

SUNNY LEE

University College London, School of Management
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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

University College London, UK

Oct 2019– | Tenured Associate Professor in Organisational Behaviour

Sep 2014–Sep 2019 | Assistant Professor in Organisational Behaviour

Leadership appointments

- Senior Management Team & Deputy Director for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (2020–2024)
- Academic Director for MSc in People Analytics and Human Centric Management (2023–)

EDUCATION

Jul 2014 | London Business School, UK

PhD. In Organisational Behaviour (Doctoral Fellowship: 2008–2014)
Academic Advisors: Madan Pillutla and Stefan Thau

Jul 2003 | University of Chicago, USA

Master of Public Policy (Harris Fellowship: 2001–2023)

Aug 2000 | Seoul National University, South Korea

BA. In English Literature and Language (Graduated Cum Laude)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research explores the hidden forces that shape individuals' career outcomes, examining how stereotypes and motivations, interacting with organizational dynamics, influence employees and their careers both in the short and long term. By uncovering these subtle yet powerful mechanisms, my work aims to help employees grow and succeed, making sure everyone has a chance to move forward in a fair way.

PUBLICATIONS

⁺ denotes equal authorship. * denotes the authors who were doctoral students at the time each project started

Social Biases in Career Outcomes

1. Liu, L.*, Kilduff, M., Lee, SY., & Fisher, C. (conditionally accepted, 2025). Buffered by Reflected Glory? The Effects of Star Connections on Career Outcomes. **Journal of Applied Psychology**
2. Moore, M., Lee, SY., Kim, K.*, & Cable, D. (2017). The advantage of being oneself: The role of applicant self-verification in organizational hiring decisions. **Journal of Applied Psychology**, 102, 1493–1513. [[Link](#)]
3. Lee, SY., Pitesa, M., Thau, S., & Pillutla, MM. (2015). When beauty helps and it hurts: An organizational context model of attractiveness discrimination in selection decisions. **Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes**, 128, 15–28. [[Link](#)]
4. Lee, SY., Pitesa, M., Thau, S., & Pillutla, MM. (2014). Discrimination in selection decisions: Integrating stereotype fit and interdependence theories. **Academy of Management Journal**, 53, 789–812. [[Link](#)]
5. Inesi, E., Lee, SY., & Rios, K. (2014). Objects of desire: Subordinate ingratiation triggers self-objectification among the powerful. **Journal of Experimental Social Psychology**, 53, 19–30. [[Link](#)]

Gender Differences in the Workplace

6. Kniffin, K. et al (among the selectively invited 24 scholars) (2021). COVID-19 and the workplace: A review and preview of impacts for employees, teams, and organizations. **American Psychologist**, 76, 63–77. [\[Link\]](#)
7. Kesebir, S., Lee, SY., Elliot, E., & Pillutla, MM. (2019). Gender differences in lay beliefs about competition. **Motivation and Emotion**, 43, 719–739. [\[Link\]](#)
8. Lee, SY., Kesebir, S., & Pillutla, MM. (2016). Gender differences in response to competition with same-gender coworkers: A relational perspective. **Journal of Personality and Social Personality**, 110, 869–886. [\[Link\]](#)

Psychological Consequences of Social Networks

9. Quintane, E., Lee, SY., Lee, JW., Ruiz, C., & Kilduff, M. (2024). The dark side of collaborating across silos. **Harvard Business Review**. [\[Link\]](#)
10. Kilduff, M., Wang, K.*, Lee, SY., Tsai, WP., Chaung YT., & Tsai FS. (2024). Hiding and seeking knowledge providing ties from rivals: A strategic perspective on network perceptions. **Academy of Management Journal**. [\[Link\]](#)
11. Lee, JW.*, Quintane, E., Lee, SY., Kilduff, M., & Ruiz, C. (2023). The strain of spanning structural holes: How brokering leads to burnout and abusive behavior. **Organization Science**, 35, 177–194. [\[Link\]](#)
12. Birkinshaw, J., Crilly, D., Bouquet, C., & Lee, SY. (2015). How do firms manage strategic dualities? A process perspective. **Academy of Management Discoveries**, 2, 51–78. [\[Link\]](#)

