

SUNNY LEE

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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

University College London, UK

Oct 2019– | Tenured Associate Professor in Organisational Behaviour

Sep 2014–Sep 2019 | Assistant Professor in Organisational Behaviour

Leadership appointments

- Deputy Director for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion & School's Board Member (2019–2024)
- Academic Director for MSc in People Analytics and Human Centric Management (2023–)

EDUCATION

Jul 2014 | London Business School, UK

PhD in Organisational Behaviour (Doctoral Fellowship: 2008–2014)

Jul 2003 | University of Chicago, USA

Master of Public Policy (Harris Fellowship: 2001–2003)

Aug 2000 | Seoul National University, South Korea

BA in English Literature and Language (cum laude)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research explores how social and organizational dynamics shape individual career outcomes. I examine how people navigate career challenges in increasingly complex environments, ranging from stereotypes and biases to informal social networks and human-AI collaboration.

Through this work, I aim to empower employees from diverse backgrounds to grow and succeed as leaders. In doing so, I also help organizations tap into diverse talent and foster sustainable, equitable, human-centric environments for long-term success.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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

1. Liu, L.* , Kilduff, M., Lee, S.Y., & Fisher, C. (2025). Buffered by Reflected Glory? The Effects of Star Connections on Career Outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. [\[Link\]](#)
2. Kilduff, M., Wang, K.* , Lee, S.Y., Tsai, WP., Chuang YT., & Tsai FS. (2024). Hiding and seeking knowledge providing ties from rivals: A strategic perspective on network perceptions. *Academy of Management Journal*, 67, 1207–1233. [\[Link\]](#)
3. Lee, JW.* , Quintane, E., Lee, S.Y., Kilduff, M., & Ruiz, C. (2023). The strain of spanning structural holes: How brokering leads to burnout and abusive behavior. *Organization Science*, 35, 177–194. [\[Link\]](#)
4. Kniffin, K. et al. (2021). COVID-19 and the workplace: A review and preview of impacts for employees, teams, and organizations. *American Psychologist*, 76, 63–77. [\[Link\]](#)
5. Kesebir, S., Lee, S.Y., Elliot, E., & Pillutla, MM. (2019). Gender differences in lay beliefs about competition. *Motivation and Emotion*, 43, 719–739. [\[Link\]](#)

6. Moore, M., Lee, S.Y., Kim, K.*, & Cable, D. (2017). The advantage of being oneself: The role of applicant self-verification in organizational hiring decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102, 1493–1513. [\[Link\]](#)
7. Lee, S.Y., Kesebir, S., & Pillutla, MM. (2016). Gender differences in response to competition with same-gender coworkers: A relational perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 110, 869–886. [\[Link\]](#)
8. Lee, S.Y., Pitesa, M., Thau, S., & Pillutla, MM. (2015). When beauty helps and it hurts: An organizational context model of attractiveness discrimination in selection decisions. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 128, 15–28. [\[Link\]](#)
9. Birkinshaw, J., Crilly, D., Bouquet, C., & Lee, S.Y. (2015). How do firms manage strategic dualities? A process perspective. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 2, 51–78. [\[Link\]](#)
10. Lee, S.Y., Pitesa, M., Thau, S., & Pillutla, MM. (2014). Discrimination in selection decisions: Integrating stereotype fit and interdependence theories. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53, 789–812. [\[Link\]](#)
11. Inesi, E., Lee, S.Y., & Rios, K. (2014). Objects of desire: Subordinate ingratiation triggers self-objectification among the powerful. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 53, 19–30. [\[Link\]](#)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Academy of Management Best Conference Proceedings

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

Books and Book Chapters

- d. Lee, S.Y. (expected in 2026). *Your Next Move: How to Negotiate Your Life on Your Own Terms*. Quarto Group
- e. Kesebir, S., Lee, S.Y., Qiu, J.*, & Pillutla, MM. (2020). Same-sex peer norms: Implications for gender differences in negotiation. In Olekalns, M., & Kennedy, J. (Eds.), *Handbook on Gender and Negotiation*, London, England, Edward Elgar. [\[Link\]](#)

Working Paper

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

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

The details of some papers are omitted to respect blind review process.

Under Review or with R&R Invitations

13. Lee, S.Y. & Dietz, B. Interviewers' impression management, [Under 2nd Review](#)
14. Lee, S.Y. Too loyal to be promoted, [Under Review](#)
15. Wang, K.*, Kilduff, M., Quintane, E., & Lee, S.Y. Flexibility in network brokering, [Under Review](#)

Manuscript in Preparation

16. Lee, S.Y.⁺ & Puranam, P.⁺. Gender differences in organizational design (target: *AMD*)
17. Madan, N., Puranam, P., Lee, S.Y. & SMD, A. Centralized decision making (target: *OS*)

ACADEMIC SERVICES

Journal Editorial Review Board Member

- 2025– | **Academy of Management Discoveries**
- 2022– | **Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes**
- 2022– | **Motivation and Emotion**

