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THE INDIVIDUAL, THE SOURCE, AND THE CONTEXT: AN INVESTIGATION OF ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF FEEDBACK SEEKING BEHAVIOR

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The William W. and Catherine M. Rucks Department of Management

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ABSTRACT

In the last twenty years, researchers have examined why individuals may proactively seek performance feedback in the workplace. Since Ashford and Cummings' (1983) seminal article, situational and individual difference variables have predominantly been examined to predict how often employees will seek feedback. One situational variable that has been researched but not sufficiently examined is the feedback context. A public or a private feedback context considers whether the presence of an audience inhibits or facilitates feedback seeking behaviors. This dissertation explores the role of the feedback context by developing a conceptual model to determine how frequently employees may seek feedback in a public or private context. Variables used in previous feedback seeking research are incorporated in this conceptual model. These individual difference and situational variables include perceived value of public or private feedback, goal orientation, public self-consciousness, self-esteem, external feedback propensity, and tolerance for ambiguity. Also explored are the relationships between public or private feedback seeking and individual outcomes such as career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and individual performance.

One hundred forty-eight employees participated in a field study to determine whether individuals vary in their feedback seeking behaviors. Results of this study show some significant differences in individuals seeking public or private feedback. The results also support some significant relationships between public or private feedback seeking and individual outcomes such as extrinsic career success. Surprisingly, the relationships between public and private feedback seeking and organizational citizenship behaviors and individual performance were not as predicted.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Performance management has gained importance for human resource practitioners and corporations with more emphasis being placed on improving performance appraisal practices and performance goals (Gagne, 2002). Recently, corporations such as Payless ShoeSource and PPG Industries have tried to become learning organizations that emphasize continuous self-development of employee skills that match business goals (Gagne, 2002; Rich, 2002). Some companies are moving away from traditional performance reviews and instead are focusing on increasing performance feedback and goals on a regular basis. The concept of continuous improvement and learning creates an atmosphere for self-development and increased performance feedback. Organizational systems are also being designed to encourage employees to seek performance feedback more frequently instead of waiting for their annual review (Gagne, 2002). Thus, practitioners and researchers continue to recognize the value of performance feedback in relation to employee behavior.

Feedback research has long been recognized as an important component in performance improvements (e.g., Fedor, 1991; Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979; Nadler, 1979). Feedback has been defined as any information regarding the effectiveness of an individual's behavior (Ilgen et al. 1979). In addition to a focus on performance appraisal, researchers have begun to investigate other facets of the feedback process, including an individual's reaction to feedback (Fedor, 1991) and an individual's proactive feedback seeking behavior (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Early models present many different phases of the feedback process (Ilgen et al., 1979), such as the individual's perceptions of feedback, his or her acceptance of feedback, the

individual's desire to respond to feedback, and the individual's intended response. These early models either accentuate feedback research as information that is typically only given to employees during performance appraisals or highlight an individual's reaction to performance feedback. As research on the feedback process evolved, scholars began to stress developing feedback environments within organizations. Additionally, researchers introduced the notion of employees taking a proactive role in the feedback process (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). This research indicates that individuals may actively seek feedback in order to obtain more information regarding their performance.

Feedback seeking behavior research has identified many individual and situational antecedent variables such as goal orientation (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle, Ganesan, Challagalla, & Brown, 2000) and relationship quality with the feedback source. Researchers studying relationship quality posited that the relationship between the feedback source and feedback seeker would be positively related to a greater frequency of feedback seeking behavior with that particular source (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; Madzar, 2001). Although there have been a few studies that show a positive relationship between feedback seeking behavior and performance (e.g., Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001), most of the feedback seeking research over the last twenty years has identified specific antecedents leading to this proactive behavior. Subsequently, with the increasing emphasis on continuous improvement and self-development in learning organizations, researchers have focused on identifying conducive feedback environments that encourage employees to seek performance feedback at any time. However, the effects of creating this kind of feedback

environment on individual-level outcomes, such as individual performance, should also be considered (Madzar, 1995; Morrison, 1995).

One research stream to emerge in the last decade focuses on the relationship between the feedback seeking context and feedback seeking behaviors. The feedback seeking context considers whether an individual will seek feedback in a public or private context. That is, the presence of other individuals besides the feedback source (i.e., a public context) or the presence of only one person (i.e., private context) has a direct relationship on an individual's tendency to seek feedback. Individuals are reluctant to seek feedback in a public situation more than a private situation due to impression management costs (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy, Albright, Cawley, & Williams, 1995). In order to develop proper feedback environments, organizations need to have a better understanding of the contexts in which people choose to seek performance feedback.

Ashford and Cummings (1983) identified specific motives for seeking feedback, such as uncertainty reduction, impression management, and protection of one's ego. In order to understand an individual's feedback environment, researchers and practitioners should have a better understanding of employees' motives in choosing a particular context for feedback seeking. Individual and situational variables predicting the choice of the feedback seeking context as well as individual outcomes of a proactive feedback seeking behavior will be discussed in this dissertation.

Statement of the Problem

Recent evidence regarding the feedback environment supports the need for more research to determine other factors that may be related to feedback seeking behavior and, more specifically, strategies for organizations to encourage a feedback

seeking environment (Madzar, 1995; Morrison, 1995; Williams, Miller, Steelman, & Levy, 1999). Feedback seeking behavior has been shown to be positively related to individual performance (Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001); however, previous research also supports the notion that some individuals are reluctant to seek feedback in a public context (Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990). Thus, models of feedback seeking should be created to explore the dynamics of the feedback seeking context that may encourage more feedback seeking behavior. For instance, if an individual works for an organization in which most people seek feedback in a public context and if that individual only seeks feedback in a private context, then that individual's performance may suffer due to his or her unwillingness to seek public feedback. Are some individuals more likely to seek feedback in a public context than a private context and, if so, does the information source relate to individual consequences, such as individual performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and career success? This dissertation proposes that individuals will vary on which context (i.e., public vs. private) they will seek information and on how the feedback seeking behavior relates to individual outcomes.

Theoretically, researchers have focused on defensive impression management strategies to explain why people may or may not seek feedback. However, it is important to recognize that employees may also seek feedback for assertive impression management motives that will improve their public image (Morrison & Bies, 1991). Within the impression management literature (Morrison & Bies, 1991), a defensive impression management strategy affirms that individuals will avoid creating an unfavorable public image. Conversely, individuals may use an assertive impression management strategy, engaging in behaviors to enhance their public image. In

particular, individuals may seek feedback in a public situation not only to acquire diagnostic information but also to appear conscientious and concerned about their task performance. Contrary to the goal of improving one's public image, individuals may seek feedback in a private context to protect their ego. Therefore, individual motives for seeking performance feedback may vary according to the context and the person from whom feedback is sought in the workplace.

In this dissertation, a conceptual scheme will be developed to explore which situational and individual variables are related to an employee's willingness to seek feedback in a public or private context. Figure 1 depicts the antecedents identified to predict feedback seeking behavior in a public or private context. Individual influences such as goal orientation, public self-consciousness, self-esteem, external feedback propensity, and tolerance for ambiguity will be examined. Furthermore, the situational variable, perceived value of feedback will be incorporated in the conceptual scheme. Previous research has focused on many of these variables as being related to the frequency of feedback seeking behavior; however, these studies have not explicitly considered an individual's choice to seek feedback in a public or private context. Based on impression management theory, this dissertation will explore both the defensive and assertive management motives that individuals use to seek diagnostic feedback. Moreover, this dissertation will propose that individuals develop these strategies not only to receive pertinent information but also to improve their public image by choosing a particular context in which to seek feedback.

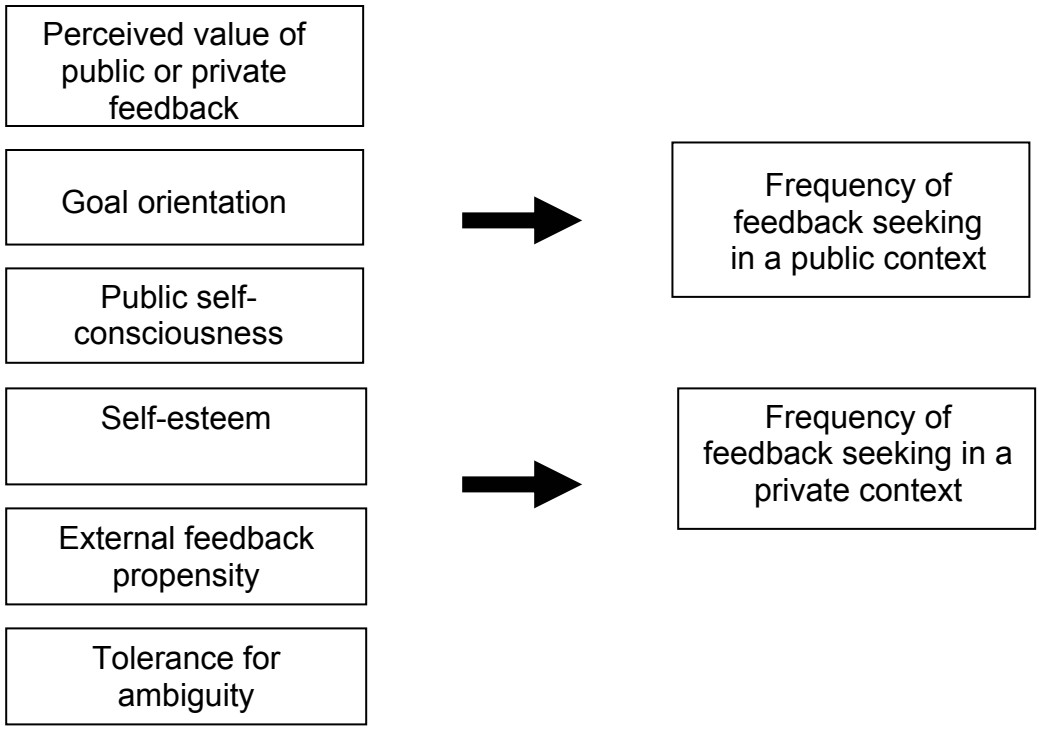

Figure 1. Antecedents predicting feedback seeking behavior in a public or private context.

Also considered in this dissertation will be individual outcomes of feedback seeking behavior. Figure 2 depicts the individual outcome variables of career success, organizational citizenship behavior, and individual performance, which are included in the conceptual scheme. Relatively few studies have addressed the feedback seeking source in relation to feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995), and only a few studies have addressed individual outcomes in relation to feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). Therefore, both public and private feedback seeking behavior will be examined as an interaction with feedback source predicting individual outcomes. Impression management and social exchange theory will be used to support this framework.

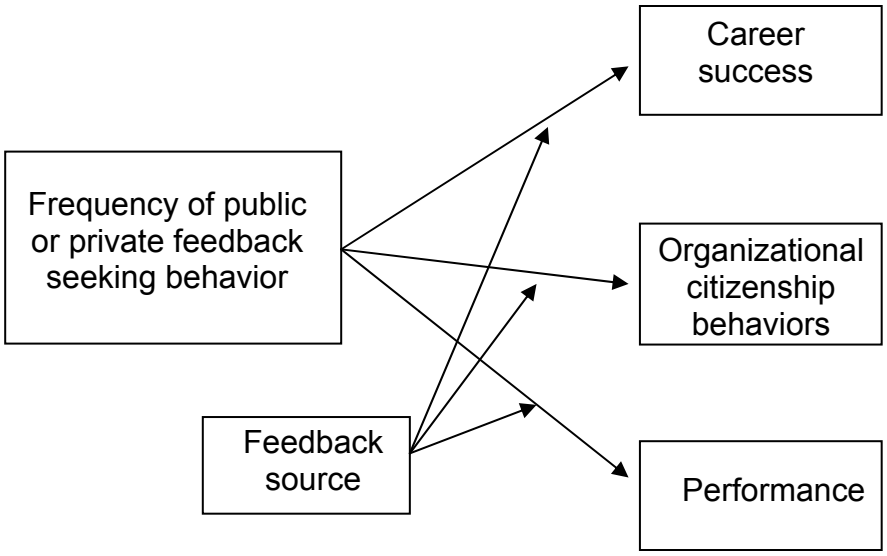

Figure 2: The interaction between feedback seeking frequency and feedback source predicting individual outcomes.

The remaining chapters of this dissertation will elaborate on a conceptual scheme for feedback seeking behavior. In the first part of Chapter 2, the proposed antecedents for seeking feedback in a public or private context will be discussed and the second half will discuss the interaction between feedback seeking frequency and feedback source predicting individual outcomes. In Chapter 3, the proposed statistical methods and procedures for testing the conceptual scheme will be discussed. The results from the data will be discussed in Chapter 4, and the final chapter will provide a general discussion of the overall dissertation with suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Feedback has long been studied as an important component in various facets of organizational research (Greller & Herold, 1975; Ilgen et al., 1979; Nadler, 1979). Herold and Greller (1977) stressed the importance of fully understanding the feedback process due to its relationship with training, performance, motivation, and satisfaction. The importance of feedback is also stressed in job design theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and goal-setting theory (Locke, Shaw, Saari, & Latham, 1981). While early models present many different phases of the feedback process (Ilgen et al., 1979; Nadler, 1979), they present feedback as something that is only given to employees without considering whether employees actively seek feedback. In this dissertation, I explore the proactive feedback seeking behaviors of individuals in the workplace by discussing the evolution of feedback seeking research from these early feedback models (e.g., Ilgen et al., 1979; Nadler, 1979). The present chapter identifies potential gaps in the literature that will be subsequently addressed in this dissertation.

Ilgen, Fisher, and Taylor (1979) developed an initial framework on feedback from which many research streams have evolved. The authors defined feedback as any information regarding the effectiveness of an individual's behavior. Ilgen et al. discussed four phases in their feedback framework, as well as the processes that influence feedback. The first phase in the feedback process addresses how accurately an individual perceives and remembers the feedback, and whether the individual links the feedback to the appropriate behaviors. The second phase involves the individual's acceptance of the feedback message as being accurate, reliable, and consistent. The third phase addresses the individual's desire to respond to feedback and determines

whether the feedback serves as a motivator to change the individual's behavior. Finally, the fourth phase considers the individual's intentions to respond to the feedback message through the actual behavioral changes and/or reactions.

Within each of these phases, Ilgen et al. (1979) discussed three components that may relate to the feedback process: feedback source, feedback message, and recipient of the feedback. The source may relate to each of these phases through variables such as the perceived credibility of the source and the power or influence a source may have over the individual. The feedback message may relate to each of the four phases of feedback through its timing, sign (i.e., positive or negative feedback), and frequency, such that feedback given immediately after a specific behavior may have more impact on individual performance than feedback given a week later. After considering each of these components, the recipient may not fully process the information, accept the feedback as relevant, and/or intend to change his or her behavior after receiving the feedback information. From this review, Ilgen et al. suggested that future research should evaluate the impact of the feedback source on the recipient, recipient reactions, and motivation or intentions to give feedback.

Nadler (1979) developed a feedback framework that explains the effects of feedback on task group behavior instead of only considering the effects of feedback on individual behavior. Nadler defines feedback as information about actual performance that can be used to control future performance and he develops a preliminary model based on the motivational effects that feedback may have on group performance. Feedback is more specifically classified as three types: feedback to the entire group, feedback on an individual's performance related to the group, and feedback on the individual's performance only. Similar to previous models (e.g., Ilgen et al., 1979),

Nadler defines four categories for consideration in the group feedback process: characteristics of the feedback, nature of the feedback process (i.e., whether the feedback is used for goal setting or problem-solving), individual differences of the group members, and the task structure (i.e., how individual performance relates to group performance). From this preliminary model of group feedback effects, Nadler (1979) noted that future research streams should pay more attention to individual difference variables as a motivator for group processes, and to the feedback process in relation to group motivational effects.

Both of these early models present the individual as a passive recipient in the feedback process, and both incorporate similar phases. For instance, both Ilgen et al. (1979) and Nadler (1979) discuss individual differences as a potential factor relating to the feedback, and both models incorporate the characteristics of the feedback as important components in the feedback process. Furthermore, in Ilgen et al.'s model, the feedback source becomes an important component in the feedback process and potentially to the feedback recipient. While these early models stressed a passive recipient to feedback, researchers were identifying important components of an individual's feedback environment (e.g., Greller & Herold, 1975), such as the feedback sources within an organization.

Researchers began looking for sources of performance information for employees in the feedback environment, and five were identified, including the formal organization, supervisors, co-workers, task-output, and self (Greller & Herold, 1975). Greller and Herold concluded that the usefulness of feedback differed by the amount of information received and how psychologically distant the source was from the individual. Although these authors concluded that employees used many different

sources for feedback, this stream of research continued to view employees as "passive" recipients in the feedback process. Nonetheless, Greller and Herold's study later inspired other researchers to consider components of the feedback environment.

Subsequent research by Herold and Parsons (1985) developed a feedback environment scale, which takes into consideration cues available in an environment. However, the authors only considered what cues are most available in a feedback environment and did not address which cues are used in an organization. Ashford (1993) began to address these research questions. Her research study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to discuss cue availability in organizations and to determine which cues were most commonly used by individuals. Unlike previous studies (e.g., Greller & Herold, 1975; Herold & Parsons, 1985), the findings contradict the importance of psychologically close feedback from the task and self-feedback, in favor of a greater emphasis on more distant sources such as a supervisor or the organization. Ashford (1993) found that employees perceived the supervisor and organization as more important sources that could help them succeed in organizations. An individual's co-worker was also found to be an important and frequently used source within the feedback environment. Ashford concluded that many cues are available in any organization, such as the task, self, co-worker, supervisor, and the company; however, only a few of these sources are perceived as important and are actually used by individuals.

Literature Review for Feedback Seeking Behavior

While research was developing on the feedback environment, feedback seeking behavior emerged as another approach to understanding an employee's work environment. Since Ashford and Cummings' (1983) seminal article on feedback

seeking behavior, numerous studies have emphasized both personal, as well as situational influences on feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Fedor, Rensvold, & Adams, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). More recently, scholars have focused on the importance of creating a feedback seeking environment for employees and have tried to determine which individual and situational variables may increase the frequency of feedback seeking behavior (Levy et al., 1995; Williams et al., 1999; Madzar, 1995, Morrison, 1995). Researchers have also examined this feedback seeking behavior in relation to managerial effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991) and performance outcomes (Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001).

Unique to Ashford and Cummings (1983) was the suggestion that employees can also be proactive in seeking feedback. Specifically, the authors describe feedback seeking behavior as a conscious devotion of effort toward determining the correctness and adequacy of behaviors for attaining valued end states. Feedback seeking behavior can be exhibited through *inquiry* or *monitoring.* Inquiry exists when an employee asks another source for information regarding performance feedback, whereas monitoring behavior occurs when an employee observes informational cues from various sources without directly asking for performance feedback.

Ashford and Cummings (1983) discussed various motives for individuals to seek performance feedback either through inquiry or monitoring. The first motive is uncertainty reduction for the individual. By seeking feedback, employees can reduce uncertainty regarding their task performance and alter their behavior, which may help them attain particular goals. A second motive for seeking feedback is signaling. That is, feedback provides cues as to which behaviors are considered valuable within the

organization. For instance, a manager may give feedback regarding an employee's customer service skills to signal to the employee that quality customer service is an important goal for the organization. Finally, the authors discussed an ego defensive motive to avoiding negative feedback. This motive suggests that seeking feedback for its informational value may cause conflict if an individual's desire is to protect his or her ego. The authors suggested that contextual factors and the seeker's past performance may be reasons for protecting one's ego and may determine the frequency of feedback seeking behavior.

Although it is important to understand the motives for seeking feedback, researchers have also examined specific individual and situational variables that cause individuals to seek performance feedback. Over the past twenty years, individual difference variables such as tolerance for ambiguity (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Bennett, Herold, & Ashford, 1990; Fedor et. al, 1992), external feedback propensity (Fedor et al., 1992; Renn & Fedor, 2001), public self-consciousness (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; London, Larsen, & Thisted, 1999), self-esteem (Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995), and goal orientation (Madzar, 2001; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000) have been identified as antecedents to the frequency of feedback seeking behavior.

Situational variables such as the perceived value of seeking feedback (Ashford, 1986; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000), the credibility, and expertise of the feedback source (Fedor et al., 1992; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995), the feedback source's mood (Ang, Cummings, Straub, & Earley, 1993), the feedback context (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995;

Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Williams et al., 1999), and the source's supportiveness and leadership styles (Madzar, 2001; VandeWalle et al., 2000; Williams et al., 1999) have also been identified as antecedents to feedback seeking behavior. Most studies on feedback seeking behavior have adopted a framework with both individual and situational variables. Some of the variables identified as antecedents have shown consistent results in the literature, whereas other variables have not (e.g., public self-consciousness, and self-esteem). In the next few paragraphs, I will provide a general overview of the relationships found between these antecedents and the frequency of feedback seeking behavior.

Antecedents to Feedback Seeking Behaviors. Tolerance for ambiguity is an individual's ability to tolerate an uncertain situation. All of the research findings support a negative relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and feedback seeking behavior (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Bennett et. al, 1990; Fedor et al., 1992). External feedback propensity is another individual difference variable that relates to an individual's preference for or trust in feedback from other sources. External feedback propensity has been positively related to an individual's feedback seeking behavior (Fedor et al., 1992; Renn & Fedor, 2001). I will examine these variables in relation to both public and private feedback later in this chapter.

Goal orientation is grounded in research by Dweck (1986), which identifies two types of individuals: those with a learning goal orientation and those with a performance goal orientation. An individual with a learning goal orientation strives to improve his or her ability, and an individual with a performance goal orientation focuses on proving his or her ability to other people (Dweck, 1986). VandeWalle and colleagues focused on individuals with a learning goal orientation and found a strong,

positive relationship between this personality trait and an individual's feedback seeking behavior (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). This variable will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Two other individual difference variables, public self-consciousness and self-esteem, have found equivocal results in research (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990). Public self-consciousness is defined as a personality trait that directs outward attention by recognizing the presence of others (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975). Ashford & Northcraft (1992) posited a negative relationship between individuals high in this personality trait and feedback seeking behavior; however, the results were not statistically significant. In fact, contrary to Ashford & Northcraft's hypotheses, Levy et al. (1995) found a significant positive relationship between public self-consciousness and feedback seeking behavior. These conflicting results and the proposed relationships will be discussed later in this chapter.

Similar to the conflicting findings regarding public self-consciousness, researchers have hypothesized both positive and negative relationships between self-esteem and feedback seeking behavior. For instance, Northcraft and Ashford (1990) posited that individuals with high self-esteem would be more likely to seek performance feedback, whereas Fedor et al. (1992) posited that high self-esteem individuals would be less likely to seek feedback. The results for the proposed main effects and interactions in these previous studies were mixed; I will discuss these studies in more detail later in the chapter as well.

Most of the situational variables explored in previous research revolve around the feedback source as an antecedent to seeking performance feedback. Source

credibility and expertise are similar variables that have been used interchangeably as antecedents to feedback seeking behavior. A highly credible source is an individual who is perceived as a good source of information due to his or her expertise. Researchers have found a positive relationship between source expertise and the frequency of feedback seeking behavior (Fedor et al., 1992; Morrison & Vancouver, 2001; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Another source variable emphasizes the mood of the source as a potential antecedent to feedback seeking behavior. Ang et al. (1993) found a strong, positive relationship between the source's mood and feedback seeking behavior such that when a feedback source is in a good mood then an individual will be more likely to seek feedback from that person.

The relationship between the source and the feedback seeker was further explored by considering the source's supportiveness and leadership style. Vancouver and Morrison (1995) found that close relationships between the feedback source and feedback seeker increase the tendency of feedback seeking behavior. Research has found positive relationships between leadership styles based on mutual trust, respect, and consideration of an individual's feelings, and the frequency of feedback seeking behavior (Madzar, 2001; VandeWalle et al., 2000). Although the feedback source has been shown to be an important antecedent to feedback seeking frequency, the source will not be included as an antecedent in this dissertation. This study only examines direct effects in order to maintain a parsimonious model. Future research could elaborate on the relationships between these antecedents and the feedback source in order to predict the frequency of public or private feedback seeking. However, the feedback source will be examined in relation to potential individual outcomes and the frequency of feedback seeking.

Perceived value of feedback is another situational variable that has been found to be positively related to feedback seeking behavior (Ashford, 1986; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). This situational variable's relationship to another previously researched variable, feedback context (i.e., being in the presence of an audience when seeking feedback), will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Many empirical studies have used a cost/benefit framework to explain why these antecedents (both individual and situational variables) predict feedback seeking behaviors. This framework is based on the contention that individuals consider various costs and benefits when deciding whether or not to seek feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Potential benefits of feedback seeking behavior have been conceptualized as its perceived value (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997), goal orientation of the feedback seeker (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000), and desire for control of the feedback seeker (Ashford & Black, 1996). If feedback seeking is viewed as a proactive behavior, then individuals with a learning goal orientation and desire for control in their performance will perceive feedback seeking as a benefit. Potential costs have been conceptualized as effort costs (Ashford, 1986), social costs (Ashford, 1986; Fedor et al., 1992), the impression management costs of seeking feedback in the presence of an audience (Ang et. al, 1993; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995), and low self-confidence of the feedback-seeker (Ashford, 1986).

A major gap in the literature concerns one of these perceived costs in feedback seeking behavior. There is a lack of research examining the role of the feedback context for feedback seeking behavior. Specifically, do certain individual and

situational variables relate differently to the frequency of seeking feedback in front of one person versus seeking feedback in front of many people? Another gap in the literature involves the relationship between feedback seeking behavior and individual consequences, such as career success, organizational citizenship behavior, and individual performance. There have been relatively few studies that incorporate consequences of feedback seeking behavior, such as managerial effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991), feedback based goals (Renn & Fedor, 2001), and performance (Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). Likewise, there is little research examining the role of the feedback source in relation to these potential consequences.

In the following section, I will discuss why researchers should consider the context (i.e., public vs. private) in which an individual seeks performance feedback. From this discussion, a conceptual scheme for seeking feedback in a public or private context will be developed using antecedents identified in previous research. Following the discussion on antecedents, literature regarding the feedback source in the feedback seeking process and a conceptual scheme incorporating the feedback source will be discussed.

Feedback Seeking Context

A few studies have examined the social costs related to seeking feedback in the presence of other employees (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Williams et. al, 1999; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990), and have noted that individuals may respond differently when seeking feedback before an audience. Researchers have defined the public nature of feedback seeking as two distinct situations: public feedback seeking and private feedback seeking. Although neither concept has been

clearly defined, public feedback seeking has been conceptualized as having a main feedback source and other co-workers present (who may or may not have an evaluative capacity) when the feedback is sought. Private feedback seeking has been conceptualized as having only the feedback source present when the feedback is sought. Ashford and Cummings (1983) noted that due to increased risks, individuals reduced their feedback seeking tendencies in the presence of other co-workers.

Northcraft and Ashford (1990) initially examined the contextual influence of an audience on the frequency of feedback seeking behavior by testing whether an individual would seek feedback in the presence of others. Although the authors found only partial support for the influence of the public on feedback inquiry, a follow-up study demonstrated that individuals are generally more likely to seek feedback in a private context (i.e., with only the feedback source) than in a public context (i.e., with the feedback source and other employees) (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992).

Levy et al. (1995) further explored the contextual influence on the frequency of feedback seeking behavior by examining the feedback seeking process. The authors identified some of the cognitive processes leading to the actual feedback seeking behavior which include an individual's intent to seek feedback, reconsideration of seeking intent, and modification of seeking intent. The first stage of the feedback seeking process includes an individual's initial intent to seek performance feedback in order to reduce uncertainty regarding his or her performance. During the next stage, the reconsideration of seeking intent, the individual may change his or her mind before actually seeking performance feedback. Within this stage, the authors posited that the presence of an audience (i.e., the feedback context) will determine whether an individual will reconsider and modify his or her intention to seek feedback. Finally, the

modification of seeking intent stage is when an individual actually changes his or her initial intent to seek performance feedback. The authors found relationships among variables such as public self-consciousness, public/private context, self-esteem, and the feedback seeking process. However, the authors suggested that there are three important dimensions (i.e., public, private, semi-private) as opposed to Northcraft and Ashford's (1990) original conceptualization of only a public and private context. Levy et al. (1995) found that the more public individuals perceive the context to be, individuals will be less likely to seek feedback.

Impression management occurs when individuals attempt to control the impressions that other people may have of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), and this theory has been used to support a direct effect for the context (i.e., public or private) on the frequency of feedback seeking behavior (Ang et al., 1993; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995). Impression management tactics may relate to whether an employee seeks feedback in a public situation in order to advance his or her public image or seeks feedback in a private situation to protect his or her own ego. Previous research on feedback seeking behavior supports three motives in the feedback seeking process: the desire for feedback information, the desire to protect one's ego, and signaling cues from the organization (e.g., Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Levy et al., 1995). The motive to determine important cues in the organization is similar to impression management theory, such that individuals use feedback as a behavioral tool to shape others' impressions. Therefore, an individual may strategically seek feedback in a particular context for his or her own impression management.

