Conflict Frames and the Use of Deception: Are Competitive Negotiators Less Ethical?[1]

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This article examines the relationship among conflict orientation, competitive bargaining, and unethical behavior. We report results from a negotiation study ($N = 111$ dyads) involving a 7-action prisoner's dilemma. We coded participants' conflict frames and their use of both competitive ethical tactics and deception. Our results demonstrate that negotiators' conflict frames influence the use of both types of behavior. While prior work has conceptualized competitive ethical tactics as distinct from unethical tactics (e.g., deception), our results suggest that in practice negotiators who adopt a competitive orientation use both types of tactics in tandem. We also examine the influence of deception on the bargaining process and outcomes. We find that the use of deception significantly distorts targets' beliefs, influences targets' decisions, increases deceivers' profits, and harms targets' profits. We discuss theoretical implications of these results and offer prescriptions for curtailing deception.

Negotiation is a fundamental social interaction through which individuals exchange information and allocate scarce resources (Bazerman, Curhan, Moore, & Valley, 2000; Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992; Neale & Northcraft, 1991). In this article, we examine the information exchange process and its relationship to negotiated outcomes. In particular, we investigate the use of deception in negotiations. As recent events involving high-profile U.S. corporations highlight, deception within and between organizations can cause significant harm (Buffett, 2002; Stevenson & Oppel, 2002). As a result, it is important to understand conditions under which deception is more or less likely to occur.

In this article, we explore the influence of cognitive framing on competitive and deceptive behavior in negotiations. While most negotiations involve elements of both cooperation and competition (Friedman & Shapiro, 1999), individual negotiators may perceive, or frame, their conflict in terms that are primarily cooperative or competitive. Competitively framed negotiators tend to perceive their dispute as one in which one party gains at the other's expense. Cooperatively framed negotiators tend to perceive their dispute as an opportunity to create an integrative agreement that benefits both parties (Bazerman, Magliozzi, & Neale, 1985; Gelfand et al., 2001; Pinkley, 1990). Prior work has demonstrated that conflict frames significantly influence negotiated outcomes (Pinkley, 1990, 1992; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994), yet surprisingly little prior research has investigated the relationship between a negotiator's conflict frame and his or her use of tactics within a negotiation (for an exception, see Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994).

In this article, we distinguish competitive, ethical acts (aggressively playing by the rules of a game) from competitive, *un*ethical acts (willfully violating the explicit or implicit rules of a game). While the ethicality of some tactics is unclear, the negotiation literature generally has assumed that a distinction can be made between competitive, ethical behaviors and competitive, unethical behaviors. For example, Lewicki, Litterer, Minton, and Saunders (1994) distinguished the fundamental strategies of distributive bargaining, such as "discovering the other party's resistance point" (p. 54) from hardball tactics, which are considered out of bounds. Similarly, Thompson (2001) outlined techniques of distributive negotiation as well as questionable negotiation strategies, including misrepresentation, bluffing, falsification, and deception. Shell (1999) separated legitimate competitive techniques from ethically questionable tactics. Finally, Karrass (1992) separated accepted tactics aimed at getting what a person wants from clearly unethical maneuvers used by "scoundrels" (p. 184).

These conceptual distinctions are consistent with recent evidence suggesting that negotiators exhibit general agreement in their perceptions of which negotiation tactics are ethically acceptable (Lewicki & Robinson, 1998). The implicit assumption that ethical and unethical competitive behavior can be separated in practice, however, remains an open and important question that we investigate here.

In this article, we examine the influence of a negotiator's conflict frame on his or her use of ethical competitive tactics and deception. We examine these behaviors in the practice of negotiation and focus on intentional acts of deception (lies of commission), rather than unstated misrepresentations (lies of omission). In addition, while previous research generally has measured deception as a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not it occurred in a negotiation (e.g., Boles, Croson, & Murnighan, 2000; O'Connor & Carnevale, 1997; Schweitzer & Croson, 1999), we introduce a method to quantitatively measure both the

incidence and the magnitude of deception. We also measure the influence of deception on the target's beliefs and on outcomes.

Conflict Frames

Negotiation is a form of social decision making that is profoundly affected by how negotiators perceive their situation cognitively. This subjective interpretation of the conflict represents the negotiation frame (Bottom & Studt, 1993; DeDreu, Carnevale, Emans, & Van de Vliert, 1994; Neale, Huber, & Northcraft, 1987; Schurr, 1987). The literature on negotiator framing comprises two basic conceptual approaches (Schweitzer & DeChurch, 2001). The first approach involves a reference-dependent evaluation of outcomes. Different frames can cue the adoption of different reference points (e.g., the sticker price vs. the dealer invoice) and influence the subsequent encoding of outcomes in terms of gains or losses (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Gains are evaluated differently than are losses, and the use of different reference frames can significantly influence negotiator behavior and negotiated outcomes (Bazerman et al., 1985; Bottom, 1998; DeDreu et al., 1994; DeDreu & McCusker, 1997; McCusker & Carnevale, 1995).

A second approach to framing involves conflict frames (Gelfand et al., 2001; Pinkley, 1990). These frames represent cognitive schema that reflect an individual's interpretation of a situation (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Gray, 1997; Tannen, 1999). In an important study that extended previous research on conflict frames (e.g., Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Pruitt, 1981; Wish, Deutsch, & Kaplan, 1976), Pinkley inductively analyzed both disputants' and mediators' perceptions of conflict. Her work developed a direct approach for measuring a negotiator's conflict frame, and her approach has been validated and used in several studies (Gelfand et al., 2001; Jehn, 1995, 1997; Pinkley, 1992; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994).

