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Setting the Stage for Negotiations: How Superordinate Goal Dialogues Promote Trust and Joint Gain in Negotiations between Teams

Roderick I. Swaab

INSEAD

Robert B. Lount, Jr.

Fisher College of Business

The Ohio State University

Seunghoo Chung

Faculty of Business

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Jeanne M. Brett

Kellogg School of Management

Northwestern University

Abstract

Although negotiations between teams can result in informational advantages resulting in higher joint gain, the presence of teams can also undermine trust, fuel competition, and impair joint gain. This research addresses this challenge by using structured dialogues to develop trust that helps to establish cooperative interdependence between teams. Building upon prior research in negotiations and intergroup relations, we propose that superordinate goal dialogues can increase trust and facilitate strategy to generate high quality outcomes. Across four face-to-face negotiation studies, we document that structured dialogues about superordinate goals increase trust and teams' use of negotiation strategy to ultimately improve joint gain. We identify the boundary conditions that shape when superordinate goal dialogues are most likely to increase joint gain, as well as when they will not be effective.

Keywords: Negotiation, Teams, Trust, Communication, Goals

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Negotiations are discussions between two or more parties aimed at resolving a perceived divergence of interests (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993). Although most of the research focuses on one-on-one negotiations, organizations often send teams to the table. For example, teams negotiate buy-in to an agreement that requires implementation across a varied and contested political landscape. Likewise, teams typically conduct high-stakes negotiations for corporate mergers and acquisitions, law making in government, and international trade agreements because the complexity of the issues requires diverse expertise.

Sending a team to negotiate can provide an advantage as teams surpass solos when it comes to achieving an understanding of the issues and, as a result, achieve higher joint gain - value that benefits both themselves and their counterparts. (See Cohen & Thompson 2011 for a review.) However, negotiating teams also have disadvantages. Teams trust each other less than solos (Naquin & Kurtzberg, 2009; Polzer, 1996), limiting the potential benefits of trust in negotiation (Kong et al., 2014). Indeed, low trust increases reliance on more competitive strategies, which limit the achievement of high joint gain (Gunia et al., 2011). These different results of having teams negotiate highlight the need for an integrative model to understand how to promote trust, reduce competition, and increase cooperation to facilitate joint gain.

Trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of another (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395) or the willingness to be vulnerable to another party when that party cannot be controlled or monitored (Mayer et al., 1995). Trust can form because of the ability, benevolence, and integrity of the trustee (e.g., Cai & Hung, 2005; Mayer et al., 1995), or may simply be due to an individual's dispositional willingness to rely on others (Colquitt et al., 2007). Trust is a critical determinant of cooperation versus competition in negotiation (Kong et al., 2014). Yet,

despite the important role of trust in negotiations between teams (Naquin & Kurtzberg, 2009; Polzer, 1996), the literature lacks a theoretical exposition and empirical demonstration of how to promote trust so that teams are more likely to engage in strategies that facilitate rather than undermine their joint gain (Malhotra, 2015; Thompson et al., 2012).

We propose that to facilitate trust in inter-team negotiations, teams should carefully select the topics of their pre-negotiation conversations. Specifically, we propose that teams that engage in across-the-table conversations about their superordinate goals prior to negotiating are more likely to build trust and use negotiation strategies that facilitate the creation of joint gain than teams that do not. We call these conversations superordinate goal dialogues, which we define as a "dialogue between two parties that focuses on the superordinate outcomes that both parties hope to accomplish but cannot attain by themselves." This definition is consistent with Sherif's (1958, p. 349) definition of superordinate goals: "goals which are compelling and highly appealing to members of two or more groups in conflict, but which cannot be attained by the resources and energies of the groups separately." We propose that superordinate goal dialogues are likely to engender trust in the other team's intentions because discussing goals that both parties hope to achieve creates positive interdependence (Brewer, 2000). In order for these effects to emerge, it is important that superordinate goals are sufficiently compelling that both teams are willing to pursue them by investing contributions without feeling coerced by the other (Blake & Mouton, 1984; Sherif, 1966).

Although prior research on negotiations and intergroup relations has not examined our propositions, each literature holds the potential to advance our understanding of trust development in this context. Negotiation research has examined the impact of trust on strategies that help increase joint gain (e.g., Kimmel et al., 1980; Kong et al., 2014; Lount et al., 2008), has observed how trust develops in negotiations (Yao et al., 2017), and has tested the association between pre-negotiation relationships and trust (Lu et al., 2017); but it has not

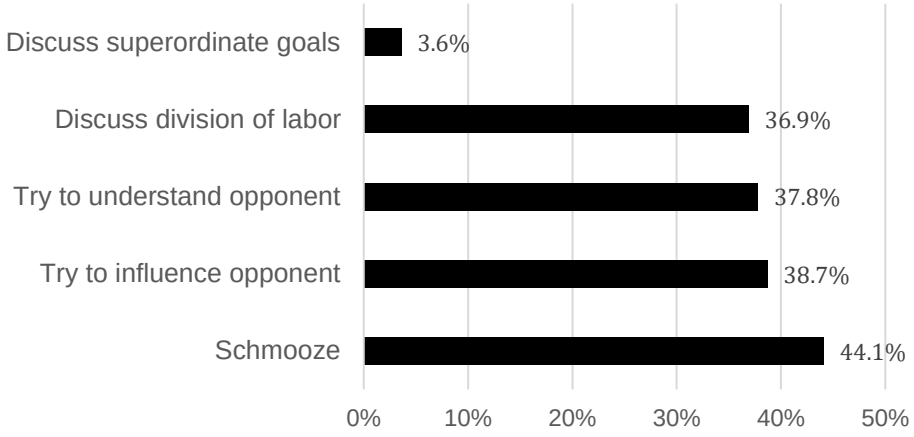
systematically examined how trust can be established at the outset of negotiations (Kong et al., 2014; p.1249), let alone between negotiating teams where trust tends to be low (Naquin & Kurtzberg, 2009; Polzer, 1996). The intergroup relations literature proposes that superordinate goals can increase trust (Brewer, 2000; Hewstone et al., 2005) and cooperation (Sheriff, 1958), but researchers have not examined how or when to engage in superordinate goal dialogues in team-on-team negotiation. Integrating insights from both literatures, we propose that the use of negotiation strategy that is facilitated by negotiators trusting one another can be improved if teams engage in superordinate goal dialogues prior to negotiating.

This research makes several theoretical contributions. First, by examining how superordinate goal dialogues can increase trust between negotiating teams, this research contributes to theory by showing how consequential the selection of conversation topics is for building trust. Second, this research contributes to theory about intergroup relations by showing why superordinate goal dialogues promote negotiation strategies that increase joint gain. Third, this research identifies important boundary conditions on the phenomenon, showing that superordinate goal dialogues are particularly effective in building trust between teams if the goals are sufficiently compelling and if both teams are ready to pursue these goals. Finally, this research responds to recent calls for a better understanding of trust development in negotiations (Kong et al., 2017; Lewicki & Polin, 2013).

This research is also practically relevant. Despite the prevalence of negotiations between teams, pre-negotiation dialogues about superordinate goals are uncommon. Indeed, when we surveyed 111 professionals pursuing a Master of Business Administration (MBA) about the tactics that they typically engage in before a team-on-team negotiation, only four percent mentioned that they would discuss superordinate goals with the other team (Figure 1). Instead, the most common tactic (44 percent) was “schmoozing,” which is a means of social lubrication that involves talking about personal or background issues not currently under

negotiation (Morris et al., 2002). Other common tactics that negotiators reported included trying to influence (39 percent) or understand their opponent (38 percent). (See supplementary materials for more detail about this survey.) We conclude that team-on-team negotiators are unlikely to engage in superordinate goal dialogues without prompting.

Figure 1. *What people discuss at the start of their team-on-team negotiations*



We tested our model, proposing that superordinate goal dialogues facilitate trust and joint gain, in four interactive face-to-face negotiation studies. Study 1 situated our research in the literature comparing team-on-team versus solo negotiations. It was a pre-registered experiment, which tested the impact of superordinate goal dialogues compared to no pre-negotiation dialogue on joint gain between teams and between solos. Study 2 replicated the positive effect of superordinate goal dialogues between teams on joint gain using a more complex simulation than Study 1 and a different sample. Study 3 examined the assumptions underlying our theorizing that superordinate goal dialogues are particularly effective between teams when the goals are sufficiently compelling and when both teams are ready to pursue these goals. Study 4 compared superordinate goal dialogues against a schmoozing control condition, and examined the mediating role of trust on use of negotiation strategy and joint gain.