Antecedents for Seeking Feedback in a Public or Private Context. Previous research shows that some individuals are reluctant to seek feedback in a public

context (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995). Currently, there is no framework that accounts for which individual and situational influences would predict whether an individual seeks feedback in a public or private context. Impression management theory will be used to identify specific antecedents for seeking feedback in a public or private context, such as perceived value of feedback, goal orientation, public self-consciousness, self-esteem, external feedback propensity, and tolerance for ambiguity. These variables were chosen to emphasize how impression management relates to seeking feedback in a particular context (i.e., public or private) and to examine the mixed theoretical explanations, and relationships found in previous studies.

Perceived Value of Public or Private Feedback. In their original conceptualization of feedback seeking behavior, Ashford and Cummings (1983) discussed the perceived costs and benefits of feedback seeking behavior for the employee. One of the perceived benefits to the feedback seeker has been identified as the anticipated value of feedback (Ashford, 1986; Mignerey et al., 1995). A perceived value in public or private feedback is derived in part from the value placed on what the information will produce. Individuals who perceive the importance of performance feedback in attaining specific goals will be more likely to seek feedback than those who do not perceive any value in this information.

Ashford (1986) identified the importance of goal attainment and the reduction of uncertainty in performance feedback as main components in the perceived value of feedback. Individuals who seek feedback as a means of acquiring important information toward achieving a particular goal or eliminating uncertainty regarding performance will perceive a higher value than individuals who are not interested in

goal attainment or who are certain about their performance (Ashford, 1986; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). For instance, individuals may seek feedback after learning a new task in a training situation in order to reduce the uncertainty regarding their task performance.

Individuals typically consider the costs involved in seeking feedback as well as the benefits when calculating the perceived value of feedback. Previous research supports a positive relationship between the perceived value of feedback and feedback seeking behavior (Ashford, 1986; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000), and a negative relationship between the perceived costs and seeking feedback (VandeWalle et al., 2000). One of the perceived costs identified in feedback seeking research pertains to whether individuals will seek less feedback in the presence of others (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995). Those who perceive the social or self-presentational costs as being too high will not seek feedback in a public situation (i.e., in the presence of more than one person) but will choose to seek feedback in a private situation (i.e., only in the presence of one person). An individual may perceive social costs for seeking feedback if he or she believes that the seeking behavior will be interpreted as a sign of weakness or lack of confidence (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Self-presentational costs are the belief that seeking feedback weakens an individual's self-confident image (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995). However, if the perceived value of feedback is higher than any of the social or self-presentational costs associated with an audience, then individuals will still seek feedback regardless of the context.

Impression management occurs when individuals attempt to control the impressions that other people may have of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Individuals

are concerned about these impressions (i.e., from a supervisor or a co-worker) because they may affect the individual employee. For instance, if a supervisor has a positive impression of his or her subordinate's performance, then this subordinate may be perceived more favorably, be treated differently and perhaps have positive evaluations. Ashford & Cummings (1983) suggest that there may be social goals or social costs to seeking feedback. As mentioned previously, social costs for seeking feedback may be interpreted as a sign of weakness, whereas social goals may be a motive to influence social interactions with others, such as supervisors and co-workers. Through these social goals, individuals may use impression management as a motive to control the impressions other employees may have of them as a result of their feedback seeking strategies.

Impression management theory has typically been used to explain why some individuals choose to seek feedback either in a public or a private context. An individual who perceives social costs to seeking feedback in a public context may use a defensive impression management strategy, which is behavior designed to protect the individual's public image or to avoid creating an unfavorable public image (Levy et al., 1995; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Northcraft and Ashford (1990) posited that the social costs of seeking feedback in the presence of an audience would be too great and that the individual would employ defensive impression management strategies. Although the study found only partial support for this hypothesis, a follow-up study found significant support for the defensive impression management strategy (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992).

Contrary to the defensive impression management strategy, Morrison & Bies (1992) proposed that assertive impression management strategies may serve as a

motive to enhance an individual's public image. Some individuals may perceive a benefit to seeking feedback in either context (i.e., public or private), which may lead to assertive impression management strategies create a favorable public image by appearing conscientious and responsible for proactively seeking performance feedback (Morrison & Bies, 1991).

Most researchers have incorporated the defensive impression management strategy as a theoretical explanation for reducing the frequency of feedback seeking behavior in the presence of an audience. This appears due to Ashford and Cummings' (1983) suggestion that managers might perceive feedback seeking as a sign of weakness or as a lack of ability in task performance. Further, Ashford and Northcraft (1992) found that individuals were less likely to seek feedback in the presence of others. The authors explained this finding by suggesting that the impression management costs were higher than the perceived value of feedback, and therefore individuals either did not seek feedback or were more likely to seek feedback in a private situation.

Ashford and Cummings (1983) also suggested that there might be social goals as well as social costs associated with seeking performance feedback. Thus, individuals can apply an assertive impression management strategy by seeking feedback that may enhance their public image in either context (i.e., public vs. private). Ashford and Northcraft (1992) supported the notion that employees viewed feedback seekers as more conscientious, more likely to advance, and more likable as opposed to individuals who did not seek feedback, which contradicts the original belief that a feedback seeker may be perceived as weak (Ashford & Cummings, 1983).

Ashford & Tsui (1991) also explored the role of impression management theory in the feedback seeking process. In this field study, the authors examined whether an individual's tendency to seek negative feedback was related to other employees' (i.e., superiors, subordinates, and peers) impressions of the individual's overall effectiveness. The results support a positive relationship between feedback seeking behavior and others' ratings of managerial effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Both studies (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991) support the notion that individuals may be able to use feedback seeking behavior as a way of enhancing their public image.

In addition to the use of impression management theory to understand feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991), Ashford and Cummings (1983) discussed three motives for seeking feedback. These motives for seeking feedback include reducing uncertainty for individual performance, signaling cues for proper behavior in the organization, and protecting one's ego. Most empirical evidence supports the uncertainty reduction motive as an explanation for the positive relationship between the perceived value of feedback and the increased frequency of feedback seeking behavior (Ashford, 1986; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). For instance, VandeWalle and colleagues in two different studies found a positive relationship and suggested that learning goal oriented individuals perceived a greater value in any feedback that provided information for improving their task behaviors. However, the perceived value of feedback may also include enhancing one's public image by determining which cues are most important and appropriate within the organization. Assertive impression management theory suggests that some individuals may perceive a higher value in

feedback not only for the diagnostic information but also for enhancing their public image by determining the important cues within an organization.

In the feedback seeking process, individuals will take into consideration both the benefits and costs of seeking feedback. The perceived value of feedback may come from reducing uncertainty in task performance but may also serve as a way to enhance one's public image. Thus, if an individual perceives greater value in seeking feedback to gain diagnostic information or to improve one's image, then this value may override any defensive impression management concerns.

Individuals may perceive value in public feedback or in private feedback. Previous research supports the idea that individuals will perceive value in feedback as a way to reduce uncertainty in their performance; however, individuals may perceive a different value in public feedback compared with private feedback. Specifically, an individual may perceive a high value in public feedback as a way to enhance his or her public image. Conversely, an individual may perceive a high value in private feedback as a way to protect his or her image in front of other employees. Ashford and Northcraft (1992) found that some individuals may perceive the context as a cost to seeking feedback and that these individuals prefer to seek feedback in private rather than in public. Studies also support the notion that other employees may perceive positive images of the feedback-seeker (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Therefore, I propose that individuals may perceive a value in either public or private feedback and that this will have a positive relationship with seeking either public or private feedback, respectively.

Hypothesis 1a: There will be a positive relationship between the perceived value of public feedback seeking and the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 1b: There will be a positive relationship between the perceived value of private feedback seeking and the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Goal Orientation. Dweck (1986) discusses two types of goal orientation: a learning goal orientation and a performance goal orientation. An individual with a performance goal orientation seeks approval regarding his or her competence from others and does not like to be regarded negatively by peers. Furthermore, performance goal oriented individuals will attribute their mistakes to their ability. An individual with a learning goal orientation seeks constructive feedback in order to master a specific task and accepts challenging tasks to increase knowledge.

Goal orientation has been integrated into various research streams. For example, both learning and performance goal orientations have been shown to be related to self-efficacy for certain tasks (Phillips & Gully, 1997), and individual learning in a training context (Colquitt & Simmering, 1998; Fisher & Ford, 1998). Goal orientation has also been integrated into feedback seeking research (Tuckey, Brewer, & Williamson, 2002; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). Although most of the goal orientation literature focuses on the learning processes of individuals, learning goal oriented individuals evaluate their current competencies with their own past competencies, and performance goal oriented individuals evaluate their own competencies in relation to other individuals. Thus, a proactive behavior such as feedback seeking is a way to improve an individual's ability (i.e., learning goal oriented

individuals), or to seek approval from others (i.e., performance goal oriented individuals), as described below.

In a review of goal orientation research, Farr, Hofmann, and Ringenbach (1993) proposed that goal orientation might be related to the feedback process and in particular to feedback seeking behavior. They argue that a learning goal oriented individual seeks feedback regarding the individual's current competence in comparison to his or her own past competence. In other words, learning goal oriented individuals have a mastery motive and seek information that will help them improve their performance. Alternatively, performance goal oriented individuals seek feedback regarding their current performance in comparison to other co-workers in order to present a favorable image or to avoid an unfavorable image.

VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) considered goal orientation as an individual difference variable predicting feedback seeking behavior. The authors developed a mediating model with perceived value and perceived costs as the mediator between goal orientation and feedback seeking behavior. Their study conceptualized goal orientation as a three-factor construct consistent with recent studies (e.g., Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997): learning goal orientation, prove performance goal orientation, and avoid performance goal orientation. The avoid dimension of performance goal orientation is the desire to avoid negative judgments of one's ability, whereas the prove dimension is the desire to gain favorable judgments of one's ability. Although the authors found only partial support for the mediated model, a positive relationship was found between learning goal orientation and feedback seeking. Interestingly, the authors found a negative relationship between the prove and avoid performance goal orientations and feedback

seeking behavior in their first study but found only a significant negative relationship with the avoid dimension in the second study. The authors concluded that the avoid dimension is more closely associated with the ego and self-presentational cost motive for seeking feedback and this individual would be less likely to seek feedback due to these high costs.

Similar to previous studies (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992), VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) incorporated a cost/benefit framework to explain the relationship between goal oriented individuals and feedback seeking behaviors. In particular, the authors discuss how individuals perceive the ego costs and self-presentational costs before seeking feedback within an organization. To a greater extent than learning goal oriented individuals, performance goal oriented individuals will view performance feedback as a judgment of their fixed ability and will take into consideration the ego or self-presentational costs. In contrast, learning goal oriented individuals view their ability as adaptable, such that performance feedback is viewed as important information to improve behavior, and they are not as concerned with the ego or self-presentational costs.

The benefits of seeking feedback are also considered prior to an individual's seeking behavior (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Learning goal oriented individuals are concerned with improving their own ability and mastering their task behavior, whereas performance goal oriented individuals question their ability to change their behavior and will not see the benefits of seeking feedback. Thus, learning goal oriented individuals will see more benefits of seeking feedback in general than performance goal oriented individuals.

A recent study (Tuckey et al., 2002) further considered the three-factor goal orientation construct. Similar to VandeWalle and Cummings (1997), the authors found both direct and indirect effects for goal orientation on feedback seeking behavior. In this study, scales were developed for three motives identified in feedback seeking research as mediating variables: desire for useful information, desire to protect one's ego, and a defensive impression management strategy. The study included a student sample and an employee sample with many hypotheses having mixed results between the two samples. Nonsignificant results were found between learning goal orientation and feedback seeking for the employee survey and a significant, positive relationship for the student sample. Similarly, the avoid dimension had mixed results between the two samples. Interestingly, the prove dimension had a significant, negative relationship with feedback seeking behavior. The desire for useful information motive was positively related to feedback seeking behavior and a learning goal orientation. Alternatively, the desire to protect one's ego and defensive impression management strategies were related to both prove and avoid performance goal orientations. The authors concluded that the desire for useful information increases feedback seeking behaviors and that the desire to protect one's ego and defensive impression management decreases feedback seeking behaviors.

VandeWalle et al. (2000) further examined the role of learning goal orientation by integrating the leadership style of the feedback source as an antecedent to feedback seeking behavior. The authors replicated their previous study by examining the mediating variables perceived cost and perceived value of feedback in relation to learning goal orientation and feedback seeking behavior. However, the authors only considered learning goal orientation since it more closely relates to an individual's

motive to reduce uncertainty when seeking feedback. They posited interactions between learning goal orientation and two leadership styles (i.e., initiation of structure and consideration) predicting the perceived value and the perceived cost of feedback. The results support the interactions, such that learning goal oriented individuals are better able to deal with low consideration supervisors. For instance, an individual with a learning goal orientation would be able to look beyond the adverse situation with an inconsiderate leader and seek feedback for its perceived value instead of concentrating on the perceived cost.

Learning goal orientation has been shown to be positively related to feedback seeking behavior (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). These individuals seek challenging opportunities in order to increase their competencies but are also concerned with improving their abilities. Learning goal oriented individuals want to seek feedback in any context (i.e., public or private) because they can use this information to improve their individual and organizational goals.

Alternatively, performance goal oriented individuals will seek information to compare their own abilities with their co-workers' (Farr et al., 1993). However, these individuals are concerned with their ego and self-presentational costs and perceive feedback seeking as an indicator of their low ability to perform. Performance goal oriented individuals believe that their abilities are fixed, and they view any effort to seek information as a sign of low ability because high ability individuals would not need to seek feedback (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). This explains why performance goal oriented individuals would seek feedback less frequently than learning goal oriented individuals. Based on an individual's desire to protect one's ego, the avoid dimension is expected to be negatively related to feedback seeking in

general. Previous researchers (e.g., VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; Tuckey et al., 2002) have not explained the relationship between the prove dimension and feedback seeking. Individuals with either a prove or avoid dimension will want to protect their own ego and will still seek feedback less frequently than learning goal oriented individuals. In general, I posit that either performance goal orientated individuals (i.e., avoid and prove) will be less likely to seek feedback than learning goal oriented individuals. However, the desire to compare their own competencies to co-workers' suggests that they will be more likely to seek feedback in a private context than in a public context.

Hypothesis 2: Learning goal orientation will be positively related to frequency of feedback seeking in a public or a private context.

Hypothesis 3: Performance goal orientation will be positively related to frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Public Self-consciousness. Public self-consciousness has been examined as an individual personality trait predicting feedback seeking behavior. Fenigstein et al. (1975) defined self-consciousness as a personality trait that directs attention inward toward one's self (i.e., private self-consciousness) or directs the attention outward by recognizing the presence of others (i.e., public self-consciousness). Public self-consciousness focuses attention on one's self as a social object that may be affected by others. Fenigstein et al. argue that public self-consciousness (PSC) raises awareness of others' impressions of that individual. Furthermore, Levy et al. (1995) note that PSC refers to a person's awareness of being observed in the presence of others.

Ashford and Northcraft (1992) proposed that individuals high in PSC would be more influenced by the presence of an audience than individuals low in PSC. The authors suggest that due to impression management costs, individuals who are high in PSC will be sensitive to how others react to them and how others perceive them when seeking feedback. Therefore, the authors posited that high PSC individuals would reduce feedback seeking more than low PSC individuals in the presence of an audience. However, the proposed interaction between PSC and feedback context (i.e., public or private) predicting feedback seeking was not significant. The authors suggest that the public context in the laboratory study may have been strong enough to minimize the impact of personality. In most organizations, the public context should not be as strong as the manipulations used in a laboratory experiment. Individual differences are likely to be more pronounced in a weak situation (i.e., those in which there are few situational pressures to conform) versus a strong situation (i.e., those in which demands placed on individuals induce conformity) (Mischel, 1977).

In a recent study, London et al. (1999) continued to consider PSC to be an antecedent in the feedback seeking process. However, the authors incorporated feedback seeking as an important component within a self-development framework. Unlike Ashford & Northcraft's (1992) hypothesis, London et al. posited that PSC would be positively related to feedback seeking and development and did not find statistical significance for this hypothesis. Although the authors provide few explanations for the lack of support for their hypothesis, they suggest that the Danish sample used in the study may be the reason their results differ from those based on U.S. samples.

Contrary to Ashford and Northcraft's (1992) interpretation in which high PSC individuals are anxious about others' impressions and concerned with the costs of

seeking feedback in the presence of others, Levy et al. (1995) suggested that high PSC individuals are more likely to seek feedback than low PSC individuals. In defining public self-consciousness, Fenigstein et al. (1975) did not state that the presence of others will necessarily cause discomfort for the individual who is high in PSC. Therefore, Levy et al. (1995) argue that high PSC individuals' heightened awareness of others' impressions does not cause discomfort but may in fact increase feedback seeking to enhance their public image. Levy et al. found a significant positive relationship between high PSC individuals and their intentions to seek feedback.

Two different hypotheses in relation to the PSC definition (Fenigstein et al., 1975) were used in previous studies. Ashford and Northcraft's (1992) study posited that high PSC individuals would consider impression management costs when seeking feedback in the presence of others, whereas Levy et al. (1995) found that high PSC individuals would see the benefits of seeking feedback in the presence of others and that it would not cause any social anxiety for the feedback seeker. Levy et al.'s rationale for the positive relationship is that high PSC individuals are most interested in their performance, as well as others' impressions regarding their performance.

One component of impression management theory, assertive impression management, can be used to explain the relationship between public self-consciousness and feedback seeking behavior. Assertive impression management argues that an individual intends to create a favorable public image. Thus, individuals who are high in PSC will be more likely to seek feedback in a public context in order to enhance their own public images.

Individuals who are high in PSC are more aware of others' impressions of their performance than are low PSC individuals. Thus, high PSC individuals would be

concerned not only with the feedback source's impression but with impressions of co-workers who may be present when seeking feedback (Levy et al., 1995). According to the assertive impression management perspective, high PSC individuals will want to seek more feedback in the presence of others to enhance their image as being conscientious, responsible employees.

Conversely, private feedback involves just one source providing feedback, and thus high PSC individuals may be less likely to seek feedback in a private context. Although high PSC individuals remain concerned about the impressions of that one source, these individuals are also likely to be concerned about impressions held by their co-workers. Fenigstein et al. (1975) describe a high PSC behavior as individuals who constantly scrutinize their behavior and the reactions of others to that behavior. Further, the authors suggest that high PSC individuals are concerned with others' reactions almost to the point of obsessiveness. Thus, the high PSC individual would be more likely to seek feedback in a public situation. Conversely, high PSC individuals will be less likely to seek feedback in a private situation in which the impressions of only one feedback source are available.

Low PSC individuals are not as concerned about their social situation as high PSC individuals, but still possess a minimal level of concern for others' reactions to their behavior. Although low PSC individuals will not seek as much feedback as high PSC individuals, they will seek feedback for different motives than the high PSC individual. A low PSC individual will seek feedback for his or her performance information to reduce uncertainty, whereas the high PSC individual will be motivated to seek feedback for the signaling cues that may be used to enhance his or her public image. Therefore, low PSC individuals are less concerned with the feedback source's

impressions, making them more likely to seek feedback in a private situation. By seeking feedback in private, low PSC individuals are still social beings concerned about reactions from the one feedback source. However, low PSC individuals are probably more interested in receiving the feedback message as a way to reduce uncertainty in their performance than in obsessing over their co-workers' reactions.

Hypothesis 4a: Public self-consciousness will be positively related to the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 4b: Public self-consciousness will be negatively related to the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem is defined as the general liking or disliking of one's self and is concerned with the overall favorability of one's self-evaluations (Brockner, 1988). Self-esteem has been studied in various forms in the feedback seeking literature. However, there have been mixed results as well as different theoretical explanations in most of the studies incorporating self-esteem as an antecedent to feedback seeking behavior. Northcraft and Ashford's (1990) study considered the effects of the seeking context on feedback seeking behavior, as well as posited the relationship between individual differences (i.e., self-esteem) and feedback seeking behavior. The authors predicted that when performance expectations are low, individuals with low self-esteem will decrease their feedback seeking behavior. Although the hypothesized interaction between performance expectations and self-esteem was not a significant predictor of either seeking performance feedback or seeking social comparison feedback, high self-esteem individuals were significantly more likely to seek performance feedback than low self-esteem individuals. Furthermore, *post hoc* analyses revealed that individuals who are low in self-esteem

seek performance feedback less than high self-esteem individuals in both public and private contexts. These results suggest that self-presentation and ego concerns inherent in impression management theory may be prevalent in feedback seeking behavior. The authors suggest that more research is needed to determine the effects of a public or private context on low self-esteem individuals when seeking performance feedback.

Contrary to Northcraft and Ashford (1990), Fedor et al. (1992) posited that high self-esteem individuals would be less likely to elicit feedback than low self-esteem individuals in order to protect their self-image. The study's participants were flight students training to become Army helicopter pilots. The findings for the relationship between self-esteem and feedback seeking were mixed for the two phases (i.e., flight simulator and instrument phase for pilots) included in the study. In particular, there was a nonsignificant correlation between self-esteem and feedback seeking behavior as well as mixed results for the regression analyses. The authors suggested that self-esteem may have played a less important role in the flight simulator instrument phase of the study due to their acquired experience in flying by this second phase. However, the authors suggested that more research is needed to determine the relationship between low self-esteem individuals and seeking performance feedback, so that managers may be better prepared to create a feedback environment that encourages low self-esteem individuals to seek feedback.

Similar to the previous study, Levy et al. (1995) incorporated self-esteem into their conceptual model of the feedback seeking process. The authors proposed that high self-esteem individuals would be more likely to modify their seeking intentions and be more self-protective of their image than low self-esteem individuals. Levy et al.

suggested that the motive to protect one's ego explains why high self-esteem individuals are more likely to modify their seeking intentions. The authors posited an interaction between self-esteem and seeking context predicting modification of seeking intentions, such that high self-esteem individuals would modify their seeking intentions in public more than they would in private. Although this study found a significant relationship between self-esteem and modification of seeking intentions, the interaction was only marginally significant ($p<.08$). The plotted interaction indicated that high self-esteem individuals modify their seeking intentions (i.e., to determine whether to seek or not to seek feedback) more than low self-esteem individuals in a public context than in a private context. However, the plotted interaction did not indicate that high self-esteem individuals modify their seeking intentions more in a public context than in a semi-private context.

The equivocal results from previous research on self-esteem's relationship to feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990) raised questions about the theoretical bases for each of these studies. Fedor et al. (1992) suggested that high self-esteem individuals would be more concerned about their own self-image and that seeking feedback may potentially create feelings of worthlessness and incompetence. Similarly, Levy et al. (1995) suggested that high self-esteem individuals would be more self-protective and more likely to modify their seeking intentions than low self-esteem individuals. Both studies (Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995) describe the relationship between high self-esteem individuals and feedback seeking from a self-protection motive, such that the seeking behavior may cause harm to the individuals' image. Conversely, Northcraft and Ashford (1990) employed the ego defense motive as a coping mechanism for

explaining the relationship between high self-esteem individuals and feedback seeking behavior. The authors propose that high self-esteem individuals have stronger egos to deal with any negative comments from feedback and are more likely than low self-esteem individuals to seek feedback.

Interestingly, Brockner's (1988) behavioral plasticity hypothesis supports Northcraft and Ashford's (1990) findings that high self-esteem individuals will seek more feedback than low self-esteem individuals. Behavioral plasticity asserts that low self-esteem individuals are more influenced by external and social cues than are high self-esteem individuals (Brockner, 1988). Brockner suggests that this occurs because of the tendency of low self-esteem individuals to compare themselves to others, their need for constant approval, and their tendency to generate negative comments to feelings of self-worth. In short, low self-esteem individuals are consumed by these external cues, and subsequently these cues can influence their behavior.

Low self-esteem individuals will respond differently to social cues within their environment than high self-esteem individuals (Brockner, 1988). Low self-esteem individuals are more cognizant of the external surroundings and interactions with other people. For instance, a low self-esteem individual would be more aware of social interactions in a public context (i.e., in the presence of the feedback source and other individuals) and may alter his or her feedback seeking behaviors accordingly. This suggests that the behaviors of low self-esteem individuals may be more influenced in a public context.

Two relatively recent studies incorporated Brockner's behavioral plasticity hypothesis (1988) to examine the relationship between self-esteem and feedback seeking behavior. First, Vancouver and Morrison (1995) considered the interaction

between self-esteem and the relationship quality with the feedback source as a predictor of feedback seeking behavior. The authors define relationship quality as one with mutual respect, such that the better the relationship, the less likely the source will react negatively to the feedback request. The study found that individuals who are high in self-esteem are significantly less influenced by relationship quality with the feedback source than are low self-esteem individuals when seeking feedback. Low self-esteem individuals are more concerned with social and ego costs in seeking feedback and will consider the quality of the relationship much more than high self-esteem individuals.

Similarly, Madzar (2001) considered self-esteem in relation to leadership style. Low self-esteem individuals were posited to be more likely to seek feedback from a transformational leader than a transactional leader. Transformational leaders will offer more developmental support than transactional leaders. The authors argue that low self-esteem individuals are reluctant to seek negative performance feedback unless they can receive this feedback from a supportive transformational leader. Both studies support the idea that low self-esteem individuals are concerned with their relationship with the feedback source and will seek feedback less than high self-esteem individuals in general (e.g., Madzar, 2001; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995).

Although there have been mixed findings and explanations for the relationship between self-esteem and feedback seeking behavior, the theoretical base for most of the significant hypotheses comes from Brockner's plasticity hypothesis (1988). Behavioral plasticity predicts that low self-esteem individuals will be more susceptible to influences in a public context than high self-esteem individuals. In contrast, individuals who are high in self-esteem will be more likely to seek feedback in a public situation regardless of the social costs. Thus, low self-esteem individuals will seek

information in a private context because it is less costly and does not have the potential to deteriorate their sense of self-identity.

Hypothesis 5a: Self-esteem will be positively related to the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 5b: Self-esteem will be negatively related to the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

External Feedback Propensity. Recently, researchers have called for more domain-specific individual difference variables to be examined within an employee's feedback environment. For example, Herold and Fedor (1998) recommend determining which variables are present when an individual shapes his or her feedback environment. One variable, external feedback propensity, considers an individual's preference for feedback from such external sources as an individual's supervisor or co-worker. Further defined external feedback propensity refers to an individual's trust in feedback from other sources.

Only a few studies have examined the relationship between this individual difference variable and the frequency of seeking performance feedback (e.g., Fedor et al., 1992; Renn & Fedor, 2001). These studies have found a positive relationship between an individual's propensity for external feedback and the frequency of seeking feedback. For instance, Fedor et al., who examined this relationship with a sample of helicopter pilot trainees, found that pilots with a propensity to seek performance feedback from other people seek feedback more frequently than those who did not have this trust for external feedback.

Similarly, Renn and Fedor (2001) examined the relationship between an individual's external feedback propensity with feedback seeking and work

performance. In their model, feedback seeking behaviors were expected to mediate the relationship between external feedback propensity and work performance. Finding support for the mediated relationship using a sample of customer service representatives, the authors concluded that individuals with a higher desire for external feedback may appropriately use the information they receive to improve their work performance.

Consistently, external feedback propensity relates positively to the frequency of seeking general feedback (e.g., Fedor et al., 1992; Herold & Fedor, 1998; Renn & Fedor, 2001). However, no study has examined this individual difference variable in relation to public or private feedback seeking behavior. Although this dissertation specifically defines the feedback environment according to a particular context (i.e., public or private context), the environment still requires feedback from an external source. Either context allows an individual to seek feedback from an external source (i.e., supervisor, co-worker, or both). Thus, I posit a positive relationship between an individual's external feedback propensity and the frequency of seeking feedback in either a public or private context.

Hypothesis 6a: There will be a positive relationship between external feedback propensity and the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 6b: There will be a positive relationship between external feedback propensity and the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Tolerance for Ambiguity. Another individual difference variable that is related to an individual's frequency of seeking feedback is tolerance for ambiguity which is an individual's ability to tolerate an uncertain situation (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Bennett et al., 1990; Fedor et al., 1992; Norton, 1975). Within an individual's feedback

environment, feedback cues may be clearly defined or vague. An individual's ability to tolerate the unknown will determine how often he or she seeks information to reduce that uncertainty.

All research findings support a negative relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and feedback seeking behavior (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Bennett et al., 1990; Fedor et al., 1992). An individual who is intolerant of ambiguity will be more likely to seek performance feedback, and an individual who is very tolerant of ambiguity will not be motivated to seek performance feedback. A negative relationship was found in both of these previous studies (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Fedor et al., 1992) using a global measure for tolerance for ambiguity. However, Bennett et al. (1990) examined the two factors related to tolerance for ambiguity: job-related tolerance for ambiguity and problem-solving tolerance for ambiguity (Norton, 1975). The authors posited that individuals may have different tolerance levels for factors related more specifically to the job than to factors related to problem-solving in general. As predicted, the authors found that individuals do differ in their frequency to seek feedback according to their uncertainty for job-related factors versus problem-solving factors. Therefore, the authors concluded that future research should focus on job-related tolerance for ambiguity in relation to the feedback seeking process, since individuals are most likely to seek feedback related to their job performance.