One of the key dimensions of Pinkley's (1992) conflict frames is a negotiator's cooperate-versus-win orientation. This orientation reflects a negotiator's perception of responsibility for the conflict and the affixing of blame (see also Gelfand et al., 2001; Weiner, 1995). Cooperate-framed negotiators see both parties as potentially responsible and believe that mutual agreement can and will help to resolve the conflict. Negotiators with a win frame, in contrast, view the conflict in terms of individual gains. Win-framed negotiators are more likely than are cooperate-framed negotiators to blame the other party for the conflict and to assign responsibility to the other party for rectifying the situation through some form of compensation or change in behavior (Pinkley, 1990). This cooperate-versus-win distinction also reflects a longstanding conceptualization in social psychology that characterizes disputants as oriented primarily toward cooperation or competition (Wish et al., 1976), concern for self versus concern for other (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), right versus wrong (Sheppard, Blumenfeld-Jones, & Minton, 1987), or exhibiting a cooperative

versus individualistic or competitive motivational orientation (Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992; Deutsch, 1958; Messick & McClintock, 1968; Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986).

Frames are conceptually distinct from both social values (Carnevale & Probst, 1998; Messick & McClintock, 1968) and conflict behaviors (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). *Social values* reflect an underlying trait that describes individuals' preferences for the distribution of outcomes to oneself and to another party (Beggan & Allison, 1994). Social values have been conceptualized as a "relatively stable personality trait" (Nauta, De Dreu, & Van De Vaart, 2002, p. 201), typically measured via preferences for outcome distributions. Conflict frames, however, represent schemas or mental representations of conflict that are more situationally dependent than social values (Pinkley, 1990; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994). Unlike the stable, trait-based conceptualization of social values, Pinkley (1990) argued that "situational cues encourage or discourage the development of [a] frame in each specific conflict situation" (p. 124).

Frames also differ from conflict behaviors. According to dual-concern theory, conflict behaviors describe individuals' reactions to the perception that one's own and another party's aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). Conflict behaviors are classified based on the extent to which they reflect concern for oneself and concern for the other party. For instance, collaborative behavior is presumed to reflect high concern for both parties, while competitive behavior reflects high concern for oneself and low concern for the other party.

The choice of conflict behavior is often influenced by both social values (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995) and conflict frames (Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994). Like social values, conflict behaviors evidence trait-like characteristics. Conflict behaviors are somewhat consistent across conflict situations (Sternberg & Dobson, 1987) and are predicted by personality traits such as agreeableness (Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Hair, 1996) and thinking versus feeling decision-making preferences (Chanin & Schneer, 1984). This trait-based conceptualization contrasts with Pinkley and Northcraft's finding that frames converge during conflict resolution and Schweitzer and DeChurch's (2001) finding that frames are impacted by situational cues (i.e., reference anchors).

Deception and Competitive Behavior in Negotiations

A growing literature has examined the deception-decision process in negotiations. Lewicki and Robinson (1998) defined *deception* as an attempt by a negotiator to "manipulate the opponent's logical and inferential processes, in order to lead the opponent to an incorrect conclusion or deduction" (p. 667). This can be done using either lies of commission, which are active misstatements; or lies of omission, which are statements that omit relevant information and convey a mistaken impression (Spranca, Minsk, & Baron, 1991). Negotiators are more reticent

to mislead their opponent by commission than omission (Schweitzer & Croson, 1999), in part because the emotional reaction to negative outcomes tends to be stronger for outcomes that result from actions than those that result from inaction (Kahneman & Tversky, 1982). In fact, lies of commission are viewed more seriously by targets of deception than are lies of omission (Spranca et al., 1991). In this article, we focus on *lies of commission*, defined as deliberate actions taken by a negotiator with the intention of creating or perpetuating a counterpart's false belief (Dees & Cramton, 1991).

Prior work has suggested that lies of commission are conceptually distinct from ethical, competitive tactics (Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992; Thompson, 2001). Competitive behaviors have the goal of giving disputants a unilateral advantage in negotiation, but do not violate common perceptions of acceptable negotiation behavior. Lewicki and Robinson (1998) found that traditional competitive bargaining tactics, which include techniques such as hiding one's real bottom line or making very high or very low opening offers, are generally considered to be ethically acceptable. Misrepresentation (e.g., intentionally misrepresenting factual information to your opponent), bluffing, and other forms of deception (e.g., making false promises) were considered ethically unacceptable. These findings suggest that acts of deception can be separated—at least in negotiators' minds—from ethical competitive tactics.

In practice, both ethical competitive tactics and deception can help negotiators to achieve favorable outcomes. Negotiation is based on information dependence (Kelley & Thibaut, 1969). That is, negotiators must exchange information to learn one another's true priorities and preferences. At the same time, because negotiators also are interested in maximizing their self-interest, they may want to selectively disclose or misrepresent their true positions to gain an advantage by manipulating the information available to the other party (Lewicki et al., 1994).

Prior work in negotiation has identified a number of situational factors that influence the use of deception, including power asymmetries (Crott, Kayser, & Lamm, 1980), the use of agents (Bowie & Freeman, 1992), whether the relationship between negotiators is expected to be short-term or long-term (Boles et al., 2000; Lewicki & Spencer, 1991), and negotiators' medium of communication (Valley, Moag, & Bazerman, 1998). Related work has also identified individual characteristics that influence deception, such as Machiavellianism (Fry, 1985; Huber & Neale, 1986), locus of control, and moral development (Trevino, 1986; Trevino & Youngblood, 1990).