The Effects of Negotiating Teams on Joint Gain

When people have different preferences across issues, negotiations provide an opportunity to create joint gain (Raiffa, 1982). For example, if one negotiator cares more about issue X and the other cares more about issue Y, and both concede on their low-priority issues, they can make a trade-off that benefits both their individual and joint outcomes (Bazerman & Neale, 1992). Insight into each other's preferences facilitates joint gain (Pruitt & Lewis, 1975; Thompson & Hastie, 1990), and trust and information exchange facilitates insight (Froman & Cohen, 1970; Kimmel et al., 1980). Creating joint gain is an important objective in negotiations because joint gain reduces the recurrence of conflict and stimulates economic prosperity (Pruitt & Lewis, 1975; Raiffa, 1982).

Prior research finds that team-on-team negotiations result in higher joint gain than solo-on-solo negotiations because teammates tend to exchange more information and viewpoints, resulting in a more thorough analysis of negotiation issues that enables beneficial trade-offs (Hüffmeier et al., 2019; Thompson et al., 1996). However, despite their potential, it is important to recognize that teams in negotiations can also harm trust, fuel competition and dampen the achievement of joint gain. The reason is that interactions between teams heighten the salience of team boundaries, which leads team members to perceive the other team as less trustworthy than their own team (Brewer & Kramer, 1985; Tajfel, 1978). Low trust may motivate team members to withhold information and adopt a more competitive negotiation strategy to protect against being taken advantage of, rather than to engage in the collaboration required to develop insight, make trade-offs, and negotiate high joint gain. Consistent with this theorizing, Polzer (1996) found that negotiating teams reported less trust and were more competitive than solos. Likewise, Naquin and Kurtzberg (2009) found that negotiators trust teams less than the individuals within it, and that these perceptions increased competition and lowered joint gain.

In sum, whereas the presence of a team at the negotiating table may provide an informational advantage, it can also decrease trust, increase competition, and affect the use of strategy necessary for the creation of joint gain. To address this tension between information sharing and competitiveness, we propose that teams engage jointly in pre-negotiation, superordinate goal dialogues to promote trust and joint gain.

Superordinate Goals, Inter-Team Trust, and Negotiation Strategy

Increasing trust between teams is an important first step in facilitating joint gain in team-on-team negotiations. We propose one way to do so is to have teams engage jointly in a pre-negotiation, superordinate goal dialogue. We develop a theoretical model to explain when, how, and why superordinate goal dialogues promote trust and joint gain in team-on-team negotiations. Our definition of trust implies that teams should be willing to trust if they have positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of the other team (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). Given the importance of early trust development (Lount et al., 2008), we focus on how superordinate goal dialogues between teams prior to the negotiation can establish these positive expectations.

Although research on pre-negotiation dynamics is limited (Malhotra, 2015; Thompson et al., 2012), some research suggests that the self-disclosure involved in pre-negotiation schmoozing can lead to greater cooperation because it promotes attraction, liking, positive mood (Moore et al., 1999; Morris et al., 2002), and trust (Lu et al., 2017). Prior research also has established the mediating effects of rapport (Drolet & Morris, 2000), positive mood (Baron, 1990; Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Kramer et al., 1993), and trust on joint gain (Kong et al., 2014). However, schmoozing is unlikely to be sufficient to promote trust between teams because interactions within larger groups are more difficult to coordinate and perceived to be socially risky, decreasing the level of personal disclosure that facilitates trust (Cooney, Mastroianni, Abi-Esber, & Brooks, 2020). For example, with multiple people at the table

who cannot all talk at once, teams may find it more difficult than solos to identify similarities with other negotiators, reducing the impact of schmoozing on trust. These lower levels of trust in an inter-team context, in turn, are consequential for the ability to achieve high joint gain. Consistent with this idea, both the Moore et al. (1999) and Morris et al. (2002) studies reported only marginally significant effects of schmoozing on joint gain on negotiations between solos. Schmoozing may also lack substance and negotiators may view it as 'cheap talk' and competition in the team setting may exacerbate this effect. Indeed, pre-negotiation communication does not increase joint gain unless it is relevant to the negotiation (Swaab et al., 2007) and outgroup liking is usually not sufficient to reduce competitive behavior between groups (Tam et al., 2009). Thus, schmoozing prior to a team-on-team negotiation may be insufficient to promote trust and joint gain.

The present research proposes that to promote trust, reduce competition, and create joint gain, pre-negotiation dialogues should focus on superordinate goals. Superordinate goal dialogues are likely to engender trust between teams because the discussion of common goals that both parties hope to accomplish but cannot by themselves (Sherif, 1958) creates positive interdependence between teams (Brewer, 2000). Thus, by discussing compelling common outcomes that teams would like to achieve, but cannot achieve by themselves, negotiation teams are likely to activate norms and positive expectations that both teams will engage in behavior that will facilitate these common objectives. In addition, a dialogue between teams focused on superordinate goals is likely to reduce the salience of team boundaries, encourage a more differentiated perception of the outgroup, and curtail the negative expectations that lower trust in intergroup settings (Brewer & Kramer, 1985; Hewstone et al., 2005; Tam et al., 2009). We predict that trust is more likely to result when teams engage in pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues than when they do not.

Although prior research has demonstrated a strong link between negotiators' goals and joint gain (Zetik & Stuhlmacher, 2002), it has not closely examined the impact of superordinate goals. One exception is a study in which Polzer and Neale (1995) instructed negotiators, prior to their negotiation, to obtain 5100 points for both parties (superordinate goal) or for themselves (individual goal). Negotiators with the superordinate goal realized higher joint gain than negotiators with the individual goal. Although this study established a link between a superordinate goal and joint gain in one-on-one negotiations, it is unclear whether these findings apply to team-on-team negotiations and settings where assigning negotiators specific point goals is not feasible. In addition, because Polzer and Neale (1995) imposed the superordinate goal, it is not clear whether negotiators can generate superordinate goals by themselves through discussion. This is an important question because negotiations generally do not involve a third party with the authority to impose specific goals.

Early work on intergroup conflict showed the potential of superordinate goals in improving intergroup outcomes (Allport, 1954). For example, Sherif and colleagues (1961) staged a breakdown of a truck on its way to pick up food for two rival groups. To restart the truck, the researchers told the groups to push the truck, jointly, a cooperative effort that reduced their conflict. Sherif and colleagues (1961) also showed that superordinate goals decrease competition; however, like the Polzer and Neale (1995) study, the superordinate goal was specific to the context, the broken down truck, and imposed by a third party. Thus, it remains unclear whether prior to negotiating, teams can generate superordinate goals that promote trust, and thus increase cooperation and decrease competition.

Our proposal that teams can define their own superordinate goals extends prior research because it addresses the concern that existing interventions do not go beyond the specific study context and/or that they require the presence of a third party with the authority to

impose the goal. A joint discussion of superordinate goals can apply in any setting where there are two interdependent teams and does not require an external third party.

Superordinate goal dialogues. Although we anticipate that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues can promote trust and, in turn, decrease competition and promote cooperation, prior research also suggests that the effects of superordinate goals are likely to be contingent on a set of important preconditions. First, the definition of superordinate goals implies that goal dialogues should only promote trust when they include a discussion of goals that *both* parties hope to accomplish but cannot achieve by themselves (Sherif, 1958). This definition implies that a conversation geared toward a discussion of each party's own individual goals is unlikely to be effective, because these are not necessarily goals that both teams would like to achieve and thus not likely to create the positive interdependence that is needed to build trust (Brewer, 2000).

Second, the notion that superordinate goal discussions need to create positive interdependence between teams to engender trust (Brewer, 2000) implies that these discussions should also take place between the two negotiating teams, and that merely discussing superordinate goals within each team is not sufficient to improve trust. An intra-team discussion of superordinate goals does not provide insight into how each team can help the other achieve the outcomes that the team would like to achieve. In contrast, an inter-team discussion can reveal that both teams hope to accomplish the same goal, e.g., a fair and economically beneficial agreement. Given that superordinate goals should refer to common outcomes that both parties hope to accomplish but cannot accomplish alone, intra-team discussions of superordinate goals are unlikely to create positive interdependence and trust. This idea is consistent with findings from Polzer and Neale (1995) showing that superordinate goals do not create joint gain when only given to one of the parties.