Individuals who are intolerant of uncertain situations will seek feedback in any context (i.e., public or private), whereas individuals who have a high tolerance will seek feedback less frequently. The propensity for individuals to tolerate uncertain situations is related to the uncertainty of job-related factors (i.e., job-related tolerance for ambiguity). This general intolerance will determine whether or not an individual will

seek feedback to reduce that uncertainty. Thus, the context has little effect on the individual's general intolerance for job-related factors. Individuals will react to the uncertain situation by simply seeking information that will attenuate the ambiguous situation. Therefore, I posit the following relationship:

Hypothesis 7a: There will be a negative relationship between job-related tolerance for ambiguity and the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 7b: There will be a negative relationship between job-related tolerance for ambiguity and the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Feedback Source as a Moderator between Feedback Seeking Behaviors and Individual Outcomes

The next section provides a general overview of previous research that considers the feedback source as a predictor in feedback seeking behaviors. The role of the feedback source in the feedback seeking process has not been addressed in relation to individual outcomes, and there have been very few studies examining organizational outcomes of the feedback seeking process (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). The second part of my conceptual model addresses the role of feedback seeking behaviors and the feedback source predicting individual outcomes.

Feedback Seeking Sources and Feedback Seeking Behavior. Early studies identified salient sources for performance feedback in an employee's work environment (Greller & Herold, 1975; Herold & Parsons, 1985). Yet there have been only a few attempts to determine how individuals distinguish between sources when seeking feedback. For example, Herold, Liden, and Leatherwood (1987) examined the

frequency of seeking feedback among five sources and also the feedback's consistency, reliability, and usefulness. Similar to previous findings, five sources were identified for frequency and importance within an employee's work environment: self, task, supervisor, co-workers, and the formal organization. The authors found that individuals recognize these five sources within their work environment and consider self to be the most frequently used source for feedback, and the formal organization as the least used source. More importantly, seeking feedback from a supervisor, co-worker, and the formal organization was negatively related to stress and turnover.

Ashford and Tsui (1991) further examined differences between feedback seeking sources in relation to managerial effectiveness. Using a self-regulation framework, the authors posited that the type of feedback (positive or negative), the feedback seeking strategy (inquiry or monitoring), and the source would predict managerial effectiveness. Impression management concerns were also addressed when considering from whom to seek feedback. Results varied according to the power of the feedback source, such that individuals sought feedback more from a supervisor than a co-worker. Supervisors may be able to provide valuable information such as performance expectations and individuals may be able to portray a positive, responsible self-image in front of their supervisor. Conversely, individuals seeking feedback from co-workers may not directly benefit the individual due to the co-workers' lack of power within the organization.

Recent studies regarding information seeking during the socialization process have further examined the use of various sources by considering specific characteristics of the source. For instance, three studies have addressed whether the source's expertise is taken under consideration before seeking feedback. Vancouver

and Morrison (1995) found that an individual will attempt to reduce uncertainty regarding his or her performance by seeking feedback from an expert who can provide accurate information. Another study (Fedor et al., 1992) found only partial support for source credibility (a construct shown to be closely related to expertise) and feedback seeking behavior with mixed results from different phases of the study. However, a recent study by Morrison and Vancouver (2000) supported the idea that individuals seek feedback from an expert source when attempting to reduce uncertainty regarding their performance.

Additionally, perceived accessibility may represent a perceived cost to the information seeker if the source is rarely available for performance feedback (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). An individual will try to minimize effort costs when seeking feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1983), and therefore the likelihood that an individual will ask a given source for feedback will depend on the source's accessibility. Indeed, Vancouver and Morrison (1995) found a positive relationship between the likelihood of seeking performance feedback and the source's accessibility.

A few studies have examined multiple sources in the feedback seeking process (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992); however, no previous research has considered the relationship between the feedback source and feedback seeking behavior on individual outcomes such as career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and performance. Feedback source has played a significant role in one's decision to seek feedback thus the source should also play a significant role in individual outcomes.

Consequences. Although there is considerable emphasis on creating a feedback seeking environment in organizations (e.g., Madzar, 1995; Morrison, 1995), only a few studies have addressed the potential consequences of feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). This represents a deficiency in the literature since the relationship between public or private feedback seeking behaviors and individual outcomes may differ. For instance, individuals who publicly seek information regarding their performance in front of peers and/or supervisors may feel more accountable to use that feedback information. This new performance information may motivate a change in behaviors particularly since there are witnesses to the feedback information. Although there is some evidence that feedback seeking in general leads to positive outcomes such as enhanced performance (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001), I predict a difference in these outcomes based on whether an individual seeks feedback in a public or private context. In the following sections, I will discuss three potential consequences of public or private feedback seeking behavior: career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and individual performance.

Career Success. Career success is defined as the accumulated outcomes or achievements that result from one's work experiences (Judge & Bretz, 1994; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; London & Stumpf, 1982; Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999). Many factors have been associated with career success, such as human capital attributes and demographic variables (Judge & Bretz, 1994; Judge et al., 1995). More recently, researchers have considered dispositional variables such as the big five personality traits (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999) and a proactive

personality (Seibert et al., 1999; Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001) as antecedents to an individual's career success.

Career success contains two components: extrinsic and intrinsic career success. Extrinsic career success (objective career success) is typically defined as pay, promotions, and status. Intrinsic career success (subjective career success) is defined as people's feelings of satisfaction and accomplishment with their career (Judge et al., 1995; Judge et al., 1999; London & Stumpf, 1982). Although both components can be measured as independent outcomes, they are moderately related, and both have been included in career success research (Judge & Bretz, 1994; Judge et al., 1999).

Practitioners and researchers are becoming increasingly aware of proactive behaviors (i.e., feedback seeking behaviors) in the organization and their potential impact on individual outcomes, such as career success (Crant, 2000). Crant states that people exhibit proactive behaviors when they seek information and opportunities to improve their situations; moreover, proactive individuals do not wait for these opportunities. Proactive behaviors in organizations are described as feedback seeking behavior, issue selling, and innovation. These proactive behaviors differ according to the specific context and general actions of each individual. For instance, issue selling is the proactive behavior in which managers try to influence decision-making strategies by drawing others' attention to particular issues. Feedback seeking involves seeking performance information in order to reduce uncertainty, to signal cues from the organization, and to protect one's ego (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Crant, 2000). Innovative employees seek sponsorship for their ideas in the workplace. This review of

proactive behaviors encourages more integration between research streams in order to understand these behaviors within an organization.

One factor that contributes to proactive behaviors is a proactive personality (Crant, 2000). Seibert et al. (2001) found an indirect relationship between proactive personality and career success through two other proactive behaviors: innovation and career initiative. Similar proactive behaviors, such as innovation and career initiative, have been shown to be related to both intrinsic and extrinsic career success (Seibert et al., 1999). Yet feedback seeking studies have not considered the relationship with career success.

The motives for feedback seeking behavior include reducing uncertainty in individual performance as well as determining the proper cues for valued behavior within an organization. Proactive individuals seeking feedback will gain important performance information that may be used to change their behaviors. Individuals who seek feedback are taking the initiative to improve their circumstances in the organization, which may lead to higher levels of both extrinsic and intrinsic career success. Therefore, there should be a positive relationship between public or private feedback seeking behaviors and career success. According to previous studies regarding individual accountability, individuals feel accountable in a particular situation if they have an expectation to be judged for achieving a particular goal (Frink & Klimoski, 1998). Individuals who seek performance feedback in a public situation may be creating expectations in those who witness the feedback seeking behavior. According to assertive impression management, individuals who desire to provide a positive image and seek feedback in a public context may have more positive outcomes than those who seek feedback in a private context.

Hypothesis 8: There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of feedback seeking behaviors (public and private) and career success (extrinsic and intrinsic). However, public feedback seeking will have a stronger positive relationship with career success (extrinsic and intrinsic) than will private feedback seeking.

Feedback seeking behavior has also been investigated in the context of an individual's career transition. Callister, Kramer, and Turban (1999) incorporated both the uncertainty reduction motive and impression management theory to test whether employees making recent transitions (i.e., geographical job transfers) displayed either inquiry or monitored feedback seeking behavior. The authors found that employees' monitoring behavior (i.e., observing informational cues without directly asking for performance feedback) remained constant over time among peers and supervisors, whereas inquiry feedback seeking behavior decreases among peers and remains constant for supervisors. Furthermore, the uncertainty reduction motive had a negative relationship with inquiry among peers. Employees who received and observed the pertinent information after transitions reduced the amount of inquiry feedback seeking among peers but the inquiry feedback seeking remained constant with supervisors. The authors concluded that feedback seeking behavior over time varies according to the particular source.

Ashford and Tsui (1991) found that individuals use different feedback seeking strategies with different sources. They found that individuals perceive more value when receiving feedback from supervisors compared with co-workers, due to the supervisors' resources and rewards within the organization. Similarly, Morrison (1993) found that newcomers sought performance feedback more from supervisors than from

experienced co-workers because supervisors are typically responsible for performance evaluations and potential rewards.

The feedback source has been shown to play an important role in the feedback seeking process because impression management concerns with the feedback source are frequently associated with feedback seeking behaviors (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison, 1993). Assertive impression management explains why individuals seek less feedback from peers over time than from their immediate supervisor (Callister et al., 1999). Individuals will seek feedback from a supervisor to capitalize on building a positive self-image and to create future promotion opportunities. Although individuals will seek feedback information from experienced co-workers, they will seek less feedback over time from their peers in order to protect their self-image. The potential benefits from seeking feedback from supervisors are not always present when seeking feedback from peers. An individual using assertive impression management strategies to enhance his or her own public image will choose the supervisor as a more important source in feedback seeking behavior.

Another motive for seeking feedback is to determine the signaling cues for appropriate behavior within the organization. By seeking feedback from a supervisor, an individual may be able to determine which components of the job are most valuable to the organization; behaviors can then be changed to match these cues, perhaps leading to greater career success. The motive to seek feedback from a supervisor is justified by assertive impression management theory. Specifically, an individual will want to maximize or enhance his or her public image with a source that will recognize the proactive behaviors and potentially increase opportunities for extrinsic career

success. Similarly, intrinsic career satisfaction increases because individuals are taking the initiative to shape their careers.

Individuals who proactively seek feedback from supervisors are more likely to have higher levels of both extrinsic and intrinsic career success, because supervisors have the power to offer career advancement through promotions and salary increases. Proactive individuals who seek feedback from a co-worker can still gain valuable performance information that may lead to higher levels of performance, which in turn may provide more career advancement opportunities and higher career satisfaction. Although seeking feedback from a co-worker will have a positive relationship with career success, the interaction between feedback seeking behavior and the feedback source will be more positively related when feedback is sought from a supervisor. Furthermore, if an individual seeks public feedback he or she will have a stronger desire to maintain a positive image and use the performance feedback due to the audience than an individual who seeks feedback from only one person.

Hypothesis 9: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and career success (extrinsic and intrinsic), such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors will be more strongly positively related to career success when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source.

Hypothesis 10: The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to career success than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Feedback seeking behavior has been shown to be positively related to individual performance or in-role behavior (e.g., Klich

& Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). However, no study has considered an individual's extra-role behaviors in relation to feedback seeking behavior. Social exchange theory is commonly used to explain why individuals may exhibit extra-role behaviors in the workplace, and it could also be used to explain why individuals may feel the need to reciprocate extra-role behaviors in return for pertinent performance information. This section will explore the direct relationship between feedback seeking behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors. Furthermore, the feedback source will be considered as a moderator in the relationship between feedback seeking and organizational citizenship behaviors.

Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) were originally defined as individual behaviors that are discretionary and that, in the aggregate, promote overall effectiveness within the organization (Organ, 1988). However, since the original conceptualization, similar dimensions have emerged that redefine OCBs (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Recent reviews have identified more than the five components (i.e., altruism, compliance, courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue) of citizenship behavior originally identified by early researchers. Furthermore, researchers have questioned whether these dimensions represent items for an aggregate measure of OCBs or if each dimension should be treated as distinct behaviors with varying antecedents and consequences.

In a recent meta-analysis, the nature of the construct and the dimensionality of the last twenty years of research on OCBs were considered (LePine et al., 2002). The authors found support for an aggregate citizenship construct due to the high correlations between each of the five dimensions most commonly used in OCB research. However, the authors caution researchers about only using this aggregate

measure for OCBs instead of each of the identified dimensions. For instance, many studies included in the meta-analysis had very low effect sizes that may have prevented the detection of differences between the dimensions. Second, the authors argue that there may be unidentified variables that would specifically predict certain dimensions of OCBs, such as citizenship behaviors aimed at an individual (OCB-I) and behaviors aimed at the organization (OCB-O; Willliams & Anderson, 1991).

Although the authors support an aggregate construct for OCBs due to practical reasons and unknown predictors, researchers should match the appropriate dimension of OCBs to each research question and theoretical base (LePine et al., 2002). Based on this suggestion, I will incorporate social exchange theory and choose separate dimensions of OCBs to examine the relationship between feedback seeking behavior and OCBs.

Some researchers have separated OCB dimensions according to the benefactor of the behavior. Williams and Anderson (1991) distinguish between individual citizenship behaviors (OCB-I) and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB-O). These two dimensions incorporate components of the seven dimensions (i.e., helping behaviors and organizational compliance) recently identified by Podsakoff et al. (2000). Specifically, OCB-I are behaviors that immediately benefit a specific individual and can indirectly benefit the organization. For instance, an employee that takes a special interest in another employee or helps a co-worker when he or she has missed work is engaging in OCB-I behaviors. OCB-O are individual behaviors that benefit the organization in general, such as an employee giving advance notice when he or she is unable to come to work (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Whether an

individual seeks feedback from a supervisor or co-worker may determine the benefactor of the citizenship behavior (i.e., benefit the individual or the organization).

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) describes the interpersonal processes between two people in which one person provides some favor and in return the second person has an unspecified obligation to return this favor. An individual's need to reciprocate in an exchange relationship is found in Gouldner's norm of reciprocity (1960), which states that exchange relationships over time develop an expectation to return a particular favor to someone. As the rewarded services continue, the norm to reciprocate obliges the other person to continue with the exchange process; therefore, the more favors that are exchanged the greater the likelihood of increasing the social exchange process. Previous research has incorporated social exchange theory as an explanation of the relationship between OCBs and perceived organizational support (Kaufman, Stamper, & Tesluk, 2001), the quality of the interpersonal relationships (Anderson & Williams, 1996), and team support (Bishop, Scot, & Burroughs, 2000).

According to Gouldner's norm of reciprocity (1960), an individual will feel the need to return the favor to a feedback source for providing information about his or her performance. That is, individuals who proactively seek feedback will verify the value of the feedback information and will feel the need to reciprocate in the exchange process. Furthermore, individuals will be more likely to do this when they believe that OCBs will be interpreted favorably by individuals who influence desired outcomes (i.e., supervisor). Individuals who feel obligated to reciprocate will exhibit various helping behaviors directed toward the organization or the individual. Therefore, there will be a positive relationship between the frequency of feedback seeking behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors. As in previous hypotheses, my belief is that

public feedback seeking will have a slightly more positive relationship to OCBs than will private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 11: There will be a positive relationship between public and private feedback seeking behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., OCB-I and OCB-O). However, public feedback seeking will be more positively related to organizational citizenship behaviors than private feedback seeking.

In a study by Ladd and Henry (2000), the authors used social exchange theory to explain the relationship between individual difference variables and two dimensions of OCB (i.e., OCB-I and OCB-O). The authors posited that employee support perceptions (i.e., how much individuals feel supported by the organization and individuals), exchange ideology (i.e., individual beliefs about reciprocity from the organization and individuals), and personality variables (i.e., conscientiousness and empathy) would predict citizenship behaviors toward specific individuals (i.e., OCB-I) and towards the organization (i.e., OCB-O). Through social exchange theory, this study proposed that an individual's perceptions of support from the organization and from co-workers would be positively related to OCB-O and OCB-I, respectively. That is, perceived organizational support and perceived co-worker support, defined as an individual's general belief of the extent to which an organization or co-worker values his or her contributions and well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Ladd & Henry, 2000), was found to be related to OCB-O and OCB-I.

The previous study supports the notion that employees reciprocate citizenship behaviors through social exchange theory in return for some previous favor given to them (e.g., Kaufman et al., 2001; Ladd & Henry, 2000). By focusing on the benefactors of the citizenship behaviors, this dissertation will use a social exchange framework to

explain the relationship between the feedback seeker, the feedback source, and citizenship behaviors.

The source of feedback will determine whether the individual or the organization will benefit in the exchange of citizenship behaviors. Specifically, OCB-I are helping behaviors that directly benefit a particular individual, who may be a supervisor or co-worker. For instance, social exchange theory holds that if an individual seeks performance feedback from a co-worker, he or she may feel obligated to return the favor to the specific individual. However, if an individual seeks performance feedback from a supervisor then he or she may feel obligated to return the favor to the individual (i.e., OCB-I) or to the organization (i.e., OCB-O). Although seeking feedback from either source may initiate an exchange relationship with citizenship behaviors, the organization directly benefits from OCB-O behaviors, and the supervisor, as the most immediate representative of the organization, is associated with OCB-O behaviors. For example, supervisors have the authority and opportunity to provide desired outcomes for employees through high performance appraisals, salary increases, and promotions. Therefore, employees will be more likely to exhibit OCB-O behaviors in return for performance feedback from supervisors.

The following hypotheses are rooted in social exchange theory and impression management theory. In exchange for receiving valuable performance feedback, individuals will reciprocate through OCB behaviors. As previously hypothesized, feedback seeking behavior will initiate an exchange relationship with some feedback source in which the individual will feel obligated to return the favor for performance feedback with OCBs.

Furthermore, through impression management concerns the source will determine the type of citizenship behaviors (i.e., OCB-I or OCB-O) to reciprocate to a particular source. A recent framework utilizing impression management theory to explain citizenship behaviors suggests that an individual will engage in citizenship behaviors when he or she believes that an influential person will notice the OCBs (Bolino, 1999). Assertive impression management strategies would be employed when seeking feedback from a supervisor in order to enhance an individual's public image. According to social exchange theory, an individual will reciprocate favors to the supervisor for the performance feedback. OCB-O behaviors such as giving advance notice when unable to come to work and adhering to informal rules devised to maintain order are more applicable to one's supervisor than to co-workers. Therefore, employees will be more likely to exhibit OCB-O behaviors in return for performance feedback from supervisors than from co-workers.

Conversely, if an individual seeks feedback from a co-worker he or she will tailor the citizenship behaviors towards that individual (i.e., OCB-I) as opposed to the organization (i.e., OCB-O). For instance, an individual is more likely to help co-workers when they are absent in return for any performance feedback the individual may have received from these co-workers. Impression management concerns are not as important to co-workers due to their lack of influence within the organization. However, through norms of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), an individual will exchange the favor for receiving performance feedback with OCB-I behaviors. Therefore, there will be an interaction between feedback seeking behaviors and the feedback source on the two dimensions of citizenship behaviors.

Hypothesis12a: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and OCB-I, such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking will be more strongly positively related to OCB-I when the co-worker is the source rather than when the supervisor is the source.

Hypothesis12b: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behavior and OCB-O, such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking will be more strongly positively related to OCB-O when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source.

Hypothesis 13: The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to organizational citizenship behaviors than will the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source.

Performance. There have been relatively few studies examining the relationship between feedback seeking behaviors and individual performance (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). Furthermore, performance has been defined differently in each of the prior studies. For instance, Ashford and Black (1996) did not support a positive relationship between newcomer information seeking and their self-report measures of job performance. However, Morrison (1993) found a significant, positive relationship between newcomer information seeking and individual performance over time using supervisor ratings of job performance.

More recently, Renn and Fedor (2001) defined job performance by considering both objective work quantity measures and subjective supervisor evaluations for work quality performance. The authors found that feedback seeking mediated the relationship between individual difference variables (i.e., personal control and external feedback propensity) and individual performance. Finally, Klich and Feldman (1992) found a positive relationship between feedback seeking and performance evaluations. Although there have been multiple conceptualizations of individual performance, there is consistent support for a positive relationship between feedback seeking behaviors and individual performance when not relying on self-reported measures of individual performance.

Initially, Ashford and Cummings (1983) described feedback seeking behavior as a way to reduce uncertainty regarding an individual's performance. By reducing uncertainty, individuals may increase their level of performance. Morrison (1993) expounded upon this premise by examining the relationship between individual information seeking and performance over time. Morrison found that when individuals seek performance feedback, they reduce uncertainty regarding their performance and adjust their behaviors according to the feedback, which leads to higher levels of individual performance.

Fedor et al. (1992) integrated a different approach in discussing the relationship between seeking feedback and performance. They posited that a high performing individual will be less likely to seek performance feedback than a poor performing individual. Although the authors found partial support for this hypothesis, they suggest that the opposite may also be true. Increased feedback seeking may also lead to higher levels of performance. The authors suggest that more research is needed on

contextual factors that may moderate the relationship between feedback seeking behavior and individual performance.

More recently, researchers have considered feedback seeking behaviors' indirect relationship with performance. Specifically, Renn and Fedor (2001) considered the mediating variable of feedback-based goals between seeking feedback and increased work quantity and quality. Although the indirect relationship was supported over a direct link between feedback seeking and performance, other studies have found a positive relationship with performance (e.g., Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993).

Based on the motives for seeking feedback, an individual will seek feedback to reduce uncertainty in his or her own performance and to determine the signaling cues for appropriate behavior in the organization. Either motive should lead to more information if the individual proactively seeks performance feedback. For instance, if an individual's motive for seeking feedback is to reduce uncertainty regarding his or her performance, then the individual will have the necessary information to alter his or her behavior, which may lead to higher levels of performance. Alternatively, if an individual's motive for seeking feedback is to determine the most valued behaviors within the organization, then the individual can use this information to increase his or her levels of individual performance. Based on previous research (e.g., Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001) and individual motives for seeking feedback, there will be a positive relationship between the frequency of feedback seeking behavior and individual performance.

Hypothesis 14: There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and individual performance

levels. However, public feedback seeking will be more positively related to individual performance than private feedback seeking.

Only one study has incorporated the feedback source as a potential correlate in the relationship between feedback seeking and performance (Klich & Feldman, 1992). In this study, the authors found a positive relationship between achieving higher performance evaluations and seeking feedback from an expert source (i.e., individuals who possess expertise in judging performance) rather than a legitimate source (i.e., individuals who control rewards and sanctions). Legitimate sources (e.g., supervisors) may not observe an individual's performance often enough to give adequate performance feedback. Furthermore, supervisors, as legitimate sources, may not always have the technical expertise to give appropriate performance feedback to an individual, whereas expert sources with more task experience would be able to give adequate performance feedback.

Interestingly, Vancouver and Morrison (1995) found that regardless of the source's ability to provide useful information, the source's reward power (i.e., an individual's ability to affect positive and negative outcomes for the feedback seeker) led to higher levels of feedback seeking behavior. Due to impression management concerns, the authors state that low performers are concerned about the perceived costs of seeking feedback from a source that may affect both positive and negative outcomes. However, high performers will also see the perceived value and benefits from seeking feedback from a source with reward power and will be more likely to seek feedback.

Although most feedback seeking research stresses the relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate, the co-worker may also be a valuable source of

information and expertise regarding performance feedback (Greller & Herold, 1975; Herold & Parson, 1985). Thus, the feedback source should be more broadly defined as both the supervisor and co-worker in providing pertinent performance feedback. However, expertise is not the only important power base that a source may have. Positive relationships have consistently been found between supervisor expert, referent power, and performance outcomes (Fedor et al., 2001; Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985). Various feedback seeking studies indicate that expert sources and sources with reward power may have significant relationships with increased performance (e.g., Klich & Feldman, 1992; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). However, perceived expertise may come from a supervisor or co-worker, whereas reward power may only come from one's supervisor.

An individual will seek feedback to reduce uncertainty in performance feedback, but he or she will consider the costs or benefits of seeking this feedback from a particular source. Defensive impression management concerns may inhibit an individual from seeking information from a supervisor due to his or her influence on reward outcomes (i.e., bonuses, raises, promotions), and facilitate feedback seeking among co-workers. Conversely, assertive impression management concerns may encourage some individuals to seek performance feedback from their supervisor due to their expertise, as well as reward power. However, seeking feedback from an expert source, whether it is a supervisor or co-worker, should reduce uncertainty and lead to higher levels of individual performance. Thus, individuals who seek performance feedback will frequently have higher levels of performance.

Another motive for seeking feedback is to determine the signaling cues for appropriate behavior within the organization. By seeking feedback from a supervisor,

an individual may be able to determine which components of the job are most valuable to the organization, and changing behaviors to match these cues may lead to higher levels of performance. Consequently, the supervisor may give a higher performance rating due to the employee's added value within the organization. The motive to seek feedback from a supervisor is justified by assertive impression management theory. Specifically, an individual will want to maximize or enhance his or her public image with a source that will recognize the proactive behaviors that contribute to increased levels of individual performance. Ashford (1993) confirmed in her study of cue usage in the feedback environment that individuals place more emphasis on feedback cues from a supervisor and/or the company in evaluating their own performance. The differences between supervisor cues and co-worker cues support the notion that feedback seeking from supervisors may have a different relationship with performance than seeking feedback from co-workers. If individuals are more likely to accept the cues from supervisors over co-workers, then performance improvement will be greater from supervisor feedback. Therefore, the feedback source will moderate the relationship between feedback seeking behavior and increased individual performance.

> **Hypothesis 15**: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and individual performance such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking will be more strongly positively related to individual performance when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source.

Hypothesis 16: The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to individual performance than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source.

Summary

In this chapter, the antecedents for seeking feedback in a public or private context were discussed and the interactions between public and private feedback seeking behaviors and the feedback source predicting individual outcomes were presented. Individuals may seek feedback in the presence of only one source (i.e., supervisor or co-worker in a private context), or they may seek feedback in the presence of more than one person (i.e., a public context). Antecedents such as the perceived value of feedback, goal orientation, public self-consciousness, self-esteem, external feedback propensity, and tolerance for ambiguity were posited to relate to the frequency of seeking feedback in a public or private context.

With the recent emphasis on creating a feedback seeking environment (e.g., Madzar, 1995; Morrison, 1995), it is important to identify the type of individual who would seek feedback in a public context and the type of individual that would seek feedback in a private context. Based on the previous hypotheses, I predict that an individual who seeks feedback in a public context would perceive a high value in public feedback, would have a learning goal orientation, would be high in public self-consciousness, would be high in self-esteem, would have an external feedback propensity, and would have a low tolerance for ambiguity. Alternatively, an individual who seeks feedback in a private context would perceive a high value in private feedback, would have either a learning or performance goal orientation, would be low

in public self-consciousness, would be low in self-esteem, would have an external feedback propensity, and would have a low tolerance for ambiguity.

Outcomes such as career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and individual performance were discussed in relation to the frequency of seeking public and private feedback and the feedback source. The hypotheses developed to explain each of these variables are summarized in Table 1. In the following chapter, the procedures, sample, and measures used for testing this conceptual scheme will be discussed.

Table 1 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1a: There will be a positive relationship between the perceived value of public feedback seeking and the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 1b: There will be a positive relationship between the perceived value of private feedback seeking and the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 2: Learning goal orientation will be positively related to frequency of feedback seeking in a public or private context.

Hypothesis 3: Performance goal orientation will be positively related to the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 4a: Public self-consciousness will be positively related to the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 4b: Public self-consciousness will be negatively related to the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 5a: Self-esteem will be positively related to the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 5b: Self-esteem will be negatively related to the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 6a: There will be a positive relationship between external feedback propensity and the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 6b: There will be a positive relationship between external feedback propensity and the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 7a: There will be a negative relationship between job-related tolerance for ambiguity and the frequency of public feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 7b: There will be a negative relationship between job-related tolerance for ambiguity and the frequency of private feedback seeking behaviors.

Hypothesis 8: There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of feedback seeking behaviors (public and private) and career success (extrinsic and intrinsic). However, public feedback seeking will have a stronger positive relationship with career success (extrinsic and intrinsic) than will private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 9: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and career success (extrinsic and intrinsic) such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors will

(Table 1 continued)

be more strongly positively related to career success when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source.

Hypothesis 10: The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to career success than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source.

Hypothesis 11: There will be a positive relationship between public and private feedback seeking behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., OCB-I and OCB-O). However, public feedback seeking will be more positively related to organizational citizenship behaviors than private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis12a: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and OCB-I such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking will be more strongly positively related to OCB-I when the co-worker is the source rather than when the supervisor is the source.

Hypothesis12b: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behavior and OCB-O such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking will be more strongly positively related to OCB-O when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source.

Hypothesis 13: The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to organizational citizenship behaviors than will the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source.

