



# It Doesn't Hurt to Ask (for More Time): Employees Overestimate the Interpersonal Costs of Extension Requests



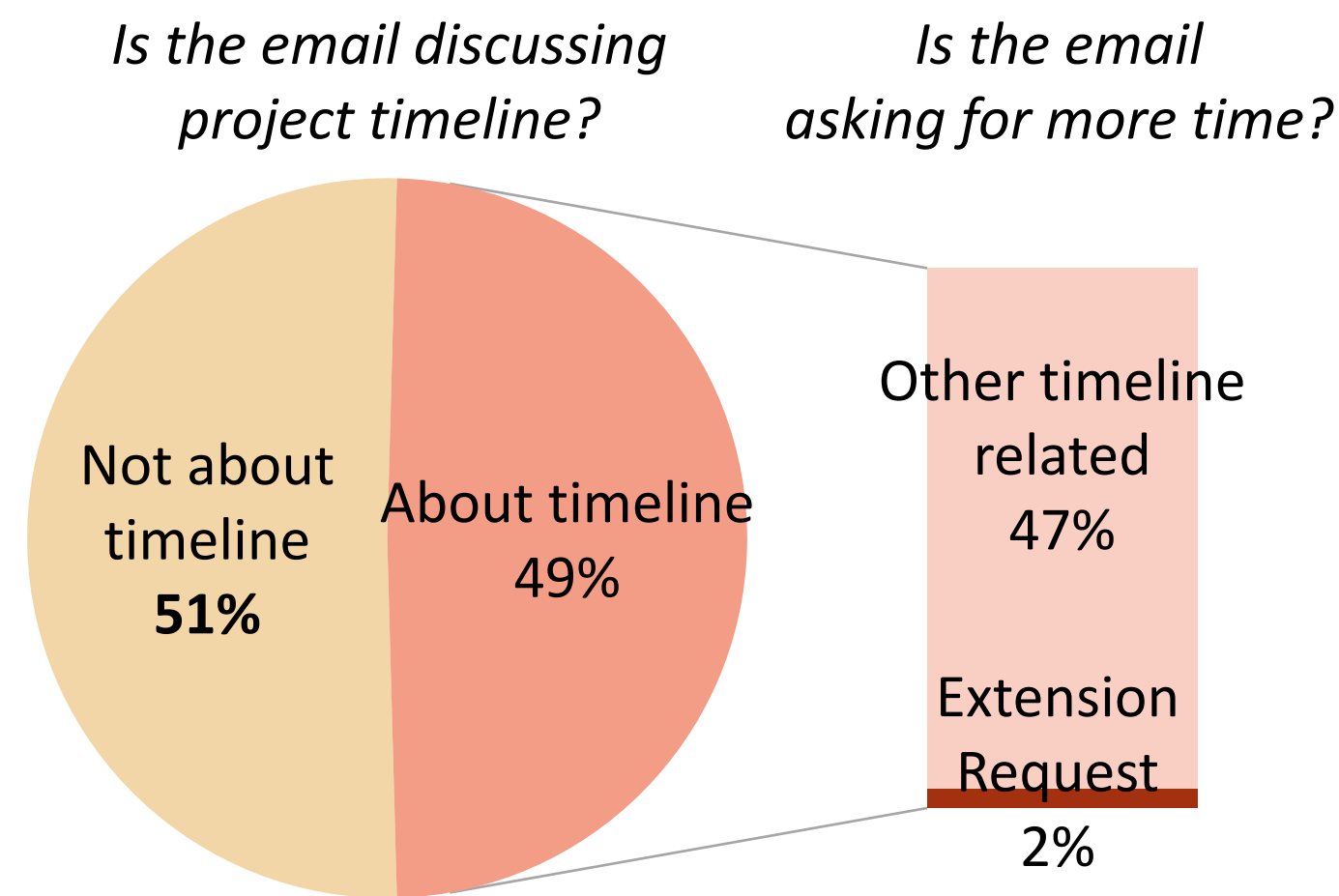
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## Abstract

Five studies (N=3220) demonstrate that employees avoid asking for more to work on their tasks because they overestimate its image costs. Results suggest that this perspective gap may lead employees to forgo the opportunity to enhance their performance and image through asking for more time.