Third, prior research suggests that for superordinate goals to be effective, teams need to be ready and willing to pursue these goals (Blake & Mouton, 1984; Sherif, 1966). This implies that superordinate goal dialogues are more likely to be effective when they take place after each team has prepared for the negotiation rather than before intra-team preparation. Indeed, without understanding and aligning their own preferences, teams cannot engage effectively in an intergroup negotiation (Halevy, 2008), let alone benefit from a superordinate goal dialogue. Reversing the order requires shifting from a superordinate goal mindset to a subgroup goal mindset, and then engaging in the inter-team negotiation. Not only does this timing fail to take advantage in negotiation of any momentum generated in superordinate goal discussions, it may also be conceptually and motivationally difficult to engage in superordinate goal dialogues prior to the articulation of subgroup goals (Fiol et al., 2009). Indeed, research on intergroup relations shows that the more secure teams feel about their own needs, the better they integrate their teams' goals into superordinate goals (Fiol et al., 2009; Haslam et al., 2003). As such, superordinate goal dialogues are unlikely to be effective if they take place before teams have considered their own team's goals because such timing prevents teams from being ready and willing to pursue their superordinate goals.

Finally, the present research focuses on superordinate goal dialogues that take place before the negotiation starts. The reason is that the most critical time for negotiators to develop trust is early in the negotiation (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Lount et al., 2008; Rubin & Brown, 1975; Sinaceur & Neale, 2005; Swaab et al., 2011). Although this focus does not preclude negotiators from building trust through superordinate goal dialogues during the negotiation, doing so may be more challenging than prior to the onset of negotiations. Parties already engaged in protecting and promoting their interests in negotiation might not be able to signal their willingness to pursue superordinate goals in a credible way. As such, we propose that superordinate dialogues that take place when negotiators' relationships are more

malleable – prior to the negotiation, will be more effective than superordinate dialogues held during the negotiation.

Hypothesis 1: *Superordinate goal dialogues between teams will increase joint gain.*

Hypothesis 2: *Superordinate goal dialogues between teams will increase trust.*

Trust facilitates joint gain because it influences negotiators' use of strategy (Kong et al., 2014). Two categories of negotiation strategy have been commonly identified by negotiation scholars: 1) an integrative approach in which negotiators engage in behaviors that can create value for both parties, and 2) a distributive approach in which negotiators engage in behaviors focused upon claiming value (Deutsch, 1973; Kimmel et al., 1980; Putnam & Wilson, 1989; Walton & McKersie, 1965). Integrative strategy includes behaviors such as, asking and answering questions about negotiators' interests and priorities, which has been referred to as the question and answer (Q&A) strategy (Gunia et al., 2011). Distributive strategy includes behaviors such as attempts to persuade the counterpart to make concessions, which has been referred to as the substantiation and offer (S&O) strategy (Gunia et al., 2011). Whereas Q&A facilitates joint gain, S&O undermines the creation of joint gain (Gunia et al., 2011; Kong et al., 2014; Putnam & Wilson, 1989).

Prior research shows that trust influences the use of both strategies (Kong et al., 2014). Q&A strategies are likely when trust is high because asking and answering questions makes negotiators vulnerable to exploitation. The positive expectations of others when trust is high reassures negotiators that their counterparts will use the information shared in good faith (Gunia et al., 2011). However, when trust is low, negotiators are likely to fall back on behaviors that reduce their vulnerability and engage in S&O (Kimmel et al., 1980). Indeed, prior research has demonstrated that high trust increases Q&A and decreases S&O, and that both strategies mediate the link between trust and joint gain (Kong et al., 2014). Given our

proposal that superordinate goal dialogues promote trust and joint gain, we further propose that these patterns are mediated by negotiator strategy:

Hypothesis 3a: *Superordinate goal dialogues between teams will increase joint gain because they promote trust, which increases the use of Q&A strategy.*

Hypothesis 3b: *Superordinate goal dialogues between teams will increase joint gain because they promote trust, which decreases the use of S&O strategy.*

Study 1

Study 1 tested the prediction that superordinate goal dialogues between teams would increase joint gain. Study 1 also compared the effect of superordinate goal dialogues in negotiations between solos to situate our findings in the team negotiation literature, which has documented that teams achieve higher joint gain than solos. We expected that team negotiations would achieve higher joint gain than solo negotiations. We also explored whether the effect of superordinate goals was larger for two teams negotiating than two solos.

Study 1 was pre-registered: https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=ct5aa2. Data, syntax, and supplemental materials are available online: https://osf.io/fwa2b/?view_only=88d8c35486064bd1aa5474a1b2ba02b1

Method

Design and Participants. Three-hundred and forty-one undergraduate business school students (48% female; average age = 20.48 years) at a U.S. university participated for course credit. In the team conditions, we randomly assigned participants to two person teams. Teams of three also occurred due to scheduling and session attendance (n = 3). Controlling for team size did not change the direction or significance of the results. In the team conditions, we randomly assigned participants to teams. All members of the same team had the same role information. Next, we randomly assigned teams to negotiation groups (a negotiation group is one team-on-team negotiation), resulting in 59 team-on-team negotiations. Finally, we

randomly assigned negotiation groups to one of two conditions: Pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues (n = 30) or pre-negotiation control (n = 29). In the solo condition, we randomly assigned participants to negotiate with one other participant, resulting in 51 dyads (one-on-one negotiations). We randomly assigned dyads to one of two conditions: Pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues (n = 25) or pre-negotiation control (n = 26). Combining the group and dyad negotiation conditions resulted in a total sample of 110 negotiations. We determined in advance that we would try to collect as many observations as possible in a data collection period of two weeks, with a minimum of 25 observations per condition.

Procedure. Participants negotiated *Sweet Shops* (negotiationexercises.com), which required them to assume the role of a bakery or ice-cream shop owner. The negotiation involves an allocation of shared space in a market, to sell both baked goods and ice cream. Both the pre-negotiation meeting and negotiation itself took place in private, in person, breakout rooms. The negotiation included five issues each with five options: Staffing, temperature, design, and maintenance were integrative issues that could be traded against each other. Delivery was a compatible issue. The profit implications of each option associated with each issue were quantified with points, and parties received information explaining how to compute the value of agreements. Both parties had comparable alternatives in which they would stay in their current location for the time being if they did not reach an agreement.

Manipulation. After individual or team preparation, we sent participants to their negotiation room. After arriving in the room, we told those solos and teams who had been randomly assigned to the superordinate goal dialogue condition to take five minutes to discuss the following questions: *What will be important for all parties? Why? What do you want to have achieved for all parties after the discussion*? We told groups and solos to

discuss the above questions only during the allotted five minutes and that criticizing each other or discussing the specific issues to be negotiated was prohibited. At the end of the dialogue phase, we informed groups and solos that they had 15 minutes to negotiate. We told groups and solos in the control condition to wait and not talk to each other until they were told to begin the negotiation. They waited 5 minutes. This was the same amount of time that groups and solos in the experimental condition engaged in their superordinate goal dialogues.

Measures. Participants submitted their agreement at the end of the negotiation. We computed both parties' individual and joint gain using the formulas provided in participants' packets. The dependent measure was joint gain, the sum of the total value created by each team in each group or each solo in each dyad. There were no impasses in Study 1.

Results

Hypothesis 1 predicted that joint gain would be higher when teams engaged in a pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogue than when they did not. Consistent with this prediction, joint gain was higher when teams engaged in superordinate goal dialogues (M = 17,508.33, SD = 1,464.35, CI_{95} = 16,961.54; 18,055.13) than when they did not (M = 16732.76, SD = 1520.59, CI_{95} = 16154.36; 17311.16), $t(106) = 2.25$, $p = .026$, $d = .52$. Following our pre-registered report plan, we also explored whether superordinate goal dialogues increased solos' joint gain. They did not: in superordinate goal dialogues (M = 15,850.00, SD = 1,218.35, CI_{95} = 15,347.09; 16,352.91), in no dialogue (M = 16,144.23, SD = 957.01, CI_{95} = 15,757.69; 16,530.77), $t(106) = .79$, $p = .43$, $d = .04$. This resulted in a non-significant main effect for superordinate goal dialogues, $F(1, 106) = .91$, $p = .34$, $d = .18$.

