory that reducing ambiguity should reduce gender differences in extension requests, in this context, female students were equally as likely as male students to submit at least one extension request during the semester (24.0% of female vs. 25.1% of male), $\chi^2(1) = 0.09$, $P = 0.768$. These results held controlling for their graduation year and age, $\beta = -0.04$, $P = 0.805$, 95% CI (-0.38, 0.28). Female students also requested as many extensions as male students throughout the academic year, $\beta = 0.05$, $P = 0.813$, 95% CI (-0.38, 0.48). Further supporting the lack of gender differences in this context, comparing the average number of extension requests made by student gender using a Bayesian t-test with an uninformative prior, resulted in a Bayes Factor of 0.194, revealing moderate support for the null hypothesis (39, 40). See SI Appendix for a plot of male and female student's extension requests across the course of the academic year.

Study 5: Simulated classroom experience with and without formal policies. Building on the findings from Studies 4a & 4b, in Study 5 we experimentally examined whether formal policies could effectively reduce gender differences in attitudes toward extension requests. This study was pre-registered (<https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=dh98z8>).

We analyzed the responses of 975 college students who simulated being a student in Study 4a. Participants imagined that they were enrolled in a college course with around 100 students and were assigned a discussion paper that was worth 20% of their grade. The paper was due the next day, and they felt tight on time to complete the assignment.

Depending on condition assignment, participants were given no additional information (Control), reminded that they may ask for more time by sending the instructor an email (Informal Request), or reminded of a school-wide policy that would allow them to ask for more time by sending the instructor an email (Formal Policy Request). We then measured students' willingness to ask for an extension, their predicted impression costs, and their trait relational orientation.

Consistent with the findings of Study 4a, female students who were assigned to the Informal Request condition were significantly less willing to ask for an extension as compared to male students, $d = -0.47$, $P = 0.002^5$, 95% CI (-0.69, -0.24). Female students who were assigned to the Control condition also reported being less willing to request an extension than the male

⁵ For all pairwise comparisons in the current study, we report p-values adjusted for multiple comparisons using Tukey's method.

students, $d = -0.45$, $P = 0.001$, 95% CI (-0.67, -0.22). Yet, when students were informed of a formal policy, female students were equally likely as male students to make an extension request, $d = 0.10$, $P = 0.959$, 95% CI (-0.13, 0.33), suggesting that a formal policy reminder uniquely reduced the gender difference in willingness to request an extension. To further investigate whether a formal policy uniquely eliminated the gender difference in willingness to request an extension, we used a Bayesian t-test with an uninformative prior to compare male and female student's responses in each condition. While the Bayes Factor of the gender difference in the Control condition ($BF_{Control} = 340.59$) and the Informal Policy condition ($BF_{Informal} = 249.04$) revealed extreme evidence for the alternative hypothesis that women were less likely to make an extension request than men, the Bayes Factor in the Formal Policy condition ($BF_{Policy} = 0.179$) revealed moderate support for the null hypothesis of no gender differences (40).

Next, we examined whether formal policies reduced gender differences in the willingness to request extensions by mitigating predicted impression costs for female students. In the Control and Informal Request conditions, female (vs. male) students expected that extension requests would result in greater perceived costs in how competent and committed they appeared to their instructors, $d = 0.43$, $P = 0.001$, 95% CI (0.21, 0.66). In line with our theory, predicted impression costs were significantly correlated with student's trait relational orientation, $r = 0.10$, $P = 0.011$, 95% CI (-0.03, 0.28). Yet, when informed of the policy regarding extension requests, female students did not expect greater impression costs for requesting an extension than male students, $d = 0.27$, $P = 0.170$, 95% CI (0.04, 0.50), despite their greater relational orientation, $d = 0.56$, $P = 0.001$, 95% CI (0.33, 0.79). Thus, having a formal policy allowed relationally oriented individuals to be less fearful of social repercussions when asking for extension requests.

Discussion

Across eight studies with over 5,000 participants using diverse populations including online panels of working adults and undergraduate students, women were less likely to request workplace extensions, even for deadlines that were explicitly feasible and helpful to adjust. Working women expressed less comfort with requesting extensions on adjustable deadlines compared to male peers, which partially explained their greater experience of time pressure and burnout (S1-2c). Female students were also less likely to request an extension on an important assignment, forgoing the opportunity to improve their performance (S4a). Our studies offered an intervention to reduce this gender difference—having formal policies to request extensions led women to feel as comfortable as men about making extension requests (S4b-5).

Women were more prone to avoid extension requests than men due to their greater relational orientation, which led women to perceive extension requests as being more harmful (S2a). While prior research suggests that some gender differences, such as willingness to negotiate, reverts when women are in high-status positions (28), our data suggests that women are more likely to avoid asking for more time than men regardless of their workplace status or their managers' gender (S2b-2c).

One question that requires further investigation is whether women are accurate in their beliefs. If women experience greater backlash for extension requests, as they do when being assertive in other domains (27), women's avoidance of extension requests may be a necessary precaution. As indicated in Study 3, our data suggests that supervisors do not evaluate women more harshly, despite women predicting harsher judgement. However, as this evidence is based

on laboratory studies, future work would benefit from further examining the predicted and actual interpersonal outcomes of requesting deadline extensions in workplace settings.

Scholars have identified how women end up with more tasks at work which contributes to their experience of greater time pressure. Women receive more requests to complete tasks outside of their formal responsibilities (14) and have a harder time delegating tasks to others at work (16). Our findings shed light on a previously unstudied contributor to women's experience of time pressure: their reluctance to ask for more time. Compared to men, women feel less comfortable asking for more time, as they believe it will be more interpersonally costly. Therefore, women could end up with less time, affecting their performance and wellbeing.

Materials and Methods

All studies were approved by Harvard University's Institutional Review Board, and all participants gave their informed consent before participating. See Table 1 for a breakdown of sample characteristics by study. All surveys were administered via the Qualtrics survey platform.

