

Helping One's Way to the Top: Self-Monitors Achieve Status by Helping Others and Knowing Who Helps Whom

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The authors argue that high self-monitors may be more sensitive to the status implications of social exchange and more effective in managing their exchange relations to elicit conferrals of status than low self-monitors. In a series of studies, they found that high self-monitors were more accurate in perceiving the status dynamics involved both in a set of fictitious exchange relations and in real relationships involving other members of their social group. Further, high self-monitors elevated their social status among their peers by establishing a reputation as a generous exchange partner. Specifically, they were more likely than low self-monitors to be sought out for help and to refrain from asking others for help. This behavior provides one explanation for why high self-monitors acquire elevated status among their peers—they are more attuned to status dynamics in exchange relations and adapt their behavior in ways that elicit status.

Keywords: self-monitoring, exchange relations, helping, social status

Self-monitoring scholars have called for status to occupy a more prominent role in theory and research on self-monitoring (see Gangestad & Snyder, 2000, p. 547). We heed this call by considering the way in which high self-monitors perceive the status dynamics of exchange relations and alter their exchange behavior in ways that elicit status conferrals from their peers. Previous researchers have suggested that high self-monitors have (a) heightened awareness of their situations—they pay more attention to their social environment—and (b) expressive control—they are more responsive to social and interpersonal cues of situational appropriateness (Snyder, 1987). We draw on these two aspects of self-monitoring behavior—social awareness and expressive control—to explain how high self-monitors perceive the relative status of their own and others' exchange relations and attain elevated positions of status in social groups.

Although previous work alludes to how high self-monitors might function in their exchange relations, no research has directly examined how self-monitoring relates to patterns of exchange across relations or to perceptions of status dynamics within relations. Such evidence could help personality scholars understand how self-monitoring comes to life in everyday interactions: Do

high self-monitors better comprehend the networks of relationships around them? And how do high self-monitors attain positions of status and influence among their peers—is it partly driven by their ability to establish a generous reputation as an exchange partner? In this article we address these questions, arguing that high self-monitors do, in fact, better understand the networks around them and that they can elicit conferrals of social status by altering their exchange behavior (e.g., by refraining from seeking help). Taken together, these perceptions and behaviors provide a crucial theoretical link, we suggest, between self-monitoring and social status.

Social Status and Social Exchange Dynamics

Sorokin (1927) argued that status can appear in many different forms, including economic, political, informational, and social. In the present research, we have focused our attention on social status, which refers to a position of elevated social standing and interpersonal influence (Bourdieu, 1984). Social status is conferred to people on the basis of their apparent possession of attributes (e.g., competence, generosity) held as ideal by other members of their social group (Wegener, 1992). To the extent that a focal individual possesses a unique value or has provided something of unique value to the group, others are willing to be persuaded by that individual and weigh his or her opinions more heavily in their decision-making (e.g., Anderson, John, Keltner, & Kring, 2001).

Exchange behavior, particularly the giving and receiving of help, advice, and social support, can operate as a basic source of social status conferrals. Studies have shown that people tend to be held in higher esteem if others perceive them to be more generous—providing more help and advice to others than they receive in return (e.g., Blau, 1963; Flynn, 2003). Helping behavior can also

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act as an important source of interpersonal influence (Jones, 1964; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). For example, if an individual is having difficulty accomplishing a task, she may enlist the support of others who have received favors from her in the past. Assuming these help recipients have not yet reciprocated, they are obligated to provide help in return (Gouldner, 1960). Thus, status dynamics in exchange relations are partly driven by previous acts of generosity—the more generous you have been in the past, the more status and influence you have over your peers in the future.

Beginning with Malinowski's (1922) and Mauss's (1925) early work on gift giving and exchange behavior, researchers have recognized the trade-off between help seeking and conferrals of status and influence. Those who assume the role of help seeker tend to occupy a lower status position because they "expose themselves to denial and rejection" and acknowledge their dependence on others (Goffman, 1971, p. 114). If people tend to seek help often, more often than they provide it, they risk ruining their reputation as an exchange partner and undermining their status (e.g., Blau, 1963; Lee, 1997). This implies that we can recognize the status dynamics of an exchange relation by examining the pattern of resource sharing—who tends to give help and who tends to receive it. Consider the following example of two coworkers, Steve and Amy. If Steve and Amy seek (or do not seek) assistance from each other, this would indicate an equivalent-status exchange relation. However, if Steve is willing to request assistance from Amy, but Amy is not inclined to request assistance from Steve, this would indicate a high-status exchange relation for Amy and a low-status exchange relation for Steve.¹

Given their concern for maintaining a positive public image, high self-monitors may be more sensitive to the status dynamics of exchange behavior in two ways. First, high self-monitors may be more perceptive in recognizing patterns of exchange relations (i.e., who occupies a position of higher status or which actor is relatively more dependent on the other for assistance). Second, high self-monitors may be motivated to seek conferrals of social status by carefully managing their exchange relations. Specifically, they may attempt to maintain a generous pattern of behavior in which they refrain from requesting help from others but are willing to provide help when others approach them (i.e., leading others to view them as giving more than they receive). We explore these two outcomes—perception and behavior—in the next two sections.