Best Conference Proceedings

- a. Tolsa-Caballero, N.* & Lee, SY. (2022). The downside of ranking systems: Qualified contenders may quit. Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings. [\[Link\]](#)
- b. Lee, JW.* & Lee, SY. (2017). The dark side of brokerage: Brokers' energy depletion and unethicality. Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings. [\[Link\]](#)
- c. Lee, SY. & Pillutla, MM. (2013). Racial discrimination taking both ways: moderation of social goal and task-type. Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings. [\[Link\]](#)

Book and Book chapters

- a. Lee, SY. (2025-2026). Negotiate Up. [Quarto Group](#)
- For inquiries, please contact Jack Fogg, my literary agent and the co-founder of [DunnFogg](#)
- b. Kesebir, S., Lee, SY., Qiu, J.*, & Pillutla, MM. (2020). Same-sex peer norms: Implications for gender differences in negotiation. In Olekalns, M., & Kennedy, J. (Eds.), **Handbook on Gender and Negotiation**, London, England, Edward Elgar. [\[Link\]](#)

Working papers

- a. In groups we trust: Lower betrayal aversion toward a group than toward an individual (with Zoe Kinias, Ivey Business School, and Bart Vanneste, UCL), [available at SSRN](#) [\[Link\]](#)

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

- 1) Impression Management in Job Interviews (with Bart Dietz, RSM), [Under Review](#)
- 2) Organizational Commitment (single-author paper), [Manuscript in Preparation](#)
- 3) Gender Differences in Organizational Design (with Phanish Puranam, INSEAD), [Manuscript in Preparation](#)
- 4) Nepotism (with Kenny Ching, Worcester Polytechnic Institute), [Manuscript in Preparation](#)

- 5) Accountability and Managerial Decision Making (with David Faro, LBS, and Nazli Gurdamar-Okutur, Koc University), Data Collection in Progress
- 6) Psychological Impacts of Organizational Structure (with Selin Kesebir and Yoon Hyuk, LBS), Data Collection in Progress
- 7) Brokerage Flexibility (with Kun Wang, Martin Kilduff, UCL, and Eric Quintane, ESMT), Data Collection in Progress

SELECTED RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Research Talks/Presentations

- 2025 (being rescheduled) | Warwick Business School, UK
- 2025 (planned) | Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea
- 2025 (planned) | The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen
- 2024 | Ewha University, South Korea
- 2024 | SKK Graduate School of Business, South Korea
- 2023 | Amazon, UK
- 2023 | Sainsbury Wellcome Centre, UK
- 2023 | Singapore Management University, Singapore
- 2022 | Singapore Management University, Singapore
- 2022 | Management Consulting Student Association, Seoul National University, South Korea
- 2021 | KAIST College of Business, South Korea
- 2018 | Georgia Institute of Technology, USA
- 2016 | Singapore Management University, Singapore
- 2014 | University College London, UK
- 2014 | Erasmus University, the Netherlands

Academy of Management Annual Conferences

- 2024. Lee, SY. & Dietz, B. Interviewer selling revisited: The effects of promoting extrinsic incentives in attracting job applicants (Chicago, USA)
- 2024. Wang, K.*, Kilduff, M., Quintane, E., & Lee, SY. Flexibility in social network brokering (Chicago, USA)
- 2024. Goh, K. et al. Organizing for inclusion: integrating and extending research on diversity and organization design (Chicago, USA)
- 2022. Tolsa-Caballero, N., & Lee, SY. The downside of ranking systems: Qualified candidates may quit (Seattle, USA)
- 2022. Wang, K.*, Lee, SY., & Kilduff, M. Disappoint friends or downplay organizational norms? The influence of workplace friendship trajectory (Seattle, USA)
- 2021. Wang, K.*, Lee, SY., & Kilduff, M. How referrals affect employees' reactions to new hires they have referred (Seattle, USA)
- 2019. Lee, J.*, Lee, SY., & Kilduff, M. Hidden costs of brokerage: Brokerage behavior and broker exhaustion. Presented at a symposium "Brokers Behaving Badly" (Boston, USA)
- 2018. Liu, L.*, Lee, SY., Fisher, C., & Kilduff, M. Great expectations? The effect of high-reputation connections on evaluations of employees (Chicago, USA)

