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Examining The Impact of Political Skill on Networking Behavior: The Role of WFH

Master Thesis

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Preface

In this preface, I want to share a personal journey that has shaped my view of the changing work landscape, particularly remote work - a phenomenon that has become increasingly common after the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

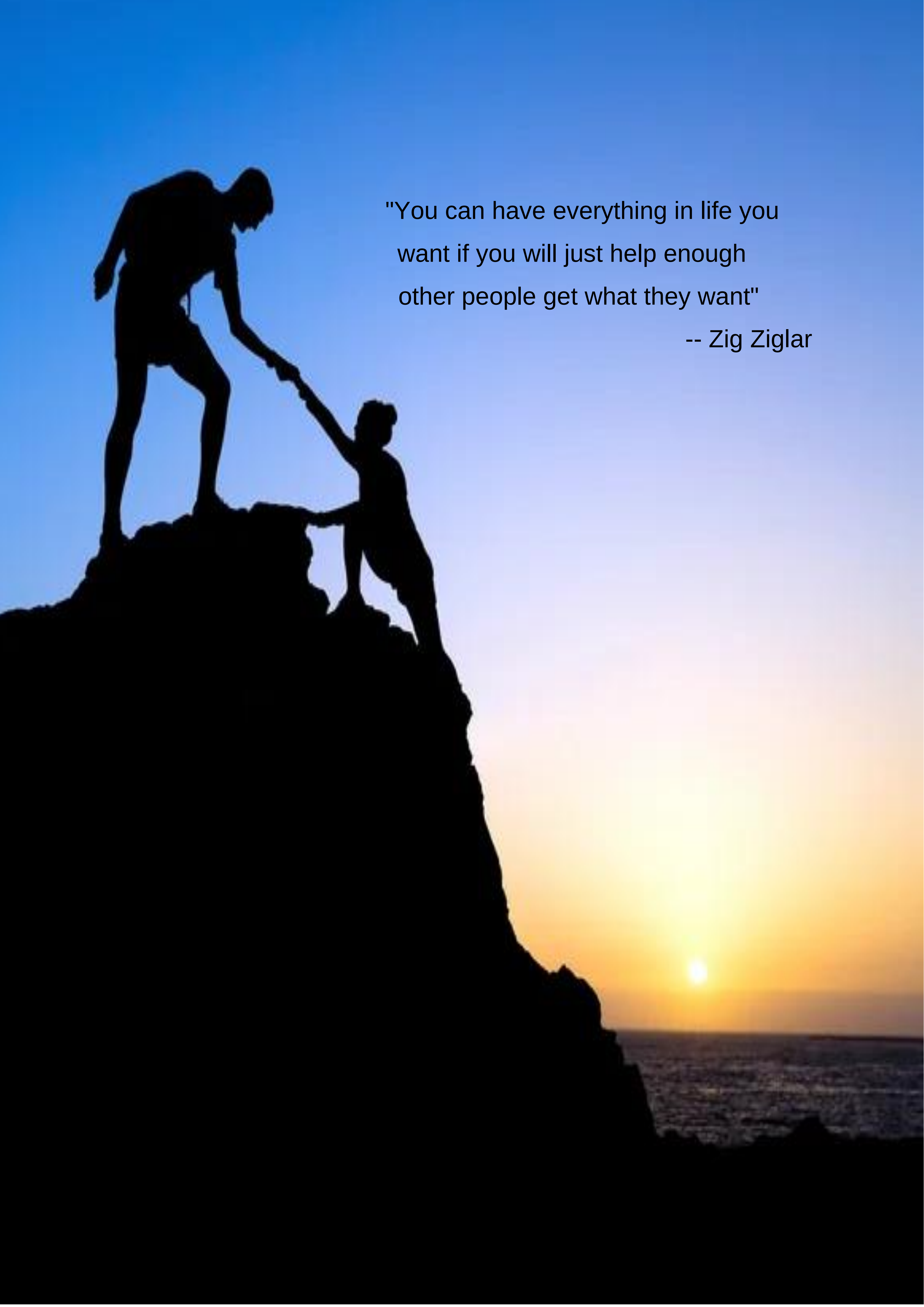
It all started with a policy change at Stater, where I work, where the aftermath of Covid-19 led to a substantial change in our working arrangements. We were introduced to the concept of working from home three days a week, an option that immediately piqued our interest. The opportunity to escape the daily worries of traffic jams and the rush to catch the train was definitely appealing. Moreover, this new setup seemed to offer the perfect opportunity to combine household chores and even manage the responsibilities for my second job as community manager for a cryptocurrency company called Meld, all from the comfort of my home.

As I dove deeper into this new routine, I came across the versatility of working from home. On the one hand, the convenience it offered was unparalleled. But on the other hand, I was faced with challenges I hadn't quite anticipated. The freedom that comes with being at home - a place usually associated with relaxation and leisure - tested my self-discipline considerably. Staying focused on my work became a formidable task when temptations such as the television, my bed and the refrigerator were only a few steps away.

Another aspect that surprised me was the sense of isolation that gradually crept in. The absence of daily interactions with colleagues, once a natural part of my workday, led to feelings of loneliness. This shift in my social environment made me realize the importance of physical presence and face-to-face communication in fostering a sense of belonging and togetherness.

Reflecting on these experiences, I have come to see the wisdom behind the decision to require office presence two days a week. This hybrid model offers a balanced approach, preserving the benefits of remote working while mitigating its drawbacks by ensuring regular face-to-face interactions with colleagues. It reminds us of the importance of social contacts at work, not only for productivity but also for our mental well-being.

This personal exploration of the nuances of remote work has sparked my curiosity about its broader implications, especially with regard to networking behaviors in the digital age. With this thesis, I hope to dive into these topics, drawing on a wealth of research and insights from industry professionals to provide a comprehensive look at the future of work.


"You can have everything in life you
want if you will just help enough
other people get what they want"
-- Zig Ziglar

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Abstract

This research investigates how political skill and working from home (WFH) affect employees' networking behavior. In traditional office settings, workers with high political skill are more actively involved in networking compared to their less politically skillful counterparts. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered networking dynamics through the widespread use of WFH. The aim is to explore the impact of WFH on the interaction between political skill and network behavior. The research suggests that reduced face-to-face interaction during WFH may hinder workers' networking efforts. The research also suggests that individuals with high political skill can continue to maintain and even expand their networks through effective use of digital communication tools. They might leverage their understanding of social dynamics to engage meaningfully with others remotely, albeit with potential slight reductions in networking efficacy compared to in-office settings. Survey data from 61 employees across four departments at a large financial firm were analyzed. The results show that employees with high political skill are more involved in networking activities than those with lower political skill. Contrary to expectations, the research shows that WFH does not negatively affect employee networking behavior, nor does it moderate the relationship between political skill and networking behavior. This research highlights the need to rethink strategies and practices in the context of the increase in WFH and provides valuable insights for academics and managers who need to address the challenges and opportunities of remote work.

Keywords: COVID-19, networking, networking behavior, political skill, remote work, working from home (WFH).

Chapter 1 Introduction

Networking is a cornerstone of professional growth and organizational success, where individuals interact, establish, and maintain relationships (Porter & Woo, 2015), with employees forming networks with both managers and peers within organizations (Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Michael & Yukl, 1993). This kind of networking provides numerous benefits, such as promoting communication and teamwork within organizations, creating a conducive organizational climate (Gibson et al., 2014), enabling the sharing and acquisition of implicit knowledge among colleagues and specialists (Dachner et al., 2021), and enhancing innovativeness (Casciaro et al., 2016). In addition, active participation in networking is associated with several personal benefits, including improved job performance, increased visibility and influence within the organization, and noticeable career progression (Thompson, 2005; Forret & Dougherty, 2001, 2004; Wolff & Moser, 2009). From a social and political standpoint, individuals exhibiting high levels of political skill, characterized by networking ability, apparent sincerity, interpersonal influence, and social astuteness (Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005), are inclined to utilize their networking behaviors more effectively. Employees with high political skills have a unique ability to recognize and seize opportunities and excel at building effective, mutually beneficial relationships in the workplace. (Ferris et al. 2007; Wei et al., 2012; Ferris et al., 2008). In contrast, individuals with low political skills often tend to withdraw from group commitments, reduce interactions with colleagues, withhold crucial information and sometimes undermine others to gain visibility (Harris et al., 2007; Mintzberg, 2007).

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed the operational dynamics of organizations, particularly with the accelerated adoption of WFH (Zou et al., 2020; Douglas et al., 2020). The rise of working from home (WFH) has created an environment that challenges established theories of strategic networking behavior. Working remotely can hinder the development and maintenance of social relationships with colleagues, which can lead to feelings of isolation (Lal et al., 2021). This isolation can negatively impact an employee's ability to network effectively (Lal et al., 2021). Previous studies have primarily examined networking in traditional office environments, underscoring the need for further exploration on the impact of WFH on this behavior (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Wolff & Kim, 2012; Kurland & Cooper, 2002). Employees who work remotely tend to have fewer face-to-face interactions with their colleagues and managers than employees in conventional workplaces. This difference has become even more apparent with the significant increase in popularity of WFH, which, according to Statista data, rose from 20% in 2020 to 28% in 2023

(Scherif, 2024). This trend highlights the urgent need to examine the potential negative impact of remote working on networking behavior.

In addition, the emergence of remote work as a dominant paradigm, accelerated by the global COVID19 pandemic (Chen, 2021), underscores the need for political skills in relation to networking behavior. These skills are essential for navigating digital communication challenges, maintaining visibility despite physical absence, building and maintaining networks without face-to-face interactions, exerting influence without direct authority, adapting to organizational change, and resolving conflict in a virtual environment (Golden et al., 2006; Haeger & Lingham, 2014; Mohd Makhbul & Rawshdeh 2021; Perrewé et al. 2004).

Political skill, the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives (Mintzberg, 1985; Pfeffer, 1981), has become indispensable for effective remote working and allows people to communicate, influence and stay connected, contributing to their personal and organizational success in a WFH environment. Yet, with remote work becoming increasingly prevalent, the complexities of WFH and its effects on professional networks remain insufficiently explored in academic research. The digital work environment brings challenges such as increased isolation, reduced communication and disrupted work-life balance (Allen et al., 2015; Zhang, 2016). Moreover, the shift to WFH may have a different effect on the networking behavior of individuals with different levels of political skills, which increases the need for in-depth studies of how these dynamics change under current conditions (Allen et al., 2003; Van Zoonen et al., 2021).

To fill these research gaps, this research conducted an empirical investigation of the effects of political skills on networking behavior, the negative impact of WFH on networking behavior, and the moderating effect of WFH on the relationship between political skills and networking behavior. The approach utilized a quantitative research methodology aimed at empirically testing the proposed hypotheses. Data for the analysis were gathered using a structured survey, detailed in Appendix A. To ensure that the data reflect consistent organizational culture and practices and to enhance the reliability and validity of the results, the survey was conducted exclusively within Stater, a leading entity in the financial sector.

In examining the relationship between political skills and networking behavior and WFH, the Need to Belong Theory, which posits that people have an intrinsic desire to form and maintain strong, positive interpersonal relationships, provides a compelling framework for understanding this dynamic (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This theory suggests that the urge to belong and be accepted within a group motivates individuals to engage in behaviors conducive to forming and maintaining social bonds (Wang et al., 2020). Political skills, characterized by the ability to understand others, adapt to different social situations, exert influence and navigate the social complexities of the workplace, emerge as a facilitator in this process. Workers with higher political skills are inherently better equipped to satisfy their need to belong by networking more effectively. They recognize and seize opportunities for meaningful social interactions, more easily build contacts and cultivate relationships that are both useful and satisfying. Consequently, these people show greater commitment to networking activities, not only as a strategic career move, but also as a fundamental expression of their innate social needs.

By leveraging the theoretical framework of the Need to Belong Theory and existing literature on political skill and networking behavior, this research aims to explore the impact of WFH on the interaction between political skill and network behavior. This research objective leads to the formulation of the central research question, ***"In what ways does political skill influence network behavior, and how does remote work moderate these dynamics?".***

This research complements the existing literature with three important contributions. First, it confirms the positive relationship between political skills and networking behavior, in line with previous research that highlights the role of political skill in facilitating networking. By validating these results, the research not only aligns with but also reinforces the established understanding that political skills are crucial for facilitating effective networking (Ferris et al., 2007; Cullen et al., 2014; Blickle et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2007; Ahearn et al., 2004; Gentry et al., 2012; Bing et al., 2011; Munyon et al., 2013). Second, contributing to the expanding body of research on networking behavior, (Kram, 1985; Mintzberg, 1973; Granovetter, 1973; Gould & Penley, 1984; Luthans et al., 1985; Arthur et al., 1995; Langford, 2000; Orpen, 1996; Wolff & Moser, 2009; Gibson et al., 2014; Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Michael & Yukl, 1993; Yukl, 2012; Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Thompson, 2005; Wolff & Moser, 2010), the results demonstrate that WFH does not negatively affect networking behavior (Lal et al., 2021; Kurland & Bailey, 1999; Wang et al., 2020; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Golden et al., 2008; Morganson et al., 2010). Third, the results show that WFH does not moderate the relationship between political skills and networking behavior. This suggests that the strength of this relationship remains consistent whether individuals work predominantly at home or in an office setting. (Ferris et al. 2007; Wei et al., 2012; Harris et al., 2007; Mintzberg, 2007; Ferris et al., 2008; Rajkumar, 2020; Kniffin et al., 2021; Mohd Makhbul & Rawshdeh 2021; Perrewé et al. 2004).

The proposal is divided into several chapters. Chapter 2 presents a literature review that focuses on relevant theories related to the identified problem. It elaborates on defining the concepts, explores different aspects of each concept, discusses the strategic relevance of this research and highlights the distinction between home and office work. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in the research. Chapter 4 discusses the data analysis and describes the results obtained. Chapter 5 contains a detailed discussion, interpretation of the results in light of the research question and theory, and addresses implications, limitations and recommendations for future research and practical applications. The final section, Chapter 6, contains the conclusion.