Self-Monitoring and Accuracy in Perceiving Exchange Relations

Self-monitoring is characterized by an acuteness of perception, discernment, and understanding of social situations (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Whereas most people possess a discriminative facility, or an innate "sensitivity to the subtle clues in the situation" (Mischel & Shoda, 1998, p. 246), a high self-monitor's discriminative facility may be particularly acute (Snyder, 1974, 1987). High self-monitors attend closely to the behavior of others in their immediate environment. They recognize changes in social dynamics and can diagnose differences in behavioral norms from one situation to the next (see, e.g., Costanzo & Archer, 1989; Funder & Harris, 1986; Hosch, Leippe, Marchioni, & Cooper, 1984). This heightened awareness of social and informational cues can assist high self-monitors in accurately identifying social structures—the

makeup of exchange relations that connect members of their social group.

Human beings sometimes have difficulty encoding, representing, and inferring others' social relationships (e.g., Janicik & Larrick, 2005; Rubin & Zajonc, 1969; Zajonc & Burnstein, 1965; see Kenny, Bond, Mohr, & Hom, 1996, for contrary evidence), but the ability to learn relationship patterns is a critical skill that has been linked to important individual resources, including power and reputation (Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994; Krackhardt, 1990; Krackhardt & Kilduff, 1999). Researchers have found that high self-monitors are more aware of the thoughts and feelings of others in their social networks (e.g., Ickes, Stinson, Bissonette, & Garcia, 1990). Such perspicacity should help inform high self-monitors of the exchange relations that exist among members of their social network. That is, high self-monitors should have more accurate representations of others' cognitive networks, enabling them to answer the question "who is friends with whom in this group?" and, more specifically, "who occupies a position of relatively higher status in these exchange relations?" (i.e., who goes to whom for help and advice?).

Self-Monitoring and Exchange Behavior

Aside from having greater awareness of social and informational cues, high self-monitors are motivated to act on these cues in ways that cultivate a favorable public image. High self-monitors are like social pragmatists, attempting to impress others in order to win their approval and respect (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000, p. 531). Previous researchers have found that high self-monitors' need for social status can affect their decision making as consumers (DeBono, 1987). Whereas high self-monitors react more positively to advertisements for products that are associated with prestige (e.g., a luxury car or a fashionable piece of clothing), low self-monitors focus more on quality and reliability (e.g., DeBono & Snyder, 1989; Snyder & Debono, 1985). This need for a positive public appearance also affects high self-monitors' decision-making in choosing romantic partners—they pursue physically attractive romantic partners (e.g., Snyder & Debono, 1985) to enhance their social standing among their peers (e.g., Sigall & Landy, 1973; Snyder & Debono, 1985).

Motivated to maintain a positive public image, high self-monitors may be particularly sensitive to the status dynamics of dyadic exchange relations—appreciating the negative effect that being indebted to others can have on their reputation. Noting this dynamic, high self-monitors may avoid seeking help from others and instead be inclined to provide help when they are asked for it. This prediction runs counter to findings from previous researchers indicating that high self-monitors are less willing to demonstrate commitment to their exchange partners, particularly their romantic partners (e.g., Snyder & Simpson, 1984). Instead, high self-monitors may be willing to demonstrate higher levels of commitment to their exchange partners by being generous in their exchange relations (i.e., being the target of requests more often than

¹ Some psychologists have noted circumstances in which help seeking can provide a status advantage. For example, Jones (1964) proposed that an individual who requests help from a high-status target may successfully ingratiate themselves to that individual in the short-term, thereby elevating his or her own status in the long-term.

requesting help), thereby enhancing others' impressions of them. Thus, maintaining an asymmetric pattern of exchange behavior, in which people perceive them as more rather than less generous, might serve as a means for high self-monitors to acquire the elevated social status they desire.

Summary of Predictions

We made several specific predictions. First, we posited that high self-monitors would be more accurate than other participants in perceiving others' exchange relations. They would not only recognize whether an exchange relation exists between two people but also recognize which of the two occupied a relatively higher status position. Second, high self-monitors may differ from low self-monitors in their exchange behavior. We predicted that high self-monitors would be viewed as having higher status than other participants, in part because of the way in which they demonstrated more generosity. Being more sensitive to the negative status implications of receiving help, high self-monitors would be less likely than low self-monitors to request help from others. On the other hand, high self-monitors would also be more sensitive to the positive status implications of being sought out for help. Therefore, high self-monitors would cultivate a public image of someone who should be sought out for help. Taken together, these predictions imply a final prediction: Perceived generosity would mediate the relationship between self-monitoring and social status.