In addition, our study replicates earlier findings in the team negotiation literature, showing that joint gain was significantly higher in negotiations between teams than negotiations between solos, $F(1, 106) = 19.73$, $p < .001$, $d = .85$. These effects were further

qualified by a significant interaction effect, $F(1, 106) = 4.47$, $p = .037$, $d = .40$, reflecting that superordinate goal dialogues led to an increase in joint gain between teams but not solos.

Discussion

Study 1 showed that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues between negotiating teams increased joint gain. We did not predict that this intervention would affect value claiming, and it did not in either the team or the solo conditions. Study 1 also replicated the established finding that teams achieved higher join gain than solos. Study 1 did not find superordinate goal dialogues to increase joint gain for solos. Although we expected superordinate goal dialogues to be particularly effective between teams because they should address teams' trust deficit, we did not have strong a-priori reasons to believe that dialogues would be ineffective for solos. Nevertheless, this null effect is consistent with other research in the communication literature showing that cooperative goals cause dyads to reduce their reliance on competitive strategies but do not increase their reliance on cooperative strategies that are responsible for higher joint gain (Liu & Wilson, 2011). Taken together, the findings from Study 1 show that superordinate goal dialogues are particularly valuable in the context of negotiations between teams.

Study 1 established a causal link between superordinate goal dialogues and joint gain in negotiations between teams. However, it is possible that it was not the dialogue condition, but rather it was the period of silence before the negotiations began in the control condition that lowered the quality of agreements for teams. Although our control condition was designed to maximize internal validity because it kept time spent together prior to negotiating constant, it could have compromised external validity as most negotiators would not sit in front of each other without talking for several minutes. In addition, it is possible that the superordinate goal dialogue intervention in Study 1 is particularly effective for teams of undergraduate students with little work experience, but not for negotiators with more experience. Finally, it is

possible that superordinate goal dialogues are particularly effective in negotiations with only integrative and compatible issues, but not in more competitive negotiations that also include purely distributive issues. We designed Study 2 to address these alternative explanations.

Study 2

Study 2 tested Hypothesis 1, that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues increase joint gain between teams. Compared to Study 1, it used a more ecologically valid control condition, a sample from a population with more work experience, and a simulation with integrative and distributive issues.

Method

Participants and Design. Study 2 was a classroom study. Available cohort size limited the sample size. Participants were 284 MBA students enrolled in a negotiations course at a global business school (N = 119; 30% female) and a U.S. business school (N = 165; 33% female). Within each school, we randomly assigned participants to a team of buyers or sellers and then randomly paired teams into buyer-seller groups. Groups were randomly allocated to a pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogue condition (n=34) or a control condition (n=35). Although the modal size was two people per team, team sizes ranged from 2-4 people (M = 2.04 for buyers and M = 2.07 for sellers). Controlling for team size did not affect the significance of the results.

Procedure. Participants negotiated *Cartoon* (negotiationandteamresources.com). The parties represented a buyer or a seller and negotiated four issues concerning the syndication of a television show. Price was a distributive issue; one party's loss was the other's gain. Financing terms and number of runs were integrative issues. The negotiators also had the option of including a second show in the agreement. This was a compatible issue, in that its inclusion could benefit both parties. Both buyer and seller had comparable alternatives in which the buyer could buy from another company, and the seller could sell to another station.

All participants in a buyer team had the same information and all participants in a seller team had the same information. Participants first read their information, which we distributed to them several days prior to the negotiation, individually. Participants in both conditions defined their own buyer or seller team's goals in a 15-minute private meeting just prior to the beginning of the negotiation. The manipulation occurred after the team preparation. After finishing the negotiation, groups reported the terms of the agreement and were debriefed.

Manipulation. We randomly assigned negotiation groups to a superordinate goal dialogue or control condition. Groups in the *superordinate goals dialogue condition* received the same manipulation materials as in Study 1. They had 5 minutes to discuss superordinate goals, then 70 minutes to negotiate. We instructed groups in the control condition to start the negotiation immediately after their team preparation. To keep total time constant across conditions, we gave control groups 75 minutes to negotiate.

Measures. We measured joint gain as in Study 1. Negotiations that did not reach an agreement were recorded as an impasse. Because impasses can be an indicator of outcome quality, we report the frequency of impasses in each condition. However, given the low number of impasses across all our studies (i.e., 1.25%), coding the impasse groups or dyads' joint gain as zero would lead to including an extreme statistical outlier. Thus, given their infrequency, we followed Tripp and Sondak's (1992) recommendation to exclude impasse groups. There was one impasse in the control condition and two in the experimental condition.

Results

Hypothesis 1 predicted that joint gain would be higher when teams engaged in a pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues than when they did not. Consistent with this prediction, joint gain was higher when groups engaged in superordinate goal dialogues (M = 4,856,437.50, SD = 336,739.24, CI_{95} = 4,735,030.06; 4,977,844.94) than when they did not

(M = 4,464,991.91, SD = 625,250.68, CI_{95} = 4,246,831.64; 4,683,152.19), $F(1, 64) = 9.85$, $p = .003$, $d = .77$.[i]

Discussion

Study 2 replicated the findings from Study 1 showing that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues versus no pre-negotiation interaction increased joint gain. Again, we did not expect that this intervention would affect value claiming, and it did not. Study 2 also established that the positive effects of engaging in superordinate goal dialogues on joint gain observed in Study 1 were unlikely to have been driven by the control condition, the relative experience of participants, or the absence of a distributive issue in the negotiation simulation.

Although Study 2 replicated the causal link between superordinate goal dialogues and joint gain, it did not directly test our assumptions for when superordinate goal dialogues would be effective. The purpose of Study 3 was to test three assumptions.

First, to examine the assumption that goal dialogues facilitate higher joint gain when they include goals that both teams would like to achieve, Study 3 varied whether pre-negotiation dialogues focused on superordinate goals or each team's own individual goals. Our theorizing was that an intra-team dialogue about the team's own goals is unlikely to affect joint gain, because these are not goals that both teams would like to achieve and thus are not likely to create the positive interdependence needed to build trust (Brewer, 2000).

Second, to examine the assumption that superordinate goal dialogues need to create positive interdependence between teams to engender trust and high joint gain, Study 3 varied whether teams discussed superordinate goals with the other team or only within their own team. Our theorizing is that intra-team discussion of superordinate goals is unlikely to be effective because such discussion does not provide insight into whether the other party also

[i] Although groups at the global business school created more joint gain than at the U.S. school (p =.029), when adding school as a covariate, the main effect of the superordinate goal dialogue remained significant (p = .002). Additionally, school did not interact with the intervention (p = .31).

hopes to accomplish the same goals and/or whether it is impossible for them to achieve their goals by themselves. As such, intra-team discussion of superordinate goals is unlikely to create the positive interdependence and trust that negotiators need to achieve joint gain.

Third, to examine the assumption that teams need to be ready to discuss their superordinate goals (Blake & Mouton, 1984; Sherif, 1966), Study 3 varied whether superordinate goal dialogues between teams took place after each team considered its own team's goals or before. Our theorizing is that superordinate goal dialogues are unlikely to be effective when they take place prior to each team's preparation, because such timing prevents the team from being ready and willing to pursue the superordinate goals and effectively engage in intergroup negotiation (Fiol et al., 2009; Haslam et al., 2003).

Study 3

In addition to testing the assumptions underlying our theorizing, Study 3 also examined the robustness of our intervention by focusing on teams of negotiators who knew each other. Prior research suggests that teams of friends and acquaintances tend to achieve lower joint gain than teams of strangers because when friends negotiate, they are concerned about harmony which prevents them from obtaining the insight needed to make more optimal trade-offs (Peterson & Thompson, 1997; Thompson et al., 1996). As such, the positive effect of the superordinate goal dialogue intervention in Studies 1 and 2 may have been because team members were strangers. To address this possible explanation and design a more stringent test of our hypothesis, Study 3 examined team members who were acquaintances. By studying the effect of superordinate goal dialogues among team members who knew each other, Study 3 also resembles real world negotiations and thus helps address any concerns the previous studies may have raised about ecological validity. To further test the robustness of our findings, Study 3 used a different MBA sample and yet another mixed motive negotiation exercise that included integrative, compatible, and distributive issues.