Study 1: Survey of working adults. Through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), we recruited 587 adults working as paid employees outside of the home, at least 21 hours a week, and located in the US, who indicated that they had people whom they could delegate tasks to at their primary job (e.g., coworkers, junior colleagues, direct supervisees). Sixteen respondents who did not report their gender or age were excluded from the final analysis, resulting in a final sample of 575 adults from 22 industries including Information and Technology (12.4%), Business and Finance (11.8%), Sales (10.6%), and Administrative and Support Services (10.1%).

As our primary outcome variable, respondents indicated how comfortable they felt requesting extensions for adjustable deadlines at work, defined using the following text: "Some task deadlines in the workplace are adjustable. For these deadlines, people may ask for more time to work on their task." Our key predictor variable was the respondent's gender. We also measured two downstream psychological variables that we predicted would be impacted by attitudes towards making extension requests. First, respondents indicated how time-pressed they felt at work by rating their agreement with two statements from prior research (Kasser & Sheldon, 2009), including "There have not been enough minutes in the day." Second, respondents reported their experience of workplace burnout during the past 4 weeks using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach et al., 1986). Finally, we measured a number of exploratory outcome variables and covariates, including level of comfort with delegation, overall happiness, age, tenure, income, and industry (see SI Appendix for these measures).

Study 2a. Simulated workplace interaction with a supervisor. We recruited 656 full time working adults located in the US through Qualtrics, a survey panel service. Five respondents did not report their gender as either male or female and were excluded from the final analysis, resulting in a final sample of 651 adults. All participants imagined a high time stress workplace situation based on a scenario constructed from pilot surveys which suggested that the scenario is representative of stress-inducing yet adjustable deadlines.

First, participants answered how comfortable they would feel asking for an extension on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*). Next, participants predicted how the extension request would impact their supervisor's perception of them as a committed and competent worker using a six-item measure, adapted from prior research (20). We assessed trait

relational orientation using an 8-item measure adapted from prior research (25). See SI Appendix for a full description of these measures.

We also measured a number of covariates that we thought could differ across genders and potentially impact the level of comfort in requesting deadline extensions, such as how possible and helpful a deadline extension would be. We also measured how aversive participants expected the extension request experience would be using questionnaires adapted from prior research (42). See SI Appendix for more detailed descriptions of these covariate measures.

Study 2b. Simulated workplace interaction with a colleague vs. supervisor. We recruited 599 adults employed for pay outside of the home, at least 21 hours a week, and located in the US through MTurk. Study 2b largely followed the procedures of Study 2a with three key differences. First, participants were assigned to imagine the interaction with either their direct supervisor or a colleague of the same status (vs. everyone imagined interacting with their supervisor; see SI Appendix for full text). Second, participants predicted how much more or less committed and competent their manager would perceive them to be using a two-item version of the scale from Study 2a. Finally, to ensure that women’s greater discomfort in making extension requests were not driven by women perceiving the deadline adjustment as less likely or less helpful, we measured (i) how likely participants thought the extension request would be granted on scale from 1 (*extremely unlikely*) to 7 (*extremely likely*) and (ii) how much the participant thought the proposal would improve if they received the extension on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*a great deal*).

Study 2c. Simulated workplace interaction with a female vs. male supervisor. 604 adults employed for pay outside of the home, at least 21 hours a week, and located in the US were recruited through MTurk to answer a work-related survey. We excluded 4 participants who indicated their gender as “Other,” resulting in a final sample of 600 participants. Study 2c followed the same procedures of Study 2b, with one key difference: instead of randomly varying the relative status of the requestee, we varied the gender of the direct supervisor. Half of the participants imagined an interaction with a male direct supervisor—either named Mike, Kevin, or Allen—while the other imagined an interaction with a female supervisor—Ellen, Kathleen, or Joanne.

Study 3: Simulated employee vs. supervisor perspective. 872 adults who (a) worked for pay at least 21 hours a week (b) with at least three direct reports were recruited through Mturk to simulate a workplace scenario. Participants listed three direct reports that they most recently started working with. Then, they took on the role of the supervisor and imagined themselves in the scenario from Study 2a with one of the direct reports they listed. To explore whether supervisors were more likely to attribute female (vs. male) employees’ extension requests to a lack of commitment or competence, we asked participants to indicate how much they believed their employee requested an extension due to various reasons, including personal obligations, other work commitments, and lack of skill, on scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*a great deal*). See SI Appendix for a full list of the items.

Study 4a: Classroom with no formal policy. 103 students enrolled in a Midwestern university in the US were assigned to submit a discussion paper about advertisements. The paper was worth 20% of their final grade. The adjustability of the deadline was communicated both when the paper was assigned in class (“If you need more time, email the instructor”) as well as on the syllabus (“This paper is due by midnight on 2/4 as we will discuss the paper in class on 2/5. If you need an extension for this assignment, please email me [the professor] to request one.”). A teaching assistant blind to the student’s identity and the research hypotheses graded the

essay on a scale from 0-30. We examined students' rate of extension and their final grades by gender.

Study 4b: Online courses with formal policy. We analyzed an anonymous log of data from students' extensions on assignment deadlines during the 2018-2019 academic year from an online university. At this institution, all students are entitled to four 24-hour assignment deadline extensions per course. The extension requests are made by submitting an online form, processed centrally by the school. See SI Appendix for an example of the online form. We compared how often male and female students asked for extensions on their assignment by submitting this form. The data included the number of extensions each of the 905 students—spanning from freshmen to seniors—requested on their assignments across all the classes they took throughout the academic year. We focused our analysis on currently enrolled undergraduates who indicated their gender as male or female on the school system, which led to a final sample of 767 students.

Study 5: Simulated classroom experience with vs. without formal policy. 1,012 undergraduates simulated a classroom experience in an online survey. We excluded 37 students who did not meet our pre-registered criteria (e.g., took a similar study before), yielding a final sample of 975.⁶

All students imagined that they were enrolled in a college course with around 100 students and were assigned a discussion paper with a one-week deadline. They were additionally told the assignment was due tomorrow and they felt tight on time. Students were assigned to one of three conditions: Control, Informal Request, and Formal Policy Request. Those in the Formal Policy Request condition were told “When assigning the task, your instructor reminded you that according to the school policy you can ask for more time to work on the task by sending them an email.”; those in the Informal Request condition were told “When assigning the task, your instructor reminded you that you can ask for more time to work on the task by sending them an email.”; those in the Control condition were given no additional information (see SI Appendix for a full description of the scenario). Thinking about how they would think and feel in the scenario, participants answered, “How comfortable would you feel making an extension request?” and “How likely is it that you would ask for more time to work on the assignment?” on a scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Extremely*). We created a composite item of willingness to request an extension by taking the average of these two items ($\alpha = 0.75$). Participants predicted the impact of the extension request on their appearance by completing the competence and commitment measures from Study 2b. We created a composite measure by taking the average of these two items ($\alpha = 0.78$). We measured participants' trait relational orientation using the validated 8-item measure from Study 2a ($\alpha = 0.69$).