## Survey & Archival Data Analysis

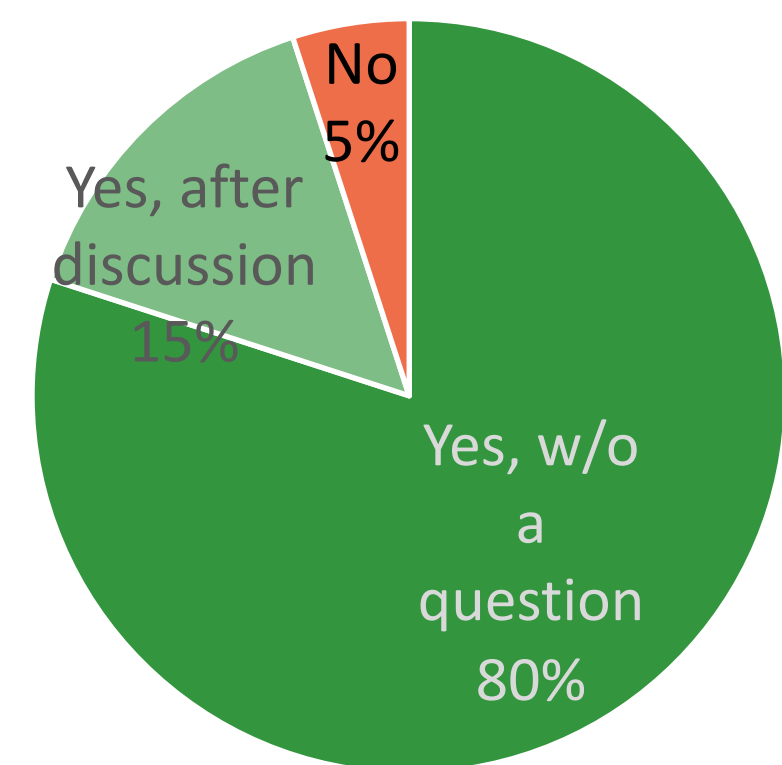
Employees don't communicate their need for more time.



(N=348; Work email corpus data of an energy firm (1997-1999))

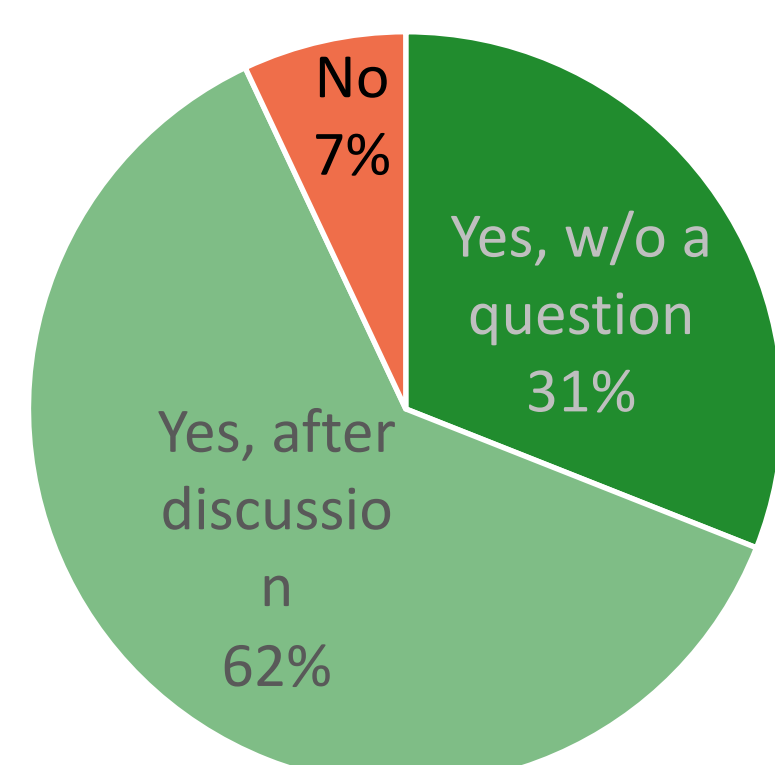
Even when managers willingly give more time.

Did the manager grant the employee more time?



(N=228; Working employee sample)