Chapter 2 Literature review

Networking behavior

Networking behavior will be defined here as the intentional actions people take to build and maintain relationships with others who could potentially provide support or opportunities in their work or career. This definition emphasizes networking as a proactive approach to expanding one's circle of professional contacts and nurturing meaningful connections (Kram, 1985).

The origin of networking in management research finds its roots in the works by Mintzberg (1973) and Granovetter (1973). Much research has been done on the multifaceted role of networking in various areas, including career strategies (Gould & Penley, 1984), political dynamics (Luthans et al., 1985) and cultivating intelligent careers (Arthur et al., 1995). Networking emerges as a crucial factor influencing several outcomes, particularly career progression (Langford, 2000; Orpen, 1996; Wolff & Moser, 2009) and salary development (Gould & Penley, 1984).

Employee networking behavior is described as "a goal-oriented behavior, both inside and outside the organization, aimed at forming, nurturing, and leveraging social connections'' (Gibson et al., 2014). This definition includes three main aspects. First, networking behavior is driven by specific goals, such as acquiring information, resources or influence that can enhance an individual's career or benefit the workplace. For example, leaders may cultivate and maintain positive relationships with peers, superiors and external stakeholders to gain informational, resourceful and political support to enhance their team's status and goals (Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Michael & Yukl, 1993; Yukl, 2012). Second, networking behavior occurs both inside and outside the organization, referred to as internal and external networking. For example, participating in an industry conference and interacting with participants from other organizations is an example of external networking (Yukl, 2012). Finally, the essence of networking lies in creating and maintaining relationships, which requires ongoing and proactive employee involvement. For example, organizing social outings for new team members to facilitate their integration into the company is one of many strategies used to establish and maintain ties with new acquaintances (Gibson et al., 2014).

Networking outcomes can be divided into individual and organizational levels. At the individual level, research suggests that individuals with good connections enjoy benefits in their careers and development, such as increased visibility and power, which contributes to career success and advancement opportunities (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Wolff & Moser, 2009). At the organizational level, networking is indirectly related to job performance because it provides resources and support for ambitious projects, which directly benefits the organization (Thompson, 2005). Training employees in effective networking can improve interorganizational communication, teamwork and strategic information gathering. However, networking can also have negative consequences, such as turnover, especially if individuals transfer to competing companies (Wolff & Moser, 2010).

Political skill

Recognizing the importance of politics and influence in organizations, researchers introduced the term political skill to describe it as the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives (Mintzberg, 1985; Pfeffer, 1981). Political skill is composed of four dimensions distinct but related: networking ability, apparent sincerity, interpersonal influence, and social astuteness (Ferris, et al., 2005). Employees that are skilled politically, through their networking ability, might establish and effectively utilize connections in the work environment, which would help them gain access to valued resources and, consequently, have success in their job and organization. Moreover, networking is a dyadic process that results in social capital, goodwill, and trust between partners (Porter & Woo, 2015). The ability of interpersonal influence of politically skilled employees helps them use their social capital and attain greater access to information. In addition, their apparent sincerity makes politically skilled employees seem like they have higher levels of sincerity and integrity, thus, resulting trust worthier (Lvina et al., 2017). Finally, their ability to read and understand how people work (social astuteness) allows them to appropriately adjust their behavior to different situational needs, which gives them a sense of control and self-confidence to navigate political arenas (Ferris et al., 2007). Consequently, these employees view interpersonal interactions and environmental signals as opportunities, not threats (Perrewé et al., 2004).

There is convincing evidence of the benefits of political skills, including their role in gaining respect from colleagues (Cullen et al., 2014), establishing a valued reputation (Blickle et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2007), increasing the likelihood of promotion (Gentry et al., 2012) and earning higher ratings of job performance (Ahearn et al., 2004). Such skills are crucial to effectively leveraging relationships and understanding the intricacies of social interactions, leading to remarkable improvements in team effectiveness and overall organizational performance. This importance is further confirmed by research results highlighting the multifaceted benefits of political understanding (Cullen et al., 2014; Blickle et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2007; Gentry et al., 2012; Ferris et al., 2005; Semadar et al., 2006), which demonstrates its essential role in both personal advancement and collective organizational success.

Building on this foundation, the positive effects of political skills go beyond immediate job performance and affect broader aspects of professional life. Meta-analyses (Bing et al., 2011; Munyon et al., 2013) confirm the broad benefits of these skills, including their contribution to self-efficacy, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity, personal reputation and career development. Such extensive validation highlights the nature of political skills in navigating the complexities of the work environment and underscores their importance to personal development and the overall health of the organization.

In examining the relationship between political skills and networking behavior in employees, the Need to Belong Theory, which posits that people have an intrinsic desire to form and maintain strong, positive interpersonal relationships, provides a compelling framework for understanding this dynamic (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This theory suggests that the urge to belong and be accepted within a group motivates individuals to engage in behaviors conducive to forming and maintaining social bonds (Wang et al., 2020).

Political skills, characterized by the ability to understand others, adapt to different social situations, influence and navigate the social complexities of the workplace, emerge as a facilitator in this process. Workers with better political skills are inherently better equipped to satisfy their need to belong by networking more effectively. They can identify and seize opportunities for meaningful social interactions, more easily build good relationships, and cultivate relationships that are both useful and satisfying. Consequently, these individuals show greater commitment to networking activities not only as a strategic career move, but also as a fundamental expression of their innate social needs.

Hypothesis 1: *Political skill positively affects networking behavior, indicating that employees with high political skill are more involved in networking activities than those with lower political skill.*

Following the hypothesis, it is necessary to dive deeper into the changing landscape of remote working and its possible implications for political skills and networking behavior. The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed the operational dynamics of organizations, particularly with the accelerated adoption of WFH (Zou et al., 2020; Douglas et al., 2020). The rise of WFH has created an environment that challenges established theories of strategic networking behavior. Working remotely can hinder the development and maintenance of social relationships with colleagues, which can lead to feelings of isolation (Lal et al., 2021). This isolation can negatively impact an employee's ability to network effectively (Lal et al., 2021). Previous studies have primarily examined networking in traditional office environments, underscoring the need for further exploration on the impact of

WFH on this behavior (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Wolff & Kim, 2012; Kurland & Cooper, 2002).

The emergence of remote work as a dominant paradigm, accelerated by the global COVID19 pandemic (Chen, 2021), underscores the need for political skills for navigating digital communication challenges, maintaining visibility despite physical absence, building and maintaining networks without face-to-face interactions, exerting influence without direct authority, adapting to organizational change, and resolving conflict in a virtual environment (Golden et al., 2006; Haeger & Lingham, 2014; Mohd Makhbul & Rawshdeh 2021; Perrewé et al. 2004). They have become indispensable for effective remote working and allow people to communicate, influence and stay connected, contributing to their personal and organizational success in a WFH environment.

Working from Home (WFH)

Work from home, also known as teleworking or telecommuting is the work activities with the deployment of information and communication technologies (ICT) that enables workers to access their work tasks wherever possible such as at home (Tremblay & Thomsin, 2012; Nakrošienė et al., 2019). Initially, organizations viewed WFH as a solution to alleviate the burdens of long commutes to the workplace (Nilles, 1975) and to address concerns such as reducing real estate costs, air pollution, and traffic congestion (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). However, during COVID-19, government-enforced WFH situations led to a shift in team collaboration affordances, resulting in both positive and negative effects on team collaboration (Waizenegger et al., 2020).

Numerous studies underscore the benefits of remote work, highlighting their ability to free knowledge workers from the distractions of the traditional office environment and heavy commuting, allowing them to better focus on individual tasks (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Mazzi, 1996). This increased concentration is consistently associated with higher job satisfaction among telecommuters (Fonner & Stache, 2012). Moreover, the autonomy afforded by remote working, which allows for greater flexibility in scheduling, has been found to contribute significantly to employee well-being (Delanoeije et al., 2019). Additionally, the blurring of work-life boundaries in a remote work environment has been shown to reduce work-life conflicts, allowing remote workers to seamlessly integrate their professional and personal responsibilities (Golden et al., 2006; Haeger & Lingham, 2014). Technological advances allow teleworkers to effectively balance the demands of work and personal life and achieve a harmonious merging of the two domains.

Despite the conveniences offered by ICTs to work remotely, people WFH often experience disadvantages in interpersonal interaction due to physical separation. This spatial separation can create feelings of alienation, isolation and anxiety (Collins, 2005). Moreover, Suh & Lee (2017) argue that collaborative tasks performed from home, especially those with limited automation, can exacerbate technostress and lead to dissatisfaction with one's job.

Also, the literature highlights several adverse effects of WFH on well-being. First, the blurred boundary between home and work creates problems such as the ubiquitous "always-on culture" fostered by ICTs, which makes it difficult for knowledge workers to disconnect and increases work intensity (Derks et al., 2016).

In addition, distractions from the home environment and interactions with family members compound these challenges (Allen et al., 2015). Mazmanian et al. (2013) describe the "autonomy paradox," in which although ICT provides greater flexibility in work and lifestyle choices, it also puts pressure on knowledge workers to remain constantly connected and alert (Matusik & Mickel, 2011). Moreover, as Ashforth et al. (2000) point out, the proximity of home and work proves emotionally taxing and leads to fatigue and negative emotional states (Sonnentag et al., 2008).

Networking behavior and WFH

Lal et al. (2021) found that working remotely intensifies feelings of isolation and loneliness, mainly due to the absence of face-to-face interactions. In addition, the research showed how difficult it is to build trust and develop meaningful bonds between colleagues in remote work environments. Previous studies by Kurland & Bailey (1999) and Wang et al. (2020) also identified remote work as a catalyst for employee isolation. Despite the convenience of virtual collaboration enabled by communication technologies, they fall short of the dynamic and enriching nature of face-to-face encounters, which are vital for fostering strong social bonds (Vayre and Pignault, 2014). Consequently, video conferencing and online discussions may lack the spontaneity and depth of face-to-face interactions, hampering employees' networking efforts and hindering their ability to build meaningful professional relationships, ultimately reducing their engagement in networking activities.

Baumeister and Leary's (1995) theory of belonging emphasizes the human tendency to form lasting and meaningful interpersonal relationships, which are crucial for mental, emotional and physical health (Wang et al., 2020). Moreover, individuals who experience a sense of connectedness with their colleagues tend to engage in proactive social interactions and experience an increased sense of belonging (Golden et al., 2008). However, the advent of remote work, especially for individuals who work primarily from home, can hinder such social dynamics, leading to feelings of social isolation (Golden et al., 2008; Morganson et al., 2010). Consequently, individuals struggling with isolation may show less initiative in seeking regular social engagements, compromising their sense of belonging within the organizational framework (Golden et al., 2008). Therefore, the need to belong theory can help to clarify why working from home negatively affects workers' networking behavior.

Hypothesis 2: *WFH negatively affects the networking behavior of employees, indicating that those who work primarily from home participate less in networking activities than their office colleagues.*

Interplay of political skill, networking behavior and WFH

Political skill relates primarily to an individual's interpersonal skills within organizational contexts and serves as an asset for navigating the complex social landscapes of work environments. The literature on the subject highlights the numerous benefits that political skill brings, including its ability to reduce adverse effects such as social pressure, role overload and role conflict. Significantly, it contributes to improving organizational performance (Perrewé et al., 2004; Treadway et al., 2014; Perrewé et al., 2005; Harris et al., 2007). This research is complemented by results suggesting that employees who are skilled in political maneuvering are more likely to use their networking behaviors effectively. Such individuals capitalize on their acumen to identify and exploit a broad spectrum of opportunities, gaining access to the resources (e.g., information, opportunities) essential for achieving superior work outcomes, such as job engagement and performance (Ferris et al. 2007; Wei et al., 2012).

In contrast, individuals with deficiencies in political skills often tend to withdraw from group commitments, reduce interactions with colleagues, withhold crucial information and sometimes undermine others to gain visibility (Harris et al., 2007; Mintzberg, 2007). This deficiency not only hinders effective communication, but also leads to deteriorated, or in some cases, non-existent relationships in the workplace, culminating in isolation or even voluntary disengagement from the organization. Conversely, people with high levels of political skills excel at establishing effective, mutually cooperative relationships at work (Ferris et al., 2008), proving that political skills play a central role in fostering a conducive organizational climate.

The transition to remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges, highlighting the importance of political skills in this context. Although remote working was necessary, it often led to less social interaction, leaving workers feeling isolated. This sense of detachment, coupled with the stress caused by the pandemic - as a result of which a significant proportion of workers were affected by symptoms of anxiety, depression and stress (Rajkumar, 2020; Kniffin et al., 2021) - underscored the need for workers to further develop their political skills. Such skills are essential for accurately interpreting and navigating interpersonal dynamics in the workplace, even in a virtual environment, allowing people to influence others and achieve both personal and organizational goals.

Political skills, according to Perrewé et al. (2004), act as a coping mechanism that helps individuals manage role conflicts and various tensions. Moreover, employees with high political skills often possess significant social capital (Ferris et al., 2007), which can be invaluable in overcoming feelings of isolation by facilitating access to a support network. In addition, the ability to build strong relationships can be a crucial mitigating factor in coping with pandemic-induced stress. Political skills enhance this ability by enabling individuals to effectively navigate workplace dynamics, promoting a sense of control over their interactions and environment. This is achieved by cultivating strong alliances and positive relationships, which are essential for gaining support, conducting negotiations and skillfully resolving conflicts (Mohd Makhbul & Rawshdeh 2021; Perrewé et al. 2004).

In the context of Hypothesis 3, the "Need to Belong Theory" provides a compelling lens through which to examine the complex dynamics of network behavior between individuals in different work environments, particularly distinguishing between home and office environments. As explained by Baumeister & Leary (1995), this theory underscores the human drive to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships by arguing that individuals are naturally motivated to seek acceptance and belonging within their social circles (Allen et al., 2022). When this theory is applied to remote work, it becomes clear how the absence of regular face-to-face interactions in a home-based work environment can lead to feelings of social isolation, stress, and reduce one's sense of belonging within the professional sphere. Consequently, people who work primarily from home may exhibit a different motivation to participate in networking activities than their office-bound counterparts, as the latter may benefit from more available opportunities for interpersonal connections and collaboration. Moreover, the theory suggests that the interaction between an individual's political skill and his or her engagement in networking activities may be influenced by the work environment, with seasoned professionals working remotely possibly experiencing reduced engagement.