Plan of Study

We tested our predictions in four studies. In Study 1 we examined the proposed link between an individual's level of self-monitoring and his or her need for social status. In Study 2 we investigated the relationship between self-monitoring and accuracy in perceiving exchange relations. Specifically, we measured an individual's ability to learn an unfamiliar set of exchange relations using an interactive computerized exercise. In Study 3, we gathered data on actual exchange behavior and judgments of social status and examined whether high self-monitors are more likely to elicit conferrals of social status and whether others' impressions of their exchange behavior mediate this relationship. Finally, in a fourth study, we gathered data on people's perceptions of emergent exchange relations among members of their social group to determine whether self-monitoring led to greater accuracy in judging interpersonal exchange relations and whether high self-monitors were more likely to occupy a high-status position in these relations.

Study 1

Embedded in our theoretical arguments is a strong assumption that self-monitoring is related to a need for social status. Although several references to this idea exist in the self-monitoring literature, we find little direct empirical evidence of this important theoretical link. We decided to test this assumption—that high self-monitors are motivated by a need for social status—directly.

Method

Participants

One hundred Columbia University undergraduate students participated in this study in exchange for \$5.

Procedure

We asked participants to complete a brief questionnaire that included eight items designed to capture the need for social status. Sample items included "being a highly valued member of my social group is important to me" and "I enjoy having influence over other people's decision making" (see the Appendix for the complete list of these items). Each participant was instructed to rate the extent to which they agreed with each item on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Their responses to these eight items were averaged to create an overall measure of need for social status ($\bar{x} = 5.36$, $SD = 0.87$; $\alpha = .82$).

The questionnaire also included two measures of self-monitoring. Given the controversy surrounding the reliability of self-monitoring measures (see John, Cheek, & Klohnen, 1996), we felt it was important to replicate our findings using multiple measures. Our first measure, the Self-Monitoring Scale (SMS; Snyder, 1974), consists of 25 self-descriptive statements intended to capture several elements of social adroitness, including concern with situational appropriateness, attention to social cues, and ability to control expressive behavior.² Each of the items (e.g., "I'm not always the person I appear to be") was rated using true or false responses. We summed the true responses to all 25 items (some of the items were reverse scored) to create an overall score for self-monitoring ($\bar{x} = 13.17$, $SD = 3.61$). Those who are high self-monitors should have high scores on the SMS, and those who are low self-monitors should have low scores.

We also measured self-monitoring using a 13-item scale developed and validated by Lennox and Wolfe (1984). Sample items in the Lennox and Wolfe scale include "in social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for" and "I am often able to read people's true emotions correctly through their eyes." Responses to these 13 items were given using a 4-point scale that ranged from 1 (*not like me at all*) to 4 (*very much describes me*). The responses were then averaged to create an overall self-monitoring score ($\bar{x} = 2.86$, $SD = 0.52$). The reliability (alpha) coefficient for the entire scale was .84.

Results

We had suggested that high self-monitors have an acute need for social status that drives some of their exchange behavior. As expected, the two measures of self-monitoring were highly correlated ($r = .53$, $p < .01$). Further, the data reveal positive and significant correlations between the participants' reported need for social status and their self-monitoring scores, both for the SMS ($r = .31$, $p < .01$) and for the Lennox and Wolfe scale ($r = .25$, $p = .01$). These preliminary results support our assumption that high self-monitors are motivated by a strong need for social status.

Discussion

The results reported here provide some initial evidence of the link between self-monitoring and a need for social status. Participants in our study who rated themselves as high self-monitors also gave higher responses on our measure of need for social status, which included items such as "I want my peers to respect me and hold me in high esteem" and "I am not concerned with my status among my peers" (reverse scored). In the studies that follow, we

² Following the recommendation offered by John et al. (1996, pp. 772–773), we refrained from using the 18-item revised SMS because it overlapped too closely with extraversion. Given that extraversion can be related to social status (e.g., Anderson et al., 2001), we felt it was important to heed this recommendation.

consider how high self-monitors may show themselves to be more sensitive to status dynamics in exchange relations by demonstrating greater accuracy in judging asymmetric exchange relations and altering their exchange behavior in ways that elicit status conferrals.

Study 2

In our second study, we tested our prediction that high self-monitors would be more perceptive of status differences in interpersonal relations than low self-monitors (e.g., one actor influences the other actor in the dyad, but that influence is not reciprocal).

Method

Participants

Seventy undergraduate students at an East Coast university participated in this study. Participants (46 women and 24 men) were recruited via flyers that advertised a study on learning relationships. They were compensated \$10 for their participation.