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⁶ We were unable to reach our preregistered sample size of $N=1200$ after exclusion, due to the shutdown of our behavioral lab following the pandemic.

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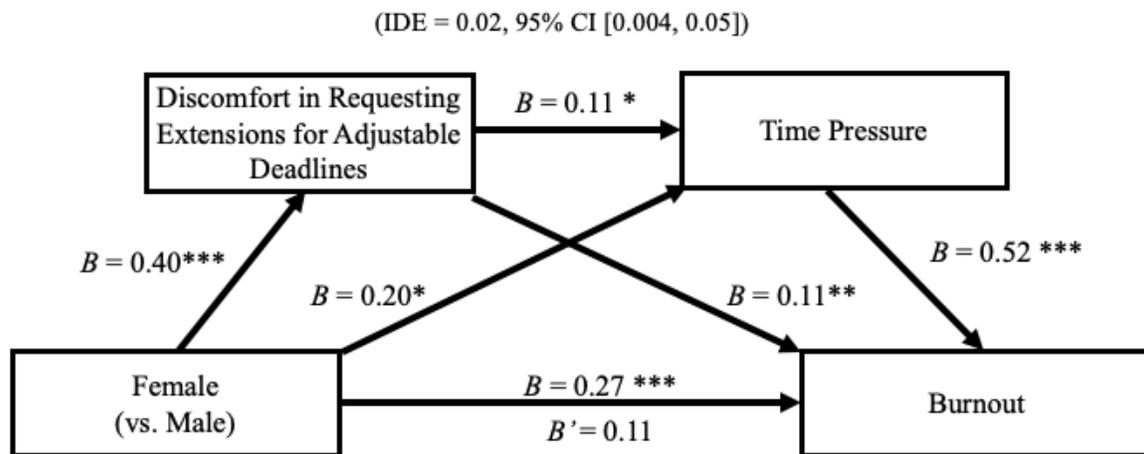
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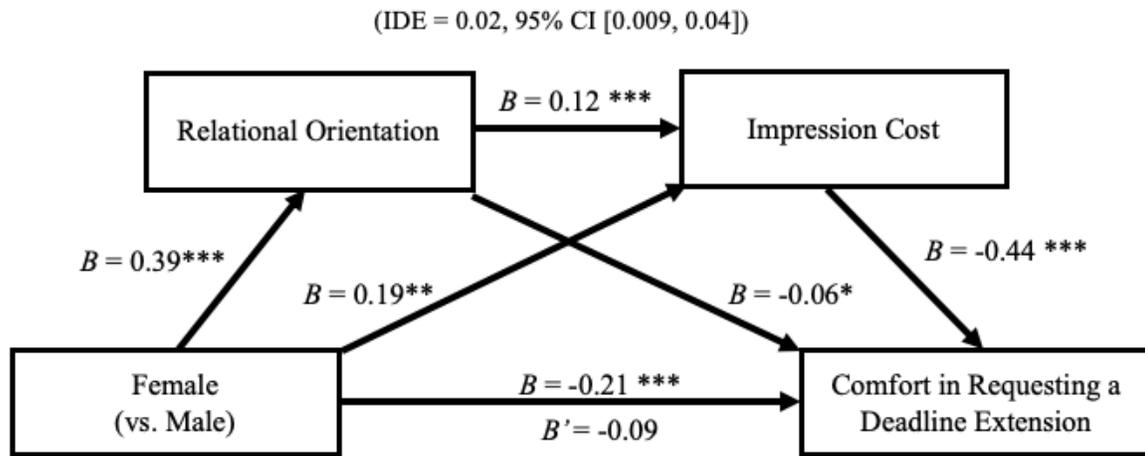
Figures and Tables

Figure 1. The effect of gender on time pressure and burnout through comfort with requesting extensions (Study 1)



Note. All B s represent standardized regression coefficients obtained through bootstrapping using 5,000 resamples. The range in brackets represents the 95% CI of the indirect effect.
* $p < .050$; ** $p < .010$; *** $p < .001$

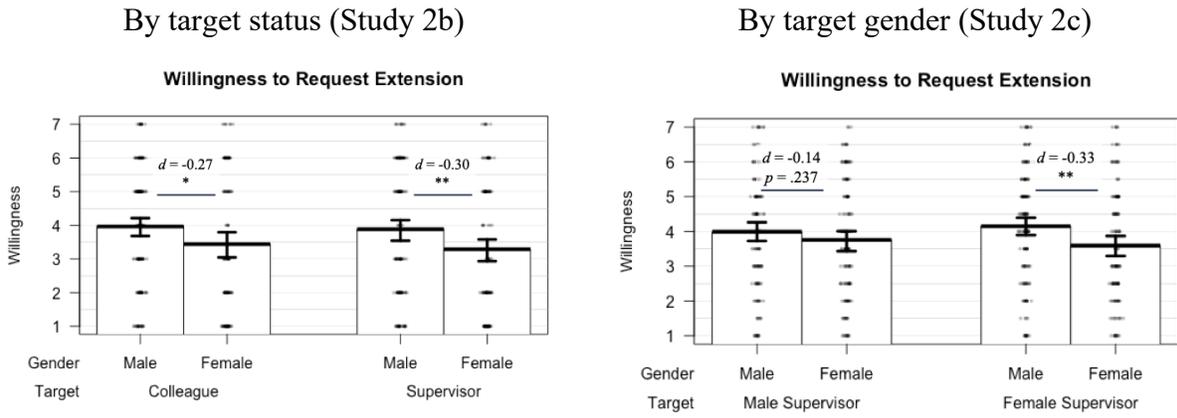
Figure 2. The effect of gender on willingness to request an extension through impression cost and relational orientation (Study 2a)



Note. All B s represent unstandardized regression coefficients obtained through bootstrapping using 5,000 resamples. The range in brackets represents the 95% CI of the indirect effect.