- 2017. Lee, J.*, & Lee, SY. The dark side of brokerage: Brokers' energy depletion and unethicity (Atlanta, USA)
- 2016. Ha, J.*, Lee, SY., & Ku, G. The effects of self-promotion on self-promoters' self-beliefs and job satisfactions. Presented at a symposium of the conference (Anaheim, USA)
- 2015. Lee, SY., Wakeman, W.*, & Sivanathan, N. Unwelcome compliments: The psychological costs of successful deception (Vancouver, Canada)
- 2014. Moore, C., Lee, SY., Kim, K.*, & Cable, D. Authenticity in the workplace: Highlighting costs and bridging conceptualizations (Philadelphia, USA)
- 2013. Lee, SY., & Pillutla, MM. Racial discrimination taking both ways: Moderation of social goal and task type (Orlando, USA)
- 2012. Lee, SY., Pillutla, MM., Thau, S., & Pitesa, M. Fundamental social goals and the attractiveness bias in selection decisions (Boston, USA)
- 2011. Birkinshaw, J., Lee, SY., & Bouquet, C. Implementing global strategy: Insights from a dual-core headquarters experiment (San Antonio, USA)

Other Conferences

- 2024. Qiu, J., Lee, SY. & Kesebir, S. Gender and the decline of leader-directed help seeking over time. **International Association for Conflict Management Annual Conference** (Singapore)
- 2022. Lee, SY. Gender difference in help-related behaviors. **UCL Diversity Research Conference** (London, UK)
- 2020. Lee, JW., Quintane, E., Lee, SY., Kilduff, M., & Ruiz, C. How brokerage leads to burnout and abusive behavior. **EGOS Colloquium** (Hamburg, Germany)
- 2020. Liu, L., Lee, SY., Fisher, C., & Kilduff, M. How connections to star managers help and hurt careers. **EGOS Colloquium** (Hamburg, Germany)
- 2015. Inesi, M.E., Lee, SY., & Rios, R. Power impacts social identity and the self-concept. **Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Conference** (Long Beach, USA)
- 2014. Lee, SY., Kesebir, S., & Pillutla, MM. Gender differences in responses to same-sex competition. **Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Conference** (Austin, USA)

RESEARCH IMPACT ACTIVITIES

Advisory Roles

- 2024– | Academic Advisor to **RSAD Limited** on the topics of organizational behavior and leadership
- 2024– | Academic Advisor to **See Talent Limited** on the topics of diversity and inclusion
- 2024 | Offered advice to the **UK Civil Service** on their new leadership dimensions
- 2023 | Offered advice to and produced commissioned research work for the **UK Civil Service** on their new performance management system for middle managers
- 2023 | Offered advice to **Canary Wharf Group** on their cultural transformation endeavours

Practitioner-Oriented Publications

- 1) Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ & Lee, SY.⁺ (2024). Peter Principle: Why competent workers can become incompetent managers. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
- 2) Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ & Lee, SY.⁺ (2024). Why are difficult conversations difficult and what organizations can do about it? *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
- 3) Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ & Lee, SY.⁺ (2023). Workers fall into two camps of competence and confidence. Here's how to manage both. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)

- 4) Chamorro-Premuzic, T.+ & **Lee, SY.**+ (2023). If we don't develop these 4 human traits, ChatGPT can replace us, psychologists say. Fast Company. [\[Link\]](#)
- 5) Chamorro-Premuzic, T.+ & **Lee, SY.**+ (2022). The science of resting well. Fast Company. [\[Link\]](#)
- 6) Lee, SY. (2022). Negotiation: Tackling our misconceptions. The Guardian. [\[Link\]](#)
- 7) Chamorro-Premuzic, T.+ & **Lee, SY.**+ (2021). The surprising behavioral science behind effective job negotiations. Fast Company. [\[Link\]](#)
- 8) **Lee, SY.** (2021). The art of negotiating salary and why it is important for everyone to take part. Human Resources Review. [\[Link\]](#)
- 9) **Lee, SY.** (2021). It's time we reconsidered our approach to imposter syndrome. HR Director. [\[Link\]](#)
- 10) **Lee, SY.** (2020). What has 2020 meant for female leadership? Management Today. [\[Link\]](#)
- 11) **Lee, SY.** (2020). Female academics need to embrace competition. The Higher Education. [\[Link\]](#)