Procedure

At the beginning of the session, participants were instructed to fill out a brief questionnaire that included a measure of self-monitoring. They were then asked to complete an exercise that measures how accurately they can learn social relations and the status hierarchy of these relations. The design of this exercise was identical to that originally developed by DeSoto (1960). It focused on a fictitious group of four individuals named Bob, Joe, Mary, and Sally. No other personal information about these four individuals was provided.

Participants were told that the objective of the task was to learn the nature of the four targets' dyadic exchange relations ("who influences whom?"). For many people, this particular exercise can be difficult because the network of exchange relations is incomplete. That is, several of the relationships are asymmetrical, so that one individual has more status than the other (e.g., Sally influences Joe, but Joe does not influence Sally). In each round, the participant was given information about each of the 12 possible relations among the four targets (e.g., "Joe influences Bob") and asked to indicate whether the information was true or false. After providing a response, the participant was informed whether the response was correct. The first round was a preliminary trial that was intended to give participants a complete set of information about the 12 relationships. Before each subsequent round, the 12 bits of information were shuffled.

Rather than have participants administer flash cards and monitor their own performance, as was the case in the original design, we created a computerized version of the exercise. Again, participants were given information about each of the 12 possible dyadic relations and asked to indicate whether the information was true or false. After providing their response to each item, the participant was informed whether it was correct or not and then asked to move on to the next item (the participant had to provide a response before proceeding to the next item). At the end of the round, if the participant answered any of the 12 items incorrectly, the computer automatically shuffled the items and repeated the exercise again. The exercise was completed when the participant correctly answered each of the 12 items for two consecutive rounds (as was the case in the original exercise).

Eleven participants were unable or unwilling to complete the exercise. For those who completed the exercise, the average number of rounds they needed to finish was 13.29 ($SD = 7.09$).

Measures

Accuracy. To assess accuracy, we measured whether the participants answered the items correctly or not. In this case, we consider two dependent variables: (a) the likelihood that a respondent will identify all 12 exchange relations correctly in a given round and (b) the proportion of correct responses given for each round. We did not include responses from the first round because the participant was not yet given information about the nature of each exchange relation. We also removed responses from the last two rounds because the successful completion of these two rounds indicated that the participant had already learned each of the 12 exchange relations. Thus, if the participant required 10 rounds to complete the exercise, we used their responses only from Rounds 2 through 8.

Self-monitoring. We assessed the participants' self-monitoring personality with the SMS. Each of the items (e.g., "I'm not always the person I appear to be") was rated using true or false responses. We summed the true responses to all 25 items (some of the items were reverse coded) to create an overall score for self-monitoring ($\bar{x} = 13.83$, $SD = 3.96$).

Results

Our main interest is whether high self-monitors were more accurate in their perceptions of exchange relations. We tested this idea in two ways—first by predicting the number of trials participants needed to complete the task and second by analyzing the accuracy of individual responses on each round (i.e., the proportion of correct responses). We estimated the effect of self-monitoring on the number of trials needed to complete the task using a hazard model, in which failure in our model is completing the task and the number of rounds is our duration variable. We included the participant's sex (0 = male, 1 = female) and age to control for demographic differences (e.g., Flynn & Ames, 2006). Participants who did not complete the task were treated as censored observations, which contribute to the calculation of our parameter estimates. By including these censored observations, we rule out the possibility that high self-monitors completed the task more quickly but were also more likely to drop out of the study.

Given that we focus on participant rounds as the observations in our analysis, we have repeated observations for each participant. This kind of clustering violates the independence assumption and can artificially reduce the size of standard errors. To adjust our standard errors for repeated observations, we included a random effect for each participant in our sample. With these random effects, the results of our duration model indicate that an increase in self-monitoring led to an increase in accuracy ($\beta = -.89$, $z = -2.03$, $p < .05$). Put differently, high self-monitors required fewer rounds than other participants to complete the task. Thus, high self-monitors appeared to demonstrate greater facility in identifying these fictitious relations, most of which were characterized by status asymmetry.

Next, we analyzed the association between self-monitoring and the performance of participants on each round using ordinary least squares regression. Our dependent variable was the proportion of correct responses from the focal round. We included the participant's sex (0 = male, 1 = female) and age to control for demographic differences. In addition to these controls, we included a dummy variable that indicated whether the participant completed the task (0 = yes, 1 = no), a measure that represented the number of attempts the participant had previously made, and the proportion of correct responses from earlier rounds. Including the number of earlier rounds and the proportion of correct responses from earlier

rounds allowed us to control for the respondent's ability to learn the relationships. Again, we have repeated observations for each individual, so we introduced a random effect to adjust our standard errors.