* $p < .050$; ** $p < .010$; *** $p < .001$

Figure 3. Men and women's willingness to request an extension by target (Studies 2b&c)



Note: Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

Table 1. Sample Characteristics by Study

	Study 1	Study 2a	Study 2b	Study 2c	Study 3	Study 4a	Study 4b	Study 5
N	575	651	599	600	872	103	767	975
Sample Source	Adults working at least 21 hours a week, not working from home, who have work colleagues they can delegate tasks to, located in the U.S. Recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk).	Adults working full time, located in the U.S. Recruited through Survey Panel Service (Qualtrics).	Adults working at least 21 hours a week, located in the U.S. Recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk).	Adults working at least 21 hours a week, located in the U.S. Recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk).	Adults working at least 21 hours a week, who either works with a direct supervisor or at least three direct reports, located in the U.S. Recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk).	Undergraduate students, registered to a course in a university in the U.S.	Undergraduate students, registered to an online university in the U.S.	Undergraduate students. Recruited online.
% Female	42.1%	51.8%	44.7%	47.5%	44.2%	57.28%	57.3%	60.7%
Age	35.80 (SD = 9.65)	43.60 (SD = 12.60)	37.42 (SD = 9.94)	38.14 (SD = 11.20)	37.50 (SD = 10.21)	-	-	22.00 (SD = 4.11)

Table 2. Supervisor’s attribution to male vs. female employee’s extension request (Study 3)

	Male	Female	Statistics			
	Employee	Employee				
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>Bayes Factor^a</i>
Lack of skill	4.26 (1.64)	3.84 (1.73)	855.88	-3.68	-0.25***	0.018
Lack of motivation	4.46 (1.74)	4.16 (1.81)	858.77	-2.52	-0.17*	0.021
Work obligation	3.96 (1.78)	3.64 (1.84)	860.05	-2.61	-0.18**	0.032
Personal reason	4.41 (1.73)	3.89 (1.90)	846.49	-4.24	-0.29***	0.014

Note: $N = 872$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

a. Estimated using Bayesian Mann-Whitney U Tests, based on a data augmentation algorithm with 5 chains of 1000 iterations

BF < 0.10: Strong evidence for H0 (i.e., Supervisor did not believe Female (vs. Male) employees were more likely to request a deadline extension for this reason)

Supplementary Information Text

A. Highly Time Pressed Industries

To determine the industries that tend to have a higher experience of time pressure, we analyzed the 2016 General Social Survey (GSS). The 2016 GSS included the following questionnaire: “In general, how do you feel about your time -- would you say you “Always feel rushed to do things you have to do” (1), “Only sometimes feel rushed” (2), or “Almost never feel rushed (3).” We limited our analysis to full time working respondents, which resulted in 441 responses (39.9% female).

We mapped the industry codes used in the 2016 GSS survey to the 22 industries used in our surveys. A table describing how these industries were mapped can be found on our OSF repository. On average, 21.8% of respondents in each industry always felt rushed. We categorized industries that had more than 21.8% of respondents who felt always rushed as “highly time pressed industries”. This resulted in 11 time-pressed industries (see Table S1). In our analysis for the surveys in Study 1 and Study 2b, we used this list to control for whether the respondent worked in a highly time pressed industry.

Table S1. List of Industries Coded as Highly Time Pressed vs. Not

		Study 1			Study 2b		
		N	% Female	Time Pressure	N	% Female	Time Pressure
Highly Time Pressed	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	35	37.14	4.01 (1.62)	32	37.50	4.36 (1.48)
	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	4	50.00	5.00 (1.68)	6	33.33	4.50 (1.22)
	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	72	15.28	4.53 (1.63)	72	23.61	4.34 (1.56)
	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	59	57.63	4.36 (1.64)	63	58.73	4.31 (1.73)
	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	30	66.67	4.17 (1.52)	33	51.52	4.42 (1.75)
	Healthcare Support Occupations	37	59.46	4.36 (1.41)	31	64.52	4.53 (1.78)
	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	9	11.11	4.50 (1.64)	11	27.27	4.32 (2.15)
	Legal Occupations	12	41.67	3.96 (1.62)	14	50.00	3.79 (1.93)
	Production Occupations	18	22.22	4.42 (1.40)	11	27.27	3.73 (2.09)
	Sales and Related Occupations	61	42.62	4.06 (1.82)	65	49.23	4.48 (1.80)
	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	18	33.33	3.92 (1.93)	21	23.81	4.67 (1.59)
Not Highly Time Pressed	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	12	33.33	3.67 (1.83)	13	7.69	3.65 (1.41)
	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	65	44.62	3.99 (1.79)	88	42.05	4.23 (1.61)
	Community and Social Service Occupations	8	50.00	3.13 (2.10)	15	66.67	3.60 (1.63)
	Construction and Extraction Occupations	16	12.50	3.97 (1.66)	10	20.00	3.50 (1.29)
	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	4	50.00	3.63 (1.49)	4	50.00	1.88 (1.18)
	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	14	35.71	4.14 (1.47)	13	46.15	4.69 (1.49)
	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	56	62.50	4.07 (1.46)	48	66.67	4.11 (1.95)
	Other	0	-	-	19	52.63	4.50 (1.66)
	Personal Care and Service Occupations	5	80.00	3.90 (2.16)	6	66.67	3.67 (2.09)
Protective Service Occupations	7	14.29	3.79 (1.11)			(1.64)	

B. Study 1a Details

Table S2. Full Description of Measures (Study 1)