Journal Ad-hoc Reviewer

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

Other Reviewer Roles

- UCL Reading Group (2015–)
- Academy of Management Annual Conferences (Occasionally)
- London Business School Organizational Behavior Research Day for Doctoral Students (2018–2020)
- Samsung Global Research Scholarship for Korean Doctoral Students in Management (2020–)

Examiner Roles (Committee for Tenure, Recruitment, and Grant)

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

SELECTED RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Research Talks/Presentations

- 2026 (planned) | Warwick Business School, UK
- 2026 (planned) | Surrey Business School, UK
- 2025 | The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen
- 2025 | Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea
- 2024 | Ewha University, South Korea
- 2024 | SKK Graduate School of Business, South Korea

2023 | Amazon, UK
 2023 | Sainsbury Wellcome Centre, UK
 2023 | Singapore Management University, Singapore
 2022 | Singapore Management University, Singapore
 2022 | Management Consulting Student Association, Seoul National University, South Korea
 2021 | KAIST College of Business, South Korea
 2018 | Georgia Institute of Technology, USA
 2016 | Singapore Management University, Singapore
 2014 | University College London, UK
 2014 | Erasmus University, the Netherlands

Academy of Management Annual Conferences

- 2025. Lee, S.Y. & Wang, K.*. Organizer and Presenter of the Symposium, ‘Agency and context in action: Unpacking the complexities of brokerage and team dynamics’(Denmark)
- 2025. Lee, S.Y. & Qiu, Judy. Organizer and Presenter of the Symposium ‘When organizational helping misses the mark: Rejected, avoided and unsolicited support’(Denmark)
- 2024. Lee, S.Y. & Dietz, B. Interviewer selling revisited: The effects of promoting extrinsic incentives in attracting job applicants (USA)
- 2024. Wang, K.*, Kilduff, M., Quintane, E., & Lee, S.Y. Flexibility in social network brokering (USA)
- 2024. Goh, K. et al. Organizing for inclusion: Integrating and extending research on diversity and organization design (USA)
- 2022. Tolsa–Caballero, N., & Lee, S.Y. The downside of ranking systems: Qualified candidates may quit (USA)
- 2022. Wang, K.*, Lee, S.Y., & Kilduff, M. Disappoint friends or downplay organizational norms? The influence of workplace friendship trajectory (USA)
- 2021. Wang, K.*, Lee, S.Y., & Kilduff, M. How referrals affect employees’ reactions to new hires they have referred (USA)
- 2019. Lee, J.*, Lee, S.Y., & Kilduff, M. Hidden costs of brokerage: Brokerage behavior and broker exhaustion. Presented at a symposium “Brokers Behaving Badly” (USA)
- 2018. Liu, L.*, Lee, S.Y., Fisher, C., & Kilduff, M. Great expectations? The effect of high-reputation connections on evaluations of employees (USA)
- 2017. Lee, J.*, & Lee, S.Y. The dark side of brokerage: Brokers’ energy depletion and unethicity (USA)
- 2016. Ha, J.*, Lee, S.Y., & Ku, G. The effects of self-promotion on self-promoters’ self-beliefs and job satisfactions. Presented at a symposium of the conference (USA)
- 2015. Lee, S.Y., Wakeman, W.*, & Sivanathan, N. Unwelcome compliments: The psychological costs of successful deception (Canada)
- 2014. Moore, C., Lee, S.Y., Kim, K.*, & Cable, D. Authenticity in the workplace: Highlighting costs and bridging conceptualizations (USA)
- 2013. Lee, S.Y., & Pillutla, MM. Racial discrimination taking both ways: Moderation of social goal and task type (USA)
- 2012. Lee, S.Y., Pillutla, MM., Thau, S., & Pitesa, M. Fundamental social goals and the attractiveness bias in selection decisions (USA)
- 2011. Birkinshaw, J., Lee, S.Y., & Bouquet, C. Implementing global strategy: Insights from a dual-core headquarters experiment (USA)