In this regression analysis, the participant's self-monitoring score once again had a significant effect on the accuracy measure, $\beta = .09$, $t(86) = 2.68$, $p < .01$, even when we controlled for the number of attempts made in earlier rounds—that is, even when we controlled for the fact that high self-monitors may learn the overall network more quickly than low self-monitors. Specifically, high self-monitors were more likely to report each exchange relation correctly than were low self-monitors. Taken together with the results from the duration model, these findings suggest that high self-monitors may be better able to perceive status-asymmetric exchange relations, at least in this fictitious social network.

Discussion

The results from Study 2 support our prediction that high self-monitors are more accurate in perceiving exchange relations. Their enhanced accuracy reflects not only an ability to detect whether an exchange relation exists but also what the relative status of the actors involved in the relation may be (e.g., Bob influences Mary). These results seem consistent with findings from previous research on self-monitoring and person perception (e.g., Ickes, Stinson, Bissonette, & Garcia, 1990). However, these results are, of course, limited. They do not indicate whether such sensitivity to the status dynamics of exchange relations can also affect high self-monitors' behavior and their ability to elicit conferrals of social status.

In Study 3, we built on the findings from Study 2 by examining the behavior and reputations of high self-monitors in the workplace. In particular, we were interested in whether high self-monitors acquire more status and influence among their coworkers than do low self-monitors. Further, we examined how self-monitoring relates to exchange dynamics—are high self-monitors more sensitive to the status implications of exchange and therefore more likely to demonstrate generous exchange behavior (according to their fellow coworkers)? Finally, we tested the idea that patterns of exchange and corresponding impressions of generosity can mediate the relationship between self-monitoring and conferrals of social status. That is, we examined whether high self-monitors acquire more generous reputations that, in turn, allow them to acquire more status and influence over their colleagues.

Study 3

We tested these ideas by examining exchange dynamics in the workplace, a context in which conferrals of social status are highly valued and earnestly sought.

Method

Participants

The participants were 306 students enrolled in a 2-year full-time master of business administration (MBA) program at an East Coast university. The sample consisted of 84 women (27%) and 222 men (73%).

As part of a class exercise in an organizational behavior course, participants were required to gather feedback from several former coworkers. Participants identified their respondents and contacted them directly with a standard set of instructions. Respondents were asked to use an anonymous online survey to rate the participant on several dimensions, including generosity and social status.

On average, participants gathered 4.32 ($SD = 1.51$) responses from work colleagues. We asked raters to clarify how well they knew the ratee using a 4-point scale that ranges from 1 (*not well at all*) to 4 (*extremely well*). The average rating for familiarity was 3.15 ($SD = 0.44$). Raters were informed that these ratings would remain confidential and would not affect the participant's course grade. In a separate questionnaire, each participant was also asked to provide self-report ratings of self-monitoring and other personality variables. These measures are described in more detail below.

Measures

Social status. According to Anderson, John, Keltner, and Kring (2001) and others (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984; Ridgeway, 1991; Wegener, 1992), high-status individuals are not only held in higher esteem but also are given greater influence over group decision making and are sought out for their affiliation and support. To capture this notion of interpersonal influence as a key component of social status, we asked respondents to rate the focal participant on five items, including "s/he is able to persuade other people and change their opinions," "s/he fails to direct and steer meetings in his/her favor" (reverse coded), and "s/he is able to build coalitions to get things done." Respondents indicated the extent to which each of these statements characterized the target using 7-point scales that range from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). The overall reliability (alpha) coefficient for the five-item scale was .83. The average of these responses was used to represent others' perceptions of each participant's status ($\bar{x} = 5.50$, $SD = 0.52$).

Perceived generosity. In addition to rating the participant's social status, coworkers were asked to provide ratings of the participant's helpfulness, or generosity. To assess generosity, we used five items: (a) "s/he is willing to help when needed," (b) "s/he asks for help from others but does not reciprocate in turn (reverse coded)," (c) "s/he is flexible and tries to accommodate others' needs," (d) "s/he is not effective at giving helpful/constructive feedback to others" (reverse coded), and (e) "s/he is unwilling to sacrifice his/her self interest for the good of the team" (reverse coded). Respondents indicate the extent to which each of these statements characterized the target using 7-point scales that range from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). The overall reliability (alpha) coefficient for the five-item scale was .70. The average of these responses was used to represent others' perceptions of the target's generosity ($\bar{x} = 5.98$, $SD = 0.49$).

Self-monitoring. We measured self-monitoring using the 13-item scale developed by Lennox and Wolfe. Responses to these 13 items were given using a 6-point scale that ranged from 1 (*certainly always false*) to 6 (*certainly always true*; $\bar{x} = 4.16$, $SD = 0.51$). The overall reliability (alpha) coefficient for the scale was .80.