Hypothesis 3: *WFH moderates the relationship between political skill and networking behavior, indicating that this relationship is weaker for employees who primarily work from home compared to those who mainly work in the office.*

Conceptual model

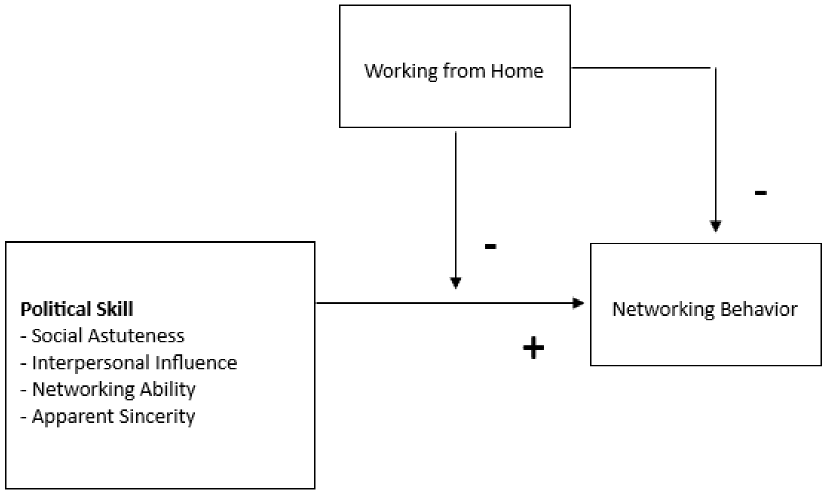

Figure 1 Conceptual model

TABLE 1
Summary of the combined effects of political skill and WFH on networking behavior

Political skill	**WFH**	
	Working mostly in the office • More available opportunities for interpersonal connections and collaboration	*Working mostly from home* • Intensifies feelings of isolation and loneliness • Difficult to build trust and develop significant bonds between colleagues
High political skilled • Ability of interpersonal influence • Ability to show a higher levels of sincerity and integrity • Ability to read and understand how people work	*High political skilled working mostly in the office* Individuals with high political skills that work mostly in the office excel in networking, taking full advantage of face-to-face interactions and organizational presence to build and strengthen relationships. They adeptly navigate social complexities and use their influence to create opportunities for career and organizational advancement.	*High political skilled working mostly from home* Individuals working from home that have high political skills may manage to maintain and even expand their networks through effective use of digital communication tools. They might leverage their understanding of social dynamics to engage meaningfully with others remotely, albeit with potential slight reductions in networking efficacy compared to in-office settings.
Low political skilled • Withdraw from group commitments • Reduce interactions with colleagues • Withhold crucial information • Sometimes undermine others to gain visibility	*Low political skilled working mostly in the office* While the opportunity for face-to-face interaction may provide some aid, individuals with low political skills that work mostly in the office still face challenges in effective networking. Their lack of social acumen and influence hampers their ability to form strong professional relationships and leverage these for career progression or organizational benefit.	*Low political skilled working mostly from home* Individuals working from home that have low political skills may struggle significantly in a high WFH context. The lack of direct social interactions exacerbates their challenges in building and maintaining networks. They are more likely to experience feelings of isolation and may have difficulty engaging in meaningful networking behaviors.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Research context

This research employs a quantitative research approach to empirically validate the proposed hypotheses. Data for the analysis were gathered through a survey, described in Appendix A. To ensure consistency with organizational culture and practices, the survey was conducted within a specific company in the financial sector, called Stater. Stater provides mortgage services and platforms for third-party lenders and manages 40% of all mortgages in the Netherlands.

Networking is a key component in the context of this research and offers numerous benefits through both internal and external networks. By cultivating relationships and establishing new links, networking facilitates knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and professional development. Within a knowledge-centric organization like Stater, networking serves as a strategic method for building relationships and unlocking fresh insights and opportunities. This encompasses broadening professional networks, sharing knowledge and skills, and fostering cooperative relationships.

Furthermore, Stater is operating in a hybrid work environment that incorporates both remote and office-based work. This context is important to the research as it reflects the evolving dynamics of work and the increasing prevalence of remote working within modern organizations.

Data collection

Data are gathered within the organization where I am employed, Stater. Permission has been obtained to collect data from the department in which I am located, designated as BO2. This department consists of various groups, such as loan servicing, mortgage processing, building deposits, customer service, and document management. The total population within this department comprises of 80 individuals.

Out of the 80 employees invited, 69 participated in the survey, yielding a response rate of approximately 86.3%. Among these, 61 respondents completed the entire survey, resulting in a final eligible sample size of 76.3%. Sample size is crucial in research as it can significantly impact the results and the strength of multiple regression analysis. Hair (2019) recommends having between 15 and 20 observations per independent variable. Therefore, with 61 respondents, the sample size is deemed sufficient for this research.

Measures:

A cross-sectional and explanatory survey is employed to evaluate the constructs of political skill, networking behavior, and WFH. Participants are invited to complete a survey with questions on all three constructs. To ensure robustness, we use established and carefully evaluated measurement scales previously validated in other studies for comparative analysis. Workers are explicitly instructed to independently evaluate all variables.

Cross-sectional surveys involve collecting data from different individuals at one point in time (Thomas, 2020). Surveys offer flexibility, allowing different aspects of human behavior and conditions to be examined in different populations. Moreover, they provide a quick way to obtain up-to-date information (Connelly, 2016).

Despite the strengths of cross-sectional surveys, they also have their limitations. For example, data in surveys are usually self-reported, meaning respondents describe their own behavior, attitudes, or knowledge. Self-reporting can be challenging when dealing with socially unacceptable or sensitive topics. When examining the influence of political skill on employee networking behavior and considering the impact of remote work, responses may be influenced by the desire for socially acceptable behavior. Additionally, there may be non-response bias, as individuals who choose not to participate may differ from those who do (Connelly, 2016).

To reduce the effect of social desirability in a survey, a few strategies are used:

- **Anonymity:** Social desirability bias can be reduced by assuring anonymized data collection and analysis to respondents/participants in surveys (Ried et al., 2022).
- **Pilot test the survey**: It is important to test the survey before using it to collect data. Pretesting and piloting can help identify questions that do not make sense to participants or problems with the survey that might lead to biased answers (Bullen, n.d.).

It is important to note that these strategies can help reduce social desirability bias, but it may not be completely eliminated. Therefore, it is important to interpret the results of a survey with caution and consider the potential impact of social desirability bias on the results.

Political skill

The primary measure of political skill is the 18-item Political Skill Inventory (Ferris et al., 2005), which assesses political skill through four dimensions: social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity. Each of these dimensions is explored through specific questions tailored to assess the unique aspects of political skill they represent and are presented on a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questions specific to each dimension are detailed in Appendix A.

The full 18-item PSI (Ferris et al., 2005) is currently the most frequently implemented measure of the political skill construct (Jacobson & Viswesvaran, 2017), continuously proving its construct validity and the possibility of application in different scenarios, with a predominance in situations involving leadership, relationship with subordinates, and career (Moraes, 2023). Given its widespread acceptance, demonstrated validity and applicability in various contexts, I use this scale in my thesis to ensure a robust and comprehensive assessment of political skills within the scope of my research.

Networking behavior

The Short Networking Behavior Scale (SNBS), developed by Wolff & Spurk (2020), served as an instrument to measure preference for online professional networking behavior. This scale consists of 18 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale varying from 1 (never/rarely) to 5 (very often/always). These items are divided into six factors: Build internal contacts, Maintain internal contacts, Use internal contacts, Build external contacts, Maintain external contacts and Use external contacts. The first three factors relate to internal networking, while the last three focus on external networking (Wolff & Spurk, 2020).

The choice of the SNBS as the measurement tool for network behavior was based on several considerations. The SNBS is widely recognized for its validity and practicality in assessing networks in a variety of settings (Stanton et al., 2002). It appears to be particularly beneficial in scenarios with time constraints or limited participant attention. Additionally, the SNBS is suitable for studies that investigate networks in a broad context. Given the time constraints and the primary focus on networks in this research, the SNBS was deemed an appropriate and effective choice.

Working from home

Golden and Veiga (2005) adopted a quantitative approach to measure remote work, asking participants to indicate the average number of hours they worked remotely each week, away from their main office. This research quantifies remote work as the percentage of total work hours that employees spend working from home. This percentage is represented on a scale of 0-100, where 0 represents working exclusively in the office and 100 represents working exclusively remotely. Using this measure, I assess the degree of WFH as a metric to determine how many hours an employee works from home in relation to their total hours worked. This variable enables me to examine whether employees are engaging in more networking activities while WFH and can also provide valuable insights for making informed decisions about optimizing employee work arrangements.

Control variables

This research uses several control variables to rule out alternative explanations of the results (Becker, 2005). First, the research controls for gender (1 = men, 2 = women) because differential relationships of networking with resources have been reported (Forret & Dougherty, 2004). The research also controls for age and job tenure, as both reflect experiences that could affect networks and their outcomes. For example, it is reported that networking might decrease with age and that contact building is more likely for newcomers (Volmer & Wolff, 2018). Another control variable used is the department group, which allows examination of possible differences between the groups within the department whose data are being collected.

Data analysis

In this research, the proposed hypotheses are tested using multiple regression analysis, focusing on employee networking behavior as the dependent variable and both WFH and political skill as independent variables. Given that the research involves a single dependent variable and that all three variables are measured on metric scales, Hair (2019) recommends the multiple regression analysis as the most suitable approach. Before conducting the multiple regression analysis, performing bivariate correlations and reliability analyses helps validate the survey questions and clarify the underlying structure of the variables. Furthermore, non-metric variables, particularly control variables, are transformed into dummy variables, and an interaction term is introduced to enhance the analysis.

The purpose of the multiple regression analysis is to elucidate the relationships between the variables. We expect the regression coefficients (beta values) to clarify the direction and magnitude of the relationships between the independent variables, political skills and WFH, and the dependent variable, networking behavior. A positive coefficient likely indicates a positive relationship, while a negative coefficient suggests a negative relationship. Additionally, the statistical significance for these coefficients, as determined by their p-values, will play a crucial role in determining the significance of these relationships.

In addition, the R-squared value is computed to determine the extent to which the independent variables account for the variance in networking behavior. A higher R-squared value signifies that the model fits the data better, indicating that the independent variables explain a greater proportion of the variance in networking behavior. Additionally, the F-test is employed to evaluate the overall statistical significance of the regression model, assessing the collective significance of the model.

In analyzing the results, we examine the individual significance of the independent variables, by using their p-values to measure their influence on network behavior. Also, we evaluate the assumptions of regression analysis - linearity, independence of residuals, homoscedasticity and the absence of multicollinearity - because any violation can compromise both the validity and interpretation of the results.

Once these assumptions are validated, we conduct the regression analysis in a hierarchical manner: the first model includes the control variables, the next model introduces the independent variables, and the last model integrates all variables, including the interaction term. This progressive method allows us to assess how the explanatory power of the model increases and whether the accuracy of the model improves with each step.

Ethics:

The ethics of scientific research, an integral aspect of professional ethics, is critical to ensuring "high quality" science through ethical practices. As described by Žukauskas et al. (2018), key principles of scientific ethics include honesty, objectivity, morality, prudence, openness, respect for intellectual property, confidentiality, responsible publication, responsible management, respect for colleagues, social responsibility, anti-discrimination, competence, legitimacy, and the safety of those involved in research. This research strictly adheres to these ethical principles, ensuring integrity and ethical rigor in its conduct.

Chapter 4 Results

Recoding variables

To conduct a multiple regression analysis, all variables need to be quantified on a metric scale. In the current research, the control variables, the independent, and dependent variables meet this requirement.

Univariate analysis

The dataset is missing some data for the variables "networking behavior", "political skills", "working from home", and "work experience". To assess whether these missing values were statistically significantly different from expected patterns, Little's MCAR test was applied. The results of the test were not statistically significant (Little's MCAR test: Chi-Square = 15.353, DF = 17, p-value = .570), indicating that the null hypothesis (H0) cannot be dismissed and suggesting the data are missing completely at random (MCAR). Among the 62 respondents, one failed to answer several essential questions on networking behavior, political skill, and WFH, missing 10 out of 40 items. To preserve research validity, this respondent was excluded. Additionally, a few other respondents omitted 1 or 2 items, which will be imputed using the mean substitution.

Descriptive statistics for seven variables are detailed in Table 2. These statistics include measures of skewness and kurtosis, and provide insight into the distribution and shape of the variables. According to Field (2018), the acceptable range for both kurtosis and skewness is between -2 and +2. Analysis shows that all variables meet this recommended range, indicating a normal distribution.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Research Variables

Variable	N	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. Networking behavior	61	2.30	.61	1.03	1.05
2. Political skill	61	3.63	.41	.31	.53
3. Working from home	61	40.39	27.39	-.27	-1.18
4. Age[a]	61	2.08	.80	-.15	-1.42
5. Gender[b]	61	1.43	.50	.31	-1.97
6. Work experience[c]	61	2.0	.93	.00	-1.88
7. Department[d]	61	2,16	.95	.26	-.94

[a] 1 = 18-34, 2 = 35-49, and 3 = 50+
[b] 1 = Male and 2 = Female.
[c] 1 = Less then 5 years, 2 = 5-10 years, and 3 = More then 10 years
[d] 1 = Repayment and Transfer, 2 = Building Deposit, 3 = Contact Center, and 4 = Document Management.