Other Conferences

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

RESEARCH IMPACT AND ADVISORY ROLES

Advisory Roles

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

Practitioner-Oriented Publications

1. Lee, S.Y., Liu, L.*, Fisher, C., & Kilduff, M. (2025). When working for an industry titan can hurt your success. *Harvard Business Review*. [\[Link\]](#)
2. Quintane, E., Lee, S.Y., Lee, JW., Ruiz, C., & Kilduff, M. (2024). The dark side of collaborating across silos. *Harvard Business Review*. [\[Link\]](#)
3. Lee, S.Y.⁺ & Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2024). Peter Principle: Why competent workers can become incompetent managers. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
4. Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ & Lee, S.Y.⁺ (2024). Why are difficult conversations difficult and what organizations can do about it? *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
5. Lee, S.Y.⁺ & Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ (2023). Workers fall into two camps of competence and confidence. Here's how to manage both. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
6. Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ & Lee, S.Y.⁺ (2023). If we don't develop these 4 human traits, ChatGPT can replace us, psychologists say. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
7. Lee, S.Y.⁺ & Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ (2022). The science of resting well. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
8. Lee, S.Y. (2022). Negotiation: Tackling our misconceptions. *The Guardian*. [\[Link\]](#)
9. Lee, S.Y.⁺ & Chamorro-Premuzic, T.⁺ (2021). The surprising behavioral science behind effective job negotiations. *Fast Company*. [\[Link\]](#)
10. Lee, S.Y. (2021). The art of negotiating salary and why it is important for everyone to take part. *Human Resources Review*. [\[Link\]](#)
11. Lee, S.Y. (2021). It's time we reconsidered our approach to imposter syndrome. *HR Director*. [\[Link\]](#)
12. Lee, S.Y. (2020). What has 2020 meant for female leadership? *Management Today*. [\[Link\]](#)

13. Lee, S.Y. (2020). Female academics need to embrace competition. *Times Higher Education*. [Link]

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & FUNDING

Awards

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

Fellowships & Funding

In the process of applying for several grant opportunities

- 2014– | **Internal Research Fellowship (£100,000)**, UCL School of Management
- 2008–2014 | **Ph.D. Fellowship (£144,000)**, London Business School
- 2013 | **Best Doctoral Student Paper (\$2,000)**, Samsung Global Research/AKMS (as part of the 73rd Academy of Management Annual Conferences)
- 2001–2003 | **Irving B. Harris Fellowship (\$50,000)**, University of Chicago
- 1997–2000 | **Faculty Fellowship (\$8,000)**, Seoul National University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Degree Course (MBAs and postgraduates)

In 2024, I was relieved of teaching duties at UCL in order to fulfil the increased responsibilities associated with my role as Academic Director.

- 2025 | **People Analytics**, SKK Graduate School of Business, Korea
- MBA students
 - Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.2/5.0**
- 2024 | **Negotiations and Bargaining**, SKK Graduate School of Business, Korea
- Executive MBA students
 - Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.5/5.0**
- 2023– | **Negotiations and Bargaining**, London Business School, UK
- MBA students, executive MBA students, and master's students
 - Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.5/5.0**
- 2015– | **Influence and Negotiations**, UCL, UK
- MBA students and master's students
 - Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.8/5.0**
 - Best Teaching Award (2022 & 2023)
- 2018–2021 | **Negotiation and Cross-Cultural Management**, UCL/Peking University, China
- Executive MBA students
 - Average Instructor Effectiveness Rating: **4.6/5.0**
- 2022– | **Global Business Mindset**, UCL, UK

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

Executive Education

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

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

2023– | **Succeed as a Board Member**, UCL, UK

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

2023– | **Sustainable Transformation of Business**, UCL/Bocconi University

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A custom program for senior managers at GB Style Ltd

2021 | **Executive Negotiations for Small and Medium Enterprises**, South Korea

A custom program for senior managers at GB Style Ltd

2021 | **Negotiations for Executives**, 6 weeks online

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

Other Invited Teaching Experience

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Doctoral Student Supervision

2020–2025 | **Kun Wang**. Co-advisor (placement: Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China)

2020–2023 | **Swati Thampan**. Co-advisor (placement: PWC, UK)

2018–2021 | **Nuria Tolsa-Cabellero**. Co-advisor (Indiana University Bloomington, USA)

2014–2020 | **Lei Liu**. Co-advisor (placement: University of Exeter Business School, UK)

2014–2019 | **Jung Won Lee**. Co-advisor (placement: ESSEC Business School, France)

Doctoral Student Committee Members

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

2015–2024 | Members for Other Doctoral Committees: Numerous and the details available on request

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

School Board, Growth, and External Engagement

2023– | Founder & Academic Director for MSc People Analytics and Human-Centric Management

2019–2024 | Member for the School's Senior Management Team

2023 | Played a key role in building multi-faceted collaborations with Canary Wharf Group

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

2020–2024 | Deputy Director for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

2019–2020 | Athena SWAN Leader (Acquired the Bronze Award in 2020)

2021–2024 | Founder and Chair for UCL's 30% Scholarship in liaison with 30% Club

2022– | Founder and Member for UCL Diversity Research Conference

Faculty and Research-related Services

2019–2022 | Research Committee Member

2020–2023 | Faculty Promotion Committee Member

2015, 2020, 2021 | Faculty Recruitment Committee Member

2020– | Research Ethics Committee Member

2021–2022 | Research Ethics Committee Taskforce Team

2014–2018 | Research Seminar Series Chair

2014–2021 | Reading Group Chair

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

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

Senior Marketing Program Manager (full-time)

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

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

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

Business Analyst, Management Consulting Division (full-time)

Aug 2003–Dec 2003 | **T-Plus Consulting (now EY Parthenon), South Korea**

Long-term Intern (full-time)

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

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