Control Variables

We have argued that self-monitoring behavior leads to conferrals of social status, but it may be that status leads to self-monitoring behavior (because high-status people feel compelled to maintain their positive public image). Although this possibility seems at odds with research on status and attention focus (e.g., Fiske, 1993; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003), we nevertheless thought it was important to consider. To this end, we followed previous research on status conferrals (e.g., Flynn, 2003) by gathering several individual measures of status. In particular, participants were asked to report their sex and race (coded as a dummy variable: 1 = White; 0 = non-White), which serve as diffuse status characteristics (e.g., Ridgeway, 1991). To control for access to resources (e.g., Blau, 1963), we

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Variables in Study 3

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Class	—									
2. White	-.09	—								
3. Female	-.13*	.00	—							
4. Work experience	.13*	-.13*	-.06	—						
5. Extraversion	-.04	.06	.06	-.05	—					
6. Openness	.00	.06	.06	.03	.20**	—				
7. Blirtatiousness	-.05	.10	-.12*	-.13*	.43**	.13*	—			
8. Overall self-monitoring	-.01	-.03	.11	-.02	.26**	.18**	.28**	—		
9. Perceived generosity	-.21**	.02	.13*	-.05	-.05	-.07	-.08	.11	—	
10. Social status	-.10	.08	-.02	-.02	.12*	.09	.07	.16**	0.51**	—
<i>M</i>	0.58	0.54	0.28	5.74	4.98	5.55	3.06	4.16	5.98	5.50
<i>SD</i>	0.49	0.50	0.45	3.29	1.54	1.13	0.66	0.51	0.49	0.52

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

collected two variables. First, as a measure of previous work experience, participants were asked to report the number of years they had worked before enrolling in graduate school. Second, to control for intelligence, we collected each participant's undergraduate grade point average.

To provide evidence of discriminant validity, we attempted to control for several other traits that might explain our findings: extraversion, blirtatiousness, and openness to experience. In the past, measures of self-monitoring have been shown to overlap significantly with measures of extraversion, which also refer to an outward, or social, disposition (e.g., John et al., 1996). Blirtatiousness, which captures how quickly, frequently, and effusively people respond to their partners in conversation, is also closely linked to the self-monitoring construct, although it is typically associated with low rather than high self-monitoring. Openness to experience has been linked to image enhancement (e.g., Flynn, 2005) as well as social status (e.g., Hogan & Hogan, 1991; Mann, 1959).

We measured extraversion and openness using the Ten Item Personality measure (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003), which captures each Big-Five dimension with a pair of items (e.g., "is extraverted, enthusiastic"). Participants rated their level of extraversion and openness using a scale that ranges from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 7 (*agree strongly*). We calculated participants' average responses to these two items ($r_{\text{extraversion}} = .61, p < .01$; $r_{\text{openness}} = .46, p < .01$) to compile a score for each construct (extraversion: $\bar{x} = 4.98, SD = 1.54$; openness: $\bar{x} = 5.55, SD = 1.13$). We measured blirtatiousness using the BLIRT scale (Swann & Rentfrow, 2001). Participants rated the eight BLIRT items on a scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Sample items include "it often takes me awhile to figure out how to express myself" (reverse scored) and "if I have something to say, I don't hesitate to say it" ($\bar{x} = 3.06, SD = 0.66$). The coefficient alpha for this scale is .73.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations are reported in Table 1.³ To test our predictions, we conducted regression analyses following the steps outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). For each regression, we included our entire set of control variables.

We predicted that high self-monitors would be better able than low self-monitors to elicit status conferrals from their colleagues. Consistent with this argument, we found a significant positive coefficient for self-monitoring on social status, $\beta = .15, t(258) = 2.27, p < .05$. We also argued that high self-monitors can increase

their social status by adapting their behavior in exchange relations, being more rather than less helpful to their peers. That is, a high self-monitor's elevated status may be partly due to her or his generosity (being the target of help rather than soliciting help). In fact, the effect of self-monitoring on perceived generosity was positive and significant, $\beta = .14, t(258) = 2.02, p < .05$.

Finally, we proposed that conferrals of social status may be partly driven by perceived generosity, an assumption that has been widely cited but rarely demonstrated (cf. Blau, 1963; Flynn, 2003). In this sample, the link between perceived generosity and social status is positive and significant, $\beta = .56, t(258) = 10.17, p < .01$. To test the idea that generosity is a means by which conferrals of social status can be elicited, we conducted a regression in which the measure of status was regressed on the measures of self-monitoring and generosity simultaneously (e.g., Baron & Kenny, 1986). In a combined model, the predictive power of perceived generosity remained strong, $\beta = .56, t(257) = 10.21, p < .01$, whereas the predictive power of self-monitoring dropped more substantially, $\beta = .08, t(257) = 1.36, ns$, indicating that perceived generosity acted as a mediator between self-monitoring and conferrals of social status. To test the significance of this mediation effect, we calculated a Sobel statistic. The Sobel score was 1.98, which is significant ($p < .05$). A summary of the mediating analyses is depicted in Figure 1.