Method

Participants. Study 3 was a classroom study and available cohort size limited the sample size. Participants were 582 MBA students (30% female, average age = 28.91 years) enrolled in an introductory leadership course at a global business school. Teams were the same as the students' MBA program study groups. MBA students were assigned to these study groups at the beginning of their program and had one-month experience working together at the time of data collection. Study groups took classes together. By the time of the experiment, study groups had engaged in several exercises, simulations and case discussions. We randomly divided study groups into two teams. We then randomly assigned each team to negotiate against a team from another study group. Finally, we randomly assigned each group to an experimental condition.

We did not determine our sample size in advance. Instead, we used all the students participating in this course within the same academic year. We excluded 10 groups because (a) an insufficient number of participants showed up simultaneously to create a team (n = 5), (b) participants on the same team were not from the same study group (n = 1), (c) the team prepared together with another team (n = 2), or (d) groups did not submit an agreement (n = 2). Our final sample included 540 participants and 112 groups.

Procedures. Participants represented a team of Directors and a team of Producers in an exercise adapted from *The Player* negotiation (negotiationandteamresources.com). They had to negotiate seven issues associated with the production of a film. Bonus and salary were distributive issues. Male lead, female lead, location, and editorial control were integrative issues. Child star was a compatible issue. Each issue had five quantified options.

Participants within a team had the same role information, which quantified the value of the issues and options to the team. Both roles had comparable alternatives if no agreement could be reached.

We gave participants 15 minutes to read their roles individually. Then we sent them with their teammates to breakout rooms where they received the manipulation. We randomly assigned groups to one of five conditions: 1) Control condition; 2) Superordinate goals dialogue; 3) Reverse sequence superordinate goals dialogue; 4) Own team goals dialogue; 5) Intra-team superordinate goals dialogue. (See Table 1 for details.)

Participants in the *control condition* met privately with their teammates for 10 minutes to discuss their team's goals and then negotiated for 35 minutes.

Participants in the *superordinate goals dialogue condition* met privately with their teammates for 10-minutes to discuss their team's goals, and then met jointly with their counterpart team for a 5-minute superordinate goals dialogue. The procedure and instructions were identical to Study 1 and Study 2. They then negotiated for 30 minutes.

Participants in the *reverse sequence superordinate goals dialogue condition* first met jointly for 5 minutes with the counterpart team to discuss superordinate goals, then broke for a 10-minute private team meeting to discuss team goals, after which they reconvened with the counterpart team to negotiate for 30 minutes.

Participants in the *own team goals dialogue condition* met privately with their teammates for 10 minutes to discuss their team's goals, and then met jointly with their counterpart team for a 5-minute discussion to discuss each team's own goals: *"What will be important for each party individually (i.e. what are the directors' goals and what are the producers' goals)? Why? What do the directors want to have achieved for themselves after the discussion? What do the producers want to have achieved for themselves after the discussion?"* They then negotiated for 30 minutes.

Participants in the *intra-team superordinate goals dialogue condition,* like those in the superordinate goals dialogue condition, met privately with their teammates for 10 minutes to

discuss their team's goals, but were then asked to discuss the superordinate goals with their own teammate for 5 minutes before joining the counterpart team for a 30-minute negotiation.

To equalize time across conditions, groups in the goal discussion conditions had 30 minutes for their negotiation whereas those in the control condition had 35 minutes. At the end of the negotiation, teams reported the terms of their agreement and were debriefed. Controlling for team size did not change the direction or significance of the results.

Measures. Participants completed an agreement sheet at the end of the negotiation. We used the same formulas detailed in participants' roles to compute buyer and seller teams' individual and joint gain. The dependent measure was joint gain, the sum of the total value created by each team in each group.

Following Tripp and Sondak's (1992) recommendation, we excluded the two impasse groups (one in the own team goals pre-meeting condition and one in the intra-team superordinate goals pre-meeting condition). There were no impasses in the other conditions.

Table 1. *Overview of procedure for each condition (Study 3).*

Condition	Individual Preparation	Team Preparation and Pre-Negotiation Dialogue	Negotiation
Control (*n*=23)	15 minutes	Within team: 10 min discussion team goals	35 minutes
Superordinate goals dialogue (*n*=23)	15 minutes	Within team: 10 min discussion team goals Between teams: 5 min discussion superordinate goals	30 minutes
Reverse sequence superordinate goals dialogue (*n*=21)	15 minutes	Between teams: 5 min discussion superordinate goals Within team: 10 min discussion team goals	30 minutes
Own team goals Dialogue (*n*=22)	15 minutes	Within team: 10 min discussion team goals Between teams: 5 min discussion own team goals	30 minutes
Intra-team superordinate goals dialogue (*n*=23)	15 minutes	Within team: 10 min discussion team goals Within team: 5 min discussion superordinate goals	30minutes

Results

Hypothesis 1 predicted that joint gain would be higher when teams engaged in a pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogue than when they did not. To examine this hypothesis,

we conducted a planned contrast analysis comparing joint gain in the superordinate goals dialogue condition (coded as 4) to the average joint gain achieved across the other conditions (each coded as -1). Results supported the prediction that joint gain would be higher for groups in the superordinate goals dialogue condition (M = 9676.09; SD = 695.09, CI_{95} = 9375.51; 9976.67), as compared to the other conditions (M = 9064.61; SD = 915.59, CI_{95} = 8871.74; 9257.48), $t(107) = 2.96$, $p = .004$, $d = .70$.

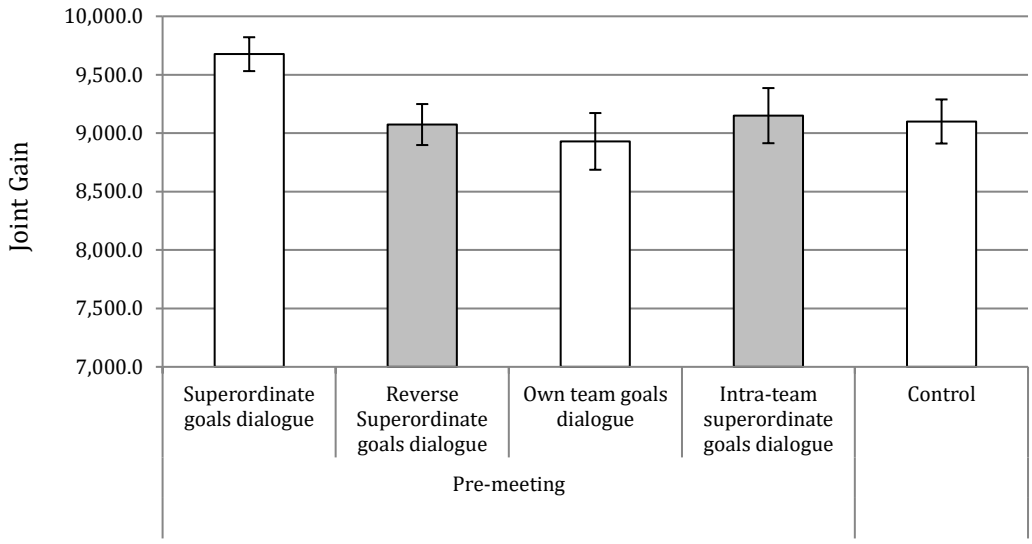
Follow-up contrast analyses revealed that groups in the superordinate goals condition achieved higher joint gain than those in each of the other conditions: the control (M = 9100.00; SD = 904.53, CI_{95} = 8708.85; 9491.15), p =.029; own team goal goals dialogue (M = 8929.55; SD = 1008.14, CI_{95} = 8482.56; 9376.53), p =.006; reverse superordinate goals dialogue (M = 9073.81; SD = 803.68, CI_{95} = 8707.98; 9439.64), p =.026, and the intra-team superordinate goals dialogue conditions (M = 9150.00; SD = 974.91, CI_{95} = 8728.42; 9571.58), p =.046. No other differences were significant (see Figure 2).

Discussion

Study 3 replicated the findings in Studies 1 and 2 using a different sample and a different negotiation task. Importantly, Study 3 also tested the core assumptions underlying our theorizing. First, the finding that superordinate goal dialogues were only effective in increasing joint gain when they involved superordinate goals, but not each team's own goals is consistent with the notion that superordinate goals ought to be discussed to create the positive interdependence needed to build trust (Brewer, 2000). Second, the finding that superordinate goal dialogues were only effective in increasing joint gain when they were held between teams but not within teams is consistent with the proposal that these dialogues need to provide insight into whether the other party also hopes to accomplish the same goals and/or whether it is impossible for them to achieve this goal by themselves (Sherif, 1958). Third, the finding that superordinate goal dialogues were only effective when they took place

after each team prepared its own goals but not before doing so, is consistent with the idea that teams need to be ready and willing to pursue their superordinate goals (Blake & Mouton, 1984; Sherif, 1966). Finally, Study 3 shows that the positive effect of superordinate goal dialogues is robust in a setting where team members know each other. This is an important observation because prior research shows teams of friends and acquaintances achieve lower joint gain than teams of strangers but has not offered a solution for this problem.

