

# Fit from Shared Strategic Preferences between Negotiator Role and Goal Focus

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## Abstract

In a price negotiation, buyers and prevention individuals prefer vigilant strategies whereas sellers and promotion individuals prefer eager strategies. When there is a match between strategy and role (*role-strategy fit*) or between strategy and regulatory focus (*focus-strategy fit*), negotiators experience more fit and plan to be more demanding. Subjective fit mediates the effect of fit on demand.

## Introduction

Prevention buyers and promotion sellers are in focus-role fit whereas promotion buyers and prevention sellers are in non-fit (Appelt et al., 2009). **We hypothesize that focus-role fit arises from shared strategic preferences.**

### Strategic preferences vary by negotiator role and regulatory focus.

- In price negotiations, a vigilant strategy supports buyers' goals to minimize monetary losses. An eager strategy supports sellers' goals to maximize monetary gains.
- Prevention individuals concerned with losses prefer a vigilant strategy whereas promotion individuals concerned with gains prefer an eager strategy (Crowe & Higgins, 1997).

### Directly manipulating negotiation strategy should yield focus-strategy fit and role-strategy fit while eliminating focus-role fit.

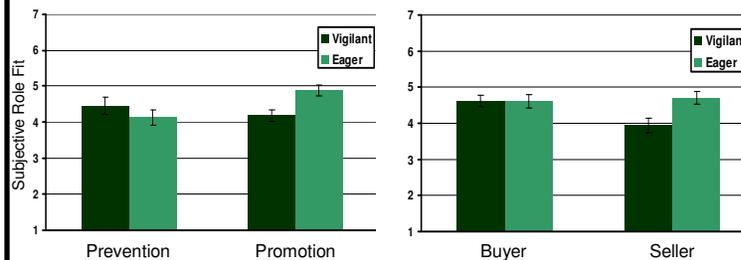
- In regulatory fit, people feel right about their goal pursuit and this intensifies their responses (Higgins, 2000). Focus-role fit negotiators experience more fit with their role and are more demanding than non-fit negotiators (Appelt et al., 2009).
- H1: Ps in focus-strategy fit (prevention-vigilant & promotion-eager) and role-strategy fit (buyer-vigilant & seller-eager) will experience greater fit and greater planned demand than participants in non-fit (prevention-eager & promotion-vigilant; buyer-eager & seller-vigilant).**
- H2: The subjective experience of fit will mediate the relationship between focus-strategy fit and demand, and role-strategy fit and demand.**

## Methods

- 2 (chronic regulatory focus: prevention vs. promotion) x 2 (strategy: vigilant vs. eager) x 2 (role: buyer vs. seller) design
- 154 Ps completed the Regulatory Focus Questionnaire (Higgins et al., 2001) before being randomly assigned to a role and strategy.
- Buyers received \$5 and sellers received a notebook. Ps prepared for the real, binding negotiation with a questionnaire.

## Results

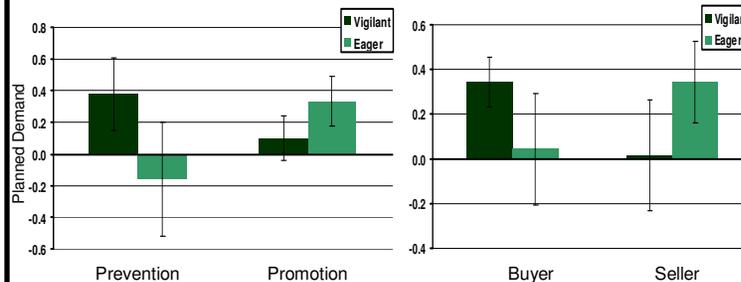
**Subjective Role Fit** (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .84$ ) is the average of ratings of role comfort, role fit, role engagement, and role rightness.



Regulatory Focus x Role,  $p > .5$   
Regulatory Focus x Strategy,  $F(1, 145) = 5.61, p = .02$   
Role x Strategy,  $F(1, 145) = 4.02, p = .02$

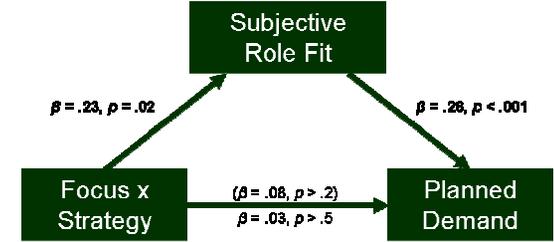
**Planned Demand** ( $r(150) = .52, p < .001$ ) is the average of standardized right price & standardized planned opening offer.

- Among low-fit Ps ( $N=69$ ), no fit effects. Among high-fit Ps ( $N=81$ ):

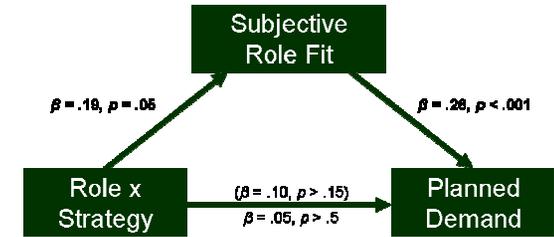


Regulatory Focus x Role,  $F(1, 72) = 2.23, p = .14$   
Regulatory Focus x Strategy,  $F(1, 72) = 6.70, p = .01$   
Role x Strategy,  $F(1, 72) = 6.32, p = .01$

Mediation of Focus x Strategy,  $p = .02$



Mediation of Role x Strategy,  $p = .04$



## Discussion

When strategy is manipulated in a price negotiation, focus-strategy fit and role-strategy fit replace focus-role fit.

- Focus-strategy fit and role-strategy fit negotiators report greater subjective fit and planned demand.
- Subjective fit mediates the relationship between focus-strategy fit & demand, and role-strategy fit & demand.

**Shared strategic preferences between motivational orientations—negotiator role and regulatory focus—can create self-regulatory compatibility.**

## References

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