To assess the distribution of variables, histograms were generated to illustrate their normal distributions, along with normal probability plots. These visual representations can be found in Appendix B. Specifically, Figure 2 shows the histogram for networking behavior, while Figure 3 presents its corresponding normal probability plot. Political skill is depicted in Figures 4 and 5, showing the histogram and normal probability plot, respectively. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate histograms and normal probability plots for WFH. Age is displayed in Figures 8 and 9, Gender in Figures 10 and 11, and Work Experience in Figures 12 and 13. Finally, Department is shown in Figures 14 and 15. Reviewing these figures provides clear visual evidence of the normal distribution for each variable.

Bivariate correlations

The bivariate correlation analysis, detailed in Tables 3 and 4 of Appendix C, was conducted to examine the validity of the survey. For the variable 'networking behavior,' all items displayed statistically significant correlations in the Pearson correlation analysis, as shown in Table 3 of Appendix C. Consequently, no items were removed from this variable. Regarding the variable political skill, the item "Het is belangrijk dat mensen geloven dat ik oprecht ben in wat ik zeg en doe" did not show a statistically significant correlation with political skill overall. However, this item did exhibit a statistically significant correlation within the "apparent sincerity" dimension, to which the item belongs. Therefore, although the item does not strongly correlate with the overall construct of political skill, it is relevant to the specific dimension it measures, and thus, it will be included in the analysis. Moreover, all other items showed statistically significant Pearson correlations with political skill (Table 4 of Appendix C).

Reliability analysis

Reliability analysis is conducted to determine the consistency of measurements within each variable, with each variable analyzed separately. The analysis results show a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .925 for networking behavior and .886 for political skill, as recorded in Tables 5 and 7 of Appendix D, respectively. According to Hair (2019), a Cronbach's Alpha score above 0.6 signifies high internal consistency among items, confirming the reliability of the measurements. In this research, all variables surpass this threshold, confirming their reliability. Further analysis, detailed in Tables 6 and 8 of Appendix D, suggests that no item removal would statistically significantly improve the Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Consequently, no items were eliminated based on the reliability analysis. More comprehensive details of this analysis are available in Appendix D.

Assumptions regression analysis

To guarantee that the results from the multiple regression analysis accurately reflect the sample, it is essential to satisfy specific assumptions. This section explores five key assumptions:

1. **Constant variance of the error term (homoscedasticity):** A fundamental assumption of linear regression analysis is that the residuals display constant variance across the range of the independent variable, a condition known as homoscedasticity. The scatterplot in Figure 18 of Appendix E clearly illustrates a consistent spread of variance, thereby confirming that this assumption is met.
2. **Multicollinearity:** This assumption addresses the issue of multicollinearity by examining the correlations among independent variables. To detect multicollinearity, correlation coefficients along with tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) values are analyzed. According to Field (2018), for the assumption to hold, VIF values should be above 1.0 but not exceed 10, and tolerance values should be above 0.20. Table 10 in Appendix E confirms that all VIF values fall within the acceptable range and all tolerance values exceed 0.20, thus meeting the criteria for the multicollinearity assumption.
3. **Normality of the error term distribution:** Normal probability plots are employed to determine if the error terms adhere to a normal distribution. The P-Plot depicted in Figure 17 of Appendix E shows that the residual line closely follows the diagonal reference line, suggesting that the error terms are normally distributed. Additionally, Figure 16 in Appendix D supports this finding by displaying an approximately normal distribution.
4. **Linearity of the phenomenon:** The assumption of linearity between the dependent variable and each independent variable must hold. This linearity is evaluated by analyzing the plot of standardized residuals against the standardized predicted values from the regression. The scatterplot presented in Figure 18 of Appendix E demonstrates no irregular patterns or deviations from a horizontal zero-line, confirming that the relationship is appropriately linear for the purposes of our regression model.
5. **Independence of the error term:** The Durbin-Watson test is used to assess the presence of autocorrelation in the residuals of a regression analysis. According to Field (2018), a test statistic value close to 2 suggests no autocorrelation among the residuals. Table 9 in Appendix E shows a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.920, indicating the absence of autocorrelation in the error terms.

Regression analysis

Prior to the regression analysis, a bivariate analysis was conducted to explore the correlations among the variables used in this research. As shown in Table 11, these correlations include both positive and negative relationships. Notably, 17 correlations were found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level, suggesting substantial and non-random relationships between the variables. Among these, a particularly strong positive correlation was observed between political skill and networking behavior (r(61) = .694, p = <.001). This finding supports our first hypothesis that political skill positively affects networking behavior, implying that employees with higher political skills are more likely to engage in networking activities compared to those with lower skills. Additionally, most dimensions of political skill are positively related to each other. However, no statistically significant correlation was identified between networking ability and apparent sincerity. The dimension most strongly correlated with networking behavior is networking ability.

Additionally, the negative correlation between age and WFH (r(61) = -.425, p = <.001), indicates that as age increases, the likelihood of WFH tends to decrease, and vice versa. In terms of work experience, three variables show statistically significant correlations. Firstly, there is a negative correlation between work experience and interpersonal influence (r(61) = -.321, p = .012). This indicates that as work experience increases, interpersonal influence tends to decrease somewhat. However, the correlation is not particularly strong, implying that while individuals with more work experience may have slightly less interpersonal influence, other factors also contribute to this relationship. The same pattern applies to the second variable that correlates with work experience, social astuteness (r(61) = -.290, p = .024). The third variable that correlates with work experience is age (r(61) = .590, p < .001). This moderate to strong positive correlation indicates that as age increases, work experience also tends to increase. In other words, older individuals are likely to have more work experience.

Table 11

Correlations for Research Variables

Variable	**1**	**2**	**2.1**	**2.2**	**2.3**	**2.4**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Dependent variable											
1. Networking behavior	-										
Independent variables											

2. Political skill	.69**	-									
2.1 Networking ability	.73**	.86**	-								
2.2 Interpersonal influence	.43**	.78**	.49**	-							
2.3 Social astuteness	.49**	.85**	.58**	.63**	-						
2.4 Apparent sincerity	.36**	.50**	.23	.39**	.38**	-					
3. Working from home	.01	-.15	-.09	-.06	-.19	-.10	-				
Control variables											
4. Age	-.09	-.11	-.09	-.15	-.14	.09	-.43**	-			
5. Gender	-.02	-.01	.07	-.17	.01	-.06	-.09	.12	-		
6. Work experience	-.18	-.23	-.13	-.32*	-.29*	.07	-.24	.58**	.14	-	
7. Department	-.06	-.01	-.16	.07	.13	.07	-.05	-.11	.06	-.21	-

[a] 1 = 18-34, 2 = 35-49, and 3 = 50+
[b] 1 = Male and 2 = Female.
[c] 1 = Less then 5 years, 2 = 5-10 years, and 3 = More then 10 years
[d] 1 = Repayment and Transfer, 2 = Building Deposit, 3 = Contact Center, and 4 = Document Management.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Three models were utilized in the regression analysis, as detailed in Table 12. The first model incorporated control variables. The second model introduced two independent variables, political skill and WFH. The final model, Model 3, included an interaction term between political skill and WFH. As displayed in Table 12, Model 1, which solely incorporated control variables, explained a modest 4.3% of the variance in networking behavior, with an adjusted R^2 of -.026. Introducing political skill and WFH in Model 2 statistically significantly enhanced the model's explanatory power, with the adjusted R^2 increasing to .442, thereby explaining an additional 46.8% of the variance. The inclusion of the interaction term between political skill and WFH in Model 3 slightly reduced the explained variance, leading to an Adjusted R^2 of .432, a decrease of 1.0%. Model 2 displayed a statistically significant improvement in predictive power, achieving a p-value of less than .001, as reflected by the F

Change statistic. Conversely, Model 3 did not demonstrate a statistically significant F Change ($p = .907$), indicating that the interaction term did not statistically significantly enhance the model's predictive capabilities.

The ANOVA F-test results, shown in Table 12, are used to assess the regression model's overall fit and to evaluate the levels of variability it encompasses (Field, 2018). Model 1 fails to provide a statistically significant result in the ANOVA F-test, with $F(4, 56) = .623$, $p = .648$, indicating that the model does not explain the variability in the data well. In contrast, Model 2 and Model 3 both show statistically significant results, with $F(6, 54) = 8.934$, $p < .001$, and $F(7, 53) = 7.519$, $p < .001$, respectively. These results suggest that Models 2 and 3 are statistically robust, implying that they significantly capture and explain the variability in the dataset and thus can be considered reliable for further analysis or application.

Hypothesis 1 is supported by the statistically significant positive relationship between political skill and networking behavior ($B = 1.057$, $p < .001$). However, Hypothesis 2 is not supported, as the analysis reveals no statistically significant association between working from home (WFH) and networking behavior ($B = .003$, $p = .263$). Similarly, Hypothesis 3 is not supported. The interaction term between political skill and WFH ($B = .001$, $p = .907$) fails to show any statistically significant moderation effect.

Table 12

Results of Regression Models of Networking Behavior[a]

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	2.66** (.37)	-1.64* (.71)	-1.54 (1.10)
Control variables			
Age	.01 (.12)	.04 (.10)	.04 (.10)
Gender	.02 (.16)	.003 (.12)	.001 (.12)
Work experience	-.14 (.11)	-.01 (.08)	-.02 (.09)
Department	-.07 (.09)	-.03 (.06)	-.03 (.07)
Independent variables			
Political skill		1.06**	1.03**

		(.15)	(.26)
Working from home		.003 (.002)	.000 (.02)
Interaction Political skill x Working from home			.001 (.01)
R^2	.04	.50**	.50
Adj. R^2	-.03	.44**	.43
F Change	.62	24.51**	.01
F	.62	8.93**	7.52**
N	61	61	61

[a] The numbers in parentheses represent the standard errors of the coefficients.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

Chapter 5 Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact of working from home (WFH) on the interaction between political skill and networking behavior. The central research question that guided this research was, “In what ways does political skill influence networking behavior, and how does remote work moderate these dynamics?’’. The results of the research indicate that hypothesis 1 is supported, with a statistically significant positive relationship between political skill and networking behavior. This finding suggests that individuals with higher levels of political skill are more engaged in networking behavior. However, Hypothesis 2, which stated that WFH has a negative influence on networking behavior, is not supported. This indicates that employees who primarily WFH do not statically significantly engage less in networking behavior compared to employees who primarily work in the office. In addition, Hypothesis 3, which examined the moderating effect of WFH on the relationship between political skill and networking behavior, is also not supported. This indicates that WFH does not statistically significantly change the influence of political skill on networking behavior.

Theoretical implications

The results offer three key theoretical implications. Firstly, previous research consistently emphasized that employees with better political skills are inherently better equipped to satisfy their need to belong by networking more effectively. They can identify and seize opportunities for meaningful social interactions, more easily build good relationships, and cultivate relationships that are both useful and satisfying. Consequently, these individuals show greater commitment to networking activities not only as a strategic career move, but also as a fundamental expression of their innate social needs (Ferris et al., 2007; Cullen et al., 2014; Blickle et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2007; Ahearn et al., 2004; Gentry et al., 2012; Bing et al., 2011; Munyon et al., 2013). Therefore, it was hypothesized that political skill positively affects networking behavior, indicating that employees with high political skill are more involved in networking activities than those with lower political skill. The results support this hypothesis. All four dimensions positively affect networking behavior (networking ability, apparent sincerity, interpersonal influence, and social astuteness). Which means that employees that are skilled politically, through their networking ability, establish and effectively utilize connections in the work environment, which helps them to gain access to valued resources and, consequently, have success in their job and organization (Porter & Woo, 2015). The ability of interpersonal influence of politically skilled employees helps them use their social capital and attain greater access to information. In addition, their apparent sincerity makes politically skilled employees seem like they have higher levels of sincerity and integrity, thus, resulting trust worthier (Lvina et al., 2017). Finally, their ability to read and understand how people work (social astuteness) allows them to appropriately adjust their behavior to different situational needs, which gives them a sense of control and self-confidence to navigate political arenas (Ferris et al., 2007). Consequently, these employees view interpersonal interactions and environmental signals as opportunities, not threats (Perrewé et al., 2004). By confirming the positive relationship between political skill on networking behavior, this research further strengthens the theoretical framework that emphasizes the role of political skills in effective networking. The results are not only consistent with, but also reinforce previous research that reinforces the understanding that political skills are indispensable for successful networking (Ferris et al., 2007; Cullen et al., 2014; Blickle et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2007; Ahearn et al., 2004; Gentry et al., 2012; Bing et al., 2011; Munyon et al., 2013).

Secondly, previous research indicates that working from home (WFH) often results in feelings of isolation and loneliness, hindering the development of trust and meaningful bonds between colleagues due to the lack of face-to-face interaction (Lal et al., 2021; Bailey & Kurland, 1999; Wang et al., 2020). These results are consistent with the “need to belong” theory, which suggests that people who work from home experience fewer social interactions and networks, negatively impacting their overall well-being and engagement at work (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Wang et al., 2020; Golden et al., 2008; Morganson et al., 2010). It was therefore hypothesized that WFH would negatively affect employees’ networking behavior, indicating that those who work primarily from home participate less in networking activities than their office colleagues. The results did not support this hypothesis. The results indicate that WFH does not affect networking behavior of employees. This result contradicts the original hypothesis and highlights the need for additional research to understand the relationship between WFH and networking behavior.

Thirdly, the emergence of remote work as a dominant paradigm, accelerated by the global COVID19 pandemic (Chen, 2021), underscores the need for political skills for navigating digital communication challenges, maintaining visibility despite physical absence, building and maintaining networks without face-to-face interactions, exerting influence without direct authority, adapting to organizational change, and resolving conflict in a virtual environment (Golden et al., 2006; Haeger & Lingham, 2014; Mohd Makhbul & Rawshdeh 2021; Perrewé et al. 2004). This is reflected in the “Need to Belong Theory,” which emphasizes our inherent desire for interpersonal connections and desire for acceptance within social groups (Allen et al., 2022). Looking at remote work, this theory explains how the absence of personal interactions can lead to social isolation and a reduced sense of belonging, which then affects the urge to network. This is especially noticeable in contrast to on-site workers, who have more opportunities for immediate interaction and collaboration.