Hypothesis 14: There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and individual performance levels. However, public feedback seeking will be more positively related to individual performance than private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 15: Feedback source will moderate the relationship between the frequency of public and private feedback seeking behaviors and individual performance such that the frequency of public and private feedback seeking will be more strongly positively related to individual performance when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source.

Hypothesis 16: The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to individual performance than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source.

CHAPTER 3
METHODS

Participants and Procedure

The participants for this dissertation came from two regional medical centers, and a marketing firm in the telecommunications industry in the Southeastern United States. Three different surveys were needed to have one complete data point: an employee survey, supervisor survey, and a co-worker survey. The survey was distributed to 708 employees within the first organization, and 302 employees completed the survey (43% response); however, only 60 matching data points (i.e., an employee survey, supervisor survey, and a co-worker survey) were available from the completed surveys. The second organization required that 66 employees (i.e., supervisors, co-workers, and employees) complete the survey during the work day. Employees in this second sample completed a consent form stating that they had voluntarily completed the survey even though the company asked the employees to complete the survey in the company training room during normal work hours. From this sample, there were 22 matching data points. Within the third organization, 305 surveys were e-mailed to participants and 252 completed the survey (83% response). From the completed surveys, I obtained 66 matching data points in the final data set. Employees at the lower and middle levels of the organization were included within this sample. These data sites provided an appropriate sample due to the availability of different job types within the three organizations. For instance, all participants are considered either white-collar or pink-collar workers and include nurses, office workers, accountants, sales persons, managers, etc. Specifically, of the participants from the first data, 34% were medical workers such as nurses, and medical

technicians, 50% were managers, and 16% were clerical administrative. The participants from the second data site included 50% sales managers, 38% salespeople, and 12% clerical staff. Finally, participants in the third sample included 49% management, 30% accountants, 12% clerical, and 9% IT specialists. Although the job types were specific to two industries, I believe the inclusion of many different white-collar and pink-collar jobs improves the study's external validity and generalizability. Unlike most feedback seeking research (e.g., Ang et al., 1993; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995) in which lab experiments with students were employed, this dissertation used a field study to test the proposed hypotheses, further improving the external validity.

One hundred forty-eight data points were included in the final analyses. Statistical power for all of the following analyses was above .80. Within the sample, 71% of the participants are female, and 83% are Caucasian/White, 16% are African American. The ages of the participants ranged from 21-64 with 12% in the 20-29 age group, 32% in the 30-39 age group, 34% in the 40-49 age group, and 22% over 50 years old. The mean salary for the sample was $45,226, with 41% earning $30,000 - $50,000 per year, 30% earning more than $50,000, and 29% earning under $30,000. Forty-one percent of the participants have a college degree, 28% have some college experience but have not completed the degree, 13% have completed high school, 9% have completed a master's degree, and 7% have a college degree, and some graduate classes. Finally, 36% of the employees in the sample had worked for over 10 years in their organization, 28% had worked for 5-10 years, 23% had worked for 2-5 years, and 13% had worked for less than 2 years. Table 2 compares the demographic

statistics for the overall sample with each of the three data sites. In general, most of the statistics are similar across all three samples; however, the most noticeable difference is seen in the salary levels for all three organizations.

A stratified sampling technique was first used within all three organizations to determine the participant list. Stratified sampling first divides a population (i.e., all employees within my data sites) according to some characteristic into nonoverlapping subdivisions, called strata. Within each organization, I subdivided the overall population of employees into a stratum of managers/supervisors in which all managers/supervisors were included in the sample. After I gathered my sample of managers/supervisors, I assigned each supervisor an employee to evaluate using systematic sampling.

Systematic sampling refers to the process in which, after a random start, every *k*th subject is included in the study (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). In other words, each supervisor was asked questions regarding one specific individual's feedback seeking behavior, and this employee was chosen by using systematic sampling. The criteria for including participants in my sample were that the employees must work full-time and must have worked for the company for at least three months. I included employees who have had a few months to establish relationships with their co-workers and supervisor; therefore, a minimum of three months' tenure with the organization was required.

Each organization used a different approach for contacting the survey participants. The first organization mailed survey information to the participants' homes, giving each person the choice to answer the survey via a web-survey or paper survey. The second organization required all selected participants to complete

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for three data sites

	First Data Site N = 60	Second Data Site N = 22	Third Data Site N = 66	Overall Sample N = 148
Gender				
Male	17%	26%	40%	29%
Female	83%	74%	60%	71%
Race				
Caucasian	82%	79%	85%	83%
African American	17%	18%	14%	16%
Age				
20-29	12%	9%	13%	12%
30-39	26%	14%	44%	32%
40-49	34%	41%	32%	34%
over 50	28%	36%	11%	22%
Salary				
Under $30,000	44%	24%	15%	29%
$30,000 - $50,000	36%	67%	37%	41%
Over $50,000	20%	9%	48%	30%
Education				
High school diploma	11%	19%	13%	13%
Some college	25%	27%	30%	28%
College degree	39%	33%	45%	41%
Some graduate	8%	9%	6%	7%
Master's degree	14%	9%	6%	9%
Doctorate degree	2%	3%	0%	0%
Organizational Tenure				
Less than 2 years	19%	18%	7%	13%
2 - 5 years	21%	31%	23%	23%
5 -10 years	24%	26%	28%	28%
Over 10 years	36%	25%	42%	36%

the paper survey during company time in company training rooms. The third organization sent each participant an e-mail that included a brief summary of the study and the survey link to complete the web survey. In order to secure an appropriate response rate, each organization sent an official letter/e-mail endorsing the study prior

to sending the surveys. Each survey participant received a brief description of the research study and an assurance that his or her responses would remain confidential. Participants were allowed to ask questions at any time during the survey period and were able to request a summary report of the study results upon completion of the research study.

The employees selected in the sample completed a survey with items pertaining to each of the following variables: perceived value of public or private feedback, goal orientation, public self-consciousness, self-esteem, external feedback propensity, tolerance for ambiguity, public feedback seeking, private feedback seeking, general feedback seeking, feedback source, and career success. Each employee was asked to supply three co-workers' names at the end of the survey. I later distributed surveys to those co-workers. The supervisor and co-worker surveys were shorter than the employee survey and included items pertaining to the following variables: public feedback seeking, private feedback seeking, general feedback seeking, organizational citizenship behaviors, and employee performance. Finally, two reminder letters/e-mails were sent to any employee, supervisor, or co-worker who had not completed the survey.

Pilot Studies

Three different pilot studies were conducted prior to final data collection. Pilot studies were conducted to test new scales for public and private feedback seeking, to test perceived value of public and private feedback, and to test existing scales for consistency. Three different pilot studies were needed to evaluate changes made to some existing scales (e.g., self-esteem), and to develop scales used for the first time in this study (i.e., public and private feedback seeking). In the first pilot study

undergraduate students were given extra credit for distributing surveys to full-time employees. This pilot survey included most of the variables included in the final analyses except for perceived value of public or private feedback, goal orientation, external feedback propensity, and tolerance for ambiguity. Exploratory factor analysis was used to assess dimensionality and internal consistency of these scales. Specifically, principal axes factor analysis with either a varimax or oblique rotation was used to evaluate these variables. Varimax rotation is suggested when the goal of the researcher is to reduce the items to a smaller number of uncorrelated items to be used as a predictor variable in regression. Varimax rotations were used to verify the internal consistency of previously established scales. Alternatively, oblique rotations should be used when theoretical meaningfulness is the main goal in establishing new scales such as the public or private feedback seeking scales in this dissertation (Hair et al., 1998). The alpha coefficients for the established scales were similar to previous research except for the self-esteem scale (coefficient alpha = .39). The original scale included five negatively worded items that can sometimes artificially reduce reliability and may explain the low reliability within the pilot study. To reduce these problems in the final data collection I added positively worded items to the original scale that were similar to the negatively worded items. I used the oblique rotation factor analysis for the public and private feedback seeking scales that were expected to be correlated. The public and private feedback seeking items, which were adapted from previous feedback seeking scales, were cross loading on each other, and no clear factors emerged. Thus, a few more items were added, and the scales were separated on the survey to clarify the difference between the two scales. The separation of these two scales on the survey clarified for participants the distinction between public and private

feedback seeking. Also, the new items added to each scale allowed more flexibility for reducing the scales during factor analysis.

A second survey was distributed to test two new scales (i.e., perceived value of public feedback and perceived value of private feedback) and to test the new items added to the public and private feedback seeking scales. Similarly, undergraduate students were asked to give the survey to a full-time employee. Two factors clearly emerged for the perceived value of public and private feedback scales. However, the public and private feedback seeking scales still did not emerge as clearly defined factors. The cross loadings had reduced, but there remained some similarities between the two factors.

A third pilot study was conducted for two reasons: 1) to retest the public and private feedback seeking scales before final data collection, and 2) to test the new variables that were added to the study (i.e., external feedback propensity and tolerance for ambiguity). None of the public or private feedback seeking items was changed from the previous pilot study; however, the design of the survey was changed to further distinguish between these scales. Public and private feedback seeking items were separated on the survey such that public feedback items were listed in the beginning of the survey and private feedback items were listed towards the end of the survey. I separated the two scales to help the participants further distinguish the differences between the public and private feedback seeking definitions. This pilot study was distributed to employees within one of the data sites and to undergraduate students as an extra credit assignment. The employees that completed the third pilot study were not included in the final study. The established scales used in this pilot study provided similar alpha coefficients to previous research (i.e., goal orientation,

public self-consciousness, self-esteem, external feedback propensity, tolerance for ambiguity, intrinsic career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and performance). The adapted scales for perceived value of public or private feedback seeking and feedback source had acceptable alpha coefficients. Both public and private feedback seeking scales showed remarkable improvement from the previous pilot studies; however, two items had low factor loadings on both factors (i.e., item 1 and item 2; see Appendix F), and when they were removed two clear factors emerged. Although these items could have been deleted prior to final data collection, I chose to keep all items used in this final pilot study. Therefore, I would have the option in final data collection to determine which items should be included in each of the scales.

The pilot studies were used to evaluate the psychometric qualities of the established and adapted scales. However, all information reported in the following section will pertain to the evaluation of items in the final analyses.

Item Reduction

Factor Analysis. Factor analyses were used to determine a set of measures with high levels of construct validity and internal consistency. Although all measures were factor analyzed, scales used for the first time were also evaluated to determine item reduction (e.g., public or private feedback seeking). Principal axes factor analysis was used with either a varimax or oblique rotation to evaluate all the variables. Oblique rotation was used where subscales were expected to be correlated such as public and private feedback seeking. Factors were only retained if they had an eigenvalue greater than one, and the interpretation of the factors was based on multiple guidelines. First, I only accepted items with factor loadings larger than $\pm$ .40. Second, I examined the pattern of high and low loadings for each item across variables (Ford, MacCallum, &

Tait, 1986; Hair et al., 1998) in order to determine which items belong to each factor. Finally, after determining which items were included in each factor, reliability tests (e.g., coefficient alpha) were used to determine the internal consistency for each of the variables.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis. A LISREL confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess dimensionality and discriminant validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981) for all the factors related to feedback seeking such as public/private feedback seeking, perceived value of public/private feedback, and feedback source. The established scales used in this survey were not included due to sample size limitations in the LISREL confirmatory factor analysis. The factor analyses used to evaluate these established scales will be discussed in the Measures section of this chapter. Since three different surveys were distributed (i.e., employee, supervisor, and co-worker), I ran three different confirmatory models with LISREL. The first analysis grouped all the items from the employee survey: self-report public and private feedback seeking, perceived value of public/private feedback, and feedback source. The second and third analyses similarly grouped all the items related to feedback seeking from the supervisor survey and co-worker survey, respectively.

Within each group of analyses the overall fit for the confirmatory model was assessed based on an iterative procedure. The Tucker Lewis index (NNFI, nonnormed fit index), Bentler's comparative fit index (CFI), and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) were used to assess adequate fit with the items. Values higher than .90 for the NNFI and the CFI indicate adequate fit for the data (Hu & Bentler, 1995), and values lower than .08 for the RMSEA suggest adequate fit for the confirmatory model. Items were removed from the overall model if factor loadings were

less than .50, if modification indices showed improvement if removed from the model, if items cross-loaded on other factors, or if the items displayed within-measure correlated error. Items were deleted from each of the following scales: perceived value of public feedback, perceived value of private feedback, public feedback seeking, and private feedback seeking. Deleting items within a construct may change the face validity of the construct and its relationship with other factors; therefore, careful consideration and justification was made when deleting specific items. After evaluating the modification indices, the corresponding factor loadings, and the face validity of each item, I decided to delete specific items from each of the constructs while still maintaining the overall integrity of the measured construct. Each item was evaluated for its quality contribution to the scale and theoretical justification as an item in each scale. For example, some of the items that were excluded from the public and private feedback seeking scales asked very specific questions regarding an individual's advancement opportunities and not his or her general performance feedback. Furthermore, some of the items that were excluded from the scales asked about the appropriateness of an individual's behavior. Individuals may perceive "appropriateness" as workplace norms and not as a direct question addressing individual performance feedback. Most of the items deleted from the public and private feedback seeking scales addressed more specific behaviors in the workplace (e.g., functions of the job and appropriateness of an individual's behavior) than just performance in general. Tables 3 and 4 list the results for each of the CFA tests and the items deleted from the final scales.

Table 3

Confirmatory factor analyses

Model	χ^2	df	NNFI	CFI	RMSEA
Employee survey	**232.59****	131	.97	.97	.069
Supervisor survey	**249.48****	131	.91	.93	.078
Co-worker survey	**236.02****	131	.93	.94	.074

Note. Each confirmatory model included the following factors: public/private feedback seeking, perceived value of public/private feedback, and feedback source. ***p*<.01.

Table 4

Items deleted from original constructs

Construct	Deleted Item Number	Item
Perceived value of public feedback	3	I find public feedback on my performance useful.
	5	I would like to get public feedback on what behaviors will help me advance within the company.
	6	I find public feedback on my advancement potential useful.
Perceived value of private feedback	1	It is important to me to receive private feedback on my performance.
	3	I find private feedback on my performance useful.
	4	It is important to me to receive private feedback on my potential for advancement from within.
	6	I find private feedback on my advancement potential useful.
Public feedback seeking (employee, supervisor, and co-worker survey)	1	How often have you asked for feedback in public?
	2	How often do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job in a public context?
	3	How often do you seek information regarding what is expected of you in your job in a public context?
	5	How frequently do you seek information regarding the appropriateness of your behavior at work in a public context?
Private feedback seeking (employee, supervisor, and co-worker survey)	1	How often have you asked for feedback in private?
	2	How often do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job in a private context?
	5	How frequently do you seek information regarding the appropriateness of your behavior at work in a private context?
	8	How frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance in a private context?

Once the confirmatory models exhibited adequate fit, discriminant validity was assessed for the final factors. Coefficient alpha provides an estimate of internal consistency, and average variance extracted was used to determine whether the items adequately measure the specific construct. In all three of the surveys, all constructs exceeded the .50 threshold for average variance extracted, and the coefficient alphas will be discussed for each factor in the measures section. Finally, Fornell & Larcker (1981) recommend testing for discriminant validity among factors, such that if the square of the parameter estimates among two constructs is less than the average variance extracted estimates of two constructs, then discriminant validity is supported. In all three analyses, discriminant validity was supported for the constructs of public/private feedback seeking, perceived value of public/private feedback seeking, and feedback source.

Measures

All measures included in the final data collection are listed in this section. Sample items are not included in this section but a complete list of the items for each variable is listed in Appendix F.

Perceived Value of Public and Private Feedback. A six-item scale was adapted from Ashford's (1986) perceived value of feedback scale for both perceived value of public, and perceived value of private feedback scales. Items used a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Both scales were evaluated for scale construction through factor analyses, and the final scales were evaluated for internal consistency (Hinkin, 1995). Two factors emerged from the principal axes factor analysis with a promax oblique rotation. The two factors clearly defined separate scales for perceived value of public feedback and

perceived value of private feedback. However, after evaluating these factors with other feedback seeking items in LISREL, three items from the perceived value of public feedback scale and four items from the perceived value of private feedback scale were removed due to within-measure correlated error and/or cross loadings on other factors. Three items remained in the final factor for perceived value of public feedback (i.e., items 1, 2, and 4), and two items were used for perceived value of private feedback (i.e., items 2 and 5). The factor loadings for perceived value of public feedback are .72, .86, and .93. The factor loadings for perceived value of private feedback are .88 and .84. Some of the items that were deleted from these two scales asked very specific questions regarding an individual's advancement opportunities and the perceived value in seeking this type of feedback in a public or private context. Previous research does support that individuals have different feedback seeking behaviors when an audience is present (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995) and therefore they may perceive a different value in seeking more specific types of feedback (i.e., career advancement) in the presence of an audience. The coefficient alphas for perceived value of public feedback and private feedback are .87 and .85, respectively. The average variance extracted for perceived value of public feedback is .71 and for perceived value of private feedback is .74.

Goal Orientation. A five-item scale for learning goal orientation and an eight-item scale for performance goal orientation developed by VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) were used. Performance goal orientation contains two dimensions: avoid and prove. The avoid dimension describes the desire to avoid the negative judgments of one's ability, and this measure contains five items. The prove dimension of performance goal orientation is the desire to gain desirable judgments of one's ability,

and this measure contains four items. VandeWalle and Cummings reported an alpha coefficient of .75 for a learning goal orientation, an alpha coefficient of .76 for the avoid dimension of performance goal orientation, and an alpha coefficient of .71 for the prove dimension of performance goal orientation. My data yielded similar results. The alpha coefficients for the prove performance dimension, avoid performance dimension, and learning goal orientation are .77, .75, and .84, respectively. Items used a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Public Self-consciousness. Four self-report items derived from Levy et al. (1995) were included to measure public self-consciousness. London et al. (1999) reported an alpha coefficient of .79 for the scale. The alpha coefficient for the four-item scale is .83. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, anchors were labeled 1= To a very little extent, 2= To a small extent, 3= To some extent, 4= Quite a bit, and 5= To a very great extent.

Self-esteem. The ten-item scale developed by Rosenberg (1965) along with the positively worded items added during the pilot studies was used to assess an individual's self-esteem. Rosenberg reported an alpha coefficient of .93 for the ten-item scale. The coefficient alpha for this scale is .82. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

External Feedback Propensity. A five-item scale for external feedback propensity was used. Fedor et al. (1992) reported an alpha coefficient of .68 for this scale. The coefficient alpha for this scale is .80. Items used a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Tolerance for Ambiguity. An eight-item scale for tolerance for ambiguity originally developed by Norton (1975) was adapted for the final study. Both Ashford

and Cummings (1985) and Bennett et al. (1990) used this eight-item scale, which includes three items for job-related ambiguity, and five items for problem-solving ambiguity. Ashford and Cummings reported an alpha coefficient of .69 for all eight items in that scale. However, Bennett et al. found a .66 alpha coefficient for the job-related ambiguity factor and a .70 alpha coefficient for the problem-solving ambiguity factor. Similar to Bennett et al., the factor analyses supported a two-factor model; however, the alpha coefficient for the job-related factor is .53, and the problem-solving factor is .80. Items used a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Public and Private Feedback Seeking. Since this dissertation was the first study to consider feedback seeking behavior in a public or private context, proper scale development steps such as item generation and scale development were used in the process of developing public and private feedback seeking scales (Hinkin, 1995). In item generation, I examined previous conceptualizations of a public or private context (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990) and feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Morrison, 1993). After defining a public or private context for seeking feedback, I adapted items based on previous scales that assessed the frequency of feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Morrison, 1993). Even though most research supports the use of self-report items for seeking feedback (e.g., Morrison, 1993; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000), both self-report from the employee and supervisor/co-worker items referencing the employee were collected. A 5-point Likert scale was used to evaluate these factors with 1 = Less than once a month, 2 = Once a month, 3 = A few times a month, 4 = Once a week, and 5 = A few times a week or more.

The survey items were evaluated for scale construction through confirmatory factor analyses using LISREL, and the final scales were evaluated for internal consistency (Hinkin, 1995) and discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The factor loadings, average variance extracted, and coefficient alphas for public/private feedback seeking scales based on the survey (i.e., employee, supervisor, and co-worker) are listed in Table 5.

Feedback Source. The feedback source scale was also developed for this study. The same scale development steps were used in the process of generating items and evaluating the final scales (Hinkin, 1995). After I examined the results from a principal axes factor analysis with varimax rotation, two factors emerged from the data. Both factors have eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The first factor accounts for 62% of the variance and consists of two items with the co-worker as the source. The alpha coefficient for this two-item measure is .89. The second factor accounts for 26% of the variance and consists of two items with the supervisor as the source. The alpha coefficient for this two-item measure is .84. Employees were asked from whom (i.e., supervisor or co-workers) they seek performance feedback and how frequently they seek feedback from this feedback source. A 5-point Likert scale was used to evaluate this factor with 1 = Less than once a month, 2 = Once a month, 3 = A few times a month, 4 = Once a week, and 5 = A few times a week or more.

Extrinsic Career Success. An individual's overall extrinsic career success has included the number of promotions with a current employer, the number of promotions over one's career, and salary. These variables were standardized and summed to form an overall extrinsic factors scale (Judge & Bretz, 1994). Self-report measures were

used for number of promotions with current employer, the number promotions over one's career, and salary.

Table 5

CFA for public and private feedback seeking, perceived value of public and private feedback, and feedback source

	Employee survey			Supervisor survey			Co-worker survey		
	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load
Public FSB	.88	.65		.87	.65		.91	.72	
Item 4			.73			.75			.84
Item 6			.83			.74			.91
Item 7			.83			.87			.91
Item 8			.84			.85			.73
Private FSB	.89	.66		.88	.68		.90	.71	
Item 3			.71			.67			.79
Item 4			.89			.83			.90
Item 6			.81			.88			.75
Item 7			.83			.89			.92
	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load
Perceived value of public FB	.87	.71		.87	.70		.87	.71	
Item 1			.72			.72			.72
Item 2			.86			.85			.85
Item 4			.93			.93			.94
Perceived value of private FB	.85	.74		.85	.74		.85	.74	
Item 2			.88			.83			.83
Item 5			.84			.89			.89
	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load	Coeff α	AVE	Factor load
Supervisor source	.84	.73		.84	.74		.84	.77	
Item 1			.91			.93			.97
Item 2			.79			.78			.77
Co-worker source	.89	.81		.89	.81		.89	.81	
Item 1			.97			.97			.96
Item 2			.82			.83			.83

Intrinsic Career Success. A five-item career satisfaction scale developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) was used. Greenhaus et al. reported an alpha coefficient of .88 for this scale. The final data produced an alpha coefficient of .90 using this five-item scale. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. OCB-I, and OCB-O measures developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) were used in both the supervisor and co-worker surveys. They reported an alpha coefficient for the OCB-I scale of .88. Ladd and Henry (2000) used this seven-item scale and reported an alpha coefficient of .73. The final data produced an alpha coefficient of .90 for the seven-item scale used in the supervisor survey and an alpha coefficient of .93 for the seven-item scale used in the co-worker survey.

Williams and Anderson (1991) reported an alpha coefficient of .75 for the OCB-O scale. Ladd and Henry (2000) used this six-item measure and reported an alpha coefficient of .65. The final data produced an alpha coefficient of .83 for the six-item scale in the supervisor survey and an alpha coefficient of .84 for the six-item scale in the co-worker survey. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree for both OCB-I and OCB-O scales.

Performance. The in-role performance scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) was used in the supervisor and co-worker survey. They reported an alpha coefficient of .91. Ladd and Henry (2000) used this seven-item scale with a reported alpha coefficient of .78. The final data produced an alpha coefficient of .91 for this seven-item scale in the supervisor survey and an alpha coefficient of .94 in the co-

worker survey. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Control variables

Survey Medium. Both web-based surveys and paper surveys were distributed among the three data sites. However, participants were not given the option of using a paper or web-based survey at all three data sites. The contact person for the first data site gave participants the opportunity to complete a web-based survey through the company intranet or through the Internet and also mailed a paper survey to the participants. The contact person for the second data site asked her employees to complete the paper survey during the workday in the company training room. And, the contact person for the third data site chose to send participants an e-mail with the Internet link to the web survey.

Web-based surveys have been shown to have fewer missing values than paper surveys and to yield similar results. Further, previous research suggests that there are no significant differences in covariance structures when two different survey media are distributed (Stanton, 1998). Although I did not anticipate any differences due to the survey medium used, I controlled for this variable by including a dummy variable with codes of 0 = Web-based survey and 1 = Paper survey. All analyses were examined with this control variable, and there were no significant differences when comparing results controlling for survey medium to results not controlling for survey medium. Thus, this control variable was eliminated from all analyses.

Social-desirability Bias. Thirteen items from the short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Ballard, 1992) were included in the employee survey. Social desirability bias is included as a control variable in order to partial out

any potential response bias due to the use of self-report measures. The reported alpha coefficient for this scale is .70. The final data produced an alpha coefficient of .72 for all thirteen items. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Organizational Tenure. Ashford (1986) found a negative relationship between job and/or organizational tenure and feedback seeking behavior, and previous studies have consistently used this variable as a control in their analyses (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000). Employees were asked how long they have worked for their current employer in years and months.

Age. Previous studies have used an individual's age as a control variable for both feedback seeking studies (e.g., Callister et al., 1999; Fedor et al., 1992; London et al. 1999) and career success studies (e.g., Judge et al., 1995; Seibert et al., 1999). This variable is included in feedback seeking studies as a control due to changes in feedback seeking over time. Similarly, an individual's age may determine the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic career success over time. Employees were asked to give their age in years in the survey.

Gender. Gender is a common control in career success studies to account for gender differences in career opportunities and overall career satisfaction (Callister et al., 1999; Judge et al., 1995; Seibert et al., 1999). Similarly, gender has been included in feedback seeking studies due to the concern that gender may affect respondents' feedback seeking behavior (Callister et al., 1999; Fedor et al., 1992; London et al., 1999). Employees were asked their gender in the survey. Gender was coded as 0 = Male and 1 = Female.

Educational Level. Educational level is positively related to the level of extrinsic career success (Judge et al. 1995). Therefore, it has been used as a control variable in studies of extrinsic and intrinsic career success (e.g., Judge et al., 1999; Seibert et al., 1999; Seibert et al., 2001). Employees were asked to report the highest level of education attained. Education was coded as 1 = Less than high school, 2 = High school graduate, 3 = Some college, 4 = College graduate, 5 = Some graduate work, 6 = Master's degree, and 7 = Doctorate degree.

Organization. Two dummy variables were used to control for the organizations from which data were collected. Dummy variables are used as a way to categorize nonmetric data into metric data. Since there may be differences, such as different organizational cultures or feedback environments, among the three different organizations used in this sample, dummy variables were used as a way to control for these differences in the regression equations. For instance, two of the organizations used in this sample are in the healthcare industry, which may differ in the availability of sources from whom feedback can be sought. Due to the nature of the jobs in hospitals (i.e., nurses, lack of office space for employees), employees may not have as much of an opportunity to seek feedback in a private context as in a typical organization such as the telecommunications company. Therefore, dummy variables were used in all analyses to control for any potential differences among organizations. Site three was dummy coded as D1 and site one was dummy coded as D2.

Know Supervisor and Know Co-worker. A control variable was added to determine how well the supervisor or co-worker knew the employee. Vancouver and Morrison (1995) found that close relationships between the feedback source and feedback seeker increase the tendency of feedback seeking behaviors. Both the

supervisor and co-worker survey included a question asking the source how long he or she had known the feedback seeker. The responses were coded as 1 = Less than a year, 2 = 1 to 2 years, 3 = 3 to 5 years, and 4 = More than 5 years.

Source Accessibility. A control variable was added to determine how often a feedback source (i.e., supervisor or co-worker) is accessible to an employee. Previous research supports a positive relationship between the likelihood of seeking feedback and a source's accessibility (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Both the supervisor and co-worker surveys included a question asking the source how often he or she sees the feedback seeker and may be accessible for feedback seeking. The responses were 1 = Several times a day, 2 = Not everyday, but several times a week, and 3 = Not every week, but several times a month.

Own Office. A control variable was added to determine whether employees had their own offices within each organization. Public or private feedback seeking may be related to whether an individual has access to a private space to seek feedback; therefore, employees were asked whether they had their own office space. The responses to this item were coded 1 = Yes and 2 = No.

Analyses

The hypotheses were tested using hierarchical multiple regression for the direct effects and moderated regression for each interaction. Direct effect hypotheses were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression in which the control variables were entered in the first step and the independent variables were entered as a block in the second step. By entering the control and independent variables in different steps, I evaluated at each stage the increment in R^2 due to the variable being entered

(Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). The control variables differed according to each hypothesis.