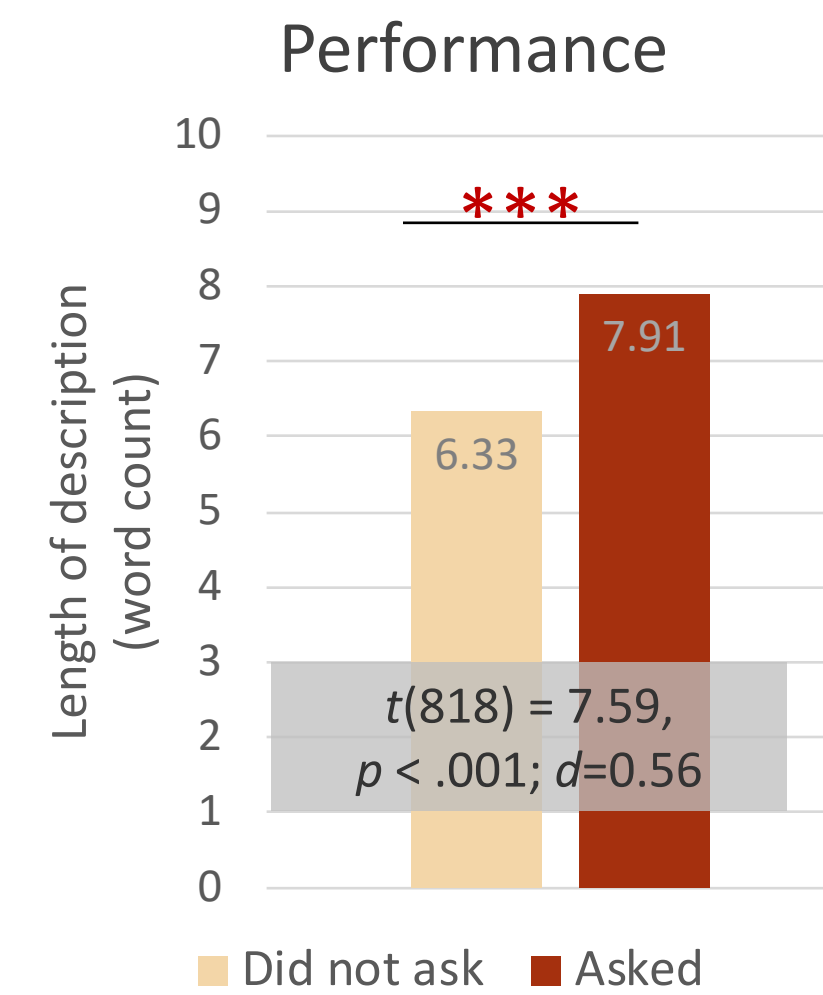
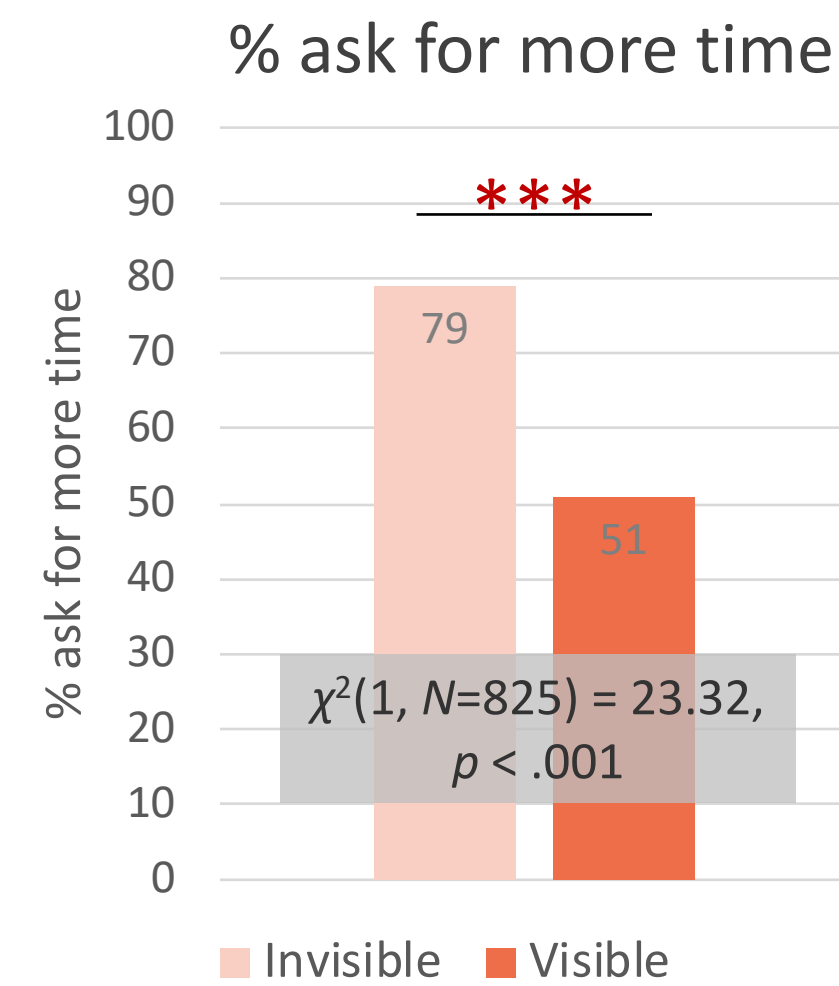
Would you give them an extension?