In the present article, we consider the influence of a negotiator's conflict frame on his or her decision to use deception. In prior work, Lewicki and Spencer (1991) predicted that negotiators who assume a competitive orientation would be more likely to view ethically marginal tactics as appropriate than would negotiators who assume a cooperative orientation. What they found, however, was that

negotiators' own motivational orientation did not affect their perception of ethically marginal tactics. Instead, they found that negotiators' expectations regarding how competitive their counterpart would be influenced their judgment of how appropriate their own use of ethically marginal tactics were. In a related study, O'Connor and Carnevale (1997) found that negotiators with individualistic, rather than cooperative, motives were more likely to misrepresent a common value issue, primarily through lies of omission.

A number of studies have examined the consequences of deceptive behavior. Prior work has suggested that deception can increase power for the negotiator (Bacharach & Lawler, 1988) and can result in an increased share of the joint profit (Chertkoff & Baird, 1971; O'Connor & Carnevale, 1997), though this may not be true for inexperienced negotiators (Roth & Murnighan, 1983; Schweitzer & Croson, 1999). If deception is revealed, however, it is likely to harm the relationship between negotiators (Bies & Moag, 1986; Lewicki et al., 1994; McCornack & Levine, 1990; Werth & Flannery, 1986) and even may lead deceived negotiators to retaliate against the deceiver (Boles et al., 2000; Brandts & Charness, 2003; Schweitzer, Brodt, & Croson, 2002).

A possible mediating variable in the deception-decision process is whether the target of deception believes that his or her counterpart will use deception. Tenbrunsel (1998), for example, argued that it is important to take into account negotiators' beliefs about whether their opponent will be tempted to misrepresent information in a negotiation. To the degree that focal negotiators were tempted to misrepresent information, they were more likely to believe that their opponent would misrepresent information as well. Tenbrunsel's study, however, examined the perceptions of the focal negotiator who could deceive his or her counterpart, rather than the opponent's beliefs about the likelihood of deception. Moreover, this study did not examine the consequences of these beliefs.

We extend prior investigations of deception in four primary ways. First, we focus on the relationship between deception and a cognitive state: a conflict frame. Second, we disentangle ethical competitive behavior from unethical deceptive behavior in a negotiation. Third, we focus on a strong form of deception—a lie of commission—which involves an active, rather than a passive use of deception. Finally, we measure both the incidence and the magnitude of this deception. In addition, we offer insight into the consequences of deception in negotiation. We examine the effect of deception on negotiator profit and examine the potential mediation of these relationships by an opponent's beliefs.

Hypotheses

The current study has two main objectives. The first objective is to establish a link between a negotiator's conflict frame and his or her use of deception. The second objective is to examine the mediating mechanism through which

deception impacts negotiated outcomes. In our study, participants made strategic decisions in a modified version of the prisoner's dilemma (PD) game (Apfelbaum, 1974; Axelrod, 1984; Messick & Brewer, 1983). Our work builds on prior experimental studies that have used the PD game to examine behavior in mixed-motive situations: "a situation in which two or more parties are faced with a conflict between the motives to cooperate and to compete with each other" (Komorita & Parks, 1995, p. 184; Schelling, 1960).

In traditional PD games, participants make simultaneous decisions to either cooperate or defect (for reviews, see Nemeth, 1972; Sally, 1995). By construction, joint outcomes are maximized when parties cooperate, but each party individually earns a higher profit for himself or herself by defecting, regardless of what his or her counterpart chooses (Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977).

In our study, we depart from the traditional PD format in several important ways. First, we describe our decision context with a scenario. This scenario describes an organizational context and suggests an ongoing relationship, even though the traditional PD framework and our instantiation of the game is single-shot. Second, we use a modified, seven-action format of the PD game (Knez & Camerer, 2000) that allows participants to choose from seven increasingly competitive actions, rather than two. That is, we enable participants to choose levels of cooperation/defection. Third, participants in our study make asynchronous choices; and fourth, we allow the first player to send a message to his or her counterpart. These aspects of our design enable our participants to engage in both competitive and deceptive behavior, which we can then measure along a continuum (of the seven actions). Notably, by using a seven-action PD game, rather than a traditional two-action game, we can measure degrees of competitive and unethical behavior.

We allow one-way communication and for clarity denote the negotiator who makes an initial claim (and has an opportunity to deceive) as the *sender*, and the negotiator who receives the message and responds to the sender's claim as the *responder*. We develop hypotheses about the effect of the sender's conflict frame on his or her use of ethical competitive behaviors and deception, and the effect of the sender's deception on the responder's beliefs, the responder's actions, and outcomes.

Conflict Frame and the Use of Deceptive and Competitive Behaviors

First, we examine the relationship between conflict frames and ethical competitive behaviors. We know from prior work involving the dual-concern model that strong concern for one's own outcomes combined with weak concern for the other party's outcomes often results in contentious tactics (Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992; Pruitt, 1981). In our case, we expect win-framed negotiators to be more likely to focus on maximizing their own gain at the expense of the other

party (Pinkley, 1990). As a result, we predict that win-framed negotiators will engage in more competitive ethical behavior than will cooperate-framed negotiators.

> *Hypothesis 1*. Win-framed negotiators will be more likely to use ethical competitive tactics than will cooperate-framed negotiators.

We also expect win-framed negotiators to be more likely to use deception than cooperate-framed negotiators. According to Lewicki's (1983) model of the deception-decision process, negotiators weigh the relative costs and benefits of engaging in deception. Prior work has found that win-framed negotiators have less concern for the opposing party (Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994), and we posit that win-framed negotiators will be less concerned about the potential harm they might cause their counterpart by using deception than will cooperate-framed negotiators. In addition, win-framed negotiators are more concerned with their own payoffs than are cooperate-framed negotiators. As a result, win-framed negotiators are likely to value the potential for increasing their profits from using deception more than cooperate-framed negotiators. Consequently, the cost–benefit calculus for using deception ought to encourage deception for win-framed negotiators, relative to cooperate-framed negotiators. As a result, we predict that win-framed negotiators will be more likely to use deception and to lie more egregiously than will cooperate-framed negotiators.