Discussion

Our results suggest that self-monitoring may be a personological determinant of social status. High self-monitors were considered high-status members of their groups, in part because of their exchange behavior. According to our findings, generosity, or at

³ At the request of the school administration, we have not reported the means, standard deviations, and correlations for the participants' undergraduate grade point average and GMAT scores (from Studies 2 and 3) in Tables 1, 2, and 3. However, it is important to note that the means and standard deviations for these two variables are nearly identical to the means and standard deviations for the entire school population.

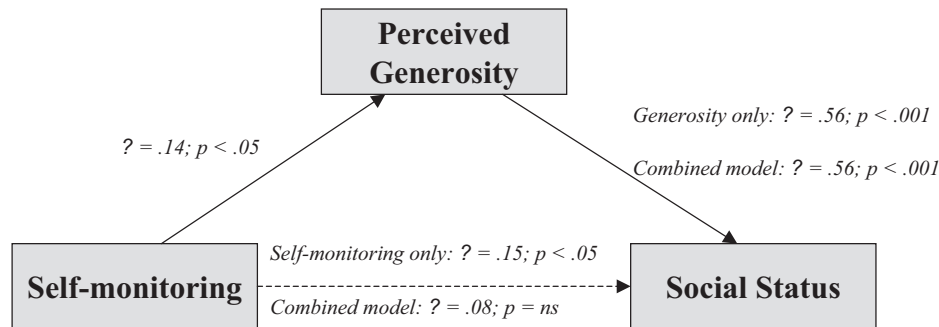


Figure 1. Perceived generosity mediates the relationship between self-monitoring and social status.

least a generous reputation, served as a means by which high self-monitors gained status in the eyes of their peers. Further, the extent to which peers rated participants as being generous mediated the relationship between self-monitoring and social status. In fact, these results remained robust even when we controlled for several measures of demographic- and resource-based status. Although these additional control variables do not completely remove the possibility of reverse causality, they do diminish the likelihood that status led to an increase in self-monitoring in this sample, rather than vice versa. In addition, our hypothesis was supported despite the fact that our generosity measure (the mediator) had a restricted range (mean of almost 6 on a 7-point scale), thereby making the test of our hypothesis more conservative.

Taken together, the findings from our first two studies suggest that (a) high self-monitors demonstrate more accuracy in perceiving status dynamics in exchange relations and (b) their generous reputations enable them to increase their social status. Although these results are promising, we also note their limitations. In particular, the relations examined in Study 2 were fabricated, whereas those considered in Study 3 were difficult to compare—participants worked in a wide range of industries, in which specific norms of interpersonal interaction may have affected their behavior. We felt it was important to replicate these findings in a field setting in which group membership is restricted. Further, we wanted to look more carefully at the helping behavior mechanism, specifically the direction of help given and received. Is it the case that high self-monitors are more often sought out for help, more loath to request help from others, or perhaps both?

In Study 4, we examined dyadic exchange relations and assessed the likelihood that people would be sought out for help and their inclination to request help. This allows us to determine how high self-monitors are building generous reputations (by providing help to others or by not imposing on them) and whether they tend to occupy high-status positions in these exchange relations. As mentioned earlier, the status dynamics of an exchange relation can be inferred by examining the pattern of resource sharing. For example, if A is willing to request assistance from B but B is not inclined to request assistance from A, this would indicate a high-status exchange relation for B and a low-status exchange relation for A. High self-monitors, we believed, would be more likely to develop exchange relations in which they occupy high-status positions (as help giver rather than help seeker).

Study 4

Method

Participants

The participants were 180 MBA students from an East Coast university. During the 1st year of the MBA program, students were required to take courses with the same group of fellow students (referred to as a *cluster*). Each cluster contained 60 individuals. The sample was 73% men and 27% women; 69% were White, 31% were non-White.

This MBA student sample offers several advantages for a study of how high self-monitors may perceive and develop exchange relations. The composition of each cluster is stable over a specific period of time. Further, MBA students have ample opportunity to observe exchange relations among their colleagues because they spend a considerable amount of time with each other (as a cluster), in and out of class. Finally, help from peers is considered a critical resource for students who hope to enhance their academic performance as well as their career prospects.

Procedure

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that assessed the nature of their exchange relations with and among their “clustermates.” At the time the survey was administered, students had been interacting with other members of their cluster for 8 weeks. The questionnaire was divided into several sections. The first section presented a complete list of students in the cluster. Using this list, participants were asked to indicate “whom would you go to for help or for advice if you had a question or a problem? Such help or advice might include assistance on a course assignment, copies of notes from classes you may have missed, career consultations, or other things.” A small sample of 2nd-year students previously indicated these kinds of helping behaviors were both typical and significant.