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & FUNDING

Awards

- 2023 | **Best Reviewer Award**, Academy of Management Discoveries
- 2023 | **Best Teaching Award (5.0/5.0)**, UCL
- 2022 | **Best Teaching Award (4.9/5.0)**, UCL
- 2020 | **Athena SWAN Bronze Award** (Institutional award), awarded by Advance HE
- 2018 | **Best Reviewer Award**, Academy of Management Annual Conferences
- 2013, 2017, 2022 | **Best Paper Proceedings**, Academy of Management Annual Conferences
- 2015 | **Student Appointed Best Author To Meet**, Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Conferences

Fellowships & Funding

In the process of applying for research grants

- 2014– | **Internal Research Fellowship (£100,000)**, UCL School of Management
- 2008–2014 | **Ph.D. Fellowship (£144,000)**, London Business School
- 2013 | **Best Doctoral Student Paper (\$2,000)**, Samsung Global Research/AKMS (as part of the 73th Academy of Management Annual Conferences)
- 2001–2003 | **Irving B. Harris Fellowship (\$46,000)**, University of Chicago
- 1997–2000 | **Faculty Fellowship (\$8,000)**, Seoul National University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Degree Course (MBAs and postgraduates)

- 2025 | **People Analytics**, SKK Graduate School of Business, Korea
 - MBA students
 - Contracted faculty member
- 2023– | **Negotiations and Bargaining**, London Business School, UK
 - MBA students, executive MBA students, and master's students
 - Contracted faculty member
 - Average Instructor Effective Rating: **4.3/5.0** (top rating: 4.5/5.0 in 2024)

2015– | **Influence and Negotiations**, UCL, UK

- MBA students and master's students
- Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.7/5.0** (top rating 5.0/5.0 in 2023)
- Best Teaching Award (2022 & 2023)

2018–2020 | **Negotiation and Cross-Cultural Management**, UCL/Peking University, China

- Executive MBA students
- Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.6/5.0** (top rating: 4.7/5.0 in 2018)

2022– | **Global Business Mindset**, UCL, UK

- The School's compulsory primer for master's students on global teams, ethics, and communication, diversity, and regional intelligence
- Module co-developer and key instructor

Executive Education

2023–2024 | **Transformational Leadership**, UCL, UK

A six-day custom program for directors at Canary Wharf Group, UK; the program director and main instructor of a two-day session on change management and organizational culture

2023– | **Succeed as a Board Member**, UCL, UK (repeating programs)

A three-day open program; the main instructor of a session on strategizing diversity and inclusion

2023– | **Sustainable Transformation of Business**, UCL/Bocconi University (repeating programs)

A three-day custom program for directors at Leonardo, Italy; the main instructor of a session on diversity, equity, and inclusion

2023– | **Negotiation and Conflict Resolution**, UCL Academic Office, UK

A two-day workshop for mid-career researchers in the medical sciences

2021 | **The Guardian One-Day MBA: Essentials of Business Success**. London, UK

A one-day workshop for managers and executives recruited by *The Guardian*

2018–2020 | **Management Skills for Police Leaders**, UCL, UK

A one-week custom program for senior police offices in the London Metropolitan Police; the main instructor for a session on managerial negotiations and leadership

2021,2022 | **HR Analytics, Performance Management, and Team Effectiveness**, South Korea

A custom program for senior managers at GB Style Ltd; the program director and one of the two main instructors

2021 | **Negotiations for Executives**, Online

Attendees included executives at JP Morgan New York and Facebook South Korea

Other Invited Teaching Experience

2023, 2024 | **Driving Sustainable Success through People**, UCL, UK

2024 | **How to Disagree Well**, UCL Astrea, UK

2024 | **Leading Diversity in Academia**, UCL Faculty of Medical Sciences, UK

2024 | **Getting Your Voice Heard**, UCL Astrea, UK

2023 | **Succeeding as Minorities**, UCL Faculty of Medical Sciences, UK

2022 | **Surviving on Challenges Together: Teamwork and Team Resilience**, UCL-Japan Challenge, UK

2021 | **Leadership in a Crisis**, UCL, UK

2018, 2019 | **Knowledge Economy**, UCL, UK

2009 | **Organizational Strategy**, London School of Economics and Politics, UK

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Doctoral Student Supervision

2020–2025 | **Kun Wang**. Doctoral Supervisor & Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee: She will be an assistant professor at **Hong Kong Polytechnic University**, China

2020–2023 | **Swati Thampan**. Doctoral Supervisor & Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee: She quit the program due to her personal situation and successfully defended her Dissertation for master's in research degree. She is now a senior associate at **PWC, UK**.