> *Hypothesis 2a*. Win-framed negotiators will be more likely to use deception than will cooperate-framed negotiators.

> *Hypothesis 2b*. Win-framed negotiators will distort the truth to a greater extent than will cooperate-framed negotiators.

Influence of Deceptive Tactics on Target's Beliefs and Behaviors

We next explore the mechanism through which deception impacts a target's decision process. The null hypothesis presumes that responders will completely discount senders' claims. In this study, senders' claims represent "cheap talk." Senders incur no economic cost for misrepresenting information, and the communication medium does not allow senders to offer guarantees or to formalize an agreement (Farrell & Rabin, 1996). As a result, if responders act as rational economic agents, they should ignore the senders' claims when they make their own decisions. That is, classical economic models predict that negotiators will ignore cheap-talk claims.

A growing literature in experimental economics and psychology, however, demonstrates that people are more trusting than classical economic models

predict, especially initially (e.g., Gleaser, Laibson, Scheinkman, & Soutter, 2000). As a result, in our third hypothesis, we consider the role of senders' claims in influencing responders' beliefs and actions. When senders misrepresent information, we expect their use of deception to distort their target's beliefs and to impact their target's actions. First, we examine the link between the claims senders make and responders' beliefs.

> *Hypothesis 3a*. A responder's beliefs about the actual intentions of the sender will be directly related to the sender's claims.

> *Hypothesis 3b*. A responder's beliefs about the actual intentions of the sender will be less accurate when the sender uses deception than when he or she does not use deception.

> *Hypothesis 3c*. The extent to which a responder's beliefs about the actual intentions of the sender are distorted will be directly related to the magnitude of the sender's deception.

We expect the use of deception to influence negotiated outcomes. Specifically, we expect responders who are targets of deception to earn less profit than responders who are not targets of deception, and we expect senders who use deception to earn more profit than senders who do not use deception. We consider the following mechanism to predict these relationships. First, we expect senders' use of deception to distort responders' beliefs. Second, we expect responders who believe (often mistakenly) that senders will act cooperatively, to reciprocate (Thompson, 2001) and act cooperatively themselves. That is, we consider the role of responders' beliefs in mediating the relationship between senders' use of deception and negotiated outcomes.

> *Hypothesis 4a*. Responders' beliefs about senders' actions will influence how cooperatively they act (i.e., how they respond to the senders).

> *Hypothesis 4b*. Responders' beliefs about senders' actions will mediate the relationship between senders' use of deception and responders' decisions.

> *Hypothesis 4c*. Responders who are targets of deception will earn less profit than will responders who are not targets of deception.

> *Hypothesis 4d*. Senders who use deception will earn higher profit than will senders who do not use deception.

Method

We recruited 222 participants to participate in a bargaining exercise as part of an optional class exercise. The exercise required participants to make decisions in a seven-action prisoner's dilemma (PD) game. This game is a modification of the traditional PD game in that participants choose from seven increasingly competitive options, as opposed to two (cooperate vs. compete).

In this exercise, we assigned participants to one of two roles: the owner of a company called Roving Tours (we refer to this role as the *sender* of a claim) or the owner of a company called Wandering Tours (the *responder* to the claim). In the sender role, participants read background material stating that their company organizes group tours to exotic locations. A new CEO, Dan, recently has been brought in to run the company and:

> Dan recently promoted you to head the Central American tour division, one of the most important divisions to the company. This division has a big impact on the rest of the company. Because Dan needs to show this year's results to prospective investors, he keeps reminding you to make sure you increase profits as much as possible.

In order to increase profits, senders are told that they need to maximize the number of tours they run. However, a competing company, Wandering Tours, also organizes tours to the same remote Central American location. If both tour companies increase their tours to this location, this will result in poorer outcomes for both. Senders are told that "a high volume of traffic to this area could harm the habitat and make this location less exotic." Thus, senders can earn higher profits for themselves by running more tours; but by running more tours, they also will create more congestion in the area and lower joint profits for both companies.

The profit each party earns is a function of the joint decision. Both senders and responders were provided background material and the payoff matrix depicted in Table 1. Senders were told the following:

> Dan had the finance officer calculate the value of different alternatives. In the table below, you can see the additional profit (in $10,000s) you would earn for each option. If you run 1 tour and [the responder] runs 7 tours, you would break even and earn $0. For every other outcome, you would earn higher profit. For example, you gain an additional $20,000 for every tour [the responder] does not run. You also gain an additional $10,000 for every additional tour you decide to run.

Senders are then told that they need to make a decision about how many tours to run next year. This decision is prompted by the following information:

Table 1

Payoff Matrix for Senders (Roving Tours) and Responders (Wandering Tours)

		Responder: Number of tours						
Your number		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
of tours	7	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
	6	5	7	9	11	13	15	17
	5	4	6	8	10	12	14	16
	4	3	5	7	9	11	13	15
	3	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
	2	1	3	5	7	9	11	13
	1	0	2	4	6	8	10	12
		Sender: Number of tours						
Your number		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
of tours	7	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
	6	5	7	9	11	13	15	17
	5	4	6	8	10	12	14	16
	4	3	5	7	9	11	13	15
	3	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
	2	1	3	5	7	9	11	13
	1	0	2	4	6	8	10	12

Note. Participants in the study saw only part of this table. Senders saw the top half, and Respondents saw the bottom half. Numbers represent the projected profit for senders and responders (in $10,000s).