Previous research in feedback seeking behaviors supports the notion that the most appropriate method for analyzing these behaviors is to use self-report measures (e.g., Morrison, 1993; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Morrison and Vancouver suggest that feedback seeking behaviors are similar to expectancy theories or general behavioral theories maintaining that the individual is the most appropriate person to assess within-person behaviors. Research trying to eliminate the effects of same-source bias will typically examine responses from an employee and his or her supervisor (Morrison, 1993; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). However, employees may seek feedback from multiple sources that may not include the supervisor (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Evaluating feedback seeking behaviors between an employee and a supervisor may not capture an individual's true feedback seeking behaviors if he or she typically seeks feedback from a co-worker. Furthermore, supervisors or co-workers may not notice the frequency with which individuals seek feedback in a public or private context (Morrison, 1993). Although previous researchers accept this justification for using self-report measures, researchers should still consider the statistical problems that may arise due to common method variance. In the next chapter, I will discuss and incorporate the correlational marker statistical method that is used to partial out any method variance within the data.

For the hypotheses testing interaction effects, moderated multiple regression was used. A moderator effect (or interaction effect) implies that the relationship between two variables changes as a function of the moderator variable. Thus, a

moderator variable always functions as an independent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Moderated regression allows a researcher to assess the impact of the moderator on the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, where the moderator becomes a product of the independent variable and the moderator variable.

One issue with interaction effects is whether the predictor variables should be centered or uncentered. Centered variables are put in deviation score form so that their means are zero (Aiken & West, 1991; Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Although centered and uncentered regression analyses have identical slopes, an advantage of centering relates to the issue of multicollinearity between the first order variables and the interaction term. Researchers argue that the multicollinearity is due to scaling issues among the predictor variables, which can be minimized through centering (Aiken & West, 1991). Similarly, researchers argue that computational problems can arise due to multicollinearity between the first order and the product variables in the regression equation (Aiken & West, 1991; Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Therefore, to reduce the computational problems associated with multicollinearity, I centered the predictor variables prior to analyzing the hypotheses.

After centering the predictor variables, I used the following steps in moderated multiple regression analyses of the interaction hypotheses. Separate regression analyses were run for each of the moderator hypotheses. The control variables were entered into the first step, then the independent variables were entered as a block, and finally the product variable of the moderator and the independent variable were entered. In order to determine whether an interaction effect is significant, I considered the statistical significance in the change in R^2 at each step. A significant interaction

effect is present if the change in R^2 is statistically significant. Finally, each interaction was plotted if the change in R^2 was statistically significant to determine the slope and relationship with the dependent variable.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

Missing Data Strategy

The data must be examined for systematic errors as well as patterns of missing data before performing any analyses (Hair et al., 1998). A thorough examination of the data will uncover some of the missing data problems that may affect further analysis. For instance, missing data may bias the results; skewed univariate distributions may also bias the results of particular statistical analyses.

In examining missing data, researchers must first calculate descriptive statistics to assess general characteristics of each variable within the data. Descriptive statistics were calculated to determine distribution patterns within the data as well as to determine if particular variables should be deleted. There are no firm rules for determining which cases and variables should be deleted from a sample. The researcher should examine both empirically and theoretically the value of each variable when examining the hypothesized relationships. However, if the imputation methods used to lessen the problems with missing data inflate the power in the final analyses, then this particular variable may be a candidate to be removed (Hair et al., 1998). All of the variables had less than 10% missing data; therefore, none of the variables were removed in the final sample.

The second step is to determine whether any particular observations should be deleted from the sample. This step is calculated by using the COUNT command within SPSS in which each case lists the number of missing variables contained. Similar to examining missing variable problems, each case should be examined both empirically and theoretically to determine why these cases have significant missing

data. If missing data are concentrated within a small group of cases, then the problem may be related to the questions and not applicable to the participants (Hair et al., 1998). I would have considered deleting a particular case if more than 10% of the variables were missing in that case; however, no cases were deleted from the final sample.

It is important to assess which variables/cases are missing due to systematic error external to the respondent (data entry mistakes) or the respondent's refusal to answer a particular item on the survey. Missing data may be due to an improper item on the survey that needs to be addressed before any analyses are run. Survey items must properly assess the research question being asked. Roth (1994) suggested that 5-10% missing data in each variable is considered appropriate in evaluating missing data. Since most of the variables had less than 5% missing data, mean substitution was used as a remedy for missing data. The mean values across the other respondents for each particular variable were used on each of the metric variables as the mean replacement value. Although the mean substitution approach is the most commonly used, there are some disadvantages to using mean replacement. This conservative approach can improve the sample size for power analyses but the distribution and variance estimates may be distorted (Hair et al., 1998). Despite these disadvantages, Monte Carlo simulations regarding missing data techniques have found that mean substitution is more accurate than listwise deletion and sometimes less accurate than pairwise deletion techniques. Further, simulations reveal that when the amount of missing data is small and random, these distortions reveal little differences in statistical analyses (Raymond & Roberts, 1987; Roth, 1994).

Outlier Analysis

Outliers are values that are distinctly different from other observations, which cause researchers to question how much the data point truly represents the population. Outliers may occur due to procedural errors, extraordinary events (with or without explanation), and a unique combination of values across variables. That is, some observations may fall into a normal range for each variable, but their combination of values across variables makes the observation unique. Depending on the cause of the outlier, they may be perceived as a valuable addition to the analyses or they may bias the results. Regardless, the impact of outliers should be evaluated prior to conducting other analyses (Hair et al., 1998).

Outliers may be detected in three different ways: univariate, bivariate, and multivariate techniques. Univariate techniques examine the distribution of observations by deleting any observations over three standard deviations from the mean. Bivariate uses scatterplots to evaluate which cases are outside the range of the other observations. Multivariate detection uses the Mahalanobis D^2 for determining which observations are considered outliers (Hair et al., 1998).

In this dissertation, both bivariate and multivariate analyses were used to determine the potential for any outliers. Within the final data set, there appeared to be no extraordinary points or unique data values. Therefore, any marginal outliers were retained in order to eliminate the risk of limiting the generalizability of the results.

Control Variable and Data Analysis Strategy

The control variables varied depending on the regression equation being examined. Although all of the commonly used control variables for each dependent variable (i.e., feedback seeking behaviors, career success, OCBs, and performance)

were included in the initial regression equations, some were not used in the final analysis, and other previously unused control variables were included. For instance, age and gender are common control variables when evaluating feedback seeking behaviors but were not used in these analyses because they did not correlate with the dependent variables. I determined which control variables to include in each regression equation by first examining which variables were correlated to the dependent variable being tested. In some equations, the traditionally used control variables did not have a significant impact on the dependent variable being tested, but other variables did impact the dependent variable. Therefore, for each equation, I included control variables that were relevant to each equation. Since the control variables vary for each regression equation, they are listed in each table of results.

The data analysis strategy and the data used to test each hypothesis varies depending on whether I am examining the antecedents to public or private feedback seeking or the consequences of public or private feedback seeking. I collected data from three different sources: the employee, the employee's supervisor, and the employee's co-worker. Each of the three sources answered questions pertaining to the same public and private feedback seeking scale, which were used to test the antecedents predicting the frequency of seeking public or private feedback seeking. Therefore, for hypotheses 1 – 7, separate equations were examined for the self-reported public or private feedback seeking behaviors, the supervisor-reported public or private feedback seeking behaviors for the employee, and the co-worker-reported public or private feedback seeking behaviors for the employee. The results using each of the three data sources are presented in the following section.

For the hypotheses testing the consequences (hypotheses 8 – 16) of public or private feedback seeking, employee self-reports were used for the independent variables public/private feedback seeking, feedback source, and the dependent variables intrinsic/extrinsic career success. Supervisor and co-worker data were used to examine the hypotheses testing organizational citizenship behaviors and individual performance as dependent variables. Supervisor and co-worker data were used for the dependent variables to reduce the effects of same source bias that may exist between variables that are collected by the same person and during the same time period.

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations are presented in Table 6.

The hypotheses were tested using hierarchical multiple regression and moderated multiple regression to test the interaction effects. For each equation, the control variables were entered first, followed by the predictor variables in the second step.

Antecedents predicting public and private feedback seeking. Hypotheses 1-7 posit relationships between the antecedents of feedback seeking behaviors and public/private feedback seeking behaviors. As stated previously, three different sources (i.e., employee self-report, supervisor, and co-worker) evaluated the employee's feedback seeking behaviors. The observed self-reported correlations (range from .27 to .73) are not similar to the observed supervisor (range from -.04 to .02) and observed co-worker (range from .03 to .12) correlations. The differences in correlations may be due to individuals' seeking feedback from different sources within

Table 6

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order intercorrelations

	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Control Variables	1. Sex	.75	.44	1.0	--													
	2. Age	41	10.24	-.02	1.0	--												
	3. Job tenure	4.46	4.87	.03	.28**	1.0	--											
	4. Org tenure	9.06	7.59	-.07	.45**	.46**	1.0	--										
	5. Education	3.59	1.13	-.23**	-.08	-.24**	-.21**	1.0	--									
	6. Know supervisor	2.79	1.05	-.05	.16	.28**	.51**	-.05	1.0	--								
	7. Know co-worker	2.68	1.03	-.09	.11	.25**	.43**	-.14	.46**	1.0	--							
	8. Supervisor accessibility	1.32	.56	.00	.07	-.09	-.07	.08	-.07	-.11	1.0	--						
	9. Co-worker accessibility	1.37	.62	-.05	-.08	.05	.02	.14	-.02	.14	.28*	1.0	--					
	10. Social desirability	3.63	.47	.03	-.01	-.06	-.05	-.15	-.01	.19*	-.01	.04	1.0	(.72)				
	11. Own office	1.67	.47	.01	-.16	.19*	-.16	-.18*	-.15	-.03	-.02	-.05	-.08	1.0	--			
	12. Survey medium	--	--	.11	.21*	-.02	-.08	-.07	-.07	.04	.07	.01	.05	-.07	1.0	--		
	13. Organization dummy 1	--	--	-.23**	-.17*	.06	.12	-.06	.04	.05	-.06	.04	-.17*	.19*	-.58**	1.0	--	
	14. Organization dummy 2	--	--	.28**	.10	-.01	-.11	.07	-.06	-.09	.11	.08	.18*	-.09	.13	-.74**	1.0	--

(Table 6 continued)

	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
IVs	15. Perc val public FB	3.17	1.13	.14	-.06	.04	-.15	-.24**	-.26**	-.06	.06	.03	.18*	.04	.13	-.15	.11	1.0
	16. Perc val private FB	2.04	1.00	.03	-.02	-.25**	-.08	-.01	-.26**	-.14	.03	.00	.02	-.09	.06	.02	-.03	.16*
	17. Perf goal orient prove	3.30	.83	-.12	-.17*	.01	-.05	.01	-.11	-.08	.10	.13	-.04	-.04	.02	.08	-.06	.19*
	18. Perf goal orient avoid	2.12	.70	-.01	.07	.29**	.15	.06	.01	-.00	-.10	-.04	-.20*	.13	.15	.10	-.22**	.02
	19. Learn goal orientation	4.17	.56	-.09	-.08	-.18*	-.18*	.12	-.05	-.05	.09	-.03	.20*	-.16	-.03	-.06	.12	.09
	20. Public self-consciousness	3.79	.75	.18*	-.11	-.02	-.10	-.02	-.20*	-.19*	.04	.07	.07	-.00	.01	.06	.05	.15
	21. Self-esteem	4.20	.48	-.04	-.01	-.05	.13	-.01	.20*	.16	.06	.04	.26**	-.29**	-.10	.02	.02	.07
	22. External FB propensity	3.75	.62	.17*	-.01	.14	-.05	-.03	-.21*	-.12	.11	.19*	.19*	.09	.20*	-.14	.14	.17*
	23. Tolerance for ambiguity	3.13	.62	-.05	.01	.11	-.01	.11	-.01	-.08	.06	-.10	-.14	.09	-.03	.10	-.17*	-.06
DVs	24. Public feedback	1.38	.68	-.04	-.10	-.18*	-.10	-.00	-.35**	-.18*	.02	.11	.08	.06	.07	.00	.03	.27**
	25. Private feedback	1.77	.91	.02	-.18*	-.20*	-.13	.06	-.24**	-.08	.05	.01	-.02	.02	-.08	.22**	-.13	.16
	26. Supervisor public FB	1.25	.57	.06	.03	.05	-.05	.06	-.05	-.14	-.06	-.00	-.05	.04	-.05	.05	.05	.02
	27. Supervisor private FB	1.83	.93	-.03	-.12	.06	.04	-.00	.07	-.06	-.19*	.07	.00	-.08	-.22**	.29**	-.16	-.08
	28. Co-worker public FB	1.42	.78	-.04	-.14	.03	-.05	-.11	-.07	-.15	.05	-.01	-.06	.24**	-.14	.21*	-.12	.13

(Table 6 continued)

	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
DVs	29. Co-worker private FB	1.60	.88	.05	-.03	-.01	-.07	-.10	-.08	-.06	.10	-.04	-.06	.21	.03	.11	-.10	.08
	30. Intrinsic career success	3.32	.92	.02	.14	.10	.17*	-.01	.15	.15	.10	-.01	.01	-.20*	-.06	.01	.07	.03
	31. Extrinsic career success	-.02	1.98	-.25**	.26**	.06	.41**	-.00	.20*	.20*	.04	-.07	-.15	-.26**	-.09	.21*	-.29**	-.10
	32. Supervisor OCB-I	3.97	.75	.11	.01	.03	.01	.06	.07	.04	-.14	.11	.08	-.05	.09	-.21*	.21**	-.10
	33. Supervisor OCB-O	4.12	.68	.00	.08	.03	.10	.16	.19*	.14	.04	.12	.09	-.14	-.01	-.18*	.23**	-.12
	34. Supervisor performance	4.27	.72	.07	.13	-.07	.08	.06	.21*	.08	.01	.04	.09	-.21*	.18*	-.37**	.29**	-.02
	35. Co-worker OCB-I	4.01	.88	.12	-.04	-.10	-.06	-.03	.10	-.09	.05	-.18*	.12	-.02	-.03	-.13	.10	-.01
	36. Co-worker OCB-O	4.11	.72	.01	.04	-.04	.06	-.02	.05	.02	.11	-.14	.13	-.08	-.04	-.12	.07	.00
	37. Co-worker performance	4.33	.72	.16*	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.08	.14	.00	.12	-.19*	.01	.00	.07	-.16*	.11	-.02
	38. Supervisor source	1.75	1.00	.00	-.24**	-.16	-.12	-.04	-.25**	-.10	.11	.01	.09	.05	-.04	.21**	-.13	.18*
	39. Co-worker source	1.87	1.08	.13	-.10	-.10	-.13	.07	-.28**	-.18*	.04	.02	-.04	-.07	-.00	.08	.04	.22**

(Table 6 continued)

	Variable	M	SD	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
IVs	15. Perc val public FB	3.17	1.13	(.87)														
	16. Perc val private FB	2.04	1.00	1.0	(.85)													
	17. Perf goal orient prove	3.30	.83	.03	1.0	(.77)												
	18. Perf goal orient avoid	2.12	.70	-.02	.17*	1.0	(.75)											
	19. Learn goal orientation	4.17	.56	.12	.14	-.35**	1.0	(.84)										
	20. Public self-consciousness	3.79	.75	.01	.40**	.05	.22**	1.0	(.83)									
	21. Self-esteem	4.20	.48	.06	.07	-.18*	.27**	.12	1.0	(.82)								
	22. External FB propensity	3.75	.62	.02	.42**	.14	.14	.56**	.06	1.0	(.68)							
	23. Tolerance for ambiguity	3.13	.62	-.16	.06	.20*	.00	.10	-.08	.24**	1.0	(.53)						
DVs	24. Public feedback	1.38	.68	.50**	.06	-.00	.08	-.02	.00	.15	-.13	1.0	(.88)					
	25. Private feedback	1.77	.91	.73**	.14	-.01	.14	.10	.05	.09	-.01	.54**	1.0	(.89)				
	26. Supervisor public FB	1.25	.57	-.04	.03	-.02	.00	-.08	.01	-.10	-.12	-.06	-.03	1.0	(.87)			
	27. Supervisor private FB	1.83	.93	-.03	.14	.01	-.05	.03	.15	.00	.11	-.04	.05	.43**	1.0	(.88)		

(Table 6 continued)

	Variable	M	SD	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
DVs	28. Co-worker public FB	1.42	.78	.12	.18*	.07	-.16	.01	-.04	-.02	-.07	.06	.15	.10	-.01	1.0	(.91)	
	29. Co-worker private FB	1.60	.88	.03	.18*	-.01	-.10	.05	-.06	-.01	-.08	-.03	.14	.06	.01	.65**	1.0	(.90)
	30. Intrinsic career success	3.32	.92	.07	.10	-.14	.12	.11	.40**	-.06	-.15	-.16*	.06	.01	.01	.03	.06	1.0
	31. Extrinsic career success	-.02	1.98	-.13	.11	.02	.05	.03	.27**	-.03	.08	-.09	-.08	-.07	.09	-.14	-.07	.32**
	32. Supervisor OCB-I	3.97	.75	-.09	.09	-.03	-.02	.18*	.07	.18*	-.09	-.08	-.08	.10	-.08	-.10	-.09	-.03
	33. Supervisor OCB-O	4.12	.68	-.10	.13	-.07	.01	.17*	.18*	.07	-.11	-.25**	-.18*	.01	-.06	-.12	-.15	.21*
	34. Supervisor performance	4.27	.72	-.09	.05	-.09	.04	.09	.15	.04	-.21*	-.21*	-.24**	-.02	-.16	-.08	-.06	.15
	35. Co-worker OCB-I	4.01	.88	-.09	-.01	-.00	.20*	.15	.11	.00	.02	-.22**	-.06	-.09	-.20*	.11	.14	.14
	36. Co-worker OCB-O	4.11	.72	-.06	.07	.11	.03	.16	-.03	.02	.07	-.24**	-.07	-.09	-.08	.02	.02	.09
	37. Co-worker performance	4.33	.72	-.11	.03	.01	.06	.13	.01	-.02	.08	-.35**	-.10	-.00	-.14	.12	.19*	.15
	38. Supervisor source	1.75	1.00	.54**	.18*	-.09	.09	.08	.04	.11	-.02	.54**	.69**	-.02	.21*	.12	.18*	-.02
	39. Co-worker source	1.87	1.08	.44**	.08	.07	.08	.20*	-.03	.07	.03	.36**	.42**	.10	.12	.07	.06	-.07

(Table 6 continued)

	Variable	M	SD	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	
DVs	29. Co-worker private FB	1.60	.88	(.90)										
	30. Intrinsic career success	3.32	.92	1.0	(.90)									
	31. Extrinsic career success	-.02	1.98	.32**	1.0	--								
	32. Supervisor OCB-I	3.97	.75	-.03	-.09	1.0	(.90)							
	33. Supervisor OCB-O	4.12	.68	.21*	.07	.59**	1.0	(.83)						
	34. Supervisor performance	4.27	.72	.15	.03	.59**	.69**	1.0	(.91)					
	35. Co-worker OCB-I	4.01	.88	.14	-.04	.22**	.11	.19*	1.0	(.93)				
	36. Co-worker OCB-O	4.11	.72	.09	.04	.13	.22**	.20*	.68**	1.0	(.84)			
	37. Co-worker performance	4.33	.72	.15	-.15	.17*	.15	.24**	.73**	.67**	1.0	(.94)		
	38. Supervisor source	1.75	1.00	-.02	.01	-.07	-.24**	-.26**	-.13	-.14	-.20*	1.0	(.84)	
	39. Co-worker source	1.87	1.08	-.07	-.11	-.00	-.11	-.20*	-.09	-.08	-.06	.41**	1.0	(.89)

Note: N = 148. Coefficient alphas are listed parenthentically on the diagonal. *p < .05 **p<.01

the organization. Regardless of these differences, the results for all the antecedent hypotheses by data source are presented. Tables 7 and 8 present the regression results in which all predictor variables are included in one equation for the criterion public or private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 1a predicted a positive relationship between perceived value of public feedback and the frequency of seeking public feedback. The results are presented in Table 7. A significant relationship was found ($p < .05$) using the employee self-report data; however, due to tests for common method variance it is unknown whether there is a true relationship between these two variables. Sensitivity analysis revealed that the more conservative tests to partial out method variance revealed a nonsignificant relationship, which means that the correlations may be inflated due to method variance. Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported. A detailed discussion regarding the tests for common method variance will be addressed in the following section. The relationship between perceived value in public feedback and public feedback seeking was not significant using either the supervisor or co-worker data for public feedback seeking.

Next, I predicted that learning goal orientation would be positively related to both public and private feedback seeking behaviors. The results are presented in Tables 7 and 8. This hypothesis was not supported for either public or private feedback seeking behaviors using any of the three data sources (i.e., employee self-report, supervisor, and co-worker). Learning goal orientation did not significantly predict the frequency of seeking feedback in a public or private context.

Hypothesis 4a predicted a positive relationship between public self-consciousness and public feedback seeking. The results are presented in Table 7.

Interestingly, the relationship was significant, but the beta coefficient was negative using the employee self-report data; therefore, the hypothesis was not supported. Further, the relationship was not significant using either the supervisor or co-worker data for public feedback seeking.

Next, self-esteem was posited to be positively related to public feedback seeking (hypothesis 5a). The results are presented in Table 7. This hypothesis was not supported using any of the three data sources for public feedback seeking. Self-esteem did not significantly predict the frequency of seeking public feedback.

A positive relationship was posited between external feedback propensity and public feedback seeking in hypothesis 6a. The results are presented in Table 7. This hypothesis was supported ($p < .05$) using the employee self-report data. External feedback propensity did contribute significantly to the frequency of seeking feedback in a public context beyond the effects of the control variables. However, a significant relationship was not found between external feedback propensity and public feedback seeking using the supervisor or co-worker data for public feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 7a predicted a negative relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and public feedback seeking behaviors. The results are presented in Table 7. This hypothesis was supported ($p < .05$) using the employee self-report data, and the supervisor data; individuals who have a high tolerance for ambiguity are less likely to seek feedback in a public context. The relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and public feedback seeking was not supported using the co-worker data for public feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 1b predicted a positive relationship between the perceived value in private feedback seeking and the frequency of seeking private feedback. The results

are presented in Table 8. This hypothesis was supported using the employee self-report data only. According to these data, employees do perceive a value in seeking feedback in a private context. However, this hypothesis was not supported when either the supervisor or co-worker was the data source for private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that a performance goal oriented individual would seek feedback in a private context. There are two dimensions to performance goal orientation: prove and avoid. The results are presented in Table 8. This hypothesis was not supported for either the prove or avoid dimension of performance goal orientation using any of the three data sources for private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 4b predicted a negative relationship between public self-consciousness and private feedback seeking. The results are presented in Table 8. This hypothesis was not supported using any of the three data sources for private feedback seeking. Public self-consciousness was not significantly related to seeking feedback in a private context.

Next, hypothesis 5b stated that self-esteem would have a negative relationship with private feedback seeking behaviors. The results are presented in Table 8. Similar to the findings on hypothesis 5a, there was no significant relationship between self-esteem and private feedback seeking using any of the three data sources for private feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 6b posited a positive relationship between external feedback propensity and private feedback seeking behaviors. The results are presented in Table 8. Interestingly, this hypothesis was not supported for any of the three data sources even though a significant relationship was found in relation to public feedback seeking.

External feedback propensity did not significantly contribute to the frequency of seeking private feedback beyond the effects of the control variables.

Table 7

Regression analyses of antecedents predicting public feedback seeking (Hypotheses 1 – 7)

	Employee self-report data	Supervisor data	Co-worker data
	β	β	β
Step 1			
Job tenure	.00	.01	.01
Know supervisor	**-.13***	**-.06†**	.01
Know co-worker	-.04	-.07	-.09
D1	-.15	.22	**.30***
D2	-.01	.20	.18
Private FB	**.39****	**.28****	**.58****
R^2	**.34****	**.23****	**.47****
df	134	134	134
F overall	**11.26****	**6.66****	**19.76****
Step 2			
Job tenure	-.01	**.02†**	.00
Know supervisor	**-.10***	**-.12***	.02
Know co-worker	-.06	-.06	**-.10†**
D1	-.01	-.03	**.36***
D2	-.01	.08	.19
Private FB	**.36****	**.29****	**.57****
Perceived value of public FB	**.09***	-.03	.07
Learning goal orientation	.00	.07	-.12
Public self-consciousness	**-.23****	-.06	-.07
Self-esteem	.01	-.00	.09
External FB propensity	**.24***	-.10	.08
Tolerance for ambiguity	**-.16***	**-.16***	-.07
R^2	**.41***	**.29†**	.49
ΔR^2	**. 07***	**.06†**	.02
df	128	128	128
F change	**2.59***	**1.87†**	**.92**
F overall	**7.33****	**4.39****	**10.30****

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 8

Regression analyses of antecedents predicting private feedback seeking (Hypotheses 1 – 7)

	Employee self-report data	Supervisor data	Co-worker data
	β	β	β
Step 1			
Job tenure	**-.02**†	-.00	-.00
Know supervisor	-.03	**.14**†	-.02
Know co-worker	.06	-.06	.05
D1	**.47****	**.56****	-.18
D2	.10	.12	-.24
Public FB	**.66****	**.68****	**.75****
R^2	**.34****	**.27****	**.45****
df	134	134	134
F overall	**11.39****	**8.32****	**18.24****
Step 2			
Job tenure	-.01	-.01	.00
Know supervisor	.02	.13	-.01
Know co-worker	.07	-.05	.05
D1	**.42****	**.55***	-.21
D2	.14	.16	-.25
Public FB	**.31****	**.70****	**.74****
Perceived value private FB	**.57****	-.00	.00
Learning goal orientation	.05	-.18	-.04
Performance goal orientation- prove	.08	.13	.07
Performance goal orientation-avoid	-.02	-.08	-.07
Public self-consciousness	.07	-.01	.05
Self-esteem	-.06	**.28**†	-.18
External FB propensity	-.03	.06	-.10
Tolerance for ambiguity	**.19***	**.25***	.03
R^2	**.64****	.34	.46
ΔR^2	**.30****	.06	.02
df	126	126	126
F change	**13.19****	1.52	.49
F overall	**15.98****	**4.54****	.49

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Hypothesis 7b predicted a negative relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and the frequency of seeking private feedback. The results are presented in

Table 8. Although there was a significant relationship using the employee self-report data, the direction of the beta coefficient was not as predicted; therefore, this hypothesis was not supported. The relationship between tolerance for ambiguity, and private feedback seeking was not significant using either the supervisor or co-worker data for private feedback seeking.

Common Method Variance

Common method variance is more likely to occur when individuals assess their own behaviors using the same methods (e.g., paper and pencil surveys) at the same time period than when individuals use different methods to assess their own behaviors. Common method variance can either inflate or attenuate the observed correlations between variables and lead to false interpretations of the data (Lindell & Whitney, 2001; Williams & Brown, 1994). Researchers can reduce this problem by collecting data from multiple sources and varying time periods. However, there are certain behavioral tendencies (e.g., expectancy theories and feedback seeking behaviors) that theoretically justify using individual self-reports to explain a particular phenomenon in cross-sectional research. Recent studies suggest that the common method variance problem may not be as severe as previously suggested and statistical methods to test the significance of this problem have emerged (Crampton & Wagner, 1994; Harrison, McLaughlin, & Coalter, 1996; Lindell & Whitney, 2001).

The correlational marker variable method is one *post hoc* method for determining the effects of common method variance. This method analyzes partial correlations to adjust for the common method variance. Lindell and Whitney (2001) recommend using a correlational marker prior to data collection, but if that is not possible then a substitute marker can be used for *post hoc* analysis. A correlational

marker is a variable that theoretically has no relationship with the substantive variables; therefore, this variable can be used to partial out the effects for method variance. If using a *post hoc* analysis, the researcher can use the smallest positive correlation among the manifest variables as a proxy, r_s. The following equation is used to determine the partial correlation coefficient for analyzing the effects of CMV.

$$r_{yi.m} = \frac{r_{yi} - r_s}{1 - r_s}$$

This equation corrects for common method variance where r_{yi} is the correlation between X_i and Y_i, and r_s is the smallest positive correlation between the marker variable and a substantive variable (correlation between social desirability and perceived value of private feedback). Ideally, a marker variable should have no theoretical relationship with the other variables. Social desirability has not been theoretically shown as a relevant variable in regards to feedback seeking behaviors and has been shown to have little impact on organizational variables (Ganster, Hennessey, & Luthans, 1983). In fact, researchers have made a strong argument that individuals can accurately assess their own feedback seeking behaviors since they may seek feedback from many different sources over time (Morrison, 1993). The marker variable should be determined prior to data analyses; however, this is not the case in this dissertation, and a *post hoc* proxy is used. Lindell and Whitney (2001) suggest that this *post hoc* method, which provides a reasonable proxy, will provide a conservative estimate of method variance rather than creating any problems when testing for method variance.

All of the correlations are corrected for common method variance using the marker variable and tested for significance. If a correlation is significant before the test

for common method variance and remains significant, then common method variance is not a factor in this relationship.