Consequently, the interplay between a person's political skills and their networking efforts can be greatly influenced by their work environment, which can lead to reduced networking engagement among remote professionals. It was therefore hypothesized that WFH moderates the relationship between political skill and networking behavior, indicating that this relationship is weaker for employees who primarily work from home compared to those who mainly work in the office. The results did not support this hypothesis. The result indicates that the physical work environment, whether at home or in the office, does not statistically significantly affect the relationship between political skill and networking behavior. This result contradicts the original hypothesis and highlights the need for additional research to understand the complex interplay between political skill, networking behavior, and the work environment.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this research have several implications for future research on workers, their political skills, work environment and networking behavior. First, researchers should continue to explore the dimensions of political skills and their influence on networking behavior in different work environments. The unexpected results related to WFH indicate that traditional theories may need to be modified to account for the changing nature of work. Future studies should examine the specific strategies teleworkers use to network effectively and whether these strategies can be generalized to other contexts.

Second, the lack of support for the hypothesis that remote work moderates the relationship between political skills and networking behavior suggests that researchers need to develop more nuanced models that capture the complexities of remote work. This may require examining additional variables such as the use of digital communication tools, the role of organizational culture, and the influence of individual differences in adaptability and resilience.

Practical implications

The statistically significant finding that political skill positively affects networking behavior has several important implications for management practices. To capitalize on this relationship, managers should consider the following strategies:

1. **Integrate Political Skill Development into Training Programs:**
    - **Comprehensive training:** Incorporate political skill training into the organization's professional development programs. Focus on enhancing employees' ability to network effectively by teaching key political skills such as social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity.

- **Practical workshops:** Conduct practical workshops that simulate real-life networking scenarios. This will help employees practice and refine their networking skills in a supportive environment.

2. **Evaluate and Recognize Political Skills in Performance Reviews:**
    - **Performance metrics:** Include political skill dimensions as part of the performance evaluation process. Develop specific measures to assess employees' networking behavior, interpersonal influence and social understanding.
    - **Acknowledgment and Rewards:** Recognize and reward employees who exhibit strong political skills and proactive networking behaviors. Implement reward systems that emphasize and encourage these competencies, such as bonuses, promotions or public recognition.
3. **Facilitate Networking Opportunities:**
    - **Structured Networking Events:** Organize regular networking events within the organization, such as interdepartmental meetings, social gatherings and professional development sessions. These events should be designed to promote contacts between different levels and functions.
    - **Mentorship and Buddy Programs:** Establish mentoring and buddy programs where experienced employees can guide others in developing their political and networking skills. This creates an environment of continuous learning and support.
    - **Cross-Functional Projects:** Encourage participation in cross-functional projects and teams. This helps employees build diverse networks and enhances their ability to navigate different organizational contexts.
4. **Promote a Culture of Trust and Reciprocity:**
    - **Trust and Sincerity:** Encourage a culture where trust, sincerity and mutual respect are core values. Encourage leaders to exhibit these behaviors and create an environment where employees feel safe to engage in authentic interactions.
    - **Collaboration and Support:** Emphasize the importance of collaboration and support among employees. Create policies and practices that reinforce positive social interactions and collaboration.
5. **Monitor and Measure Networking Effectiveness:**
    - **Feedback Systems:** Implement systems to collect feedback on the effectiveness of networking initiatives and training programs. Use surveys,

focus groups and performance data to assess impact and make necessary adjustments.

- **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly evaluate and update training programs, performance evaluation criteria and networking opportunities based on feedback and new best practices. Ensure the organization remains responsive to changing workforce needs.

By applying these strategies, managers can improve their employees' networking behavior and harness the positive impact of political skills. This not only improves individual career prospects, but also contributes to the overall success and cohesion of the organization. Managers play an important role in creating an environment where political skills are developed, recognized and used effectively to drive organizational growth and effectiveness.

Limitations

This research has several limitations that provide guidance for future research. Firstly, the impact of WFH was only examined within a single company, which restricts the generalizability of the results. Broadening the research to include multiple companies across diverse industries would yield a more comprehensive understanding and enables researchers to explore additional factors that might affect employee networking behavior.

Second, despite meeting the minimum requirements for analysis, the sample size was limited due to company-imposed constraints. This smaller sample may have contributed to the absence of statistically significant effects in the data, raising the possibility of a Type II error. Gathering data from a larger and more varied sample would boost statistical power and enhance the robustness of the analysis, leading to more definitive results and practical implications. The restricted number of participants likely compromised the generalizability and reliability of the results. A larger sample size would allow for greater variation and representativeness, making the results more applicable to a wider population of workers. Furthermore, increasing the sample size would increase statistical power, facilitating the detection and validation of smaller effects.

Third, the research's geographical limitation to the Netherlands presents two key challenges. Firstly, the translation of validated scales from English to Dutch could introduce linguistic and cultural nuances that might impact the results. Secondly, the applicability of the results to other countries is restricted due to cultural differences and diverse individual backgrounds, which may produce different outcomes. Future research should consider performing cross-cultural studies to explore how cultural factors influence the relationship between political skills, networking behavior, and the moderating effect of WFH.

Fourth, this research faced time constraints that restricted exploration of additional facets of WFH. Future research could address these gaps by investigating these aspects to enhance our understanding of the subject. For instance, researchers could explore how technology and digital platforms facilitate networking behaviors in a home-working environment. Specifically, researchers could assess the effectivity of several virtual networking instruments, including video calling platforms, software for collaboration, and online communities, to promote relationship building and knowledge sharing between teleworkers.

Finally, relying on self-reports to evaluate networking behavior poses the risk of subjective bias. Individuals might view themselves as politically skilled or effective networkers, but their actual behavior may not reflect this self-perception, resulting in biased outcomes and diminished reliability. To overcome this limitation, future research should adopt alternative measurement methods to achieve a more objective assessment of networking behavior. For instance, rather than solely depending on self-reports, researchers could incorporate evaluations from managers. Managers, with their comprehensive insight into employees' interactions and networking activities, can provide a more unbiased evaluation grounded in their observations and experiences. Moreover, researchers could explore objective metrics by examining the frequency and quality of networking activities. This could involve gathering data on attendance at professional events, the number of business contacts made, or the effectiveness in building professional relationships. Those objective measures would ensure a more accurate and unbiased assessment of networking behavior, free from the influence of employee self-perceptions and self-reports.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

This research studies the effects of contemporary work environments on networking behavior within organizations. In particular, it focuses on how remote work changes the relationship between political skills and networking behavior. The research confirms that political skills have a positive influence on networking behavior, indicating that employees with higher political skills are more engaged in networking activities than those with lower political skills. Contrary to expectations, however, the research shows that WFH does not negatively affect employees' networking behavior, and the research also shows that WFH does not moderate the relationship between political skill and networking behavior. Suggesting that while political skills are crucial for effective networking, the shift to remote work does not reduce workers' ability to use these skills for networking purposes

These results offer valuable insights, yet there are opportunities for further research. Future studies could explore these dynamics in various contexts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how different factors might influence the relationship between political skills and networking behavior in remote work settings. Potential areas for further investigation include cross-cultural comparisons, industry-specific analyses, variations in organizational size, and differences across hierarchical levels within organizations.

In conclusion, while this research has shed light on important aspects, there are still many areas to explore in understanding the intricate connections between work environment, political skill, and networking behavior. Further exploration of contextual factors and underlying mechanisms will enhance our ability to respond to the challenges and opportunities of networking in modern work settings.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY IN DUTCH

Onderzoek naar Netwerkgedrag van Medewerkers bij Stater

Start van het onderdeel: Welkomstwoord

Beste collega's,

Mijn naam is Wesley van Kuik, ik ben 24 jaar en werkzaam op de afdeling Bouwdepots bij Stater. Ik sta op het punt om mijn master Business Administration af te ronden, een spannende en uitdagende tijd, vooral nu ik bezig ben met mijn master thesis. Ik heb het genoegen om dit onderzoek te mogen uitvoeren bij Stater, waarbij ik jullie hulp nodig heb.

Het plan is om een enquête te verspreiden onder ongeveer 80 tot 90 collega's van vier verschillende teams binnen de afdeling BO2. Dit betekent dat ik echt jullie medewerking nodig heb om dit onderzoek succesvol af te ronden.

Alvast enorm bedankt voor je bereidheid om mee te werken aan dit onderzoek naar het netwerkgedrag van medewerkers van Stater! In de vragenlijst worden onderwerpen behandeld zoals je netwerkgedrag, politieke vaardigheden en de mate waarin je thuiswerkt. Het invullen van de vragenlijst kost slechts maximaal 10 minuten van je tijd. Je deelname wordt zeer gewaardeerd! Je kunt deze enquête invullen tot en met 12 mei.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Wesley van Kuik

Master student Business Administration (Strategic Management)

Nijmegen School of Management, Radboud Universiteit

Einde van het onderdeel: Welkomstwoord

Start van het onderdeel: Intern netwerken

De volgende stellingen gaan over intern netwerken. Kruis aan welke optie het beste bij u past.

Opties:

1 Nooit	2 Zelden	3 Regelmatig	4 Vaak	5 Altijd
o	o	o	o	o

1. In mijn organisatie spreek ik collega's aan die ik herken en start ik een dialoog.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

2. Ik maak gebruik van evenementen in mijn organisatie als gelegenheid om nieuwe connecties te maken.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

3. Wanneer ik iemand binnen mijn organisatie wil ontmoeten die van professioneel belang voor mij kan zijn, neem ik het voortouw door mezelf voor te stellen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

4. Ik maak een praatje met collega's van verschillende afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie om meer te weten te komen over hun werkplek.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

5. Indien ik een collega van een andere afdeling binnen mijn organisatie niet direct van dienst kan zijn, zal ik een oogje in het zeil houden voor hem of haar.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

6. Ik ga in gesprek met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie om te praten over eventuele problemen die zij ervaren met hun werk.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

7. Ik overleg met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie over aanstaande organisatorische veranderingen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

8. Als ik antwoorden nodig heb op gevoelige vragen, zoek ik steun bij betrouwbare collega's om meer inzicht te krijgen en de zaak beter te begrijpen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

9. Tijdens informele bijeenkomsten deel ik professionele tips en hints met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

Einde van het onderdeel: Intern netwerken

Start van het onderdeel: Extern netwerken

De volgende stellingen gaan over extern netwerken. Kruis aan welke optie het beste bij u past.

1. Ik leg informele contacten met professionals buiten de organisatie om persoonlijke relaties buiten het bedrijf op te bouwen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

2. Ik maak gebruik van externe evenementen om nieuwe contacten te leggen met mensen van andere organisaties.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

3. Wanneer ik iemand van een andere organisatie ontmoet die een belangrijk zakelijk contact voor mij kan zijn, bespreek ik onze gedeelde werkgebieden.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

4. Ik kom in contact met bekenden van andere organisaties buiten de standaard werkuren.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

5. Tijdens informele bijeenkomsten ontmoet ik bekenden van andere organisaties die voor mij van professioneel belang kunnen zijn.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

6. Ik maak gebruik van zakelijke evenementen buiten de organisatie, zoals netwerkevenementen en conferenties, om op persoonlijk niveau met zakelijke kennissen te praten.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

7. Wanneer ik kennissen van andere organisaties ontmoet, benader ik hen om bij te praten over nieuws en veranderingen in hun professionele leven.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

8. Ik deel professionele tips en hints uit met bekenden van andere organisaties.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

9. Ik vertrouw op kennissen buiten de organisatie voor werkgerelateerde aangelegenheden.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

Einde van het onderdeel: Extern netwerken

Start van het onderdeel: Politieke vaardigheden

Political skill dimensions:
Networking Ability: vraag 1, 6, 9, 10, 11 en 15
Interpersonal Influence: vraag 2, 3, 4 en 12
Social Astuteness: vraag 5, 7, 16, 17 en 18
Apparent Sincerity: vraag 8, 13, 14

De volgende stellingen gaan over politieke vaardigheden. Kruis aan welke optie het beste bij u past.

Opties:

1 Helemaal oneens	2 Oneens	3 Neutraal	4 Eens	5 Helemaal eens
o	o	o	o	o

1. Ik besteed veel tijd en moeite op het werk aan netwerken met anderen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

2. Ik kan de meeste mensen op hun gemak stellen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

3. Ik kan makkelijk en effectief communiceren met anderen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

4. Het is gemakkelijk voor mij om een goede relatie op te bouwen met de meeste mensen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

5. Ik begrijp mensen heel goed.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

6. Ik ben goed in het opbouwen van relaties met invloedrijke mensen op het werk.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

7. Ik ben goed in het aanvoelen van de motivaties en verborgen agenda's van anderen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

8. Wanneer ik met anderen communiceer, probeer ik oprecht te zijn in wat ik zeg en doe.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

9. Ik heb een groot netwerk van collega's en kennissen op het werk ontwikkeld op wie ik een beroep kan doen voor ondersteuning wanneer ik echt dingen gedaan moet krijgen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

10. Op het werk ken ik veel belangrijke mensen en ben ik goed verbonden.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

11. Ik besteed veel tijd op het werk aan het ontwikkelen van connecties met anderen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

12. Ik ben goed in het krijgen van sympathie van mensen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

13. Het is belangrijk dat mensen geloven dat ik oprecht ben in wat ik zeg en doe.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

14. Ik probeer oprechte interesse in andere mensen te tonen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

15. Ik ben goed in het gebruiken van mijn connecties en netwerk om dingen gedaan te krijgen op het werk.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

16. Ik beschik over een scherp instinct of inzicht als het aankomt op de manier waarop ik mezelf aan anderen presenteer.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

17. Ik let goed op de gezichtsuitdrukkingen van mensen.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

18. Ik weet altijd instinctief wat de juiste dingen zijn om te zeggen of te doen om anderen te beïnvloeden.

1	2	3	4	5
o	o	o	o	o

Einde van het onderdeel: Politieke vaardigheden

Start van het onderdeel: Thuiswerken

Wat is de mate waarin u thuiswerkt ten opzichte van het totale aantal uren dat u werkt? (Geef een gemiddelde schatting in percentage)

…………………………………………………

Einde van het onderdeel: Thuiswerken

Start van het onderdeel: Control-variabelen

Wat is uw leeftijd in jaren?