> Your company operated in this part of the rain forest first, and you think [the responder's company] should be the one to cut back. . . . [The CEO of the responder's company], sent you an e-mail message describing the need to "cut back" in this area. He asked you how many tours you plan to schedule for the upcoming dry season (between 1 and 7 tours). He offered to match your number.

The focus of the study is on the decisions senders make, the senders' use of deception, and the responders' beliefs. First, 111 senders simultaneously (a) decided the number of tours their company would actually run for the following year; and (b) made a claim, in writing, to their counterpart (responders) about

the number of tours they would run the following year. Senders were informed that responders would see their written claim before making their own decisions.

At a separate location, a total of 111 responders viewed the written claims made by the senders and then decided how many tours they would run. Responders were informed that they previously had offered to match the number of tours run by the other party. Responders also answered questions about the number of tours they believed senders would actually run. Neither the senders nor the responders knew the identity of the other party.[3]

Our design enables us to disentangle competitive bargaining behavior (choosing to run a high number of tours) from unethical behavior (misrepresenting the number of tours senders plan to run). Note that senders decide how many tours to run before they decide what number to tell responders.

We assessed competitive conflict frames using the method developed by Pinkley (1990). Senders responded to three open-ended questions about the root of the conflict, and two coders rated these responses. The three questions are "What do you believe this negotiation is really about?"; "What do you feel is at the heart of this negotiation?"; and "What do you want to come out of this negotiation?" Two raters who were blind to the study's purpose and hypotheses independently evaluated the conflict frame of each set of responses by indicating a score on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*entirely cooperate*) to 7 (*entirely win*). We provided our raters with the following instructions:

> A *cooperative orientation* would be characterized by the search for joint gains and a concern for the outcomes of both parties. A *win orientation* would be characterized by concern only for one's own outcomes, even at the expense of the other party.

We assessed rater agreement by computing within-group interrater agreement (r_{wg}) coefficients (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984) for each pair of ratings. The median r_{wg} coefficient was .89. This coefficient indicates that raters' scores have sufficient agreement to justify aggregating them. Scores were then averaged, and the resulting variable was used in subsequent analyses.

Results

We first examine the relationship between negotiators' conflict frames, the competitiveness of their decisions, and their use of deception. We focus our

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[3]In our scenario, we informed responders that they previously had offered to match the number of tours their counterpart ran. This may have created a demand effect for responders to behave cooperatively. To gauge this effect, we compared the average responder decision to the average sender decision. Both values were above the scale midpoint (4.79 and 5.22, respectively) and they were not significantly different from each other, $t(110) = 1.65$, *ns*.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Key Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Sender conflict frame[a]	4.35	1.95	—								
2. Sender decision[ab]	5.22	1.92	.40**	—							
3. Sender claim[a]	3.32	1.73	.19*	.34**	—						
4. Deception magnitude	1.90	2.10	.21*	.63**	-.51**	—					
5. Sender outcome	$86,306.31	$42,851.28	.25**	.44**	-.04	.44**	—				
6. Responder beliefs[a]	4.46	1.83	-.04	.05	.44**	-.32**	-.43**	—			
7. Responder belief error[c]	0.76	2.59	.32**	.71**	-.05	.69**	.63**	-.67**	—		
8. Responder decision[a]	4.79	1.93	-.08	.01	.22*	-.17	-.89**	.50**	-.34**	—	
9. Responder outcome	$73,603.60	$42,805.96	-.40**	-.89**	-.21*	-.65**	-.80**	.18	-.79**	.44**	—
10. Joint outcome	$159,909.91	$27,385.98	-.22*	-.71**	-.39**	-.33**	.32**	-.38**	-.26**	-.71**	.32**

Note. $N = 111$ dyads.
[a]Scale range = 1 to 7. [b]The number of tours senders actually decided to run. [c]Variable ranges from -6 to +6.
*$p < .05$ (two-tailed). **$p < .01$ (two-tailed).

initial analyses on the conflict frames and behavior of the 111 participants in the sender role. We report descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among key variables for the 111 dyads in Table 2.

Conflict Frame and Competitive Behavior

In Hypothesis 1, we predicted that negotiator conflict frames would be positively related to the use of competitive tactics. In this study, senders could choose to run between one and seven tours. The more tours they decided to run, the more competitive was their decision. Supporting Hypothesis 1, the correlation between senders' conflict frames and the competitiveness of their decisions was .40 ($p <$ .01).

We also compared the decisions made by the most win-framed and the most cooperate-framed negotiators. We identified the most win-framed and the most cooperate-framed negotiators according to their conflict frame scores on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*entirely cooperate-framed*) to 7 (*entirely win-framed*). The mean conflict frame score was 4.35, and we classified the most win-framed negotiators ($n = 22$) as those with conflict frame scores greater than 1 standard deviation above the mean (>6.3). We classified the most cooperate-framed negotiators ($n = 23$) as those with conflict frame scores less than 1 standard deviation below the mean (<2.4). On average, the most win-framed negotiators ran significantly more tours than did the most cooperate-framed negotiators (6.41 vs. 3.61), $t(43) = 5.96$, $p < .001$.

Use of Deception

Negotiators in the sender role could misrepresent their actions by claiming that they had decided to run a different number of tours than they actually decided to run. In this study, most negotiators ($n = 63$; 56.8%) understated the actual number of tours they decided to run. On average, senders decided to run 5.22 ($SD = 1.92$) tours and claimed that they would run 3.32 ($SD = 1.73$) tours. This difference was statistically significant, $t(110) = 9.53$, $p < .001$, indicating that overall, senders claimed they would run fewer tours than they had actually decided they would run.