Only three correlations in the final data are significant prior to these tests: the relationships between perceived value of private feedback and private feedback seeking, the perceived value of public feedback and public feedback seeking, and the perceived value of private feedback and public feedback seeking. All three of these relationships remain significant after accounting for common method variance using the correlation between social desirability and perceived value of private feedback (i.e., .02) as r_s.

The next step is to conduct a sensitivity analysis in which the 75th, 95th, and 99th percentile points of the confidence interval for the marker variable are determined. If all significant relationships remain significant after these analyses, then this is further confirmation that common method variance is not a problem. Two out of the three correlations remained significant at all three levels of the sensitivity analyses (75th, 95th, and 99th percentile points of the confidence interval). Yet the correlation between perceived value of public feedback and public feedback seeking becomes nonsignificant at the 75th percentile point of the confidence interval, suggesting that method variance has distorted the correlations. Therefore, the results for this variable should be interpreted with caution.

Common method variance can either inflate or attenuate the observed correlations between two constructs (Cote & Buckley, 1988; Lindell & Whitney, 2001; Williams & Brown, 1994). The correlational marker method used to partial out method variance in my data found that one of the relationships may have been inflated due to method variance but attenuation may also affect the true relationship between two

variables. Attenuation occurs when the correlation between the two constructs with the method effects removed is greater than the correlation between the two methods. Furthermore, observed correlations may underestimate the true relationship between variables when the true correlation is strong (Cote & Buckley, 1988). Williams and Brown (1994) found that in some cases method variance can both inflate one relationship and attenuate another relationship. Therefore, method effects in my data could be both inflating or attenuating the true relationships between variables.

As stated previously, researchers have typically used self-report measures of feedback seeking behaviors. Individuals seek performance feedback from many different sources, and therefore the use of between-subject techniques to analyze this relationship may not truly assess the actual behaviors. Furthermore, *post hoc* analyses for common method variance indicate that most of the significant relationships remain unchanged. This signifies that the most of the results are not due to common method variance.

Consequences of Public and Private Feedback Seeking. Hypotheses 8 – 16 posit the relationships between public or private feedback seeking with three different outcomes: career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and performance. Hypothesis 8 predicts a positive relationship for both public and private feedback seeking and career success with a stronger positive relationship for those individuals who seek feedback in a public context. The results for this hypothesis are presented in Table 9. Four different regression equations were first analyzed to determine whether a main effect was found between public or private feedback seeking and intrinsic and extrinsic career success. The relationship between public feedback seeking and intrinsic career success was the only relationship to be statistically significant ($p < .05$);

however, the predicted positive relationship was not found. Interestingly, the beta coefficient for public feedback seeking is negative suggesting that the frequency of seeking public feedback reduces an individual's intrinsic career success. The remaining equations were not statistically significant suggesting that public feedback seeking did not predict extrinsic career success and that private feedback seeking did not predict intrinsic or extrinsic career success beyond the effects of the control variables. Therefore, the first part of hypothesis 8 is not supported. Hypothesis 8 also posited that individuals who seek feedback in public would have a stronger positive relationship with career success than individuals who seek feedback in a private context. However, since only one of the four equations is statistically significant, analysis is not needed to test the comparison of beta coefficients between these two variables. Hypothesis 8 is not supported.

Table 9

Regression analyses of public and private feedback seeking predicting intrinsic and extrinsic career success (Hypothesis 8)

	Public feedback seeking predicting intrinsic career success	Private feedback seeking predicting intrinsic career success	Public feedback seeking predicting extrinsic career success	Private feedback seeking predicting extrinsic career success
	β	β	β	β
Step 1				
Employee tenure	.01	.01	**.07****	**.07****
Employee age	.01	.01	.02	.02
Employee sex	.07	.07	**-.78***	**-.78***
D1	**.41**†	**.41**†	.09	.09
D2	**.41**†	**.41**†	**-.85**†	**-.85**†
Own office	**-.41***	**-.41***	**-.88****	**-.88****
R^2	**.09***	**.09***	**.31****	**.31****
df	136	136	124	124

(Table 9 continued)

F overall	**2.27***	**2.27***	**9.35****	**9.35****
Step 2				
Employee tenure	.01	.01	**.07****	**.07****
Employee age	.01	.01	.02	.02
Employee sex	.05	.06	**-.79***	**-.76***
D1	**.42†**	.38	.09	.13
D2	**.42†**	**.40†**	**-.85†**	**-.85†**
Own office	**-.40***	**-.40***	**-.87****	**-.89****
Public FB	**-.21***	---	-.10	---
Private FB	---	.06	---	-.08
R^2	**.12***	.09	.31	.31
ΔR^2	**.02***	.00	.00	.00
df	135	135	123	123
F change	**3.69***	.43	.22	.19
F overall	**2.51***	**2.0†**	**8.00****	**7.99****

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Hypothesis 9 posits an interaction between public or private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting extrinsic or intrinsic career success. The results are presented in Tables 10 through 17. First, I compared the interaction for public or private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting intrinsic career success. The results for these equations are presented in Tables 10 through 13. The interaction of public feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source significantly predicted intrinsic career success ($p < .01$); however, none of the other equations were statistically significant beyond the effects of the control variables. Therefore, public feedback seeking from a co-worker positively predicts intrinsic career success. Although a statistically significant relationship was found, this hypothesis is not supported because it was posited that seeking feedback from a supervisor would have a stronger positive relationship with career success than seeking feedback from a co-worker.

Tables 14 through 17 present the results for regression equations testing the interaction of public or private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting

extrinsic career success. Statistically significant results were only found in two equations. The relationships between public feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source and between private feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source predicting extrinsic career success were marginally supported ($p < .10$). However, the interaction of public or private feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source was not statistically significant beyond the control variables. Similar to the previous analyses for intrinsic career success, this portion of the hypothesis is not supported since it was predicted that the interaction with the supervisor as the feedback source would be more positively related to career success. Conversely, the only interactions to be significant involved the co-worker as the source predicting extrinsic career success.

Hypothesis 10 posits that the interaction between public feedback seeking and the feedback source will be more positively related to career success than the interaction between private feedback seeking and the feedback source predicting career success. That is, there will be a more positive relationship with career success when employees seek feedback in a public context than in a private context. The results for the interactions between public/private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting career success were discussed with the previous hypotheses and presented in Tables 10 through 17. The only two significant equations that can be compared for hypothesis 10 were the interaction between public feedback seeking X co-worker source predicting extrinsic career success and the interaction between private feedback seeking X co-worker source predicting extrinsic career success. T-tests comparing the beta coefficients for each of these interactions were compared

and were not significantly different (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported.

Table 10

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting intrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	.01	**.09***	136	---	**2.27***	**2.27***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.07					
D1	**.41†**					
D2	**.41†**					
Own office	**-.41***					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	.01	**.12†**	135	**.02†**	**3.69†**	**2.51***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.05					
D1	**.42†**					
D2	**.42†**					
Own office	**-.40***					
Public FB	**-.21†**					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	.01	.12	134	.01	1.15	**2.34***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.03					
D1	.37					
D2	**.42†**					
Own office	**-.39***					
Public FB	**-.38***					
Supervisor source	.10					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	.01	.13	133	.00	.56	**2.14***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.03					
D1	.38					
D2	**.43†**					
Own office	**-.40***					
Public FB	**-.36***					
Supervisor source	.09					
Xpubfbsup	.07					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 11

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting intrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	.01	**.09***	136	---	**2.27***	**2.27***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.07					
D1	**.41†**					
D2	**.41†**					
Own office	**-.41***					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	.01	**.12†**	135	**.02†**	**3.69†**	**2.51***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.05					
D1	**.42†**					
D2	**.42†**					
Own office	**-.40***					
Public FB	**-.21†**					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	.01	.12	134	.00	.52	**2.25***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.08					
D1	**.45†**					
D2	**.44†**					
Own office	**-.42***					
Public FB	-.18					
Co-worker source	-.06					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	.01	**.17****	133	**.05****	**7.64****	**2.95****
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.05					
D1	**.40†**					
D2	**.34**					
Own office	**-.45****					
Public FB	**-.31***					
Co-worker source	-.08					
Xpubfbcowo	**.26****					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 12

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting intrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	.01	**.09***	136	---	**2.27***	**2.27***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.07					
D1	**.41†**					
D2	**.41†**					
Own office	**-.41***					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	.01	.09	135	.00	.43	**2.0†**
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.06					
D1	.38					
D2	.40†					
Own office	**-.40***					
Private FB	.06					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	.01	.10	134	.00	.57	**1.82†**
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.06					
D1	.39					
D2	**.40†**					
Own office	**-.40***					
Private FB	.12					
Supervisor source	-.08					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	.01	.10	133	.00	.02	1.60
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.05					
D1	.38					
D2	**.40†**					
Own office	**-.40***					
Private FB	.11					
Supervisor source	-.09					
Xprvfbsup	.01					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 13

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting intrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	.01	**.09***	136	---	**2.27***	**2.27***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.07					
D1	**.41†**					
D2	**.41†**					
Own office	**-.41***					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	.01	.09	135	.00	.43	**2.0†**
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.06					
D1	.38					
D2	**.40†**					
Own office	**-.40***					
Private FB	.06					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	.01	**.11†**	134	**.02†**	**2.99†**	**2.15***
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.10					
D1	**.43†**					
D2	**.45†**					
Own office	**-.43***					
Private FB	.12					
Co-worker source	**-.14†**					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	.01	.11	133	.00	.01	**1.90†**
Employee age	.01					
Employee sex	.10					
D1	.43†					
D2	**.45†**					
Own office	**-.43***					
Private FB	.12					
Co-worker source	**-.13†**					
Xprvfbcowo	-.01					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 14

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting extrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	**.07****	**.31****	124	---	**9.35****	**9.35****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.78***					
D1	.09					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**.88****					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.31	123	.00	.22	**8.00****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.79***					
D1	.09					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.87****					
Public FB	-.10					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.32	122	.01	1.88	**7.28****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.85***					
D1	-.03					
D2	**-.86**†**					
Own office	**-.85***					
Public FB	-.28					
Supervisor source	.25					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.33	121	.01	1.62	**6.69****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.85***					
D1	.01					
D2	**-.83**†**					
Own office	**-.87****					
Public FB	**-.52**†**					
Supervisor source	.21					
Xpubfbsup	.22					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 15

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting extrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	**.07****	**.31****	124	---	**9.35****	**9.35****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.78***					
D1	.09					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.88****					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.31	123	.00	.22	**8.00****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.79***					
D1	.09					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.87****					
Public FB	-.10					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.31	122	.00	.07	**6.95****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.77***					
D1	.12					
D2	**-.83**†**					
Own office	**-.88****					
Public FB	-.08					
Co-worker source	-.04					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	**.08****	**.33**†**	121	**.02**†**	**3.58**†**	**6.71****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.82***					
D1	.04					
D2	**-.97***					
Own office	**-.94****					
Public FB	-.26					
Co-worker source	-.07					
Xpubfbcowo	**.35**†**					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 16

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting extrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	**.07****	**.31****	124	---	**9.35****	**9.35****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.78***					
D1	.09					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.88****					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.31	123	.00	.19	**8.00****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.76***					
D1	.13					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.89****					
Private FB	-.08					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.33	122	.01	2.57	**7.40****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.77***					
D1	.10					
D2	**-.86**†**					
Own office	**-.90****					
Private FB	-.31					
Supervisor source	.33					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.34	121	.01	1.58	**6.79****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.86***					
D1	.05					
D2	**-.89***					
Own office	**-.90****					
Private FB	**-.39**†**					
Supervisor source	.22					
Xprvfbsup	.19					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 17

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting extrinsic career success (Hypothesis 9)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Employee tenure	**.07****	**.31****	124	---	**9.35****	**9.35****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.78***					
D1	.09					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.88****					
Step 2						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.31	123	.00	.19	**8.00****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.76***					
D1	.13					
D2	**-.85**†**					
Own office	**-.89****					
Private FB	-.08					
Step 3						
Employee tenure	**.07****	.31	122	.00	.07	**6.95****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.75***					
D1	.15					
D2	**-.83**†**					
Own office	**-.89****					
Private FB	-.06					
Co-worker source	-.04					
Step 4						
Employee tenure	**.07****	**.33**†**	121	**.02**†**	**3.60**†**	**6.71****
Employee age	.02					
Employee sex	**-.83***					
D1	.23					
D2	**-.84**†**					
Own office	**-.92****					
Private FB	-.17					
Co-worker source	-.11					
Xprvfbcowo	**.30**†**					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Hypothesis 11 predicts a positive relationship between public or private feedback seeking and organizational citizenship behaviors with a stronger relationship for those who seek feedback in a public context. The results are presented in Table 18. Four different regression equations were first analyzed to determine whether a main effect was found between public or private feedback seeking and OCB-I or OCB-O. The relationship between public feedback seeking and OCB-O was the only relationship to be statistically significant ($p < .05$); however, the predicted positive relationship was not found. Interestingly, the beta coefficient for public feedback seeking is negative, suggesting that the frequency of seeking public feedback reduces an individual's OCB-O behaviors. The remaining equations were not statistically significant suggesting that public feedback seeking did not predict OCB-I and that private feedback seeking did not predict OCB-I or OCB-O beyond the effects of the control variables. Therefore, the first part of hypothesis 11 is not supported. Hypothesis 11 also posited that individuals who seek feedback in public would have a stronger positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviors than individuals who seek feedback in a private context. However, since only one of the four equations is statistically significant, analysis is not needed to test the comparison of beta coefficients between these two variables. Hypothesis 11 is not supported.

Hypothesis 12a predicts an interaction with public or private feedback seeking and the feedback source predicting OCB-I behaviors. The hypothesis posits a stronger positive relationship between public or private feedback seeking and the feedback source when the feedback source is a co-worker. The results are presented in Tables 19 through 22. Four regression equations were analyzed to test this hypothesis, and none of the equations were statistically significant. The interaction of public or private

feedback seeking and feedback source (i.e., supervisor or co-worker) does not significantly predict OCB-I behaviors beyond the effects of the control variables. This hypothesis is not supported.

Hypothesis 12b proposes an interaction with public or private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting OCB-O behaviors. The hypothesis posits a stronger positive relationship when the feedback source is the supervisor to OCB-O behaviors. The results are presented in Tables 23 through 26. The only relationship to be statistically significant ($p < .10$) is the interaction of public feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-O behaviors. The remaining interactions did not significantly predict OCB-O behaviors beyond the effects of the control variables. However, this hypothesis is partially supported since the interaction of public feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source did predict a stronger positive relationship when the supervisor is the source than when the co-worker is the source.

Table 18

Regression analyses of public and private feedback seeking predicting OCB-I and OCB-O (Hypothesis 11)

	Public feedback seeking predicting OCB-I	Private feedback seeking predicting OCB-I	Public feedback seeking predicting OCB-O	Private feedback seeking predicting OCB-O
	β	β	β	β
Step 1				
Performance	**.37****	**.37****	**.53****	**.53****
OCB-O	**.37****	**.37****	---	---
OCB-I	---	---	**.24****	**.24****
D1	.04	.04	**.27***	**.27***
D2	.08	.08	**.22†**	**.22†**
R^2	**.41****	**.41****	**.54****	**.54****
df	143	143	143	143

(Table 18 continued)

F overall	**25.20****	**25.20****	**41.97****	**41.97****
Step 2				
Performance	**.38****	**.38****	**.50****	**.52****
OCB-O	**.39****	**.37****	---	---
OCB-I	---	---	**.25****	**.24****
D1	.04	.02	**.26***	**.29***
D2	.07	.07	**.24***	**.23**†**
Public FB	.09	---	**-.13***	---
Private FB	---	.06	---	-.04
R^2	.42	.42	**.56***	.54
ΔR^2	.01	.01	**.02***	.00
df	142	142	142	142
F change	1.51	1.17	**4.74***	.70
F overall	**20.54****	**20.42****	**35.40****	**33.65****

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Hypothesis 13 predicts that the interaction between public feedback seeking and the feedback source will be more strongly positively related to OCBs than the interaction between private feedback seeking and the feedback source predictingOCBs. This hypothesis is not supported since only one of the eight equations evaluating the interaction of public and private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting OCBs is statistically significant. The only supported equation is the interaction between public feedback seeking X supervisor source predicting OCB-O ($p < .10$); however, the relationship between private feedback seeking X supervisor source predicting OCB-O cannot be compared due to the nonsignificant results. Beta coefficients represent the weight applied to independent variables in a particular regression equation. If the overall regression equation is not statistically significant, then the weights for each of the independent variables cannot be distinguished from zero and cannot be compared (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Hypothesis 14 posits a positive relationship between public and private feedback seeking with individual performance. Further, the hypothesis predicts that the

relationship between public feedback seeking and individual performance will be more strongly positively related to individual performance than the relationship between private feedback seeking and individual performance. The results are presented in Table 27. This hypothesis is not supported. Both equations are not statistically significant, suggesting that public or private feedback seeking does not significantly predict individual performance beyond the effects of the control variables.

Table 19

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-I (Hypothesis 12a)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.37****	**.41****	143	---	**25.20****	**25.20****
OCB-O	**.37****					
D1	.04					
D2	.08					
Step 2						
Performance	**.38****	.42	142	.01	1.51	**20.54****
OCB-O	**.39****					
D1	.04					
D2	.07					
Public FB	.09					
Step 3						
Performance	**.39****	.43	141	.01	1.30	**17.37****
OCB-O	**.39****					
D1	.01					
D2	.06					
Public FB	.04					
Supervisor source	.07					
Step 4						
Performance	**.38****	.43	140	.00	.04	**14.80****
OCB-O	**.39****					
D1	.08					
D2	.06					
Public FB	.05					
Supervisor source	.07					
Xpubfbsup	-.01					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 20

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting OCB-I (Hypothesis 12a)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	.60**	**.60****	143	---	**52.98****	**52.98****
OCB-O	.43**					
D1	.03					
D2	.06					
Step 2						
Performance	**.62****	.60	142	.00	.46	**42.31****
OCB-O	**.43****					
D1	.03					
D2	.06					
Public FB	.05					
Step 3						
Performance	**.63****	.60	141	.00	1.27	**35.54****
OCB-O	**.43****					
D1	.06					
D2	.08					
Public FB	.08					
Co-worker source	-.05					
Step 4						
Performance	**.63****	.60	140	.00	.05	**30.27****
OCB-O	**.43****					
D1	.05					
D2	.07					
Public FB	.08					
Co-worker source	-.05					
Xpubfbcowo	.01					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Hypothesis 15 posits the interaction between public, and private feedback seeking and the feedback source will be more strongly positively related to individual performance when the supervisor is the source rather than when the co-worker is the source. The results are presented in Tables 28 through 31. This hypothesis is not supported. All four regression equations evaluating the interaction of public and private

feedback seeking and feedback source predicting performance were not statistically significant beyond the effects of the control variables.

Table 21

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-I (Hypothesis 12a)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.37****	**.41****	143	---	**25.20****	**25.20****
OCB-O	**.37****					
D1	.04					
D2	.08					
Step 2						
Performance	**.38****	.42	142	.01	1.17	**20.42****
OCB-O	**.37****					
D1	.02					
D2	.07					
Private FB	.06					
Step 3						
Performance	**.38****	.42	141	.01	1.43	**17.31****
OCB-O	**.38****					
D1	.05					
D2	.07					
Private FB	.01					
Supervisor source	.08					
Step 4						
Performance	**.38****	.42	140	.00	.04	**14.74****
OCB-O	**.38****					
D1	.07					
D2	.07					
Private FB	.05					
Supervisor source	.09					
Xprvfbsup	-.01					

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. The predictor variables are italicized.

Hypothesis 16 predicts the interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source will be more strongly positively related to individual performance than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting

individual performance. This hypothesis is not supported since none of the regression equations are statistically significant.

Table 22

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting OCB-I (Hypothesis 12a)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.60****	**.60****	143	---	**52.98****	**52.98****
OCB-O	**.43****					
D1	.03					
D2	.06					
Step 2						
Performance	**.60****	.60	142	.00	.04	**42.10****
OCB-O	**.43****					
D1	.02					
D2	.06					
Private FB	.01					
Step 3						
Performance	**.60****	.60	141	.00	.93	**35.22****
OCB-O	**.43****					
D1	.03					
D2	.08					
Private FB	.03					
Co-worker source	-.05					
Step 4						
Performance	**.61****	.60	140	.00	.73	**30.24****
OCB-O	**.42****					
D1	.05					
D2	.07					
Private FB	.02					
Co-worker source	-.06					
Xprvfbcowo	.04					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 23

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-O (Hypothesis 12b)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.53****	**.54****	143	---	**41.97****	**41.97****
OCB-I	**.24****					
D1	**.27***					
D2	**.22**†**					
Step 2						
Performance	**.50****	**.56***	142	**.02***	**4.74***	**35.40****
OCB-I	**.25****					
D1	**.26***					
D2	**.24***					
Public FB	**-.13***					
Step 3						
Performance	**.49****	.56	141	.00	.44	**29.46****
OCB-I	**.25****					
D1	**.28***					
D2	**.24***					
Public FB	-.10					
Supervisor source	-.03					
Step 4						
Performance	**.49****	**.57**†**	140	**.01**†**	**3.53**†**	**26.21****
OCB-I	**.25****					
D1	**.29***					
D2	**.25***					
Public FB	**-.19***					
Supervisor source	-.05					
Xpubfbsup	**.09**†**					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 24

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting OCB-O (Hypothesis 12b)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.37****	**.53****	143	---	**39.71****	**39.71****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.04					
D2	-.04					

(Table 24 continued)

Step 2						
Performance	**.36****	.53	142	.00	.22	**31.64****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.04					
D2	-.04					
Public FB	-.03					
Step 3						
Performance	**.36****	.53	141	.00	.01	**26.18****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.04					
D2	-.04					
Public FB	-.03					
Co-worker source	-.03					
Step 4						
Performance	**.36****	.53	140	.00	.04	**22.30****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.04					
D2	-.04					
Public FB	-.04					
Co-worker source	-.04					
Xpubfbcowo	.01					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 25

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-O (Hypothesis 12b)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.53****	**.54****	143	---	**41.97****	**41.97****
OCB-I	**.24****					
D1	**.27***					
D2	**.22**†**					
Step 2						
Performance	**.52****	.54	142	.00	.70	**33.65****
OCB-I	**.24****					
D1	**.29***					
D2	**.23**†**					
Private FB	-.04					
Step 3						
Performance	**.50****	.55	141	.01	2.31	**28.68****
OCB-I	**.25****					
D1	**.29***					
D2	**.23***					

(Table 25 continued)

Private FB	.02					
Supervisor source	-.08					
Step 4						
Performance	**.50****	.55	140	.00	.04	**24.42****
OCB-I	**.25****					
D1	**.29***					
D2	**.23***					
Private FB	.02					
Supervisor source	-.08					
Xprvfbsup	.07					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 26

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting OCB-O (Hypothesis 12b)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
Performance	**.37****	**.53****	143	---	**39.71****	**39.71****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.04					
D2	-.04					
Step 2						
Performance	**.37****	.53	142	.00	.01	**31.55****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.03					
D2	-.04					
Private FB	-.00					
Step 3						
Performance	**.37****	.53	141	.00	.05	**26.12****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.03					
D2	-.04					
Private FB	.00					
Co-worker source	-.10					
Step 4						
Performance	**.37****	.53	140	.00	.00	**22.23****
OCB-I	**.34****					
D1	-.03					
D2	-.04					
Private FB	-.00					
Co-worker source	-.01					
Xprvfbcowo	.00					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 27

Regression analyses of public and private feedback seeking predicting performance (Hypothesis 14)

	Public feedback seeking predicting performance	Private feedback seeking predicting performance
	β	β
Step 1		
OCB-I	**.25****	**.25****
OCB-O	**.54****	**.54****
D1	**-.44****	**-.44****
D2	-.16	-.16
R^2	**.58****	**.58****
df	143	143
F overall	**49.70****	**49.70****
Step 2		
OCB-I	**.25****	**.25****
OCB-O	**.52****	**.52****
D1	**-.44****	**-.41****
D2	-.15	-.15
Public FB	-.06	---
Private FB	---	-.07
R^2	.58	.59
ΔR^2	.00	.01
df	142	142
F change	1.19	2.18
F overall	**40.06****	**40.53****

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 28

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting performance (Hypothesis 15)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
OCB-I	**.25****	**.58****	143	---	**49.70****	**49.70****
OCB-O	**.54****					
D1	**-.44****					
D2	-.16					
Step 2						
OCB-I	**.25****	.59	142	.00	1.19	**40.06****
OCB-O	**.52****					
D1	**-.44****					

(Table 28 continued)

D2	-.15					
Public FB	-.07					
Step 3						
OCB-I	**.26****	.59	141	.00	.97	**33.54****
OCB-O	**.51****					
D1	**-.42****					
D2	-.15					
Public FB	-.03					
Supervisor source	-.05					
Step 4						
OCB-I	**.25****	.59	140	.00	1.54	**29.08****
OCB-O	**.52****					
D1	**-.42****					
D2	-.16					
Public FB	.03					
Supervisor source	-.04					
Xpubfbsup	-.06					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 29

Regression analysis of public feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting performance (Hypothesis 15)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
OCB-I	**.41****	**.59****	143	---	**50.80****	**50.80****
OCB-O	**.32****					
D1	-.11					
D2	-.03					
Step 2						
OCB-I	**.40****	**.61****	142	**.03****	**9.62****	**45.02****
OCB-O	**.29****					
D1	-.11					
D2	-.01					
Public FB	**-.08****					
Step 3						
OCB-I	**.40****	.62	141	.01	2.69	**38.41****
OCB-O	**.28****					
D1	-.14					
D2	-.04					
Public FB	**-.21****					
Co-worker source	.06					

(Table 29 continued)

Step 4						
OCB-I	**.40****	.62	140	.00	.23	**32.77****
OCB-O	**.28****					
D1	-.14					
D2	-.05					
Public FB	**-.23****					
Co-worker source	.06					
Xpubfbcowo	.02					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 30

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X supervisor feedback source predicting performance (Hypothesis 15)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
OCB-I	**.25****	**.58****	143	---	**49.70****	**49.70****
OCB-O	**.54****					
D1	**-.44****					
D2	-.16					
Step 2						
OCB-I	**.25****	.59	142	.01	2.18	**40.53****
OCB-O	**.52****					
D1	**-.41****					
D2	-.15					
Private FB	-.07					
Step 3						
OCB-I	.**25****	.59	141	.00	.33	**33.67****
OCB-O	**.51****					
D1	**-.41****					
D2	-.15					
Private FB	-.04					
Supervisor source	-.03					
Step 4						
OCB-I	**.25****	.59	140	.00	.05	**28.67****
OCB-O	**.51****					
D1	**-.40****					
D2	-.15					
Private FB	-.04					
Supervisor source	-.03					
Xprvfbsup	-.01					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 31

Regression analysis of private feedback seeking X co-worker feedback source predicting performance (Hypothesis 15)

	β	R^2	df	ΔR^2	F change	F overall
Step 1						
OCB-I	**.41****	**.59****	143	---	**50.80****	**50.80****
OCB-O	**.32****					
D1	-.11					
D2	-.03					
Step 2						
OCB-I	**.41****	.59	142	.00	.33	**40.52****
OCB-O	**.32****					
D1	-.09					
D2	-.02					
Private FB	-.03					
Step 3						
OCB-I	**.41****	.59	141	.00	.53	**33.74****
OCB-O	**.32****					
D1	-.10					
D2	-.04					
Private FB	-.04					
Co-worker source	.03					
Step 4						
OCB-I	**.42****	.59	140	.00	.98	**29.06****
OCB-O	**.31****					
D1	-.11					
D2	-.03					
Private FB	-.02					
Co-worker source	.04					
Xprvfbcowo	-.04					

Note. † p < .10; * p < .05; ** p <.01. The predictor variables are italicized.

Table 32

Summary of hypothesized results

Hypothesis	**Predicted relationship**	**Outcome**
1a	Perceived value of public feedback seeking +→ Public feedback seeking	Not supported
1b	Perceived value of private feedback seeking +→ Private feedback seeking	**Supported**

(Table 32 continued)

2	Learning goal orientation +→ Public or private feedback seeking	Not supported
3	Performance goal orientation +→ Private feedback seeking	Not supported
4a	PSC +→ Public feedback seeking	Not supported
4b	PSC - → Private feedback seeking	Not supported
5a	Self-esteem +→ Public feedback seeking	Not supported
5b	Self-esteem - → Private feedback seeking	Not supported
6a	External feedback propensity +→ Public feedback seeking	**Supported**
6b	External feedback propensity + → Private feedback seeking	Not supported
7a	Tolerance for ambiguity - → Public feedback seeking	**Supported**
7b	Tolerance for ambiguity - → Private feedback seeking	Not supported
8	Public/Private feedback seeking +→ Career success	Not supported
9	Public/Private feedback seeking X Supervisor source +→ Career success	Not supported
10	Public FSB X Source more + related to career success than Private FSB X Source	Not supported
11	Public/Private feedback seeking +→ OCBs	Not supported
12a	Public/Private feedback seeking X Co-worker source +→ OCB-I	Not supported
12b	Public/Private feedback seeking X Supervisor source +→ OCB-O	**Partially supported**

(Table 32 continued)

13	Public FSB X Source more + related to OCBs than Private FSB X Source	Not supported
14	Public/Private feedback seeking +→ Performance	Not supported
15	Public/Private feedback seeking X Supervisor source +→ Performance	Not supported
16	Public FSB X Source more + related to Performance than Private FSB X Source	Not supported

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

In this chapter I will summarize the dissertation's overall results and consider future research directions based on these results. Furthermore, I will discuss the limitations of the dissertation.