Construct	Measure
Time Pressure	<p>Please read each of the following statements carefully. Use the scale provided to indicate how much you agree with each statement. (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree)</p> <p>There have not been enough minutes in the day. I have felt like things have been really hectic.</p> <p>$\alpha = 0.84$</p>
Comfort in Extension Request	<p>Some task deadlines in the workplace are adjustable. For example, your supervisor could have asked you to submit a report by Thursday, but not plan to look at it until Monday. For these deadlines, people may make extension requests. That is, people may ask for more time to work on that task.</p> <p>In general, how comfortable do you feel making extension requests for adjustable deadlines at work? (1 = Not at all; 7 = Extremely)</p>
Burnout	<p>Please think about your experience at your job during the past four weeks. Then, indicate how much you experienced each of the following states, using the scale below. (1 = Very rarely or never; 6 = Very often or always)</p> <p>Periods of fatigue when you couldn't 'get going' Being tired Being physically exhausted Being emotionally exhausted Feeling 'burned out' Being 'wiped out' Feeling 'run down' Being weary</p> <p>Adapted from Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter (1996); $\alpha = 0.96$</p>
Happiness	<p>Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are? (1 = Not at all; 10 = Extremely)</p>
Comfort in Delegation	<p>Compared to other people in your position, how much do you delegate your tasks to your employees or colleagues? (1 = Much Less; 7 = Much More)</p> <p>Compared to other people in your position, how effective are you at delegating your tasks to your employees or colleagues? (1 = Much Less; 7 = Much More)</p> <p>In general, how comfortable do you feel delegating your tasks to your employees or colleagues? (1 = Not at all; 7 = Extremely)</p> <p>Adapted from Akinola, Martin, & Phillips (2018); $\alpha = 0.72$</p>
Other Covariates	<p>Industry, Tenure, Race (Recoded as 1 = Non-white; 0 = Otherwise), marital status (1 = Married and/or in a marriage-like relationship; 0 = Otherwise), Age</p>

Table S3. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation of all variables (Study 1)

Items	M	SD	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Female	0.42	0.49										
Time Pressure	4.18	1.63	0.11**									
Comfort with Extension Request	3.70	1.66	-0.18***	-0.10*								
Happiness	7.08	2.09	-0.05	-0.14***	0.28***							
Burnout	3.00	1.34	0.11*	0.55***	-0.16***	-0.38***						
Delegation	2.00	1.41	-0.16***	-0.03	0.33***	0.29***	-0.13**					
Tenure (Years)	7.03	6.48	0.11**	0.03	0.04	0.16***	-0.13**	0.11**				
Age	35.81	9.65	0.11**	0.00	-0.03	0.05	-0.19***	0.03	0.60***			
Married	0.58	0.49	0.10*	0.09*	0.06	0.22***	0.03	0.04	0.20***	0.15***		
Non-White	0.27	0.44	-0.05	0.01	0.12**	0.05	0.01	0.11*	-0.07	-0.11**	-0.04	
High Time Pressure Industry	0.62	0.49	-0.04	0.07	-0.08	-0.04	0.05	0.00	-0.01	0.01	0.02	-0.01

Note: $N = 575$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table S4. Gender differences in DV, covariate, and demographics (Study 1)

Items	Male	Female	Gender Difference
	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>d</i>
Comfort in Extension Request	4.56 (1.56)	3.94 (1.72)	-0.38***
Time Pressure	4.03 (1.57)	4.39 (1.68)	0.23**
Happiness	7.17 (1.99)	6.95 (2.21)	-0.11
Burnout	2.88 (1.31)	3.17 (1.36)	0.22*
Delegation	2.19 (1.35)	1.74 (1.44)	-0.33***
Tenure (Years)	6.41 (5.58)	7.88 (7.48)	0.23*
Age	34.88 (8.89)	37.07 (10.49)	0.23**
Married (1 = Married)	0.54 (0.50)	0.64 (0.48)	0.19*
Non-White (1 = Non-White)	0.29 (0.46)	0.25 (0.44)	-0.09
High Time Pressure Industry (1 = High time pressure industry)	0.63 (0.48)	0.6 (0.49)	-0.08

Note: $N = 575$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table S5. Results (Study 1)

	Comfort in Extension Request				Time Pressure				Burnout			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Gender (1 = Female)	-0.37***	-0.55***	-0.39***	-0.40***	0.23**	0.31*	0.22**	0.24**	0.22*	0.20	0.24**	0.27**
Gender X Time-pressed Industry		0.11				-0.12				0.04		
Gender X Tenure			0.02				-0.10				-0.08	
Effectiveness in Delegation				-0.06				-0.09*				-0.03
Time-pressed Industry				-0.18*				0.16				0.13
Tenure				0.07				0.02				-0.04
Marital Status				0.14				-0.15				-0.09
Race (1 = Non-white)				0.24**				-0.01				-0.05
Age				-0.05				-0.04				-0.20***
F Statistic	20.14	8.41	7.47	6.20	7.23	3.64	2.94	2.72	6.60	2.82	6.37	5.48
d.f.	(1,573)	(3,571)	(3,571)	(7,560)	(1,573)	(3,571)	(3,571)	(7,560)	(1,573)	(3,571)	(3,571)	(7,560)
p-value	.001	.001	.001	.001	.007	.013	.033	.009	.010	.039	.001	.001
R ²	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.06
ΔR ²		0.01	0.01	0.04		0.01	0.01	0.02		0	0.02	0.05

Note: $N = 575$; Entries are standardized regression coefficients.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

C. Study 2a Details

Study 2a involved a workplace experience survey and a workplace simulation. Given that the workplace experience study was collected for a different purpose, in the current paper we only report the workplace simulation portion of the study. Study 2a was also bundled with several exploratory surveys regarding characteristics of deadlines people experience at work. The full study materials and data can be found on our OSF repository.

Table S6. Scenario (Study 2a)

Imagine you work at a firm where you work closely with a direct manager. Their evaluation of you determines the pay raise you will receive at the end of the year.

Two days ago, your manager assigned you to review your department's past fundraising events and draft an event proposal for next year. Hosting the event is one of the most important projects of your department, so you want to do a good job. This is your second time planning the event.

The proposal is due tomorrow, and you are feeling highly pressed for time. You could ask your manager for an extension and adjust your deadline.