Conflict Frame and Use of Deception

Our second hypothesis predicted that win-framed negotiators would be more likely than cooperate-framed negotiators to use deception (Hypothesis 2a) and that the magnitude of the deception would be larger for win-framed negotiators than for cooperate-framed negotiators (Hypothesis 2b). We used a logistic regression function to test Hypothesis 2a. We coded the dependent variable, deception,

so that senders who lied ($n = 63$) were assigned a value of 1, while honest senders ($n = 47$) were assigned a value of 0. We then modeled deception as a function of sender conflict frame. Our results support the hypothesis. Conflict frames significantly predicted the use of deception ($b = .21$), $z = 2.03$. We examined the odds ratio for conflict framing ($exp_b = 1.23$, $p < .05$) and found that a one-unit increase in the competitiveness of the sender's conflict frame led to a 12.3% increase in the likelihood that the sender would lie.

Next, we tested Hypothesis 2b by regressing the magnitude of deception on senders' conflict frames. We operationalized deception magnitude as the difference between each sender's actual decision of how many tours to run and the number of tours the senders told their responder counterparts they would run. Our results support the hypothesis. Conflict frames significantly predicted the amount of deception employed ($b = .21$), $t(108) = 2.19$, $p < .05$, such that the more win-framed negotiators were, the larger was the discrepancy between their actual and reported decisions. Taken together, our results demonstrate that negotiator conflict frames significantly influence both the likelihood that deception will be used (Hypothesis 2a) and the magnitude of that deception (Hypothesis 2b).

Influence of Deceptive Tactics on Target's Beliefs and Behaviors

Our next set of analyses explores how deception impacts outcomes. We postulated that deception would impact outcomes by biasing targets' beliefs and influencing targets' decisions. Specifically, we expected responders in this study to be more cooperative when they believed that senders were going to be cooperative. In Hypothesis 3a, we predicted that senders' claims would directly affect responders' beliefs about senders' actions. We found support for this hypothesis. Rather than discounting senders' claims as mere cheap talk, the correlation between senders' claims and responders' beliefs was .44 ($p < .01$; Table 2).

In Hypothesis 3b, we predicted that responders' beliefs would be less accurate when they were targets of deception. The accuracy of responders' beliefs is represented by the difference between the actual number of tours senders decided to run and the number of tours responders thought they would run. We examine this hypothesis using both a dichotomous and a continuous indicator of deception. For our continuous measure, we computed the accuracy of each responder's beliefs by measuring the absolute value of the difference between responders' beliefs and senders' actual decisions (responder belief error).

On average, responders were skeptical of senders' claims, but they still underestimated the number of tours senders would run (M responder belief error = 0.76 for all responders). When paired with honest senders, responders, on average, slightly overestimated the number of tours sender would run (M responder belief error = -0.90). When paired with deceptive senders, responders, on average, underestimated the number of tours senders would run (M responder

Table 3

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Testing Hypothesis 4b

Variable	β	df	R^2	Total R^2
Step 1		1, 109	—	.05*
Sender claim	.22*			
Step 2		2, 108	.20**	.25**
Sender claim	.00			
Responder belief error	.50**			

Note. Dependent variable is responder decision. Values are standardized regression coefficients.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

belief error = 2.02). Supporting Hypothesis 3b, responders' beliefs were significantly less accurate when their negotiating counterpart used deception than when their counterpart did not use deception, 2.46 ($SD = 1.66$) versus 1.27 ($SD = 1.90$), $t(109) = -3.51$, $p < .001$.

We also found support for Hypothesis 3c. The magnitude of responders' belief error was directly related to the extent to which senders misrepresented their actions ($r = .69$, $p < .01$). The corresponding effect size (i.e., r^2) indicates that nearly 49% of the variance in responder belief error is accounted for by the magnitude of deception employed by the sender.

In Hypothesis 4a, we predicted that responders' beliefs about senders' actions would impact their decisions about the number of tours to run. In Hypothesis 4b, we posited that responders' beliefs would mediate the relationship between senders' claims and responders' decisions. We tested both hypotheses using hierarchical regression analysis. We first examine the relationships between our independent variable (IV; sender's claim) and dependent variable (DV; responder's decision), and between our IV and our proposed mediator (responder beliefs). We then examine the relationship between our mediator and DV while controlling for our IV. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), full mediation is supported when the beta for the IV is significant when entered alone, but becomes nonsignificant when entered with the mediator.

We found significant relationships between sender claims and responder decisions ($r = .22$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 4a; and between sender claims and responder beliefs ($r = .44$, $p < .01$), meeting the first two conditions for mediation. We tested the final condition by first regressing responder decisions on sender claims and then on responder beliefs. We report results from hierarchical regression analysis in Table 3.

In the first step, we find that senders' claims significantly predicted responders' decisions. In the second step, we regressed responders' decisions on both senders' claims ($b = .00$, *ns*) and responders' beliefs ($b = .50$, $p < .001$) and found that only the responders' beliefs variable remained significant. Hence, we found support for a fully mediated relationship between senders' claims and responders' decisions, supporting Hypothesis 4b.

Influence of Deceptive Tactics on Negotiation Outcomes

Finally, we consider the relationship between the use of deception and outcomes. We determined outcomes by looking up the decisions of each tour company in Table 1 and assigning these profit values to the companies. We computed joint outcomes by adding the profits obtained by the two companies. As we report in Table 2, we observed significant relationships between conflict frame, the use of deception, and both individual ($r_{sender} = .25$, $p < .01$; $r_{responder} = -.40$, $p < .01$) and joint outcomes ($r = -.22$, $p < .05$).