Figure 2. *Means and standard errors by condition (Study 3).*



Study 4

The primary objective of Study 4 was to test our theorizing that superordinate goal dialogues increase joint gain because they promote trust (Hypothesis 2), which then increases use of information sharing (Q&A) (Hypothesis 3a) and decreases use of competitive tactics (S&O) (Hypothesis 3b). Accordingly, it was important to measure and examine trust after groups discussed superordinate goals, but before they started to negotiate. A second objective of Study 4 was to include a more realistic control condition in which groups schmoozed prior to negotiating. We chose this control condition because our survey, reported in the introduction, indicated that schmoozing was the most commonly used pre-negotiation tactic. Thus, it serves as a more ecologically valid control condition than the control condition used

in Study 1, which prevented negotiators from speaking while waiting for their negotiation to begin. Although schmoozing can promote trust among solo negotiators (Lu et al., 2017), we expected a stronger effect on trust from superordinate goal dialogues than schmoozing in the team condition. Schmoozing is unlikely to trigger the same level of perceived positive interdependence between teams as it does between solos. The team condition may make it difficult to identify similarities with members of the other team, which appears to be the key element of schmoozing that engenders trust. In addition, superordinate goal dialogues are likely to have a stronger impact on trust than schmoozing because they promote a focus on the teams' task and common outcomes rather than individual social relationships.

Method

Design and Participants. Four hundred and eighty-seven undergraduate business students (42% female, average age = 20.74 years) at a U.S. university participated for course credit. Over a two-week period, we sought to have as many participants with a minimum of at least forty observations per condition. We randomly allocated participants to groups and teams, and randomly assigned roles between teams. We randomly assigned groups to one of two conditions: Pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues (n = 58) or pre-negotiation control allowing for schmoozing (n = 55). We excluded 10 groups because of procedural mistakes made by the lab assistants (n = 6) or because the group started the negotiation during the pre-negotiation phase (n = 4). Teams of three also occurred due to scheduling and session attendance (n = 35). Controlling for team size did not change the direction or significance of the results. Our final sample included 444 participants and 103 groups.

Procedure. We used the same task and followed a similar procedure as in Study 1. Teams in the *superordinate goals dialogue condition* received the same manipulation materials as in the previous studies and had a 5-minute group discussion of superordinate goals. Teams in the *schmoozing control condition* had a 5-minute group session before they

started the negotiation during which they were told that they were not-allowed to discuss the negotiation, but were allowed to talk to one another while they were waiting for the research assistant to return to start the negotiation.

Measures. Joint gain was calculated as in the other studies. Each participant also individually completed a questionnaire before and after the negotiation. We measured all items on a seven-point scale (1 = very much disagree, 7 = very much agree). We measured trust after the pre-negotiation session, but before the negotiation (α = .93) and then again after the negotiation (α = .92): "I trust the other team," "The other team trusts my team," "I distrust the other team," "The other team distrusts my team." (Gunia et al., 2011). We aggregated and analyzed at the group level. R_{wg} (James et al., 1984) and ICC(1) (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979) values showed sufficient levels of agreement for aggregation of trust before the negotiation (r_{wg} = .78; ICC(1) = .08) and trust after the negotiation (r_{wg} = .80; ICC(1) = .23).

To measure S&O and Q&A negotiation strategies, all negotiations were video recorded, professionally transcribed (separated by speaking turn), unitized by thought unit, and then coded using the OFFER coding system (Brett et al., 2018) which built upon Gunia and colleagues' (2011) coding system. Following Weingart and colleagues (2007), we first had each speaking turn unitized into thought units by two coders (25.8% overlap) who showed little disagreement about the number of units (e.g., Guetzkow's *U* = .011 [Guetzkow, 1950]). Two separate coders, who were blind to the study condition, categorized each thought unit in line with the OFFER coding system (i.e., questions, answers, substantiation, single/multi-issue offers, and other [miscellaneous]). We operationalized Q&A and S&O as their frequency divided by the total number of units in each negotiation. One of the authors trained the coders on a sample negotiation transcript. Coders met several times over two months of coding to resolve any differences and calibrate their coding. Both coders categorized 2741 (out of a total of 10329) of the same units for a 26.53% degree of overlap, sufficient

according to Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999). The coders' interpretative reliability (Folger et al., 1984) on these units was high, with Cohen's Kappa = .830, $p < .001$, indicating substantial inter-coder reliability (Landis & Koch, 1977).

There were no impasses. Table 2 reports correlations among the variables.

Results

Table 2. *Means, standard deviations, and correlations between variables in Study 4.*

	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Superordinate dialogue	.50	.50				
2. Pre-Negotiation Trust	4.99	.65	.23*			
3. Q&A strategy	.44	.11	.35**	.38**		
4. S&O strategy	.33	.10	-.32**	-.39**	-.89**	
5. Joint gain	17334.95	1869.37	.18†	.10	.58**	-.58**

Note. Superordinate Dialogue (1 = Goals dialogue; 0 = Schmoozing control). *† ≤ .10, * p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01*

Hypothesis 1 predicted that joint gain would be higher when teams engaged in a superordinate goal dialogue before the negotiation compared to when they schmoozed. Results showed that joint gain was greater, albeit marginally so, for groups in the superordinate goals dialogue condition (M = 17,666.67, SD = 1,821.17, CI_{95} = 17,154.45; 18,178.88) than groups in the schmoozing control condition (M = 17,009.62; SD = 1,876.04, CI_{95} = 16,487.32; 17,531.91), $t(101) = 1.80$, $p = .074$, $d = .36$.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that trust would be higher for teams that engaged in superordinate goal dialogues compared to those that engaged in schmoozing. Results supported this prediction. Trust measured after the pre-meeting was higher for groups in the superordinate goals dialogue condition (M = 5.14, SD = .68, CI_{95} = 4.95; 5.33) than in the schmoozing condition (M = 4.84; SD = .60, CI_{95} = 4.67; 5.01), $t(101) = 2.40$, $p = .018$, $d = .47$. Trust after the negotiation did not differ between the superordinate goals dialogue condition (M = 5.65,

SD = .73, CI_{95} = 5.44; 5.86) and the schmoozing condition (*M* = 5.44; *SD* = 1.00, CI_{95} = 5.17; 5.72), *t*(101) = 1.17, *p* = .24, *d* = .24.

Hypothesis 3a predicted that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues would increase joint gain because they promote trust, which in turn increases the use of Q&A strategy. Prior to testing this mediation hypothesis, we examined the difference for Q&A between conditions. Groups used the Q&A strategy more in the superordinate goals dialogue condition (*M* = .48, *SD* = .11, CI_{95} = .45; .51) than in the schmoozing condition (*M* = .40; *SD* = .10, CI_{95} = .37; .43), *t*(101) = 3.78, *p* < .001, *d* = .76. Pre-negotiation trust and Q&A sequentially mediated the effect of the superordinate goal dialogues on joint gain. A bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples with a 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval (MacKinnon et al., 2004) confirmed that the indirect effect was significant, 95% CI [37.89, 438.28] (see Figure 3). These findings support our prediction that teams engaging in superordinate goal dialogues achieve higher joint gain because these dialogues develop trust, which leads them to use Q&A more than teams engaging in schmoozing.

Hypothesis 3b predicted that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues would increase joint gain because they promote trust, which then decreases use of competitive S&O strategy. Superordinate goal groups employed the S&O strategy less (*M* = .30, *SD* = .10, CI_{95} = .27; .33) than groups in the schmoozing condition (*M* = .37; *SD* = .10, CI_{95} = .34; .40), *t*(101) = 3.44, *p* = .001, *d* = .70. Pre-negotiation trust and S&O sequentially mediated the effect of the superordinate goal dialogue manipulation on joint gain. A bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples and a 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval confirmed that the indirect effect was significant, 95% CI [39.46, 442.28] (see Figure 4). These findings support our prediction that teams engaging in superordinate goal dialogues

achieve higher joint gain because these dialogues develop trust, which then leads them to decrease their use of a competitive S&O strategy.