1. 18-34
2. 35-49
3. 50+

Wat is uw geslacht?

1. Man
2. Vrouw
3. Zeg ik liever niet

Hoeveel jaar bent u al werkzaam bij deze organisatie?

1. Minder dan 5 jaar
2. 5-10 jaar
3. Meer dan 10 jaar

Waar bent u voornamelijk werkzaam?

1. Aflossen/Passeren
2. Bouwdepot
3. Contactcenter
4. Documentmanagement

Einde van het onderdeel: Control-variabelen

APPENDIX B

Figure 2

Normal distribution of the variable Networking Behavior

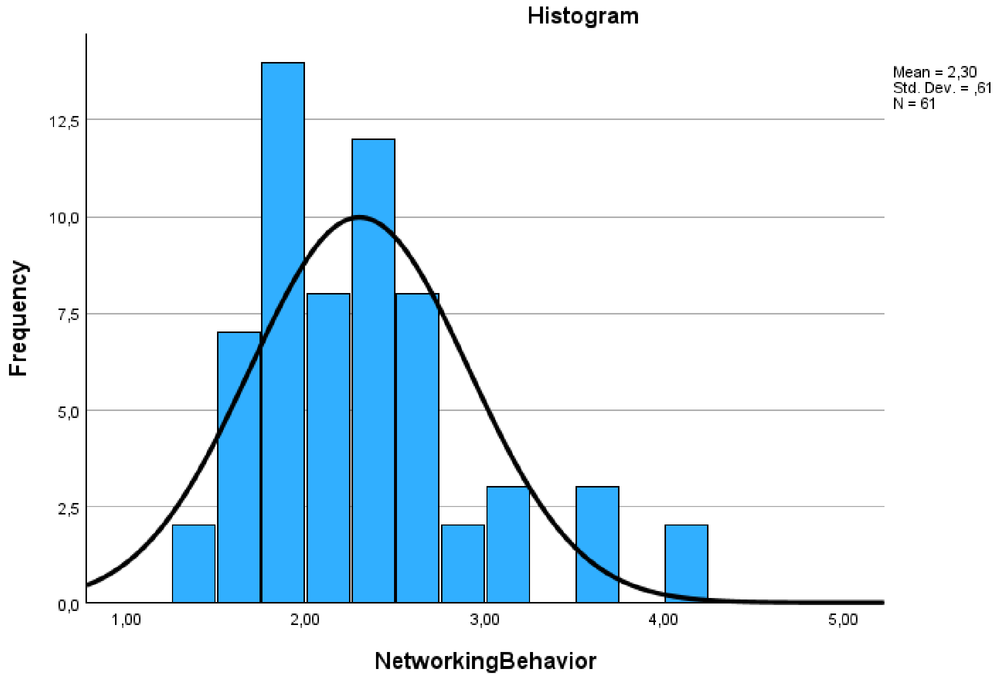


Figure 3

Normal P-P Plot of the variable Networking Behavior

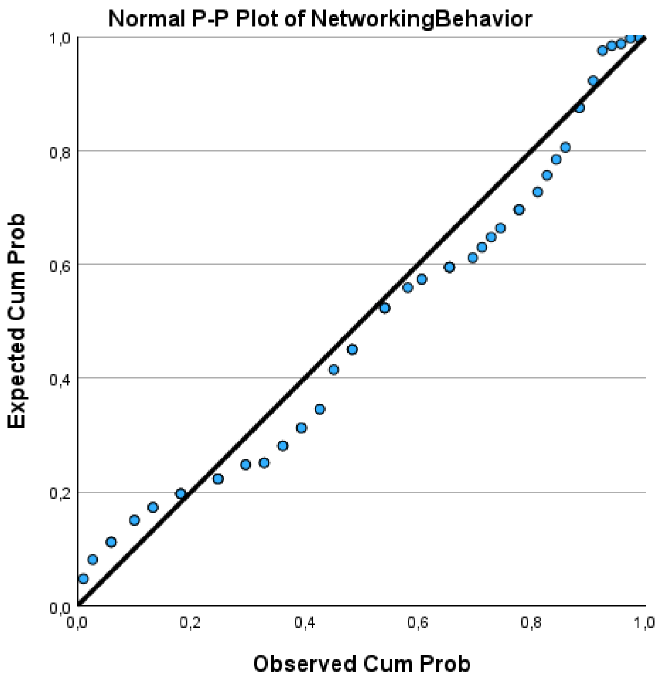


Figure 4

Normal distribution of the variable Political Skill

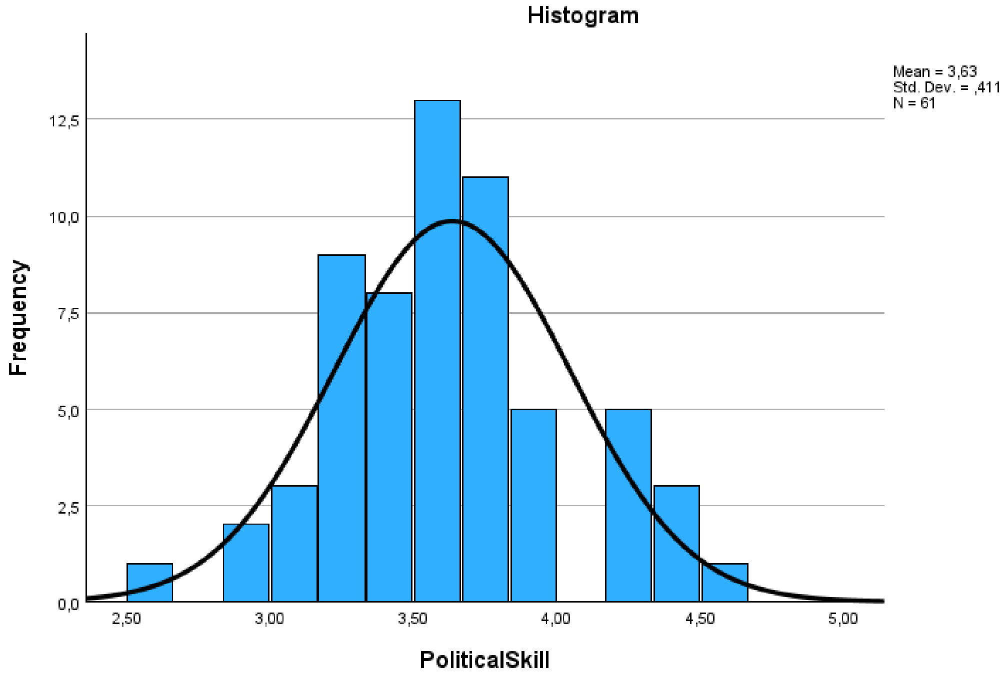


Figure 5

Normal P-P Plot of the variable Political Skill

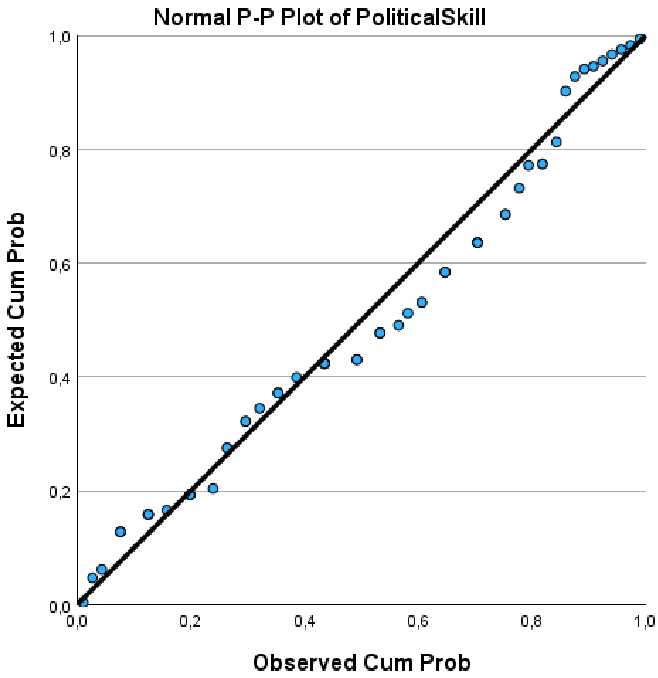


Figure 6

Normal distribution of the variable Working from Home

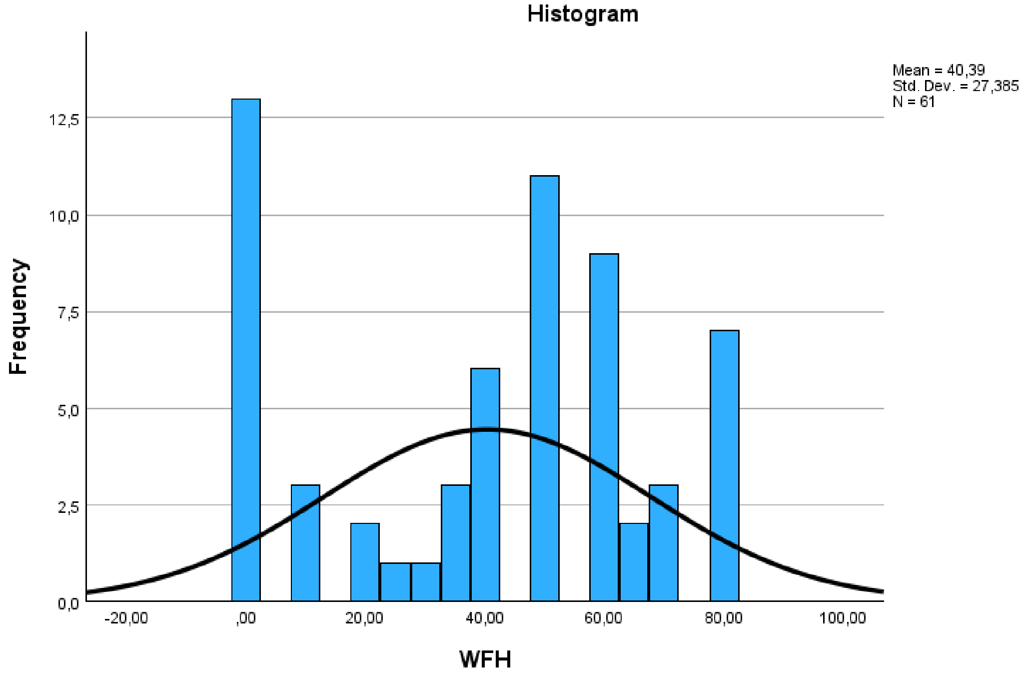


Figure 7

Normal P-P Plot of the variable Working from Home

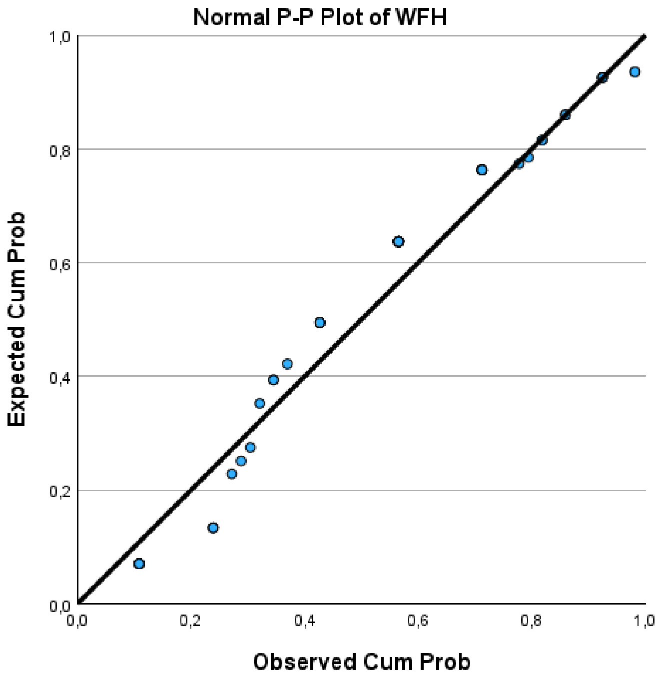


Figure 8

Normal distribution of the variable Age

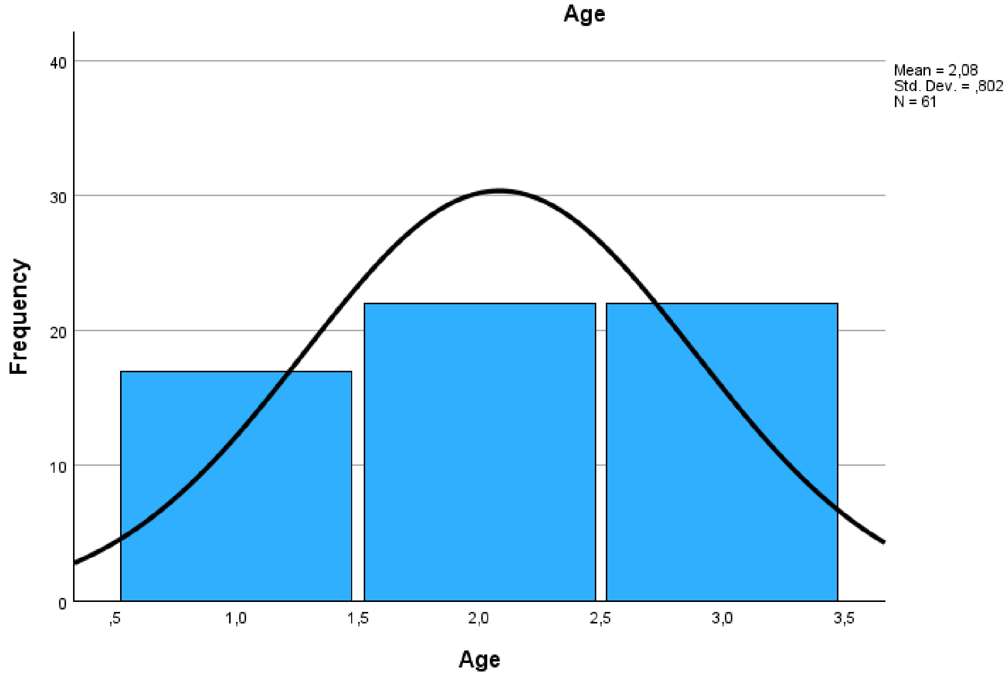


Figure 9

Normal P-P Plot of the variable Age

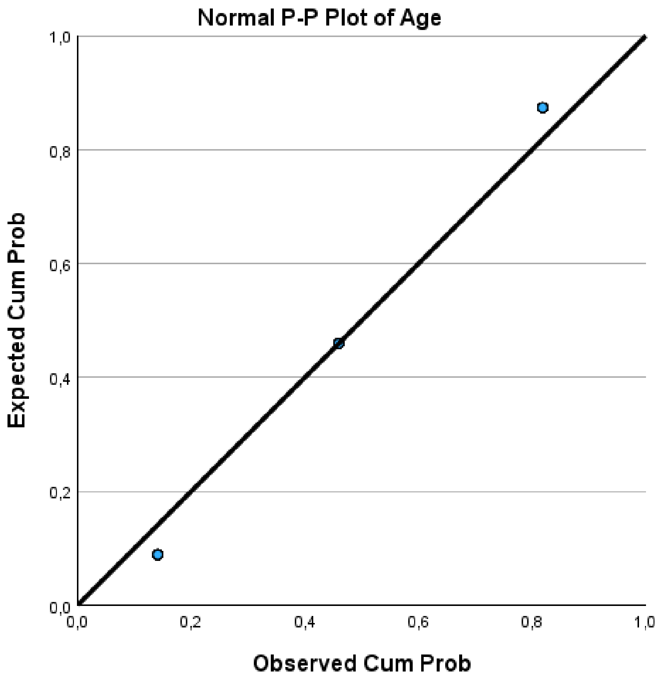


Figure 10

Normal distribution of the variable Gender

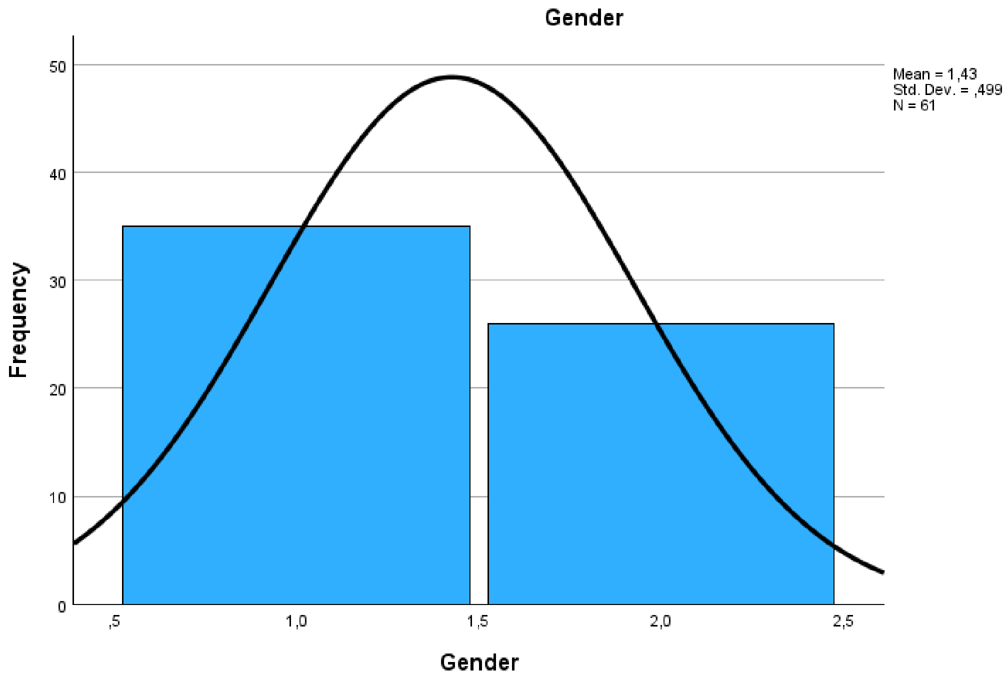


Figure 11

Normal P-P Plot of the variable Gender

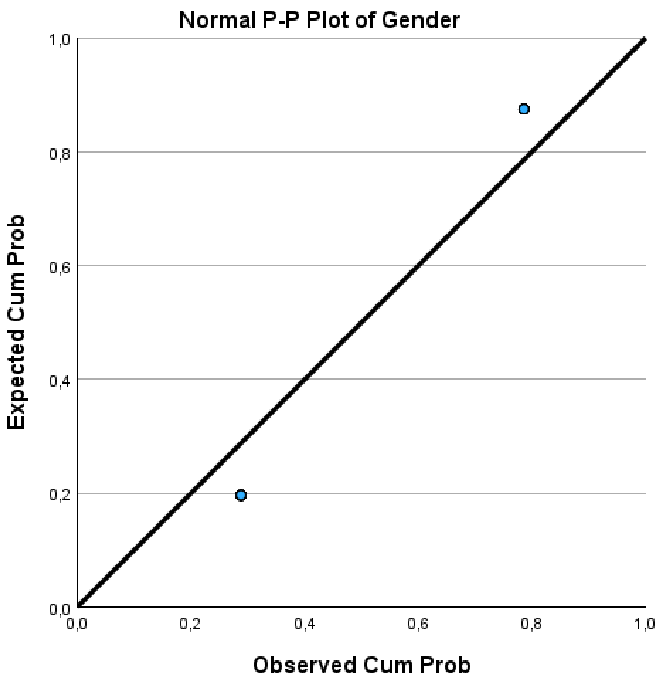


Figure 12

Normal distribution of the variable Work Experience

Figure 13

Normal P-P Plot of the Work Experience

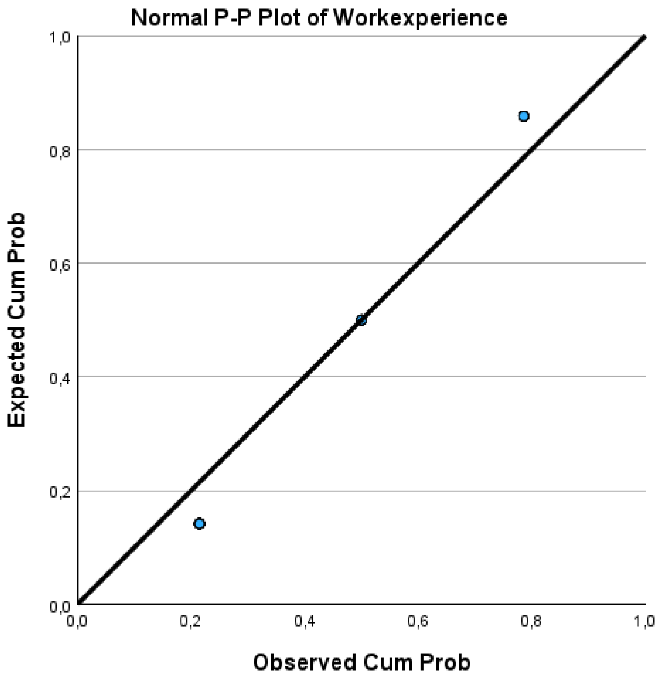


Figure 14

Normal distribution of the variable Department

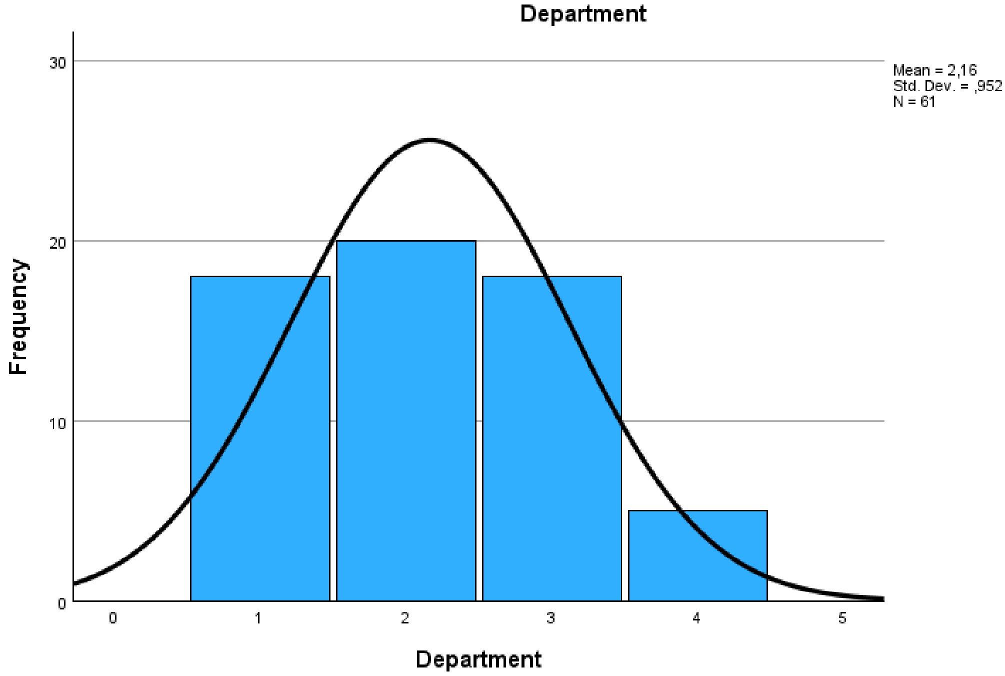
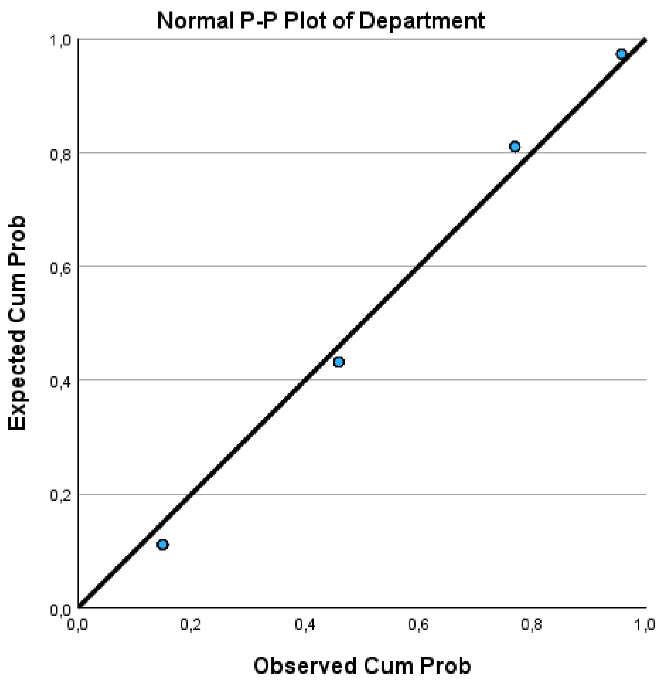


Figure 15

Normal P-P Plot of the variable Department



APPENDIX C

Table 3

Correlations for the items belonging to the variable Networking Behavior

Items	Networking Behavior
In mijn organisatie spreek ik collega's aan die ik herken en start ik een dialoog.	.26*
Ik maak gebruik van evenementen in mijn organisatie als gelegenheid om nieuwe connecties te maken.	.61**
Wanneer ik iemand binnen mijn organisatie wil ontmoeten die van professioneel belang voor mij kan zijn, neem ik het voortouw door mezelf voor te stellen.	.75**