(N=152; Working manager sample)

## Study 1A

- Task: describe events happening in an image, as many & detailed as possible
- "A manager will evaluate how competent/motivated you are based on your performance, which will determine your payment."
- Worked on task for 2 minutes + opportunity to ask for more time (1 min)
- 2 conditions: extension request visible vs. invisible to manager



## Study 1B

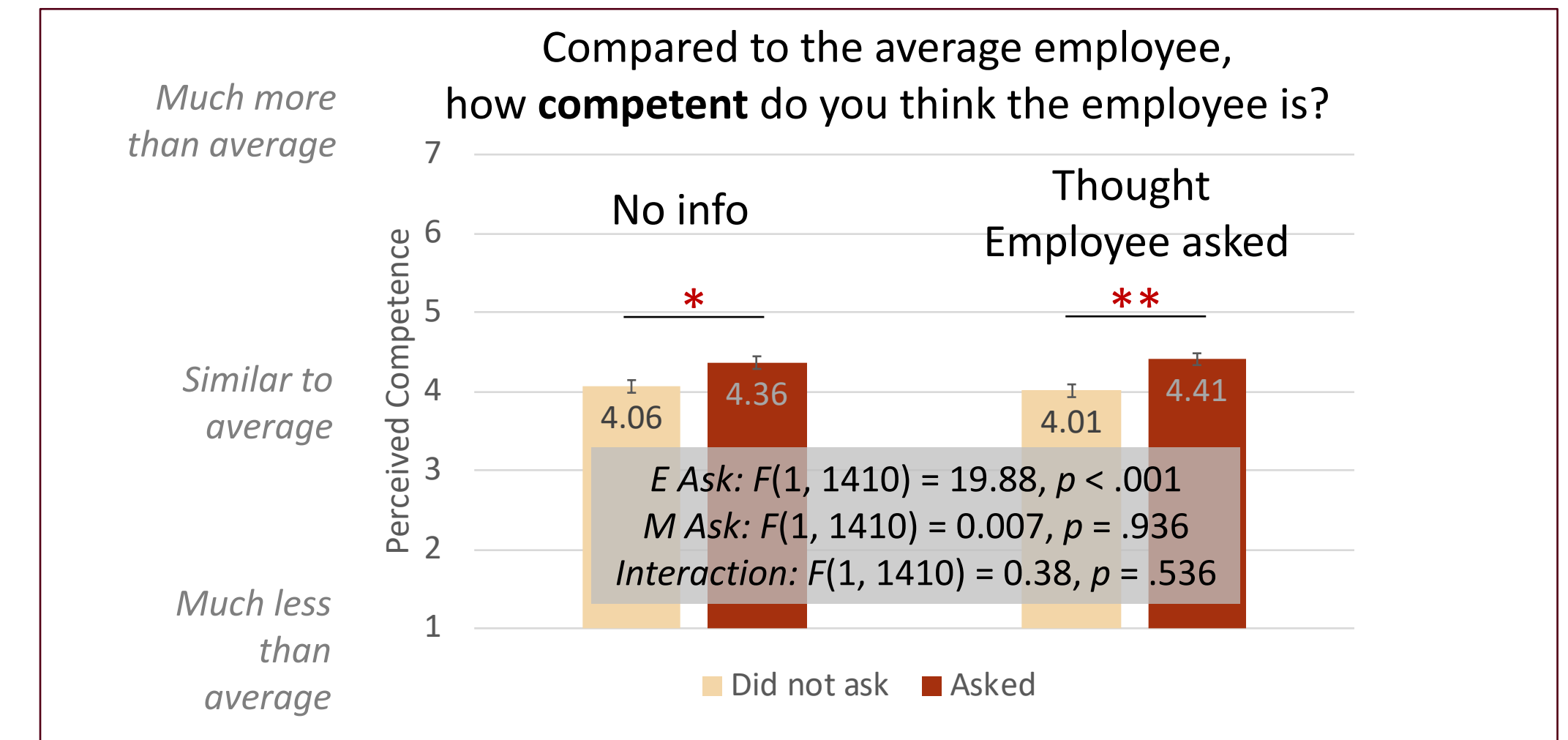
- Manager perspective.
- 2 (Employees asked vs. did not ask for more time) x 2 (Manager thought employee asked for more time vs. not)

Below is how your employee performed on the image description task.

NOTE: The employee asked for one more minute to complete the task.

Number of events described: 5  
Detail Score: 2 out of 4

This is a picture of a busy town square. In there center is a two level fountain



## Study 2

2 (Role: Employee vs. Manager) x 3 (Task Urgency: Ambiguous, High, Low)

Sample Scenario: Employee / Urgent

Imagine you work at a firm where you work closely with a direct supervisor. (...) This supervisor's evaluation of you will determine the pay raise you will receive at the end of the year. (...) Today, your supervisor assigned you to draft a proposal for a fundraising event that your department will host this year. (...) Your supervisor wants you to submit the proposal by the end of tomorrow. The event will be happening soon, so planning the event is a time sensitive task.

The employee's asking for more time to work on the task, compared to not asking for more time, [would make / makes] the manager perceive the employee as...