Table S7. Full Description of Measures (Study 2a)

Construct	Measure
Discomfort in Making Extension Request	How comfortable would you feel making this extension request to [your manager]? (1 = Not at all; 7 = Extremely) – reverse coded
Impression Cost	Relative to not asking for more time, asking for more time would make [my manager] think of me as being... (-3 = Much less; 0 = About the same; +3 = Much more) - committed to my job - motivated to my job - engaged in my job - competent - capable - intelligent Adapted from Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu (2002); $\alpha = 0.95$
Relational Orientation	To what degree are these statements characteristic of you? (1 = Never true of me; 5 = Always true of me) When making a decision, I take other people's needs and feelings into account I'm not especially sensitive to other people's feelings. (r) I don't consider myself to be a particularly helpful person. (r) I often go out of my way to help another person When people get emotionally upset, I tend to avoid them People should keep their troubles to themselves Adapted from Clark, Oullette, Powell, & Milberg (1987); $\alpha = 0.73$

Expected
aversiveness of the
extension request
experience

To what degree do you expect asking for more time to work on the proposal to be...

- difficult?
(-3 = Extremely Easy; 0 = Neither Easy nor Difficult; +3 = Extremely Difficult)
- scary?
(-3 = Extremely Non-threatening; 0 = Neither Non-threatening nor Scary; +3 = Extremely Scary)
- effortful?
(-3 = Extremely Effortless; 0 = Neither Effortless nor Effortful; +3 = Extremely Effortful)

Adapted from Small, Gelfand, Babcock, & Gettman (2007); $\alpha = 0.80$

Perceived deadline
adjustability

How adjustable do you think the deadline in the scenario is?
(1 = Not at all; 7 = Extremely)

Perceived extension
helpfulness

How helpful do you think it would be to have extra time to work on this task?
(1 = Not at all; 7 = Extremely)

Table S8. Gender differences in DV, covariate, and demographics (Study 2a)

Items	Male	Female	Gender Difference
	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>d</i>
Comfort with Extension Request	4.22 (1.75)	3.78 (1.80)	-0.24**
Impression Cost	-0.18 (1.49)	0.23 (1.49)	0.28***
Relational Orientation	3.63 (0.73)	3.93 (0.69)	0.42***
Extension Helpfulness	5.33 (1.38)	5.39 (1.47)	0.04
Deadline Adjustability	0.15 (1.51)	-0.01 (1.56)	-0.11
Expected Aversiveness	0.17 (1.30)	0.17 (1.36)	-0.01
Tenure (Years)	22.55 (16.36)	21.24 (15.81)	-0.08
Age	44.54 (12.46)	42.74 (12.69)	-0.14
Married (1 = Married)	0.62 (0.49)	0.60 (0.49)	-0.04
Non-White (1 = Non-White)	0.28 (0.45)	0.20 (0.40)	-0.18*
High Time Pressure Industry (1 = High time pressure industry)	0.41 (0.49)	0.31 (0.47)	-0.21**

Note: $N = 651$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table S9. Results (Study 2a)

	Male	Female	Statistics		
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>df</i>	<i>F-value</i>	η
Discomfort in Making Extension Request	3.78 (1.75)	4.22 (1.80)	646	14.88	0.01***
Impression Cost ($\alpha = 0.95$)	0.17 (1.49)	-0.22 (1.49)	646	14.41	0.01***
Relational Orientation	3.63 (0.73)	3.93 (0.69)	646	29.51	0.04***

Note: $N = 651$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

ANCOVA controlling for predicted aversiveness of extension request experience, perceived adjustability of deadline, and extension helpfulness.

D. Studies 2b-2c details

Study 2b Scenario.

(Colleague condition texts in square brackets)

Imagine you work at a firm where you work closely with a single direct supervisor [a colleague who is similar in rank with you]. The supervisor [colleague]'s evaluation of you determines the pay raise you will receive at the end of the year. Two days ago, your supervisor [colleague] assigned you to review your department's past fundraising events and draft an event proposal for next year. Hosting the event is one of the most important projects of your department, so you want to do a good job. This is your second time planning the event. The proposal is due tomorrow, and you are feeling highly pressed for time. You could ask for an extension to your supervisor [colleague] and adjust your deadline.

Study 2b Results. We recruited an online panel of employed adults located in the United States ($N = 599$; 44.7% female). In addition to following the general procedures described above, we randomly assigned participants to imagine that the task was assigned by either a colleague who was similar in rank or their direct supervisor.

Consistent with Study 2a, women were less likely to request an extension than men, $\beta = -0.56$, $P < 0.001$, 95% CI (-0.88, -0.25), even after controlling for perceptions of how likely and helpful they thought extending the deadline would be, $\beta = -0.49$, $P < 0.001$, 95% CI (-0.76, -0.24). Furthermore, this effect was not moderated by the status of the request target, as indicated by the confidence intervals that crossed 0, $\beta = 0.07$, $P = 0.838$, 95% CI (-0.70, 0.57). Women also expected that requesting an extension would result in greater costs to their image as a committed and competent worker, $\beta = 0.27$, $P = 0.032$, 95% CI (0.02, 0.52), regardless of the status of the request target, $\beta = 0.21$, $P = 0.410$, 95% CI (-0.29, 0.71). These results suggest that women feel less comfortable than men when requesting deadline extensions, regardless of the relative status of the requestee. Therefore, women's greater discomfort with requesting extensions found in Studies 1 and 2a were not likely driven by women occupying lower status positions in the workplace than men.

Study 2c Results. We recruited an online panel of employed adults ($N = 600$; 47.5% female) to imagine themselves interacting with either a female manager or a male manager in the scenario from Studies 2a and 2b. As in Studies 2a and 2b, women were less likely to request an extension than men, $\beta = -0.40$, $P = 0.004$, 95% CI (-0.67, -0.12). Furthermore, this effect was not moderated by the gender of the supervisor, $\beta = -0.32$, $P = 0.242$, 95% CI (-0.87, 0.22). If anything, women were less willing to request an extension than men to a female (vs. male) supervisor. Thus, specifying the request target as a female supervisor did not mitigate women's greater discomfort in requesting extensions.