Supporting Hypothesis 4c, we find that responders who were targets of deception earned less surplus than those who were not targets of deception. Similarly, supporting Hypothesis 4d, we find that senders who used deception earned more surplus than those who did not. For this analysis, we excluded dyads in which senders chose to run only one tour, and hence could not use deception. Of the 103 remaining senders, 63 used deception and 40 did not. Senders who used deception earned more profit than senders who did not use deception ($M = \$97,460$, $SD = \$42,690$; and $M = \$76,500$, $SD = \$33,783$, respectively), $t(101) = 2.63$, $p < .01$. Responders who were targets of deception earned less profit than did responders who were not targets of deception ($M = \$55,079$, $SD = \$34,166$; and $M = \$86,250$, $SD = \$32,557$, respectively), $t(101) = 4.60$, $p < .001$. We also find that when senders used deception, the joint profit for the dyad was lower than when senders did not use deception ($M = \$152,540$, $SD = \$21,774$; and $M = \$162,750$, $SD = \$27,173$, respectively), $t(101) = 2.10$, $p < .05$.

These results indicate that, overall, deceptive negotiators were more profitable than honest negotiators; and negotiators who were targets of deception were less profitable than those who were not. These differences in profit, however, appear to be moderated by the competitiveness of senders' decisions. Very competitive senders earned more profit by using deception than did cooperative senders. Although we did not formally hypothesize this relationship, we explore the post hoc proposition that the effectiveness of senders' use of deception is moderated by the competitiveness of their actions.

We used hierarchical multiple regression to model the relationship between sender profits, senders' use of deception (honest/deceptive), and the competitiveness of senders' actions. Senders' use of deception (entered as a dummy-coded
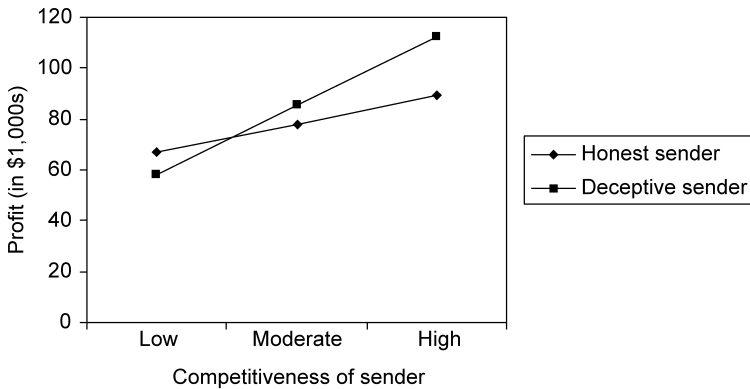
Figure 1. Mean profit for senders.

vector) and sender competitiveness were entered in Step 1. In Step 2, we entered the cross-product of the independent variables to represent the interaction. Moderation is supported when the addition of the interaction term in Step 2 results in a significant increase in the variance explained in sender profit. Results indicate a marginally significant change in R^2 at Step 2, $F(1, 107) = 3.29$, $p = .07$.

We depict the relationship between outcomes, competitiveness of actions, and use of deception in Figure 1. Here, we present the relationship between sender competitiveness and profit for honest and deceptive senders. We classified senders' actions as low in competitiveness if they were 1 standard deviation below the mean, moderate in competitiveness if they were close to the mean, and high in competitiveness if they were 1 standard deviation above the mean. These results suggest that deception increased profits most for senders who made highly competitive decisions. In fact, senders who were cooperative (ran a low number of tours) and used deception (claiming that they ran even fewer tours) actually earned slightly less profit than senders who were cooperative and honest. We discuss this relationship between competitive tactics, the use of deception, and profits in the Discussion.

Discussion

In this article, we demonstrated that disputants' conflict frames influence the use of both ethical competitive negotiation tactics and deception. While prior work has conceptually distinguished ethical competitive behavior from unethical tactics (e.g., Karrass, 1992; Lewicki et al., 1994; Thompson, 2001), our results demonstrate that, in practice, the two are not readily separated. Participants with a win-oriented conflict frame were more likely to use deception and to deceive more egregiously than were participants with a cooperative frame.

This study also provides insight into how deception influences the negotiation process and impacts outcomes. We find that senders' use of deception influenced their counterparts' beliefs and subsequent actions. While responders in our study were skeptical of senders' claims, they were not nearly skeptical enough. When senders used deception, they distorted responders' beliefs, influenced responders' actions, and ultimately increased their own profit and harmed responders' profit.

In this study, we find that deception was maximally effective for competitive negotiators who misrepresented their competitive actions as cooperative. Surprisingly, we find that moderately cooperative negotiators who misrepresented their actions as *very cooperative* gained little from their use of deception. Prior work has provided conflicting evidence regarding whether or not the use of deception improves outcomes for negotiators (e.g., Boles et al., 2000; O'Connor & Carnevale, 1997; Roth & Murnighan, 1983). We believe that the relationship between deception and outcomes is likely to be complicated; and we postulate that the link between deception and profits will be moderated by the nature of the negotiation context, the related actions negotiators take, the magnitude of the deception, and the extent to which targets believe the deception.

In general, we expect deception to be more profitable in distributive contexts than in integrative contexts. First, deception is likely to be more successful in distributive contexts than in integrative contexts. The use of deception in integrative contexts entails greater effort (Schweitzer, Brodt, & Croson, 2002). For example, negotiators who tell lies about integrative issues (e.g., misrepresenting a common-interest issue) must take care not to overstate their claims. Second, in integrative negotiation contexts, negotiators who use deception may miss opportunities to create surplus if they fail to identify opportunities to create joint gains.