Figure 3. *Trust before negotiation and Q&A strategy during negotiation mediated the relationship between superordinate goal dialogues and joint gain. Regression coefficients are unstandardized and SEs in parentheses. † ≤ .10, * p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01.*

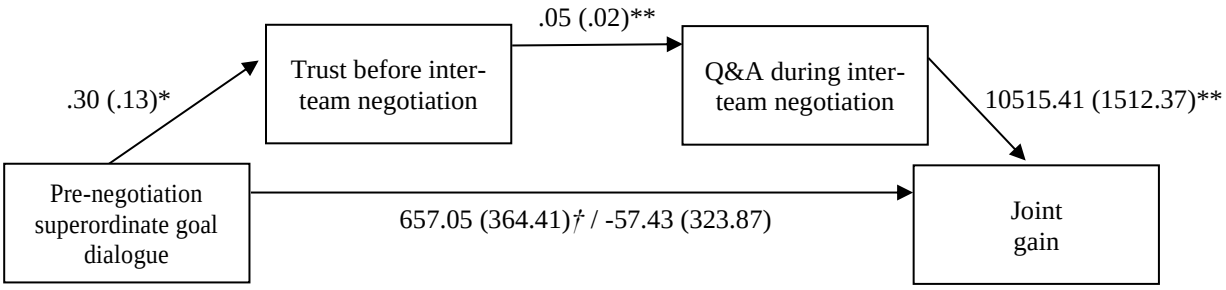
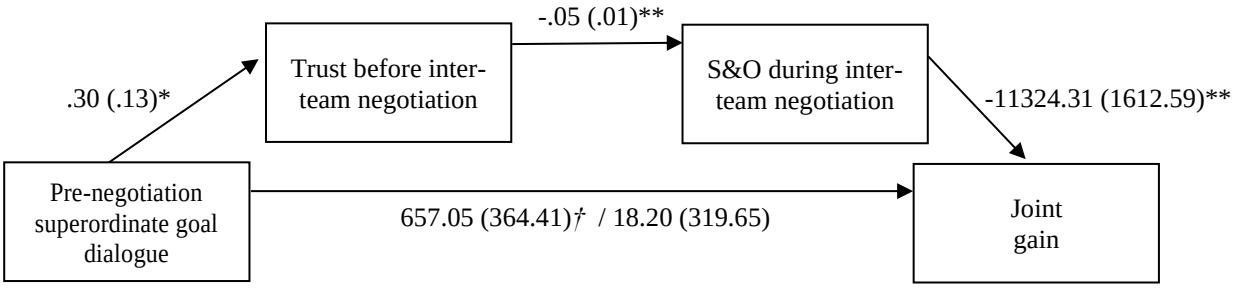


Figure 4. *Trust before negotiation and S&O strategy during negotiation mediated the relationship between superordinate goal dialogues and joint gain. Regression coefficients are unstandardized and SEs in parentheses. † ≤ .10, * p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01.*



Exploratory analyses. To further explore what negotiators discussed during the pre-negotiation dialogue, we transcribed the pre-negotiation conversations and coded them by speaking turn. (See supplementary materials for more details.) We developed a custom code to measure common goals and collective frame of reference within the framework of LIWC (linguistic word count analyses Pennebaker & Graybeal, 2001). Consistent with the effectiveness of our manipulation, we found that groups in the superordinate goal dialogue condition were significantly more likely to discuss their common goals than groups in the schmoozing condition ($p < .001$), more likely to do so using a collective frame of reference ($p < .001$), disagreed less ($p < .001$), and used more positive emotions ($p < .001$). There were no

differences between conditions in negative emotions expressed. These data show negotiators discussed common goals more in the superordinate goal dialogue condition than the schmoozing condition, but also that these discussions were characterized by more collective frames of reference and less disagreement. Analyses of the pre-negotiation data revealed that groups followed instructions and refrained from discussing the issues in the negotiation during the pre-negotiation phase.

The exploratory analyses also provided some preliminary insight into the topics discussed within each condition. Groups in the superordinate goal dialogue condition were most likely to discuss making profit, followed by distributive justice, relationship building, understanding each other's needs, and procedural justice. They also discussed these topics significantly more than groups in the schmoozing control condition (all p's <.001). Groups in the schmoozing control condition were most likely to discuss their current classes, exams, and instructors, followed by the current study, information about themselves, information unrelated to the study, and common connections. The schmoozing groups also discussed these topics significantly more than the superordinate goal dialogue groups (all p's <.017). These data show that the manipulations of schmoozing and superordinate goal dialogues were effective, but also provide insight into the topics discussed within each condition.

Finally, we correlated the coded data with pre-negotiation trust, strategy, and joint gain. These results show that superordinate goal dialogues that focused on distributive justice topics (i.e., fair allocation of resources) and involved little disagreement were positively associated with the trust needed to use more Q&A, less S&O, and ultimately higher joint gain.

Discussion

Study 4 shows the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that underlie the effect of pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues. From a psychological perspective, pre-

negotiation trust was higher after a superordinate goal dialogue than after schmoozing. From a behavioral perspective, use of Q&A was higher and use of S&O was lower in groups in the superordinate goals dialogue condition than in the schmoozing condition. These heightened trust levels, which in turn increased a reliance on cooperative Q&A strategy and decreased reliance on competitive S&O strategy, explained why superordinate goal dialogues increased joint gain.

The effect of superordinate goal dialogues on joint gains in Study 4 was marginally significant. More importantly, the indirect effect via trust, use of strategy was significant, indicating that superordinate goal dialogues need to generate trust in order to affect joint gain. Thus, Study 4 reveals the trust mechanism by which superordinate goal dialogues influenced joint gain in Studies 1, 2 and 3.

Importantly, Study 4 shows that superordinate goal dialogues have both psychological and behavioral implications that schmoozing does not. As compared to schmoozing, these dialogues not only increased pre-negotiation trust and the use of Q&A strategy, but also decreased the use of S&O strategy. Overall, Study 4 shows that promoting cooperative behavior and reducing competitive behavior, which can be achieved through first increasing trust via superordinate goal dialogues, is key to helping teams achieve higher joint gain.

General Discussion

These four, face-to-face, interactive negotiation studies document that pre-negotiation superordinate goal dialogues between teams improves joint gain. Study 1 shows the causal effect of teams discussing superordinate goals prior to negotiating on joint gain. Study 2 replicates this effect with a more complex task and more experienced participants. Study 3 replicates this effect and provides evidence supporting the core assumptions underlying our theorizing. These include that the positive effect of superordinate goal dialogues emerges when dialogues focus on a discussion of superordinate goals (not own team goals), are held

between teams (not within teams) to create positive perceived interdependence, and are held after team preparation (not before) at a time when teams were ready to pursue these goals. Study 4 shows that superordinate goal dialogues increase joint gain because they promote trust prior to the negotiation, which in turn increases the use of a cooperative Q&A strategy and decreases the use of a competitive S&O strategy during the negotiation. Study 4 also shows the value of a discussion of superordinate goals over merely schmoozing.

To examine the robustness of the superordinate goal dialogue intervention, we followed recommendations from recent research to include different types of control conditions (Schaerer et al., 2018). The general rule is that control conditions should be characterized by an absence of elements of the "treatment" relevant to the study context so that they serve as a baseline against which treatment effects can be evaluated. For most studies, scholars can choose between different types of baselines, recognizing that all come with certain advantages and disadvantages. For example, whereas the schmoozing control condition in Study 4 is an ecologically valid control, because most of the executives in the survey reported in the introduction indicated that this is what they do prior to a negotiation, it also introduces a potential threat to the internal validity because it allows teams to speak to each other. Likewise, whereas the control condition in Study 1 addresses this threat to internal validity, it compromises ecological validity, as most negotiators would not sit in front of each other without talking for several minutes. To address these challenges, we use different types of control conditions across our studies. Collectively our studies document the positive impact of superordinate goal dialogues on trust, use of negotiation strategy, and joint gain. They also identify the conditions that need to be met for such dialogues to be effective: the dialogues' focus on superordinate goals (not own team goals), the dialogues context between teams (not within teams), and the dialogues' timing after team preparation (not before).