Summary of Results

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the role of the feedback context in the feedback seeking process. A conceptual model was developed to determine which individual and situational variables would predict public and private feedback seeking behaviors. Further, the conceptual model examined individual consequences to seeking feedback in a public or private context. In general, many of the antecedent hypotheses were not supported within all three data sources (i.e., employee self-reported dataset, supervisor dataset, and co-worker dataset) except for three relationships in the employee self-reported dataset: perceived value of private feedback predicting private feedback seeking, external feedback propensity predicting public feedback seeking, and tolerance for ambiguity predicting public feedback seeking. Also, many of the hypothesized consequences of public or private feedback seeking were not supported with one exception; the interaction between public feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source positively predicted OCB-Os.

I believe the low base rate for employee feedback seeking in public and private contexts in these organizations may have prevented me from finding the expected results. A low base rate problem or a floor effect occurs when there is limited differentiation at the low end of a scale (Long, 1997). A low base rate problem reduces the probability of finding significant relationships in regression analyses because of the

limited distribution at one end of a scale. The mean value for the entire dataset is 1.38 for public feedback seeking and 1.77 for private feedback seeking. In other words, feedback seeking in either context varies in frequencies from less than once a month to seeking feedback once a month. The mean value in this sample is considerably lower than the mean values in previous feedback seeking field studies. For instance, the scaling in my study is comparable to the one used by Morrison (1993) who reported a mean value of 2.58 for feedback seeking behaviors, which means that employees will seek feedback from once a month to seeking feedback a few times a month. This means that participants in my study may seek feedback zero to six times a year whereas other feedback studies report participants seeking feedback from six to 36 times per year. Similarly, other field studies reported mean values for feedback seeking behaviors ranging from 2.36 to 3.44 using varying scales (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Fedor et al., 1992; London et al., 1999; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Tuckey et al., 2001; VandeWalle et al., 2000); however, even with different scales, participants in these studies reported seeking feedback more frequently than once a month. Therefore, the low base rate for feedback seeking behaviors in this sample as compared with other feedback seeking studies may have led to the nonsignificant findings. Prior to data collection, I believed these data sites would be appropriate organizations to evaluate feedback seeking behaviors. However, the low levels of feedback seeking may be due to organizational cultures not encouraging feedback seeking or cultures that frequently give feedback therefore feedback seeking is not needed.

Antecedents Predicting Public and Private Feedback Seeking

Data from three different sources were collected during this study to evaluate the antecedent relationships predicting public and private feedback seeking. Most of the supported hypotheses were found in the employee self-reported dataset and not in the supervisor or co-worker dataset. Researchers have argued that the employee is the best source to determine his or her frequency of seeking feedback (Morrison, 1993; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). This argument is based on previous findings about an individual's feedback environment, which state that there are multiple cues and sources used to seek feedback (Ashford, 1993; Greller & Herold, 1975; Herold & Parsons, 1985). With many cues and sources to seek feedback, an employee may not frequently seek feedback from the individuals (i.e., supervisor or co-worker) who completed surveys for that particular employee even though the employee in my study provided the names for these co-workers as potential survey participants. Further, Morrison (1993) argued that feedback seeking does not always occur in the presence of others, and even if it does these co-workers may not truly notice the frequency with which someone seeks feedback. Supervisors were asked to evaluate employees' feedback seeking behaviors, but if the employee is more likely to seek feedback from a co-worker then the supervisor would not be the best person to evaluate feedback seeking behaviors. Employees were asked to provide the names of three co-workers; however, not all of the co-workers may have completed the survey and one survey was matched to the employee survey. Only 18 employees out of the 148 completed data points had two co-workers complete a survey and I randomly picked one of the co-worker surveys to include in the completed data point. Similarly, if employees do not seek feedback from co-workers then the co-worker would not be the best source to

evaluate another employee's feedback seeking behaviors. Finally, social desirability was not significantly correlated to the self-reported public (r = .08, n.s.) or private (r = -.02, n.s.) feedback seeking scales and common method variance was addressed in the previous chapter for these self-reported variables. As stated previously, only one relationship may be contaminated due to method variance and these results should be interpreted with caution. Therefore, based on the theoretical arguments and these statistical comparisons, the employee would be the best source to determine his or her frequency of seeking feedback in either context.

Although I predicted that many of the individual difference variables would relate to public or private feedback seeking, many of the hypotheses were not supported. In addition to the low base rate problem, other factors probably contributed to many of these nonsignificant hypotheses. For instance, the perceived value of public feedback was positively related to public feedback seeking; however, this relationship was not supported due to common method variance concerns. Feedback seeking research has theoretically justified using self-reports to evaluate the frequency in which an individual seeks feedback (Morrison, 1993). However, future research should continue to evaluate the statistical problems associated with common method variance and implement measures prior to data collection to evaluate the potential bias in relationships. The following paragraphs provide further explanations for these nonsignificant hypotheses.

As stated in the previous chapter, a post hoc method for analyzing partial correlations was used to adjust for common method variance. Two of the three correlations remained significant except for the relationship between perceived value of public feedback and public feedback seeking; therefore, the results for this variable

must be interpreted with caution. At first glance, the observed self-reported correlations (range from .27 to .73) are not similar to the observed supervisor (range from -.04 to .02) and co-worker (range from .03 to .12) correlations. Further, I corrected for method bias and the corrected correlations for the self-reported data were compared to the supervisor and co-worker datasets. The corrected self-reported correlations range from .22 to .71 and are still different than the supervisor and co-worker data. However, this discrepancy in correlations among datasets may be because employees seek feedback from many sources within the organization and other employees would not be the best source for accurately reporting feedback seeking behaviors (Morrison, 1993; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Future studies should continue to examine whether common method variance contaminates relationships between predictor variables and feedback seeking behaviors when common methods for collecting data are employed. Also, more research is needed to determine if there is a true relationship between perceived value of public feedback and public feedback seeking.

Learning goal orientation was posited to have a positive relationship with both public and private feedback seeking. However, these relationships were not significant within all three data sources, which contradict previous research on feedback seeking behaviors in general. Although VandeWalle et al. (2000) found that a learning goal oriented individual would seek feedback in general due to the valuable information gained; a recent study by Tuckey et al. (2002) did not find a significant relationship for learning goal orientation within one of their samples. However, Tuckey et al. found a significant relationship for learning goal orientation in their student sample and argued that these students had more challenges to take on than the participants in the

employee sample. Within the employee sample of administrative clerks, no significant relationship between learning goal orientation and feedback seeking was found. The authors argued that this finding is due to the lack of challenges associated with the administrative clerks' job. In contrast, the organizations in my dataset provided opportunities in which employees would perceive challenges in their jobs and the organizations provided ways to improve their competencies. Therefore, I was surprised to find that neither relationship was significant based on the typical characteristics of a learning goal oriented individual. In particular, learning goal oriented individuals seek challenging opportunities and ways to increase their own competencies. Individuals who seek performance feedback should help improve their competencies and may create more challenges. Based on the characteristics of a learning goal-oriented individual, future research should continue to study learning goal orientation in relation to feedback seeking behaviors in general and continue to investigate if learning goal orientation is related to feedback seeking in a public or private context.

Performance goal orientation was posited to have a positive relationship with private feedback seeking. However, no significant relationships were found for either the avoid or prove dimensions of performance goal orientation using all three data sources. Tuckey et al. (2002) were the first researchers to examine the relationship between performance goal orientation and feedback seeking behaviors. As with their findings for learning goal orientation, the authors found mixed results for both dimensions of performance goal orientation between their student sample and the administrative clerks' sample. The authors did find that performance-prove had a negative relationship with feedback seeking but no significant relationship for the

performance-avoid dimensions. I evaluated the partial correlations between performance goal orientation and public/private feedback seeking, and none of the correlations were significant. Based on these results and the mixed findings in the previous research study (Tuckey et al., 2002), one may assume that performance goal oriented individuals are less likely to seek feedback. Perhaps performance goal oriented individuals are so consumed by the way they may appear in front of supervisors and colleagues that they avoid feedback in any context. Subsequently, the two dimensions of performance goal orientation may have unique relationships with public and private feedback seeking and should be evaluated separately. For instance, the lack of findings in the relationship between both the avoid- and prove-performance goal orientations and private feedback seeking may suggest a potential moderator effect. Interestingly, the prove-performance goal orientation has a .40 correlation ($p < .01$) with public self-consciousness but the avoid-performance goal orientation does not have a significant correlation with public self-consciousness. Each dimension of performance goal orientation may require different moderators (i.e., public self-consciousness) to explain the relationships with public and private feedback seeking. The results of this dissertation and the mixed findings in Tuckey et al.'s study suggests that future research should examine the specific dimensions of performance goal orientation (i.e., avoid and prove) in relation to feedback seeking in any context.

Individuals with high public self-consciousness were predicted to seek more feedback in a public context and less feedback in a private context. However, I found that PSC individuals are more concerned about their social situation and, due to the public context of an audience, are less likely to seek feedback. Prior to analyses, I theoretically argued for a positive relationship between PSC and public feedback

seeking and based these arguments on significant empirical findings (Levy et al., 1995). Contrary to my theoretical arguments, Ashford and Northcraft (1992) posited a negative relationship between PSC and feedback seeking suggesting the social anxiety related to being exposed as weak may deter individuals from seeking feedback. Even though the results of their lab experiment were not significant, Ashford and Northcraft's theoretical foundation may be more appropriate for those individuals seeking feedback in a public context than individuals seeking feedback in general.

The relationship between self-esteem and public or private feedback was not supported using any of the three data sources. Previous studies have had mixed results for this variable in relation to feedback seeking in general. In particular, some researchers have argued that high self-esteem individuals would seek feedback less than low self-esteem individuals in order to protect their egos (Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995). Conversely, Northcraft and Ashford (1990) found a positive main effect in the relationship between high self-esteem individuals and feedback seeking in general. Brockner (1988) argued that low self-esteem individuals are more influenced by external and social cues than high self-esteem individuals. Brockner's theoretical explanation and the inconsistent results in the relationship between self-esteem and feedback seeking in general warrant further examinations of this complicated relationship. In particular, future research is needed to see if self-esteem interacting with another variable, such as performance expectations, is related to public or private feedback seeking. Northcraft and Ashford's (1990) study suggested that an individual's performance expectations may play an important role in the relationship between self-esteem and feedback seeking in general.

External feedback propensity was posited to be positively related to both public and private feedback seeking behaviors. Individuals who have a high external feedback propensity are prone to seeking feedback from external sources as opposed to self-feedback. Interestingly, individuals with an external feedback propensity were found to seek feedback in a public context only. The relationship between external feedback propensity and private feedback seeking was not supported. Prior studies have found a significant positive relationship for external feedback propensity with general feedback seeking (Fedor et al., 1992; Herold & Fedor, 1998; Renn & Fedor, 2001), but these studies never considered external feedback propensity in relation to a public or private context. Perhaps the participants in this dissertation associated the external feedback items in the survey with the propensity to seek feedback not only from one outside source but from a number of potential sources. A few of the items are phrased such that “people” are stressed instead of just one person. For instance, one item states, “Even when I think that I could have done something better, I feel good when other people think well of what I have done,” and another states, “It is very important to me to know what people think of my work.” These items may have been interpreted to mean that more than one person is present when feedback is sought, which closely relates to public feedback seeking but not to private feedback seeking. This may explain the lack of findings in the relationship between external feedback propensity and private feedback seeking. More research may be needed to test the role of external feedback propensity as a predictor for seeking feedback in a public or private context.

Consistently, tolerance for ambiguity has been found to have a negative relationship with feedback seeking in general (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Fedor et

al., 1992; Bennett et al., 1990). However, a significant negative relationship was found only between tolerance for ambiguity and public feedback seeking using the employee self-report dataset and the supervisor dataset. The relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and public feedback seeking was not supported using the co-worker dataset. However, the lack of results from the co-worker dataset is not surprising in this relationship since none of the hypothesized relationships were significant from the co-worker dataset. As Morrison (1993) argued, co-workers may not be the best source when evaluating feedback seeking behaviors.

Based on previous research, employees who have a higher tolerance for unknown job-related activities will seek feedback less than those individuals with a lower tolerance for uncertainty (Bennett et al., 1990). Interestingly, a significant positive relationship was found between tolerance for ambiguity and private feedback seeking in the employee self-report and supervisor datasets. This contradicts the general idea that individuals who are more tolerant of uncertainty will be less likely to seek feedback. These results suggest that individuals who are a little more tolerant of the unknown will seek feedback more frequently in a private context than in a public context. It may be that the need to reduce uncertainty is not urgent enough to warrant seeking feedback in a public context and that these individuals will wait for an opportunity to seek feedback in a private context. Although e-mail may be a private feedback context (Ang et. al, 1993; Levy et al., 1995), feedback sources may not always respond in a prompt manner reducing the availability of a feedback source via e-mail. The role of e-mail as a private context will be discussed more in the future research section of this chapter.

In summary, most of the posited relationships predicting the frequency of seeking public or private feedback were not significant. However, the employee-reported dataset supports more significant relationships than the supervisor- or co-worker-reported datasets. Many authors argue that the multiple cues and sources within an individual's feedback environment make it difficult for others to give an accurate assessment of the frequency with which an individual seeks feedback, and researchers have consistently used the self-report data (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Morrison, 1993; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Another reason for the lack of results may be the low base rate problem within this data set. The mean values for all three data sources were lower than the mean values reported in previous feedback seeking studies (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Fedor et al., 1992; London et al., 1999; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Tuckey et al., 2001; VandeWalle et al., 2000). Finally, some of the relationships were significant, although not in the predicted direction (e.g., PSC predicting public feedback seeking, and tolerance for ambiguity predicting private feedback seeking). Even though they were not in the hypothesized direction, these results are interesting nonetheless because they contradict previous research findings.

Consequences of Public and Private Feedback Seeking

As stated previously, most of my hypotheses regarding the consequences of public and private feedback seeking were not supported. The relationship between public feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-Os provided the only partially supported hypothesis. In general, I believe that the low base rate problem in my dataset contributed to the lack of significant findings, and the utility of the feedback received may have contributed to my results.

Although this dissertation considered the frequency in which individuals seek feedback in a public or private context, the value of the feedback may be an important factor in relation to these individual outcomes. For instance, a recent meta-analysis on feedback interventions (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996) suggests that not all feedback interventions lead to higher levels of performance because the feedback content is usually not helpful. Therefore, more research may be needed to examine the types of information sought and the utility of the feedback information in relation to individual outcomes. The content of the feedback was not studied in this dissertation based on previous research studies evaluating the frequency in feedback seeking behaviors. Further, feedback content was not included in the interests of parsimony to the overall model. Since this is the first study to examine how frequently an individual may seek feedback in a public or private context I believed I would still get meaningful results without including this variable. Feedback content will be addressed more in the limitations section.

For each of the three outcomes variables, a main effect was first hypothesized. Public and private feedback seeking was expected to relate to higher levels of career satisfaction and extrinsic rewards. A significant relationship between public feedback seeking and intrinsic career success was found, but none of the other relationships were supported. While I expected that public feedback seekers would be more satisfied with their career success, the opposite relationship was found with a beta coefficient for public feedback seeking predicting intrinsic career success of -.21 ($p < .05$). Intrinsic career success defines an individual's feelings of satisfaction and accomplishment with one's career (Judge et al., 1995; Judge et al., 1999; London & Stumpf, 1982). I believe this relationship may have been better explained if feedback

content was evaluated in this study. For instance, some individuals may have less intrinsic career satisfaction if they feel the need to ask for information in front of their colleagues and the feedback received is negative. Therefore, a defensive impression management strategy may actually occur due to the presence of an audience, which in turn may reduce their sense of career accomplishments. In other words, individuals who are trying to prevent a negative public image may feel as if they are constantly defending their own accomplishments rather than enjoying their accomplishments. On the contrary, some individuals may have more intrinsic career satisfaction if they seek positive feedback in the presence of other employees; thus, individuals may use an assertive impression management strategy to enhance their public image in the presence of an audience.

Even though previous research supports relationships of other proactive behaviors with career success, there may be more variables in conjunction with feedback seeking that would be related to either intrinsic or extrinsic career success. For instance, Crant's (2000) review of proactive behaviors discussed proactive personality and taking charge as two individual difference variables. These individual difference variables may create a mediating relationship such that an individual's proactive personality may relate to feedback seeking and this would relate to either intrinsic or extrinsic career success. Perhaps individuals with a greater proactive personality would be more likely to seek feedback and have a greater sense of career satisfaction. Crant suggested that much of the proactive behavior literature should be integrated into an overall framework explaining proactive behaviors in the workplace. The lack of findings in this study may be explained by examining more domain-specific individual difference variables (e.g., proactive personality, taking charge) when

evaluating feedback seeking in general, as well as in a public or private context, to determine its relationship with an individual's career success.

Next, I evaluated the relationship between feedback seeking and feedback source predicting intrinsic and extrinsic career success. Surprisingly, the relationship between public feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source predicting intrinsic career success was the only supported relationship. I found marginal support for the relationships between public or private feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source predicting extrinsic career success. This finding contradicts the hypothesis that supervisor feedback source would have a stronger positive relationship with intrinsic career success than would co-worker source. Supervisors typically have more control over an individual's career in terms of promotions, pay, and status; however, co-workers may create an atmosphere in which an individual enjoys his or her job and/or career. Based on assertive impression management theory, individuals would want to enhance their public image by seeking feedback from a supervisor who is in the position to influence promotions, pay and status. If this is the case, then it is surprising that there was no significant relationship between feedback seeking and supervisor source with extrinsic career success. However, both public and private feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source predicting extrinsic career success were marginally significant. In today's workplace where jobs are more complex and employees are encouraged to be more autonomous (Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995) there are fewer managers accessible to employees; thus, sources other than a supervisor may become more significant for performance information and support (Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Through this support and cooperation, employees are perceived as team players and rewarded through

promotions and salary increases. The results of this study suggest that seeking feedback from a supervisor may not have as much of a relationship with career success but that seeking feedback from co-workers may have a more significant relationship due to the lack of accessibility with managers. Future research should continue to examine how feedback seeking relates to career success; however, research should focus on other proactive behaviors (i.e., proactive personality) that may relate to the feedback seeking process (Crant, 2000).

The interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source predicting career success was also hypothesized to have a stronger positive relationship than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting career success. However, the only significant interaction predicting intrinsic career success was the interaction between public feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source; therefore, no comparisons could be made with its relationship between private feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source predicting intrinsic career success. There were two significant relationships between public or private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting extrinsic career success; therefore, comparisons could be made between the public and private context. Unfortunately, no significant differences were found between the beta coefficients for the public context and the private context. This does not support the idea that employees may be held more accountable in the presence of an audience in order to protect their own image and to try to improve their status within the organization. Theoretically, though, there seems to be justification for differences between public feedback seeking and private feedback seeking based on impression management theory. More research may be needed to focus on specific factors of impression management, such as self-promotion

behaviors in relation to feedback seeking and career success. Alternatively, perceived individual accountability, which is the felt responsibility an individual may have when he or she expects to be judged for achieving a particular goal (Frink & Klimoski, 1998), may be another variable that would help explain differences in seeking feedback in a public or private context. Organizational citizenship behaviors were also considered in relation to public or private feedback seeking behaviors. Main effects were not found for the relationship between public or private feedback seeking and OCB-I. However, the relationship between public feedback seeking and OCB-O was statistically significant, albeit not in the predicted direction. Public feedback seeking was found to be negatively related to OCB-O as opposed to the predicted positive relationship. No relationship was found between private feedback seeking and OCB-O behaviors. The negative relationship between public feedback seeking and OCB-O contradicts social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which states that individuals will feel the need to reciprocate extra-role behaviors in return for pertinent performance information. Of course, this assumes that the feedback information received was pertinent and valuable. It may be that in these particular organizations the public feedback sought was not very helpful and there would therefore be no need to reciprocate with citizenship behaviors.

The next two hypotheses predicted that the feedback source would predict the benefactor when reciprocating with citizenship behaviors. First, I predicted that public and private feedback seeking and the co-worker feedback source would more positively predict OCB-I than the interaction with the supervisor source predicting OCB-I. No significant results were found for any of these relationships. Based on social exchange theory, individuals who seek feedback from either source should feel

the need to reciprocate through OCB-I behaviors. Perhaps the content of feedback received will determine if the individual feels the need to reciprocate based on the value of the information. It may be that the actual value of the information received will determine the future need to reciprocate through OCB-I behaviors.

Second, I predicted that public and private feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source would be more positively related to OCB-O behaviors than the interaction of public or private feedback seeking and co-worker feedback source. A marginally significant relationship was found between public feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source predicting OCB-O behaviors. Although the remaining equations were not significant, this finding partially supports the proposed hypothesis. That is, individuals who seek feedback in public from a supervisor are likely to reciprocate through OCB-O behaviors. The role of the audience in a public context may persuade individuals to reciprocate OCB-O behaviors according to the feedback source. Since the supervisor is a representative of the organization, individuals would be more likely to reciprocate with citizenship behaviors geared towards the organization than to citizenship behaviors geared to a specific individual (i.e., OCB-I). However, I was surprised to find no relationship between private feedback seeking and supervisor source predicting OCB-O. Through social exchange theory, feedback seeking behaviors should encourage an individual to reciprocate through some citizenship behaviors regardless of the context. More research may be needed to determine the role of the audience and impression management tactics in relation to these outcomes. Even though the definitions for public or private feedback stated that the members of the audience do not have to be evaluating the feedback seeker, the feedback seeker may place more of an emphasis on this audience for reciprocating

OCB-O behaviors. The presence of witnesses in the feedback seeking behaviors may create more of an obligation to reciprocate through citizenship behaviors toward the organization. As stated previously, perceived individual accountability may be another variable that would help explain differences in seeking feedback in a public or private context. In particular, an individual may feel accountable to co-workers when seeking public feedback and reciprocate citizenship behaviors after receiving the public feedback.

A stronger positive relationship was hypothesized in the interactions between public feedback seeking and feedback source predicting OCBs than in the interactions between private feedback seeking and feedback source predicting OCBs. Only one of the eight relationships was significant; therefore, no comparisons could be made between the public and private contexts. The lack of results in comparisons of public feedback seeking and private feedback seeking may suggest no significant differences between public or private feedback seeking predicting citizenship behaviors. Based on the minimal significant findings analyzing the relationship between public or private feedback seeking predicting citizenship behaviors, it may be more important to determine why the specific context (i.e., with an audience) predicts citizenship behaviors instead of focusing on whether one context is more positive than the other. In particular, public feedback seeking does appear to have a significant relationship with OCB-O behaviors. Therefore, a better understanding of the relationship between private feedback seeking and citizenship behaviors is needed to explain the role of an audience for reciprocating these behaviors.

None of the hypotheses predicting a relationship between feedback seeking and performance were supported. First, neither public nor private feedback seeking

was found to directly affect performance. This contradicts the previous positive relationship found between general feedback seeking and performance (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). Most of these studies used objective or subjective measures of performance (i.e., supervisor evaluations) except for Ashford and Black (1996), which used a self-report performance measure; therefore, the significant positive relationship between feedback seeking and performance in previous research cannot be attributed to method variance problems. Furthermore, in my dataset, supervisors evaluated individual performance based on an established scale with acceptable reliability. Thus, it was surprising that this established relationship between general feedback seeking and performance did not have a significant relationship for either of the contexts discussed.

Second, the predicted interaction of public or private feedback seeking and supervisor feedback source being more positively related to individual performance than the interaction with the co-worker feedback source was not supported. As stated previously, a low base rate in the number of people seeking feedback within these organizations may have played a part in the lack of results for these analyses. Alternatively, the feedback source may not be as much of a factor in the relationship between feedback seeking and individual performance as the utility of the feedback received. Future research should address how the feedback content and not the feedback source relate public and private feedback seeking to individual performance.

Finally, a stronger positive relationship for the interaction between public feedback seeking and feedback source predicting individual performance than the interaction between private feedback seeking and feedback source was not supported.

Since none of the relationships with feedback seeking in any context were statistically significant in predicting individual performance, no comparisons could be made between a public and private context. The lack of findings for any of these hypotheses may suggest that there are no significant differences between seeking public or private feedback and individual outcomes. However, I do believe that impression management tactics and perceived accountability are factors that should be further investigated to determine if differences do exist between public and private contexts in relation to individual outcomes. Future research should consider these variables as well as the types of feedback and the utility of the feedback as important variables in predicting the relationship with individual performance.

Limitations

As is the case with most research, the present study's limitations should be noted. One concern with this study is the low base rate problem in relation to public or private feedback seeking in these organizations. Not all individuals are willing to seek performance feedback in the presence of an audience (Northcraft and Ashford, 1990), and organizations may have varying levels of public and private contexts available to the feedback seeker. Within this dissertation, the mean value is 1.38 for public feedback seeking and 1.77 for private feedback seeking and there is a significant difference between the means ($p < .10$). Thus, the frequency in which the average employee in my sample would seek either public or private feedback was less than once a month to seeking feedback once a month. As stated previously, this frequency is lower than most feedback seeking studies in which the researchers reported that employees will seek feedback once a month to seeking feedback a few times a month.

I also explored the mean differences of feedback seeking behaviors based on gender to see if the large percentage of females (71%) in my final sample may have contributed to the low base rate problem. Previous studies suggest that gender may relate to how frequently an individual will seek feedback and women may seek less feedback than men (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Callister et al., 1999). However, t-tests comparing the means found no significant difference between public feedback seeking in men (M = 1.42) and women (M = 1.37) and no difference between the means for private feedback seeking in men (M = 1.74) and women (M = 1.78). Despite the similarities in feedback seeking behaviors between men and women in my sample, I compared the gender percentage in other studies. Most feedback seeking studies have similar percentages for gender ranging from 60-67% female (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Tuckey et al., 2002; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Only a few studies had an extremely high percentage (over 75%) of men in their sample (e.g., Fedor et al., 1992; Madzar, 2001; VandeWalle et al., 2000); whereas most feedback seeking studies had an even split based on gender. Due to similar samples based on gender, I do not believe the large percentage of females in my sample contributed to the low base rate problem.

I further examined the low base rate problem by investigating the mean value for organizational citizenship behaviors to determine if my organizations may have been prone to lower than average “helping cultures.” Employees may perceive feedback seeking and citizenship behaviors as similar due to the “helping” nature of both behaviors; therefore, I compared the mean values of my citizenship behaviors with other research studies to determine if this may have contributed to the low base rate problem in feedback seeking. The mean values for OCB-I behaviors reported in

the supervisor and co-worker surveys are 3.97 and 4.01 respectively. The mean values for OCB-O behaviors from the supervisor and co-worker surveys are 4.12 and 4.11 respectively. These values are not lower than other samples using the same scales indicating these cultures. For instance, Turnley, Bolino, Lester, and Bloodgood (2003) reported mean values of 3.88 for OCB-I and 3.76 for OCB-O and Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor (2000) reported mean values of 4.08 for OCB-I and 3.37 for OCB-O. The similar or lower reported mean values from previous studies as compared to the mean values in my study do not suggest a lack of a "helping culture" but may suggest a higher helping culture. As stated previously, the low mean values for feedback seeking behavior may be due to a culture where feedback seeking is not encouraged or due to the prevalence of feedback therefore there is no need to proactively seek performance information. Within these organizations, the similar or higher mean values for "helping behaviors" may suggest that feedback is common and therefore employees have no need to proactively seek feedback.

Another limitation to this study concerns the type of feedback sought. Ilgen et al. (1979) suggested that the feedback content, either positive or negative, may be an important variable in the feedback process. Most feedback seeking studies do not consider the feedback content (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Bennett et al., 1990; Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995; London et al., 1999; Morrison, 1993; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Renn & Fedor, 2001; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000; Williams et al., 1999), but this may have been more of a factor in evaluating the frequency of seeking public or private feedback than anticipated. Survey participants may have taken into consideration only positive feedback or negative feedback, while

others may have averaged the number of times seeking feedback in general. Although the survey stated feedback seeking in general (neither positive nor negative) in either context, some participants may have made their own distinction for positive or negative feedback.