Ik maak een praatje met collega's van verschillende afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie om meer te weten te komen over hun werkplek.	.52**
Indien ik een collega van een andere afdeling binnen mijn organisatie niet direct van dienst kan zijn, zal ik een oogje in het zeil houden voor hem of haar.	.60**
Ik ga in gesprek met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie om te praten over eventuele problemen die zij ervaren met hun werk.	.67**
Ik overleg met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie over aanstaande organisatorische veranderingen.	.61**
Als ik antwoorden nodig heb op gevoelige vragen, zoek ik steun bij betrouwbare collega's om meer inzicht te krijgen en de zaak beter te begrijpen.	.57**
Tijdens informele bijeenkomsten deel ik professionele tips en hints met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie.	.67**
Ik leg informele contacten met professionals buiten de organisatie om persoonlijke relaties buiten het bedrijf op te bouwen.	.67**
Ik maak gebruik van externe evenementen om nieuwe contacten te leggen met mensen van andere organisaties.	.78**
Wanneer ik iemand van een andere organisatie ontmoet die een belangrijk zakelijk contact voor mij kan zijn, bespreek ik onze gedeelde werkgebieden.	.82**

Ik kom in contact met bekenden van andere organisaties buiten de standaard werkuren.	.49**
Tijdens informele bijeenkomsten ontmoet ik bekenden van andere organisaties die voor mij van professioneel belang kunnen zijn.	.74**
Ik maak gebruik van zakelijke evenementen buiten de organisatie, zoals netwerkevenementen en conferenties, om op persoonlijk niveau met zakelijke kennissen te praten.	.82**
Wanneer ik kennissen van andere organisaties ontmoet, benader ik hen om bij te praten over nieuws en veranderingen in hun professionele leven.	.78**
Ik deel professionele tips en hints uit met bekenden van andere organisaties.	.81**
Ik vertrouw op kennissen buiten de organisatie voor werkgerelateerde aangelegenheden.	.71**

* p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 4

Correlations for the items associated with the variable Political Skill and its individual dimensions.