Theoretical Contributions

We developed and tested implications drawn from prior work in negotiation and intergroup relations relevant to facilitating trust and joint gain in team-on-team negotiations. Our research presumed that team-on-team negotiations: 1) are widely used when negotiations are complex and/or political, 2) have the potential to create joint gain because they bring an informational advantage, and 3) are more competitive than negotiations between solos due to lower trust. To address the threat of low trust and high competition in team-on-team negotiations, we proposed a conversation-based intervention to improve trust that built upon prior work on communication in intergroup relations.

Our findings provide a deeper understanding of when and why structured goal dialogues prior to negotiation can decrease competition and facilitate joint gain in team negotiations. Our research shows that the timing and topics of pre-negotiation dialogues have important implications for negotiating joint gain. Pre-negotiation contact without the right type of conversation topic or the right conversation topic without proper timing are unlikely to promote trust and joint gain. The right topic for conversation is a superordinate goal dialogue that creates perceptions of positive interdependence and a discussion of goals that are desirable and cannot be achieved by a single party alone. The right time for such contact is when both teams are ready to pursue these goals. We focused here on each team's readiness in terms of having prepared and solidified their own goals prior to the negotiation.

Theoretically, our intervention is successful because it addresses one of the fundamental reasons why people employ a competitive strategy in team-on-team negotiations. People engaged in intergroup conflict are less likely to trust and more likely compete with each other (Brewer & Kramer, 1985) unless they are able to perceive positive interdependence. Having teams meet separately to discuss their own goals prior to meeting to discuss superordinate goals promotes goal clarity and distinctiveness (Fiol et al., 2009). This within-group goal discussion appears to have helped teams that then participated in a superordinate goal

dialogue cope more realistically with the goal conflicts inherent in their mixed motive negotiation. Because within team discussion helps teams clarify their own goals, it also confronts teams with the reality that the common goals that both want can only be achieved through cooperation. This realization creates positive interdependence between teams that increases their willingness to trust each other and engage in more cooperative and less competitive behavior to achieve these goals (Brewer, 2000). For all these reasons, the within team meeting sets the stage for a productive between team discussion of superordinate goals.

The current results also contribute to the prior literature on team negotiations that has focused predominantly on when and/or why teams have an informational advantage over solos, but has not studied how to improve the occurrence of this advantage for teams. (See Cohen & Thompson, 2011 for a review.) Although the creation of joint gain is a function of both cognitive and social processes, assumptions about the importance of fostering trust and lowering competition in inter-team negotiations have not been developed theoretically or tested empirically against the existing approach to simply start the negotiation without any pre-negotiation dialogue between teams. Our findings show that meetings to discuss superordinate goals just prior to negotiations can play a critical role in promoting trust, reducing competition, and creating joint gain.

Our results also contribute to the literature on intergroup relations (Hewstone et al., 2005) because they provide an answer to the open question of how contact can encourage negotiating teams to build trust and behave more cooperatively. To this end, our findings show that trust and cooperation in intergroup negotiations is more likely if teams are ready and able to identify superordinate goals that each team cannot achieve on its own. These findings build upon prior work on negotiations and social dilemmas that highlight that merely providing an opportunity to communicate is not always sufficient to facilitate cooperation

(e.g., Balliet, 2010; Swaab et al., 2007). Negotiating teams need to plan both the nature and timing of their discussions to facilitate trust, cooperation, and joint gain.

Practical Implications, Limitations, and Questions for Future Research

Our findings have practical implications because they offer negotiators and/or mediators insights into how and when to intervene to facilitate trust, reduce competition, increase cooperation, and joint gain. Teams should plan prior to negotiating (Brett et al., 2009) and that planning should occur before teams meet to discuss superordinate goals. However, as revealed by the survey reported in the introduction, it is rare for teams to open negotiations discussing superordinate goals. Doing so in an inter-team negotiation might be as counter normative as discussing decision-making processes before group decision-making (Hackman & Morris, 1975). Thus, our most critical advice for team negotiations is to set a new norm and have a superordinate goal dialogue when both teams are ready to discuss these goals. Although the present research focused on perhaps the most natural moment to have these discussions – after planning within the team but before negotiating with the other team – superordinate goal dialogues can be brought up at any point during the conversation and should be effective as long as common goals exist and parties are ready to discuss them. Indeed, as conversation goals represent desires that arise in a particular context and are subject to change over time in a negotiation (Wilson, 2002), it is likely that teams can use superordinate goal dialogues effectively at any point in the negotiation as long as both sides are ready and willing to pursue such goals.

Meetings between teams prior to negotiations may be common in major transactions and critical in shaping subsequent negotiations. However, it is unclear from prior empirical research if, when, and why such contact between teams promotes joint gain. This is a particularly important question to answer in the context of team negotiations, as lack of trust may dominate these settings. The current research confirms that inter-team dialogues can

facilitate higher joint gain under specific circumstances. Dialogues that do not focus on superordinate goals (i.e., individual goals or just schmoozing) or do not follow a discussion of team goals are unlikely to establish trust. Although negotiators may be inclined to start negotiating immediately or to engage in task-irrelevant small talk first, we propose that teams and/or third parties (e.g., managers, mediators) who carefully structure a pre-negotiation joint meeting to promote inter-team trust will be more successful. The discussion of superordinate goals has important implications for practitioners because most negotiators have some say in how to structure their negotiation.

Building on the negotiations and intergroup relations literatures, we proposed and found that superordinate goal dialogues prior to negotiation between teams were key to achieving joint gain because they promoted trust and reduced competition. Future research could explore whether such dialogues are effective in emotionally charged disputes between teams characterized by hostility. Our theorizing implies that such conversations are unlikely to benefit from superordinate goal dialogues because the teams are not ready or willing to engage in these dialogues. Under these circumstances, superordinate goals may not help, and possibly may backfire if held between teams that are *already* engaged in conflict. Indeed, this is consistent with prior research showing that intergroup contact can intensify the hostile feelings that negotiating parties hold toward each other (Swaab et al., 2012). As such, to garner the benefits of superordinate goal dialogues in less acrimonious settings, these dialogues may be more effective later (e.g., after tension is reduced) as opposed to earlier in the negotiation, when negative emotions are particularly strong.

Although our exploratory analyses provide insight into the types of topics that teams discussed during their superordinate goal dialogue, future research could further examine the effectiveness of different goals. Wilson and Putnam (1990) propose that interaction goals vary in terms of their type and level of abstraction. For example, interaction goals can be

instrumental and task-oriented (e.g., obtaining profits, information), relational (e.g., gaining power, avoiding subjection), or identity related (e.g., preserving one's own team identity while dealing with the identity of the other team). They can refer to a series of negotiation sessions, a single session, or a small segment within a session. Prior communication research shows that instrumental goals predict the use of distributive tactics, and that identity and relational goals predict the use of integrative tactics (Canary et al., 1988; Keck & Samp, 2007). These findings, combined with the insights from the present research, suggest that the goals that teams discussed in the superordinate goal dialogues were more likely relational and identity goals rather than instrumental goals.

Whereas the current research highlights the benefits of superordinate goal dialogues for inter-team negotiations, it is unclear why the effects did not extend to dyadic settings in Study 1. Given that trust is higher in negotiations between dyads than teams (Naquin & Kurtzberg, 2009; Polzer, 1996), it is possible that superordinate goal dialogues were less fruitful in improving trust in dyadic than in team negotiations. Indeed, such an explanation would be consistent with prior research showing that cooperative goals cause dyads to reduce their reliance on competitive strategies but do not increase their reliance on cooperative strategies that are responsible for higher joint gain (Liu & Wilson, 2011). As such, the use of superordinate goal dialogues may be primarily useful in dyadic negotiations with lower levels of trust between parties. Future work is needed to understand their efficacy in these settings.

Conclusion

Combining insights from the negotiation and intergroup literatures, we examined a conversation-based intervention that promoted trust, increased cooperation, reduced competition, and created value in inter-team negotiations. The emphasis on superordinate goal dialogues is a departure from the traditional approach to start negotiations immediately or engage in schmoozing. Our results show that when teams jointly discuss superordinate

goals that they cannot achieve by themselves, and do so at a time when they are ready and willing pursue these goals, they establish trust, which helps them achieve high quality negotiation outcomes. It is our hope that these findings illustrate the potential benefits that conversations between teams have for overcoming challenges commonly found in inter-team negotiations, while also helping to spur future work on this topic.

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