Contributions and Future Research

This dissertation makes many contributions to the feedback seeking literature. Namely, it is the first study to examine whether the context truly matters when people decide to seek feedback. Some studies (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Williams et. al, 1999; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990) have examined the context as one of many variables relating to feedback seeking, but no study has identified specific antecedents relating to seeking feedback in a public or private context. Further, this is the first study to examine individual consequences other than individual performance (i.e., career success and organizational citizenship behaviors) in relation to feedback seeking in general.

Practitioners have recognized the importance of continuous learning and self-development in the work environment (Gagne, 2002; Rich, 2002). With this recognition, practitioners are looking for more than the annual performance review as a way to give feedback but want to stress an environment with continuous performance feedback and improvement (Gagne, 2002). Subsequently, researchers have been trying to gain a better understanding of an employee's feedback environment (Madzar, 1995; Morrison, 1995) by examining which cues and sources are available in these feedback environments (Ashford, 1993; Greller & Herold, 1975; Herold & Parsons, 1985). With this study, the feedback context becomes another

important variable in understanding how an individual's feedback environment may relate to feedback seeking.

Based on the results of this dissertation, future research ideas and additional contributions to the literature will be discussed by antecedents to public or private feedback seeking and the consequences of seeking in a public or private context.

Antecedents to Public or Private Feedback Seeking. Prior research discusses the relevance of an audience in determining an individual's behavior to seek feedback (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Levy et al., 1995; Williams et al., 1999; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990), and this dissertation was the first study to examine if people have preferences for seeking feedback in the presence of an audience (i.e., public context) or without an audience (i.e., private context). Even though many of my hypothesized relationships were not supported, statistically significant relationships were found in areas where previous research had equivocal results. For instance, PSC had a negative relationship with public feedback seeking instead of the predicted positive relationship. Theoretically, I based my arguments on the fact that high PSC individuals do not automatically have discomfort in the presence of an audience and therefore would be more likely to seek public feedback (Levy et al., 1995). However, the supported negative relationship in my results is consistent with previous theoretical explanations (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992). Furthermore, a significant negative relationship was found for public feedback seeking and not private feedback seeking. These results may indicate that employees do see a difference in seeking feedback in a public versus a private context. Therefore, it appears through some of the statistically significant results that employees make a distinction when seeking feedback in a public or private context. However, some of the previously established

antecedent relationships with feedback seeking may need to be further examined to see if moderator variables such as individual performance expectations are important in relation to seeking feedback in a specific context.

Some researchers have suggested that the only truly private context exists within e-mail communications, but employees may not accurately interpret the feedback message sent through this medium (Ang et al., 1993; Levy et al., 1995) and some messages should be more appropriately stated face-to-face. E-mail as a medium for feedback was not examined in this study; however, there may be individual differences predicting the frequency of seeking feedback in a private context which may differ from the frequency of seeking feedback in a private face-to-face context. Also, an examination of the feedback content and medium may relate differently to individual outcomes such as performance and may relate to the likelihood of seeking feedback again. In other words, an individual may seek more feedback via e-mail because it is more convenient and/or the source is more accessible with this medium. However, if the feedback is not useful (short, unclear messages) then the feedback seeker may stop seeking feedback in general, look for other feedback sources and possibly become frustrated with the lack of useful information. With the growing use of technology in the workplace, future research should examine whether people differ in seeking feedback via e-mail rather than a private face-to-face context and how this medium for seeking feedback may relate to individual outcomes (Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003).

As stated in the limitations section, some participants may have wondered whether the feedback was either positive or negative when seeking in a public or private context. Early models in feedback (Ilgen et al., 1979) stress the sign of

feedback as an important variable, and for the most part this has been somewhat neglected in the feedback seeking literature. In regard to the feedback context, sign may be a more important variable when determining feedback seeking in a public or private context than feedback seeking in general and should be included in future research studies. Although sign may be a variable to consider in future research, most feedback seeking studies (e.g., Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Bennett et al., 1990; Fedor et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995; London et al., 1999; Morrison, 1993; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Renn & Fedor, 2001; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000; Williams et al., 1999) have only considered the frequency with which individuals will seek general feedback regardless of the sign. Therefore, I assumed prior to data collection that feedback sign would not be as important when predicting if certain individual difference variables (i.e., goal-orientation, tolerance for ambiguity, external feedback propensity, public self-consciousness, and self-esteem) would relate to the frequency of seeking feedback in a public or private context. I believed that the frequency of seeking feedback would be enough to find meaningful results and in the interests of parsimony did not include feedback sign as a variable. In hindsight, feedback sign or the utility of the feedback information may be important variables to consider in regards to individual outcomes.

Alternatively, previous feedback seeking studies have considered whether the relationship with the feedback source (e.g., Fedor et al., 1992; Madzar, 2001; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995) relates to feedback seeking frequency. The relationship with the feedback source should be considered when predicting the frequency of seeking feedback in a public or private context. In my

survey, I asked supervisors and co-workers how long they have known the employee; however, this variable does not depict the true relationship with the employee. Nevertheless, significant negative correlations were found for three out of the four correlations: correlation between how long a supervisor has known an employee and public and private feedback seeking is -.35 ($p < .01$) and -.24 ($p < .01$), respectively, and correlation between how long a co-worker has known an employee and public and private feedback seeking is -.18 ($p < .05$) and -.08 (n.s.), respectively. This suggests that the longer an employee knows a feedback source the less likely he or she will seek feedback. For example, if an employee has known a feedback source for many years, the employee may know that the feedback source will provide feedback when needed or may know not to ask this feedback source for feedback because it is not useful, either interpretation would lead to less feedback seeking. However, more research is needed to better understand the true relationship between a feedback source and employee in determining how frequently the employee will seek feedback from this particular source. In other words, how well I know and respect my feedback source may determine if I will seek more or less feedback in a public or a private context.

Consequences of Public or Private Feedback Seeking. Public or private feedback seeking was examined in relation to three individual outcomes. Only three outcomes were evaluated in this study, but future research could consider other individual outcomes such as job satisfaction, turnover, and organizational commitment. In particular, individuals may be more satisfied with their jobs based on their feedback seeking interventions. Further, individuals who have a desire to seek feedback may be more committed to organizations that provide the opportunities for employees to seek

performance information. However, before these variables can be addressed in future research studies, a better understanding of public and private feedback seeking in relation to career success, organizational citizenship behaviors, and performance should be examined in greater detail.

The lack of significant findings in the relationships between feedback seeking and performance was surprising. Unlike previous research in which a positive relationship was found between these two variables (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Klich & Feldman, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001), future research may need to address other influences such as moderators between these two variables when considering the context of feedback seeking behaviors. The perceived value of the feedback received and the utility of the feedback information may be variables that would relate to feedback seeking and individual performance.

Although most of the hypotheses were not supported in this dissertation, it does raise some questions as to how much the feedback context matters within an employee's work environment. Employees are interested and willing to seek performance feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Crant, 2000); however, some organizations may not be providing environments in which people can seek feedback. In particular, fewer managers may be available as feedback sources, which encourages employees to seek from other sources or not to seek feedback at all (Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Thus, future research is warranted to determine which individuals may seek in a public or private context and how organizations can create an appropriate feedback environment for those employees. Furthermore, this study highlights the inconsistent and/or lack of findings with some of these variables and feedback seeking in general. More research may be needed to determine which

employees are more likely to seek feedback in any context and to determine the relationship between feedback seeking and individual outcomes.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY CONSENT FORM

This questionnaire is intended to provide information about the feedback environment within your organization. Responses to this questionnaire are completely confidential. You have the option to provide any additional information so that the researcher may contact you to answer any follow-up questions. However, this study is strictly voluntary and any names that are provided to the researcher will be kept confidential. Your name and/or identifying information will not be associated with your responses and will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher. Furthermore, all data collected from this questionnaire will be presented in aggregate only and your name will never be attached to the information you provide.

Your participation in this study is purely voluntary and you may stop at any time. If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Robin Cheramie at 225-578-6154 or rchera2@lsu.edu.

By participating in this study and signing your name below, you are indicating the following conditions:

- You are a full-time employee in an organization,
- You are willingly and voluntarily participating in this study and
- The information you provide (except your name) may be included in any report, presentation and/or publication of the results of this study.

Printed Name

_____

Signature Date

_____ _____

Additional contact information (optional)

_____

APPENDIX B
SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear Survey Participant:

As a doctoral student in the College of Business Administration at Louisiana State University, I am currently working on my dissertation. As part of the dissertation process, I am conducting a research study that focuses on the feedback environment within your organization. You are among a group of employees chosen to participate in this study. Your completion of the enclosed survey is important because you have been selected to represent the views of all employees in this organization, as well as employees in general. For the survey to be helpful in advancing the existing knowledge of feedback processes in the workplace, it is important that you provide honest and candid responses.

The enclosed survey should only take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Your responses will be seen by the researchers only and will be kept in the strictest of confidence. Responses will be analyzed in aggregate only through general trends and statistical relationships. Although your employer will receive a summary report of my findings, no individual responses will be seen by anyone other than the researchers.

When you have completed the survey, please check to be sure you have responded to all items. *Please return the survey in the envelope provided within seven days of receipt.*

Your time and cooperation are greatly appreciated. If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact me at 225-578-6154 or via e-mail at rchera2@lsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Robin A. Cheramie
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX C
EMPLOYEE SURVEY

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine how people seek performance feedback in organizations. In other words, are individuals asking their supervisors how well they are performing on the job?

Please note that many of the questions will seem repetitive, this is necessary for proper analyses and statistical purposes. The survey questions will tap into many different components of employee feedback seeking behavior, thus *please read each question carefully.*

I appreciate and thank you in advance for your participation.

I. Each of the following statements considers how people seek performance feedback in organizations. In other words, are individuals asking their supervisor how well they are performing on the job?

When answering the following questions, think about the last three months of work and consider this definition for a public context. Please circle the best response:

Public context – A public context indicates that more than one person (supervisor, co-worker and/or other employees in your organization) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or a co-worker, are other employees present?

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How often have you asked for feedback in a ***public*** *context?*	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you seek information regarding what is expected of you in your job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently do you seek information regarding how well you are performing on the job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently do you seek information regarding the appropriateness of your behavior at work in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often have you asked, “How am I doing?” in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently have you asked for information concerning your performance in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

When answering the following questions, think about the last three months of work and consider this definition for a public context. Please circle the best response:

Public context – A public context indicates that more than one person (supervisor, co-worker and/or other employees in your organization) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or a co-worker, are other employees present?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is important to me to receive ***public*** feedback on my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to get ***public*** feedback on what behaviors will help me to do better in performing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
I find ***public*** feedback on my performance useful.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for me to receive ***public*** feedback on my potential for advancement from within.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to get ***public*** feedback on what behaviors will help me advance within the company.	1	2	3	4	5
I find ***public*** feedback on my advancement potential useful.	1	2	3	4	5

When answering the following questions, think about the last three months of work and consider this definition for a private context. Please circle the best response:

Private context – A private context indicates only one person (a supervisor or a co-worker) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or co-worker, is that the only person present at that time?

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How often have you asked for feedback in ***private*** *context?*	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you seek information regarding what is expected of you in your job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently do you seek information regarding how well you are performing on the job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How frequently do you seek information regarding the appropriateness of your behavior at work in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often have you asked, “How am I doing?” in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently have you asked for information concerning your performance in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

When answering the following questions, think about the last three months of work and consider this definition for a private context. Please circle the best response:

Private context – A private context indicates only one person (a supervisor or a co-worker) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or co-worker, is that the only person present at that time?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is important to me to receive ***private*** feedback on my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to get ***private*** feedback on what behaviors will help me to do better in performing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
I find ***private*** feedback on my performance useful.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for me to receive ***private*** feedback on my potential for advancement from within.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to get ***private*** feedback on what behaviors will help me advance within the company.	1	2	3	4	5
I find ***private*** feedback on my advancement potential useful.	1	2	3	4	5

Each of the following statements relates to how people might feel about themselves. With respect to your own feelings about yourself, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I'm concerned with showing that I can perform better than my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy it when others at work are aware of how well I am doing.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer to work on projects where I can prove my ability to others.	1	2	3	4	5
I would avoid taking on a new task if there was a chance that I would appear rather incompetent to others.	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm concerned about taking on a task at work if my performance would reveal that I had low ability.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly.	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from.	1	2	3	4	5
I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy challenging, and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills.	1	2	3	4	5
For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer to work in situations that require a high level of ability and talent.	1	2	3	4	5
I care about what others think of me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am sensitive to others' views of my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
I want others to think highly of my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
I want to know about how others think I can improve my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
I usually worry about making a good impression.	1	2	3	4	5
I am concerned about the way I present myself.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5
All in all, I am not inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a lot of respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
There are not times when I feel useless	1	2	3	4	5
There are not times where I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.	1	2	3	4	5

Each of the following statements relates to how people might feel about their workplace. With respect to your own feelings about your workplace, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	1	2	3	4	5
On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.	1	2	3	4	5
There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.	1	2	3	4	5
No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.	1	2	3	4	5
I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.	1	2	3	4	5
There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.	1	2	3	4	5
I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.	1	2	3	4	5
I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.	1	2	3	4	5
I have never been irked by people who ask favors of me.	1	2	3	4	5
There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	1	2	3	4	5
I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	1	2	3	4	5
I have never deliberately said something to hurt someone's feelings.	1	2	3	4	5

Please think about the last three months of work when answering the following questions. Circle the best response:

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
In general, how frequently do you ask for performance feedback?	1	2	3	4	5
In general, how frequently do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job?	1	2	3	4	5
In general, how often do you seek information regarding how well you are doing on the job?	1	2	3	4	5

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How frequently have you asked for information concerning your performance?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently have you asked, “How am I doing?”	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance?	1	2	3	4	5
When seeking performance feedback, how frequently do you seek feedback from your ***supervisor***?	1	2	3	4	5
In order to find out how you are performing in your job, how often do you seek information from your ***supervisor***?	1	2	3	4	5
When seeking performance feedback, how frequently do you seek feedback from your ***co-workers****?*	1	2	3	4	5
In order to find out how you are performing in your job, how often do you seek information from your ***co-workers****?*	1	2	3	4	5

General Information (Please circle the best response).

1. What is your sex? Male Female
2. How old are you? _____ Years
3. Please indicate your race:

   White Latino/Latina African American

   Asian/Asian American Others
4. What is your job title? _____
5. What is your current annual salary? _____
6. How long have you worked for your current employer? _____Years _____ Months
7. How long have you worked in your current job? _____ Years _____ Months
8. Number of promotions with your current employer _____ Promotions
9. Number of promotions during your entire career _____ Promotions
10. How long have you been in this career? _____ Years _____ Months

11. What is your highest education level?

Less than high school	Some graduate work
High school graduate	Master's degree
Some college	Doctorate degree
College graduate	Other (explain) _____

12. Do you have your own office? (circle one):

Yes No

13. Does your supervisor have his or her own office? (circle one):

Yes No

14. Do you work in a cubicle? (circle one):

Yes No

Thank you for your time and participation with this survey. Please contact Robin Cheramie at 225-578-6154, if you have any further questions about this study.

APPENDIX D
SUPERVISOR SURVEY

I. Each of the following statements considers how people seek performance feedback in organizations. In other words, are individuals asking their supervisor how well they are performing on the job?

When answering these questions, think about the last three months of work and indicate the degree to which each statement characterizes _____'s behavior as an employee. Please consider each definition when answering the questions and circle the best response:

Public context – A public context indicates that more than one person (supervisor, co-worker and/or other employees in your organization) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or a co-worker, are other employees present?

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How often does your employee ask for feedback in ***public****?*	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your employee seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of his or her job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your employee seek information regarding what is expected of him or her in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee seek information regarding how well he or she is performing on the job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee seek information regarding the appropriateness of him or her behavior at work in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee ask, "How am I doing?" in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee ask for information concerning your performance in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee ask for an informal appraisal of your performance in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

Private context – A private context indicates only one person (a supervisor or a co-worker) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or co-worker, is that the only person present at that time?

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How often does your employee ask for feedback in ***private****?*	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your employee seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of his or her job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your employee seek information regarding what is expected of him or her in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee seek information regarding how well he or she is performing on the job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee seek information regarding the appropriateness of him or her behavior at work in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your employee ask, “How am I doing?” in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee ask for information concerning your performance in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee ask for an informal appraisal of your performance in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

Please read each of the following statements and indicate the degree to which each statement characterizes _____’s behavior as an employee.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Helps others who have been absent	1	2	3	4	5
Helps others who have heavy work loads.	1	2	3	4	5
Assists other employees with their work (when not asked).	1	2	3	4	5
Takes time to listen to co-workers’ problems and worries.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Goes out of the way to help new employees.	1	2	3	4	5
Takes a personal interest in other employees.	1	2	3	4	5
Passes along information to co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
Attendance at work is above the norm.	1	2	3	4	5
Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	1	2	3	4	5
Takes undeserved work breaks.	1	2	3	4	5
This employee spends a great deal of time with personal phone conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
Complains about insignificant things at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Conserves and protects organizational property.	1	2	3	4	5
Adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order.	1	2	3	4	5
Adequately completes assigned duties.	1	2	3	4	5
Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description.	1	2	3	4	5
Performs tasks that are expected of him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
Meets formal performance requirements on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5
Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform.	1	2	3	4	5
Fails to perform essential duties.	1	2	3	4	5

Please think about the last three months of work when answering the following questions. Circle the best response:

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
In general, how frequently does your employee ask for performance feedback?	1	2	3	4	5

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
In general, how frequently does your employee seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of the job?	1	2	3	4	5
In general, how often does your employee seek information regarding how well he or she is doing on the job?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently has your employee asked for information concerning his or her performance?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your employee ask, “How am I doing?”	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently has your employee asked for an informal appraisal of his or her performance?	1	2	3	4	5

Please complete the following statements relative to the individual about whom you completed the above items (Please circle the best response).

1. I see him/her:

   Several times a day

   Not every day, but several times a week

   Not every week, but several times a month

2. I have known him/her:

   Less than a year

   1 to 2 years

   3 to 5 years

   More than 5 years

General Information

a. What is your sex? Male Female

b. How old are you? _____ Years

c. Please indicate your race:

   White Latino/Latina African American

   Asian/Asian American Others

d. Average number of hours worked per week? _____

e. How long have you worked for your current employer? _____Years _____ Months

f. Number of promotions with your current employer _____ Promotions

g. Number of promotions during your entire career _____ Promotions

h. How many promotions has your employee had with your company _____ Promotions

i. What is your highest education level?

Less than high school	Some graduate work
High school graduate	Master's degree
Some college	Doctorate degree
College graduate	Other (explain) _____

Thank you for your time and participation with this survey. Please contact Robin Cheramie at 225-578-6154, if you have any further questions about this study.

APPENDIX E
CO-WORKER SURVEY

I. Each of the following statements considers how people seek performance feedback in organizations. In other words, are individuals asking their supervisor how well they are performing on the job?

When answering these questions, think about the last three months of work and indicate the degree to which each statement characterizes _____'s behavior as an employee. Please consider each definition when answering the questions and circle the best response:

Public context – A public context indicates that more than one person (supervisor, co-worker and/or other employees in your organization) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or a co-worker, are other employees present

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How often does your co-worker ask for feedback in *public?*	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your co-worker seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of his or her job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How does your co-worker seek information regarding what is expected of him or her in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker seek information regarding how well he or she is performing on the job in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker seek information regarding the appropriateness of him or her behavior at work in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask, "How am I doing?" in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask for information concerning your performance in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask for an informal appraisal of your performance in a ***public*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

Private context – A private context indicates only one person (a supervisor or a co-worker) is present when you seek performance feedback. In other words, when you seek performance feedback on your job from either a supervisor or co-worker, is that the only person present at that time?

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
How often does your co-worker asked for feedback in ***private****?*	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your co-worker seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of his or her job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your co-worker seek information regarding what is expected of him or her in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker seek information regarding how well he or she is performing on the job in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker seek information regarding the appropriateness of him or her behavior at work in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How does your co-worker ask, "How am I doing?" in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask for information concerning your performance in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask for an informal appraisal of your performance in a ***private*** context?	1	2	3	4	5

Please read each of the following statements and indicate the degree to which each statement characterizes _____'s behavior as an employee.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Helps others who have been absent	1	2	3	4	5
Helps others who have heavy work loads.	1	2	3	4	5
Assists other employees with their work (when not asked).	1	2	3	4	5
Takes time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries.	1	2	3	4	5
Goes out of the way to help new employees.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Takes a personal interest in other employees.	1	2	3	4	5
Passes along information to co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
Attendance at work is above the norm.	1	2	3	4	5
Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	1	2	3	4	5
Takes undeserved work breaks.	1	2	3	4	5
This employee spends a great deal of time with personal phone conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
Complains about insignificant things at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Conserves and protects organizational property.	1	2	3	4	5
Adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order.	1	2	3	4	5
Adequately completes assigned duties.	1	2	3	4	5
Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description.	1	2	3	4	5
Performs tasks that are expected of him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
Meets formal performance requirements on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5
Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform.	1	2	3	4	5
Fails to perform essential duties.	1	2	3	4	5

Please think about the last three months of work when answering the following questions. Circle the best response:

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
In general, how frequently does your co-worker ask for performance feedback?	1	2	3	4	5

	Less than once a month	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week or more
In general, how frequently does your co-worker seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of the job?	1	2	3	4	5
In general, how often does your co-worker seek information regarding how well he or she is doing on the job?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently has your co-worker asked for information concerning his or her performance?	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask, “How am I doing?”	1	2	3	4	5
How frequently does your co-worker ask for an informal appraisal of his or her performance?	1	2	3	4	5

Please complete the following statements relative to the individual about whom you completed the above items (Please circle the best response).

1. I see him/her:

   Several times a day

   Not every day, but several times a week

   Not every week, but several times a month

2. I have known him/her:

   Less than a year

   1 to 2 years

   3 to 5 years

   More than 5 years

General Information

a. What is your sex? Male Female

b. How old are you? _____ Years

c. Please indicate your race:

   White Latino/Latina African American

   Asian/Asian American Others

d. Average number of hours worked per week? _____

e. How long have you worked for your current employer? _____Years _____ Months

f. Number of promotions with your current employer _____ Promotions

g. Number of promotions during your entire career _____ Promotions

h. What is your highest education level?

Less than high school	Some graduate work
High school graduate	Master's degree
Some college	Doctorate degree
College graduate	Other (explain) _____

Thank you for your time and participation with this survey. Please contact Robin Cheramie at 225-578-6154, if you have any further questions about this study.

APPENDIX F
MEASURES

Perceived value of public feedback (adapted from Ashford, 1986)

1. It is important to me to receive public feedback on my performance.
2. I would like to get public feedback on what behaviors will help me do better in performing my job.
3. I find public feedback on my performance useful.
4. It is important for me to receive public feedback on my potential for advancement from within.
5. I would like to get public feedback on what behaviors will help me advance within the company.
6. I find public feedback on my advancement potential useful.

Perceived value of private feedback (adapted from Ashford, 1986)

1. It is important to me to receive private feedback on my performance.
2. I would like to get private feedback on what behaviors will help me do better in performing my job.
3. I find private feedback on my performance useful.
4. It is important for me to receive private feedback on my potential for advancement from within.
5. I would like to get private feedback on what behaviors will help me advance within the company.
6. I find private feedback on my advancement potential useful.

Performance goal orientation (VandeWalle, 1997)

1. I'm concerned with showing that I can perform better than my co-workers.
2. I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others at work.
3. I enjoy it when others at work are aware of how well I am doing.
4. I prefer to work on projects where I can prove my ability to others.
5. I would avoid taking on a new task if there was a chance that I would appear rather incompetent to others.
6. Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill.
7. I'm concerned about taking on a task at work if my performance would reveal that I had low ability.
8. I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly.

Learning goal orientation (VandeWalle, 1997)

1. I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from.
2. I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge.
3. I enjoy challenging, and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills.
4. For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks.
5. I prefer to work in situations that require a high level of ability and talent.

Public self-consciousness (London, Larsen, & Thisted, 1999)

1. I care about what others think of me.
2. I am sensitive to others' views of my performance.

3. I want others to think highly of my performance.
4. I want to know about how others think I can improve my performance.
5. I usually worry about making a good impression (Fenigstein et al., 1975).
6. I am concerned about the way I present myself (Fenigstein et al., 1975).

Self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965)

1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (reverse scored)
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (reverse scored)
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. (reverse scored)
9. I certainly feel useless at times. (reverse scored)
10. At times I think I am no good at all. (reverse scored)
11. All in all, I am not inclined to feel that I am a failure.
12. I feel that I have much to be proud of.
13. I have a lot of respect for myself.
14. There are not times when I feel useless.
15. There are not times where I think I am not good at all.

External feedback propensity

1. I like being told how well I am doing on a project.
2. Even though I may think I have done a good job, I feel a lot more confident of it after someone else tells me so.
3. Even when I think that I could have done something better, I feel good when other people think well of what I have done.
4. I like getting frequent feedback from others regarding my performance.
5. It is very important to me to know what people think of my work.

Tolerance for ambiguity

1. I function very poorly whenever there is a serious lack of communication in a job situation.
2. Before any important job, I must know how long it will take.
3. In a situation in which other people evaluate me, I feel a great need for clear and explicit evaluations.
4. If I am uncertain about the responsibilities of a job, I get very anxious.
5. A problem has little attraction for me if I don't think it has a solution.
6. In a decision-making situation in which there is not enough information to process the problem, I feel very uncomfortable.
7. I don't like to work on a problem unless there is a possibility of coming out with a clear-cut and unambiguous answer.
8. Complex problems appeal to me only if I have a clear idea of the total scope of the problem.

Public feedback seeking

1. How often have you asked for feedback in public?
2. How often do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job in a public context?
3. How often do you seek information regarding what is expected of you in your job in a public context?
4. How frequently do you seek information regarding how well you are performing on the job in a public context?
5. How frequently do you seek information regarding the appropriateness of your behavior at work in a public context?
6. How often have you asked, “How am I doing?” in a public context?
7. How frequently have you asked for information concerning your performance in a public context?
8. How frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance in a public context?

Private feedback seeking

1. How often have you asked for feedback in private?
2. How often do you seek information regarding how to perform specific functions of your job in a private context?
3. How often do you seek information regarding what is expected of you in your job in a private context?
4. How frequently do you seek information regarding how well you are performing on the job in a private context?
5. How frequently do you seek information regarding the appropriateness of your behavior at work in a private context?
6. How often have you asked, “How am I doing?” in a private context?
7. How frequently have you asked for information concerning your performance in a private context?
8. How frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance in a private context?

Feedback seeking (in general)

1. In general, how frequently do you ask for performance feedback?
2. In general, how frequently do you seek information regarding how to perform specific aspects of your job?
3. In general, how often do you seek information regarding how well you are doing on the job?
4. During the past three months, how frequently have you asked for information concerning your performance?
5. During the past three months, how frequently have you asked, "How am I doing?"
6. During the past three months, how frequently have you asked for an informal appraisal of your performance?

Feedback source (supervisor)

1. When seeking performance feedback, how frequently do you seek feedback from your supervisor?
2. In order to find out how you are performing in your job, how often do you seek information from your supervisor?

Feedback source (co-worker)

1. When seeking performance feedback, how frequently do you seek feedback from your co-worker?
2. In order to find out how you are performing in your job, how often do you seek information from your co-worker?

Career satisfaction (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990)

1. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.
2. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.
3. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.
4. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.
5. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

Extrinsic career success

1. Current annual salary.
2. Number of promotions with current employer. Promotions defined as "any increases in level, and/or any significant increases in job responsibilities or job score." (Seibert et al., 1999).
3. Number of promotions during entire career.
4. Job tenure.

OCB-I (Williams & Anderson, 1991)

1. Helps others who have been absent.
2. Helps others who have heavy work loads.
3. Assists supervisor with his/her work (when not asked).
4. Takes time to listen to co-workers' problems, and worries.
5. Goes out of way to help new employees.
6. Takes a personal interest in other employees.
7. Passes along information to co-workers.

OCB-O (Williams & Anderson, 1991)

1. Attendance at work is above the norm.
2. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.
3. Takes undeserved work breaks. (reverse scored)
4. Great deal of time spent with personal phone conversations. (reverse scored)
5. Complains about insignificant things at work. (reverse scored).
6. Conserves and protects organizational property.

7. Adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order.

Performance (Williams & Anderson, 1991)

1. Adequately completes assigned duties.
2. Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description.
3. Performs tasks that are expected of him/her.
4. Meets formal performance requirements of the job.
5. Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation.
6. Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform. (reverse scored).
7. Fails to perform essential duties. (reverse scored).

Social desirability bias scale (Ballard, 1992)

1. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. (reverse scored).
2. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.
3. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even thought I knew they were right. (reverse scored).
4. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
5. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something. (reverse scored).
6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. (reverse scored).
7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. (reverse scored).
9. I always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
10. I have never been irked by people who ask favors of me.
11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others. (reverse scored).
12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me. (reverse scored).
13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.

Controls

1. Job tenure
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Education level

VITA

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