Other factors are also likely to moderate the relationship between deception and profits. In our study, anonymous negotiators communicated via written messages. Quite possibly, face-to-face communication and repeated experience might limit gains from the use of deception. In our study, we also found that extreme lies were most profitable. Prior work, however, has suggested that people have greater difficulty justifying extreme, rather than small lies to themselves (Schweitzer & Hsee, 2002). As a result, in some settings (e.g., face-to-face negotiations) liars may tell extreme lies less convincingly than small lies. In addition, targets of deception may become more skeptical of large lies when they have experience and access to comparable values (e.g., historical records). Future work is needed to explore potential moderators of the relationship between deception and outcomes.

Our findings are consistent with Lewicki's (1983) cost–benefit model of deception. Lewicki proposed that negotiators would be more likely to engage in unethical behavior when the benefits of using these behaviors outweigh the costs. Benefits are related to the gains associated from the payoff from the negotiation;

while costs include negative reactions from a negotiation counterpart, loss of a deal, potential feelings of guilt or remorse, and harm to a long-term reputation. We propose that a competitive orientation (win frame) changes a negotiator's perception of these costs and benefits. Because win-framed negotiators value increasing their power and profit more than cooperate-framed negotiators, they are likely to see greater benefit from engaging in deceptive practices (since their perceived benefit is greater). They are also likely to perceive lower costs from engaging in deception (since they care less about harming their counterpart and their future relationship with their counterpart). While our results are consistent with this framework, future research should explore the mechanics of how the psychological costs and benefits of using deception change across conflict orientations.

A number of individual-level factors are also likely to influence both the decision to use deception and the likelihood of believing deception. Prior research has identified individual differences in the use of deception based on Machiavellianism (Fry, 1985; Huber & Neale, 1986), moral development (Trevino & Youngblood, 1990), cognitive ability (Neale & Bazerman, 1983), emotional intelligence (Kumar, 1997), and negative affectivity (Barry & Oliver, 1996). A related body of work has identified individual characteristics that may make some people more gullible than others. For example, prior work investigating trust has identified a number of individual factors that influence trust decisions (e.g., Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Rotter, 1971). Though clearly beyond the scope of the current study, future research is needed to explore how individual factors influence the use of and effectiveness of deception. Similarly, future work should examine the influence of conflict frames on receivers. For example, a future study should explore whether or not cooperatively framed individuals are more gullible than are win-framed individuals.

Given the opportunity to deceive, over half of our sample did so by underreporting the number of tours they had actually decided to run. This supports previous research suggesting that deception is a prevalent problem in negotiation (O'Connor & Carnevale, 1997; Schweitzer et al., 2002; Schwietzer & Croson, 1999). One caveat to this conclusion is that our task represents a strong situation for deception. We used a PD format in which senders knew they would have the opportunity to utilize deception prior to actually making their decision. While this does not mitigate our findings regarding the effects of framing on the use of deception, it does place an important boundary condition on our conclusions about the prevalence of deception in negotiations. One advantage of the seven-action PD format that we used in this study is that it enables us to measure competitive and deceptive behavior along a continuum. However, our use of the PD format in general, and certain aspects of our design in particular, may have promoted the use of deception. The PD format creates a tempting environment in which to engage in competitive actions because there is an inherent conflict

between the desire to cooperate and reach an efficient outcome and the desire to defect and maximize one's own gain. In addition, we allowed only one-way communication. This aspect of our design shifted power to senders who had an opportunity to manipulate their counterpart by engaging in competitive actions, yet send a (deceptively) cooperative message.

In general, our work departs from prior investigations of bargaining behavior and deception in important ways (e.g., Boles et al., 2000; O'Connor & Carnevale, 1997; Roth & Murnighan, 1983; Schweitzer et al., 2002). We examined the relationship between a cognitive state, a conflict frame, and the use of deception. We also measured the magnitude of deception involving a lie of commission, and we measured conflict frames using a coding process to assess perceptions and orientation toward conflict.

Our methodology afforded control over a number of factors likely to interact with the deception decision process in negotiations. For example, we did not allow negotiators to meet in person, thereby eliminating the possibility that the decision to use deception or the success of deception was influenced by other characteristics of the negotiators, such as their interpersonal persuasiveness or negotiation skill. This control is both a strength and a limitation of the current study. Future work should examine a number of situational moderators of the deception decision process, including richer opportunities for communication. For example, prior work has demonstrated that the communication medium itself (cf. Schweitzer et al., 2002; Valley et al., 1998) influences the deception decision process.

Our results highlight the importance of negotiation frames in the deception decision process and inform three important prescriptions. First, negotiators should be particularly wary of deception whenever their counterpart views their interaction with a win-oriented conflict frame: an "opportunity to grab more from the other side" (Friedman & Shapiro, 1999, p. 262). Second, negotiators should develop a reputation for cooperative behavior. This prescription is consistent with prior work that has found that negotiator reputations influence a counterpart's behavior (Tinsley, O'Connor, & Sullivan, 2002). Third, negotiators should foster a cooperative atmosphere during negotiations. Prior work has demonstrated that conflict frames converge during the negotiation process (Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994), and actions such as demonstrating concern for the other party's interests may curtail the likelihood that a counterpart will use deception.

Finally, results from this work suggest that negotiation instructors and managers should be careful when advising others to adopt a competitive approach to negotiations. In particular, while negotiation advice to "get what you want" (Schatzki, 1981, p. 103), "win your objectives" (Karrass, 1992, p. 224), and "become more assertive" (Shell, 1999, p. 238) may help cooperative negotiators to use ethical competitive tactics more effectively, it may also

increase the likelihood that they will use unethical tactics such as deception. The conceptual distinction between ethical competitive behavior and unethical competitive behavior may be far clearer in theory than it is in practice.

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