Items	Political Skill	Networking Ability	Interpersonal Influence	Social Astuteness	Apparent Sincerity
Ik besteed veel tijd en moeite op het werk aan netwerken met anderen.	.56**	.67**			
Ik kan de meeste mensen op hun gemak stellen.	.50**		.78**		
Ik kan makkelijk en effectief communiceren met anderen.	.66*		.81**		
Het is gemakkelijk voor mij om een goede relatie op te bouwen met de meeste mensen.	.58**		.84**		

Ik begrijp mensen heel goed.	.50**			.61**	
Ik ben goed in het opbouwen van relaties met invloedrijke mensen op het werk.	.71**	.73**			
Ik ben goed in het aanvoelen van de motivaties en verborgen agenda's van anderen.	.68**			.77**	
Wanneer ik met anderen communiceer, probeer ik oprecht te zijn in wat ik zeg en doe.	.34**				.70**
Ik heb een groot netwerk van collega's en kennissen op het werk ontwikkeld op wie ik een beroep kan doen voor ondersteuning wanneer ik echt dingen gedaan moet krijgen.	.64**	.79**			
Op het werk ken ik veel belangrijke mensen en ben ik goed verbonden.	.66**	.76**			
Ik besteed veel tijd op het werk aan het ontwikkelen van connecties met anderen.	.67**	.80**			
Ik ben goed in het krijgen van sympathie van mensen.	.73**		.75**		
Het is belangrijk dat mensen geloven dat ik oprecht ben in wat ik zeg en doe.	.22				.73**

Ik probeer oprechte interesse in andere mensen te tonen.	.50**				.69**
Ik ben goed in het gebruiken van mijn connecties en netwerk om dingen gedaan te krijgen op het werk.	.64**	.74**			
Ik beschik over een scherp instinct of inzicht als het aankomt op de manier waarop ik mezelf aan anderen presenteer.	.64**			.72**	
Ik let goed op de gezichtsuitdrukkingen van mensen.	.67**			.76**	
Ik weet altijd instinctief wat de juiste dingen zijn om te zeggen of te doen om anderen te beïnvloeden.	.61**			.73**	

* p < .05. **p < .01.

APPENDIX D

Table 5

Cronbach's Alpha for the Networking Behavior variable

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.925	18

Table 6 indicates that removing the item "In mijn organisatie spreek ik collega's aan die ik herken en start ik een dialoog." would lead to a slight increase in Cronbach's Alpha, specifically by 0.04. However, the increase is considered negligible, and therefore, the removal of the item is not warranted.

Table 6

Item-Total Statistics of the variable Networking Behavior

Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
In mijn organisatie spreek ik collega's aan die ik herken en start ik een dialoog.	37.93	116.43	.19	.929
Ik maak gebruik van evenementen in mijn organisatie als gelegenheid om nieuwe connecties te maken.	39.02	107.78	.55	.922
Wanneer ik iemand binnen mijn organisatie wil ontmoeten die van professioneel belang voor mij kan zijn, neem ik het voortouw door mezelf voor te stellen.	38.64	104.53	.71	.918
Ik maak een praatje met collega's van verschillende afdelingen binnen mijn	38.85	110.53	.46	.924

organisatie om meer te weten te komen over hun werkplek.				
Indien ik een collega van een andere afdeling binnen mijn organisatie niet direct van dienst kan zijn, zal ik een oogje in het zeil houden voor hem of haar.	38.70	110.41	.55	.922
Ik ga in gesprek met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie om te praten over eventuele problemen die zij ervaren met hun werk.	39.03	107.30	.62	.920
Ik overleg met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie over aanstaande organisatorische veranderingen.	39.00	108.57	.55	.922
Als ik antwoorden nodig heb op gevoelige vragen, zoek ik steun bij betrouwbare collega's om meer inzicht te krijgen en de zaak beter te begrijpen.	38.25	108.59	.50	.923
Tijdens informele bijeenkomsten deel ik professionele tips en hints met collega's van andere afdelingen binnen mijn organisatie.	38.92	107.54	.62	.921

Ik leg informele contacten met professionals buiten de organisatie om persoonlijke relaties buiten het bedrijf op te bouwen.	39.36	106.93	.62	.920
Ik maak gebruik van externe evenementen om nieuwe contacten te leggen met mensen van andere organisaties.	39.64	105.37	.750	.917
Wanneer ik iemand van een andere organisatie ontmoet die een belangrijk zakelijk contact voor mij kan zijn, bespreek ik onze gedeelde werkgebieden.	39.39	102.31	.78	.916
Ik kom in contact met bekenden van andere organisaties buiten de standaard werkuren.	39.59	111.25	.43	.925
Tijdens informele bijeenkomsten ontmoet ik bekenden van andere organisaties die voor mij van professioneel belang kunnen zijn.	39.49	106.39	.70	.919
Ik maak gebruik van zakelijke evenementen buiten de organisatie, zoals netwerkevenementen en conferenties, om op persoonlijk niveau met zakelijke kennissen te praten.	39.85	105.90	.79	.917

Wanneer ik kennissen van andere organisaties ontmoet, benader ik hen om bij te praten over nieuws en veranderingen in hun professionele leven.	39.48	104.65	.74	.918
Ik deel professionele tips en hints uit met bekenden van andere organisaties.	39.62	104.41	.78	.917
Ik vertrouw op kennissen buiten de organisatie voor werkgerelateerde aangelegenheden.	39.48	106.02	.66	.919

Table 7

Cronbach's Alpha for the Political Skill variable

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.886	18

Table 8 indicates that removing the items "Wanneer ik met anderen communiceer, probeer ik oprecht te zijn in wat ik zeg en doe" and "Het is belangrijk dat mensen geloven dat ik oprecht ben in wat ik zeg en doe" would lead to slight increases in Cronbach's Alpha, specifically by 0.01 and 0.05, respectively. However, these increases are considered negligible, and therefore, the removal of these items is not warranted.

Table 8

Item-Total Statistics of the variable Political Skill

Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Ik besteed veel tijd en moeite op het werk aan netwerken met anderen.	62.84	47.17	.45	.885
Ik kan de meeste mensen op hun gemak stellen.	61.49	50.65	.44	.883

Ik kan makkelijk en effectief communiceren met anderen.	61.41	48.88	.61	.877
Het is gemakkelijk voor mij om een goede relatie op te bouwen met de meeste mensen.	61.41	49.81	.53	.880
Ik begrijp mensen heel goed.	61.54	50.49	.43	.883
Ik ben goed in het opbouwen van relaties met invloedrijke mensen op het werk.	62.16	47.37	.66	.875
Ik ben goed in het aanvoelen van de motivaties en verborgen agenda's van anderen.	62.00	46.57	.61	.877
Wanneer ik met anderen communiceer, probeer ik oprecht te zijn in wat ik zeg en doe.	60.98	52.18	.28	.887
Ik heb een groot netwerk van collega's en kennissen op het werk ontwikkeld op wie ik een beroep kan doen voor ondersteuning wanneer ik echt dingen gedaan moet krijgen.	61.87	47.45	.57	.878
Op het werk ken ik veel belangrijke mensen en ben ik goed verbonden.	62.11	47.14	.59	.878
Ik besteed veel tijd op het werk aan het ontwikkelen van connecties met anderen.	62.51	46.72	.60	.877

Ik ben goed in het krijgen van sympathie van mensen.	61.75	48.32	.69	.875
Het is belangrijk dat mensen geloven dat ik oprecht ben in wat ik zeg en doe.	61.21	52.90	.15	.891
Ik probeer oprechte interesse in andere mensen te tonen.	61.38	50.34	.44	.883
Ik ben goed in het gebruiken van mijn connecties en netwerk om dingen gedaan te krijgen op het werk.	62.00	48.07	.57	.878
Ik beschik over een scherp instinct of inzicht als het aankomt op de manier waarop ik mezelf aan anderen presenteer.	61.87	48.98	.58	.878
Ik let goed op de gezichtsuitdrukkingen van mensen.	61.48	48.25	.61	.877
Ik weet altijd instinctief wat de juiste dingen zijn om te zeggen of te doen om anderen te beïnvloeden.	61.95	48.71	.54	.879

APPENDIX E

Figure 16

Normal distribution

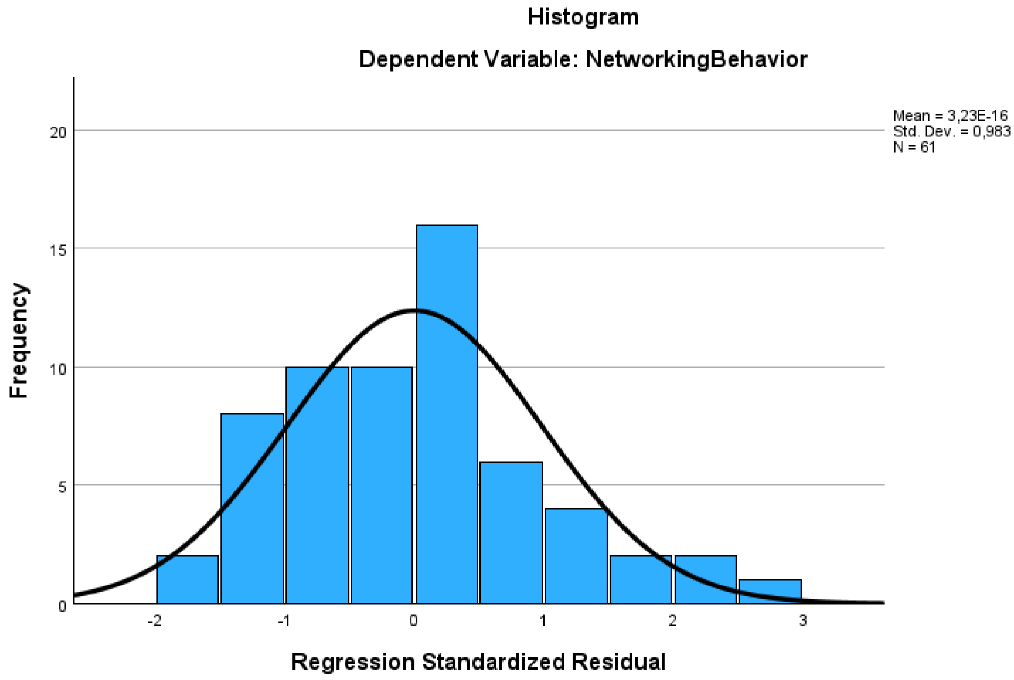


Figure 17

Normal P-Plot

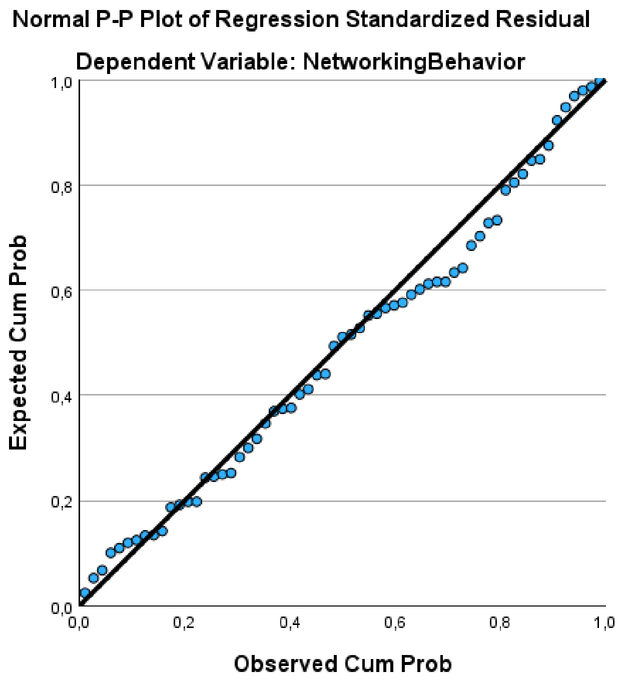
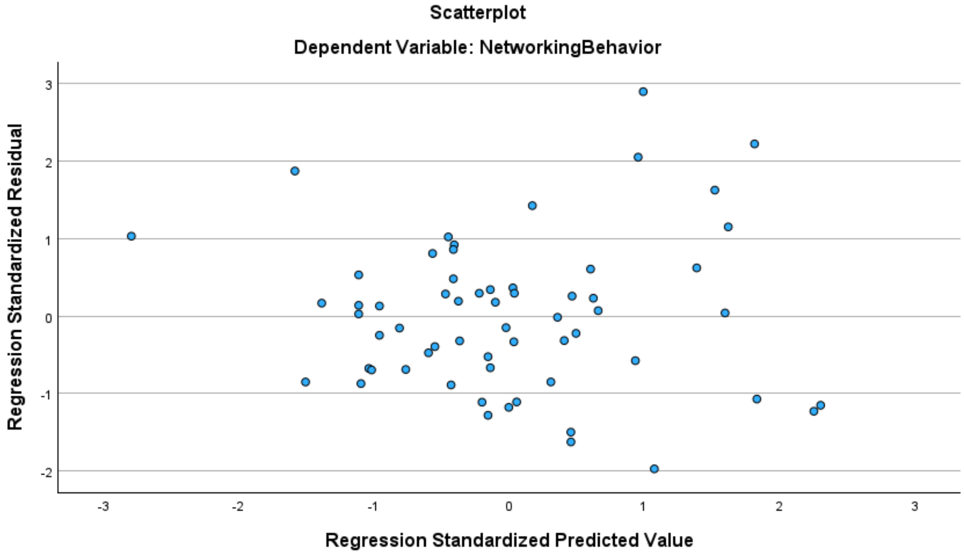


Figure 18

Scatterplot



Tabel 9

Model Summary Including Durbin-Watson Statistic

Change Statistics[b]								
Model	R	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.706[a]	.442	.498	8.934	6	54	<.001	1.920

[a] Predictors: (Constant), Political Skill, Working from Home, Department, Gender, Age, Work experience
[b] Dependent Variable: Networking Behavior

Table 10

Multicollinearity

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-1.63	.531		-3.08	.003		
	Political Skill	1.05	.14	.71	7.53	<.001	.978	1.022
	Working from Home	.002	.002	.112	1.18	.24	.978	1.022

[a] Dependent Variable: Networking Behavior