E. Study 4a Syllabus

Table S10. Syllabus (Study 4a)

2. Super Bowl Advertising Evaluation Paper (20%)

The Super Bowl is a major advertising event—the base price of commercial time has been estimated at \$4.5M. In this paper you'll be asked to evaluate an ad from the 2019 Super Bowl. You'll be asked to consider the brand concept presented in the ad, how the firm has positioned their brand among competitors, whether the ad was successful (persuasive) or not. What approach did the firm take with their ad? Was this effective? Ineffective? This paper will be 2 pages, single spaced 12-point font (Times New Roman), 1-inch margins all around.

This year the game takes place on Sunday, 2/3 at 6:30pm EST. This paper is due by midnight on 2/4 as we will discuss your impressions of Super Bowl ads in class on 2/5. **If you need an extension for this assignment please email me to request one: XXXX@XXX.edu.** To learn about 2019 Super Bowl ads before the game, see: LINK

F. Study 4a: Regression Table

Table S11. Study 4a Regression Table.

	Assignment Grade		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Extension Request	0.66**	0.86***	0.84***
Class Performance		0.28**	0.41*
(prior to the assignment)			
Extension Request X Class			-0.20
Performance			
(prior to the assignment)			
F Statistic	F(1, 101) = 9.01	F(2, 100) = 9.17	F(3, 99) = 6.45
<i>p</i> -value	.001	.001	.001
R ²	0.08	0.15	0.16
ΔR ²		0.07	0.01

Note: N = 103; Entries are standardized regression coefficients.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

G. Study 4b

Figure S1. Sample Extension Request Form (Study 4b)

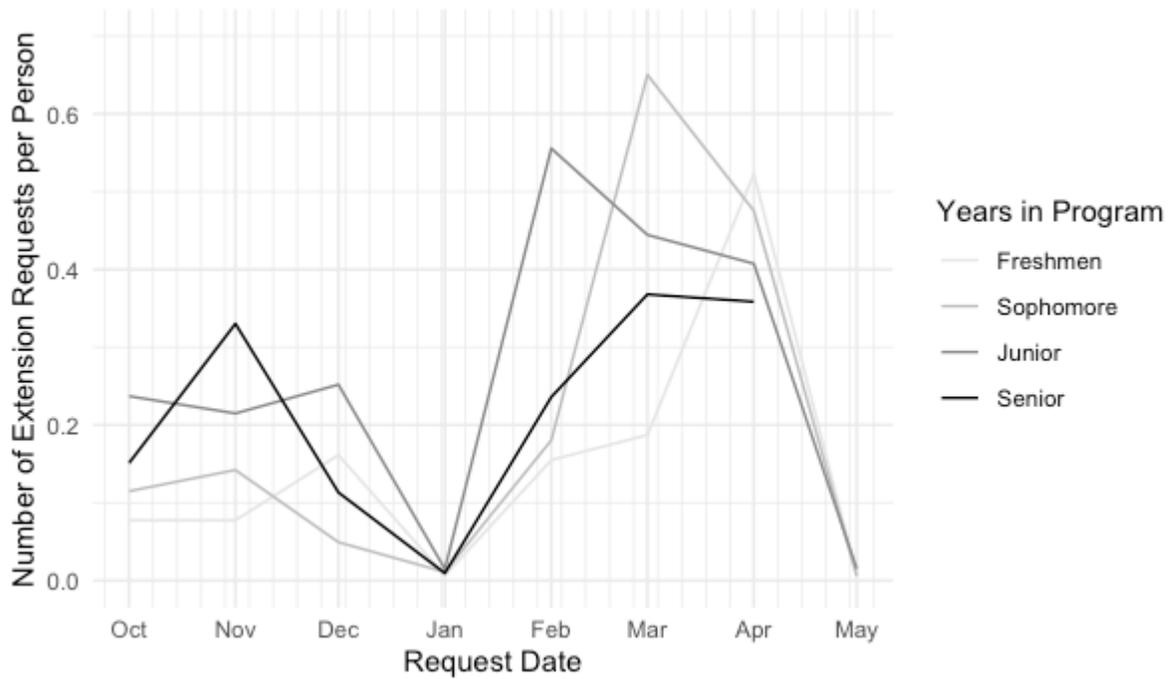
Your form has a new entry. Here are all the answers.

Email address	[REDACTED]
Your name	[REDACTED]
Your advisor	<input type="text"/>
Your advisor's email address	<input type="text"/>
Expected year of graduation	2020
Is this absence related to:	Approved Accommodation (you must have been given a letter in writing approving accommodations for the current school year)
Course	
Class for which you are requesting an extension	B164, Product Evolution and Reinvention
Course instructor	Professor <input type="text"/>
Is the extension requested for:	Regular Course Assignment
Assignment Title (e.g. LBA, Makeup work for 2.2, etc)	Brand Audit
Original Due Date	Feb 21, 2019
Requested New Due Date	Feb 28, 2019

Figure S2. Weekly Trend in Extension Request by Gender (Study 4b)



Figure S3. Monthly Trend in Extension Request by Year in Program (Study 4b)



H. Study 5: Simulated classroom experience with vs. without formal policy.

Table S12. Manipulation Text (Study 5)

Condition	Scenario
Control	Imagine you are a college student, in a class with little more than 100 students. In the middle of the semester, your instructor assigned you a discussion paper worth about 20% of your total grade. You were given a week to work on the assignment. The discussion paper is due tomorrow, and you feel tight on time.
Informal Reminder	Imagine you are a college student, in a class with little more than 100 students. In the middle of the semester, your instructor assigned you a discussion paper worth about 20% of your total grade. You were given a week to work on the assignment. The discussion paper is due tomorrow, and you feel tight on time. When assigning the task, your instructor reminded you that you can ask for more time to work on the task by sending them an email .
Policy Reminder	Imagine you are a college student, in a class with little more than 100 students. In the middle of the semester, your instructor assigned you a discussion paper worth about 20% of your total grade. You were given a week to work on the assignment. The discussion paper is due tomorrow, and you feel tight on time. When assigning the task, your instructor reminded you that according to the school policy you can ask for more time to work on the task by sending them an email .