2018–2021 | **Nuria Tolsa-Cabellero**. Doctoral Supervisor & Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee: She is now a visiting assistant professor at the **University of Indiana, Bloomington, USA**

2014–2020 | **Lei Liu**. Doctoral Supervisor & Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee: She is now an assistant professor at the **University of Exeter Business School, UK**

2014–2019 | **Jung Won Lee**. Doctoral Supervisor & Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee: She is now an assistant professor at **ESSEC Business School, France**

Doctoral Student Committee Members

2021 | Kira Choi (London Business School). External Examiner & Member of the Dissertation Committee: She is now an assistant professor at EM Lyon Business School, France

2015– | Members for Other Doctoral Committees: Numerous and the details available on request

Postgraduate Thesis Supervision

2015– | Supervisors for postgraduate dissertations (masters in management): I have supervised over 50 dissertations, with all students successfully passing.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Journal Editorial Board Member

2022– | **Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes**

2022– | **Motivation and Emotion**

Journal Ad-hoc Reviewer

- *Academy of Management Discoveries* (**Best Reviewer Award in 2023**)
- *Academy of Management Journal*
- *Academy of Management Review*
- *Economic Letters*
- *Journal of Organizational Behavior*
- *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*
- *Management Science*
- *Motivation and Emotion*
- *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*
- *Organization Science*

Other Reviewer Roles

- UCL Reading Group (2015–2024)
- Academy of Management Annual Conferences (2014)
- London Business School Organizational Behavior Research Day for Doctoral Students (2018–2020)

- UK Korean Embassy Contest on World Peace (2017)
- Samsung Global Research Scholarship for Korean Doctoral Students in Management (2020-)

Examiner Roles (Recruitment, Tenure, and Grant)

- 2025 | External Assessor for **Faculty Recruitment at Imperial Business School**
- 2025 | External Assessor for **Faculty Tenure Case at Smurfit Business School, University of College Dublin, Ireland**
- 2025 | External Assessor for **Faculty Tenure Case at IE Business School, Spain**
- 2021 | External Assessor for **Faculty Tenure Case at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK**
- 2024 | Panellist for Probation Hearing, **UCL, UK**
- 2015 | Intramural Grants Program at **Northern Illinois University, USA**

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

School Board, Growth, and External Engagement

- 2023- | Founder & Academic Advisor for MSc People Analytics and Human-Centric Management
- 2019-2024 | Member for the School's Senior Management Team
- 2023, 2024 | Took the lead in securing/conducting commissioned research projects for the UK Civil Service
 - o The team (Davide Ravasi, Nina Seppala and myself) successfully completed the project
- 2023 | Played a key role in building multi-faceted collaborations with Canary Wharf Group
 - o Played a key role in the development of exec-ed program titled 'Transformational Leadership Program' with Paolo Taticchi and Tim Ruthven
- 2023-2024 | Impact Manager for the UCL Centre for Sustainable Business
 - o Played an essential role in initiating the UCL-Mulberry Sustainability Summit (2024) by inviting their CEO to the event

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- 2020-2024 | Deputy Director for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- 2019-2020 | Athena SWAN Leader (Acquired the Bronze Award in 2020)
- 2021-2024 | Founder and Chair for UCL's 30% Scholarship in liaison with 30% Club
- 2022- | Founder and Member for UCL Diversity Research Conference

Faculty and Research-related Services

- 2019-2022 | Research Committee Member
- 2020-2023 | Faculty Promotion Committee Member
- 2015, 2020, 2021 | Faculty Recruitment Committee Member
- 2020- | Research Ethics Committee Member
- 2021-2022 | Research Ethics Committee Taskforce Team
- 2014-2018 | Research Seminar Series Chair
- 2014-2021 | Reading Group Chair

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

Mar 2006–Jun 2008 | **Hewlett Packard, South Korea**

Senior Marketing Program Manager (full-time)

Jan 2005–Feb 2006 | **LG Ad, South Korea**

Senior Researcher for Consumer Behavior and Brand Strategy (full-time)

Jan 2004–Dec 2004 | **Accenture, South Korea**

Business Analyst, Management Consulting Division (full-time)

Aug 2003–Dec 2003 | **EY Parthenon, South Korea**

Long-term Intern (full-time)

Jan 2000–Dec 2000 | **Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation**

Research Assistant to the Chairman of Investment Experts' Group (part-time)