J. Study 3: Are Women Penalized More than Men for Requesting a Deadline Extension?

Attribution. It is possible that supervisors’ response to an extension request made by a male or female employee may differ in more subtle ways that is not reflected in explicit judgments. For example, supervisors may be more likely to attribute a female employee’s need for more time to their family (vs. work obligations). Therefore, we explored whether the employee’s gender impacted supervisors’ attributions of the extension request (Table S13). We find no evidence that supervisors’ attributions for the extension request is meaningfully impacted by the employee’s gender (Table S14).

Deadline Extension Characteristics. We also explored whether female employees perceived the deadline extension in the scenario as more difficult or less helpful compared to male employees (see Table 13 for measures). We find no evidence that these covariates varied by employee gender (see Table S15 for analysis results).

Table S13. Exploratory Measures (Study 3)

Attribution	How much do you think that the employee asked for more time for each of the following reasons? (1 = Not at all; 7 = A great deal) [He/She] procrastinated [He/She] is busy due to personal reasons [He/She] did not manage [his/her] time well [He/She] lacked the skills to do the task [He/She] was not motivated to do the task The deadline was too short [He/She] is busy due to other work tasks Unexpected complications came up while [he/she] was working on the task The task was too difficult [He/She] was not given enough resources to complete the task in time [He/She] wanted to do a better job in the task
Extension Effortfulness	How effortful would it be for [you/your supervisor] to extend the deadline?
Extension Costliness	How costly would it be for [you/your supervisor] to extend the deadline?
Extension Helpfulness	How helpful would extending the deadline be for drafting the proposal?

Table S14. Attribution Results (Study 3)

	Male Employee	Female Employee	Statistics		
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>d</i>
Procrastination	4.30 (1.59)	4.14 (1.63)	861.76	-1.44	-0.10
Personal reason	4.41 (1.73)	3.89 (1.90)	846.49	-4.24	-0.29***
Poor time management	4.7 (1.45)	4.51 (1.55)	852.24	-1.86	-0.13
Lack of skill	4.26 (1.64)	3.84 (1.73)	855.88	-3.68	-0.25***
Lack of motivation	4.46 (1.74)	4.16 (1.81)	858.77	-2.52	-0.17*
Short deadline	3.70 (1.85)	3.31 (1.94)	855.95	-3.07	-0.21**
Work obligation	3.96 (1.78)	3.64 (1.84)	860.05	-2.61	-0.18**
Unexpected Complications	4.50 (1.50)	4.47 (1.53)	862.6	-0.30	-0.02
Difficult Task	3.84 (1.79)	3.45 (1.86)	858.11	-3.20	-0.22***
Lack of resources	3.87 (1.71)	3.70 (1.79)	856.32	-1.43	-0.10
Desire to perform better	4.78 (1.49)	4.64 1.58	853.64	-1.30	-0.09

Note: $N = 872$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table S15. Supervisor Task Perception Results (Study 3)

	Male Employee	Female Employee	Statistics		
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>d</i>
Extension Effortfulness	4.34 (1.61)	3.92 (1.70)	854.78	-3.71	-0.25***
Extension Costliness	5.13 (1.28)	5.07 (1.39)	848.13	-0.68	-0.05
Extension Helpfulness	4.51 (1.67)	4.21 (1.67)	864.71	-2.73	-0.18**

Note: $N = 872$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

K. Supplemental Study A: Are Women Penalized More than Men for Requesting a Deadline Extension?

In Supplemental Study A, we aimed to replicate our findings from Study 3 that supervisors evaluate men and women as equally competent and committed when they request an extension, using a more ecologically valid paradigm. It is possible that supervisors in Study 3 may have been more forgiving of extension requests in general due to the hypothetical nature of the study. To overcome this limitation, in this study supervisors interacted in real time with either a male or female employee who requested an extension. Then, they evaluated the competence and commitment of their employee.

Method. We analyzed a subset of data collected through a prior experiment, related to a separate research question. The experiment followed a 2 (Role: Junior Editor vs. Senior Editor) x 2 (Profile Exchange: Yes vs. No) between subjects design.

We assigned half of the participants (*Profile Exchanged*) to create and exchange a personal profile with their partner, which included their first name, state of residence, number of HITs completed, and an avatar icon that best represented themselves. After exchanging profile information, participants in the *Profile Exchanged* condition completed a brief “get-to-know-you” conversation with their partners using the assistive chat function (adapted from the Fast Friends paradigm) (6). The remaining participants (*Profile Not Exchanged*) did not receive additional information about their partners.

After the participants offered a response, all participants were assigned to their respective roles. Half of the participants were assigned to the role of the *Junior Editor*. They completed an article summary task and had an opportunity to request an extension. The other half was assigned the role of the *Senior Editor*, who was assigned an article summary task with a deadline to the Junior Editor, who requested an extension while working on the task.

After completing their group tasks, *Senior Editors* evaluated how competent and motivated they thought their Junior Editors were, by completing the statement “*Based on their performance during the summary task, I would evaluate the Junior Editor as...*” using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from -3 (*Extremely Incompetent*) to +3 (*Extremely Competent*). Although participants were told they would be working with another participant, in reality they interacted with a preprogrammed partner to increase experimental control.

By the nature of the experimental design, half of the participants in the *Profile Exchanged* condition exchanged profiles with a male partner, while the other half exchanged profiles with a female partner (as represented by the gender of their avatar). Focusing on the data collected from the *Senior Editors* in the *Profile Exchanged* condition ($N = 313$; 47.6% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 38.34$, $SD = 11.93$), we took advantage of this random assignment and examined whether the *Senior Editors*’ evaluation of Junior Editors who requested an extension is impacted by the Junior Editor’s gender. This analysis was pre-registered (<https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=8qe5sr>).

Results. We created a composite measure of overall evaluation by taking the average of the competence and motivation measures ($\alpha = 0.95$). Consistent with Study 3, *Senior Editors* evaluated female and male Junior Editors who made an extension request as equally competent and motivated, $d = 0.02$, $P = 0.878$, 95% CI (-0.21, 0.24). To examine how strongly our data supports the null (vs. alternative) hypothesis, we compared supervisor ratings by employee gender using the Bayesian t-test with an uninformative prior (7). This resulted in a Bayes Factor of 0.26, revealing moderate support for the null hypothesis.

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