In the following section of the survey, participants were presented with the same list of clustermates, but in this case they were asked to indicate which members of their cluster might come to them for help or advice. Participants were asked to describe both sides of each dyadic exchange relation (R) because two parties can have different impressions of the same interaction (Krackhardt, 1987; Laumann & Knoke, 1987). Thus, for each pair, we know R_{ij} , R_{ij} , R_{ji} and R_{ji} . R_{ij} indicates the exchange relation from person i to person j as reported by person i (i.e., person i 's account of whether he would go to person j for help and advice), whereas R_{ji} indicates the exchange relation from person i to person j as reported by person j (i.e., person j 's account of whether person i would come to him or her for help and advice).

Participants were also asked to describe exchange relations among other members of their cluster. We used a method of data collection pioneered by David Krackhardt (1987) in which a focal participant is asked to describe

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables (Accuracy Analysis) in Study 4

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Accuracy	—											
2. Section 1	-.13**	—										
3. Section 2	.08**	-.43**	—									
4. Same team (ij)	.02**	-.06**	.05**	—								
5. Same team (iq)	.00	.01**	.01**	-.01**	—							
6. Same team (jq)	-.19**	.01**	.01**	-.01**	-.01**	—						
7. Same race (ij)	-.01**	.00	-.12**	-.04**	.00	.00	—					
8. Same race (iq)	-.01**	.01**	-.08**	-.01**	-.01**	.00	.16**	—				
9. Same race (jq)	-.05**	.01**	-.08**	.01	.00	-.01**	.15**	.18**	—			
10. Same sex (ij)	.00	.00	.02**	-.05**	.00	.00	.08**	.02**	.02**	—		
11. Same sex (iq)	-.01**	.00	.00	-.01**	-.04**	.00	.02**	.07**	.02**	.16**	—	
12. Same sex (jq)	-.05**	-.01	.00	.01**	.00	-.05**	.03**	.03**	.07**	.17**	.15**	—
13. Tie strength (ij)	-.05**	.07**	-.05**	.26**	.00	.00	.05**	.01**	.00	.00	-.02**	.01**
14. Tie strength (iq)	-.07**	.08**	-.05**	.00	.30**	-.01	.01*	.05**	.01**	.00	.03**	.01**
15. Mutual ties (ij)	-.14**	.32**	-.22**	.06**	.01**	.01*	.01**	.01	.02**	.03**	.00	.02**
16. Mutual ties (iq)	-.15**	.30**	-.21**	.00	.09**	.00	.02**	.05**	.02**	.01**	.05**	.01**
17. Mutual ties (jq)	-.26**	.32**	-.21**	-.02**	.00	.09**	.00	.01**	.05**	.00	.00	.05**
18. Network size (i)	-.10**	.31**	-.26**	.00	.02**	.00	.04**	.02**	.03**	.01**	.03**	.00
19. Network size (j)	-.18**	.34**	-.27**	-.02**	.00	.02**	.01**	.01**	.03**	-.01*	-.02**	.02**
20. Network size (q)	-.18**	.30**	-.26**	-.02**	.01	.00	.02**	.03**	.03**	.00	.02**	.02**
21. Extraversion (i)	-.01**	.08**	.03**	-.01*	-.01**	.01	.00	-.01**	-.01*	.00	.00	.01**
22. Self-monitoring (i)	.00	-.01**	.01	.01**	-.01**	.00	.05**	.06**	.00	.01**	-.01**	.01**
M	0.83	0.32	0.28	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.61	0.59	0.60	0.59	0.60	0.59
SD	0.37	0.47	0.45	0.21	0.22	0.22	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49

Note. *i* represents ego (i.e., the respondent) and *j* and *q* represent Alter 1 and Alter 2, respectively.
p* < .05. *p* < .01.

the exchange relation between each pair of individuals in a group. In Krackhardt’s original studies, small samples were used, which made it feasible for each participant to describe the exchange relations of every other group member. Our large sample size led us to modify this technique by randomly selecting a subset of the group (7 to 9 clustermates) for each participant and asking that participant to describe the exchange relations for each person in the subset. The participants were presented with a customized grid, which included the names of each of their clustermates in the rows and approximately 8 of their randomly selected clustermates in the columns. Each participant was asked to indicate which of their clustermates listed in each of the columns would go to those listed in the rows for help or advice.

Participants were also asked to complete Lennox and Wolfe’s 13-item self-monitoring scale, which was used in Study 1 and in Study 3. Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*; $\bar{x} = 3.66, SD = 0.49$). The overall reliability (coefficient alpha) for this scale was .78.

In addition to measuring self-monitoring, we collected a measure of extraversion. Although extraversion did not appear to materially affect the results in Study 3, given the fact that previous studies have found a close relationship between these two constructs (e.g., John et al., 1996), we felt it was important to control for extraversion in each of our analyses. We measured extraversion with self-reports of eight items drawn from the Big Five Inventory, which has been found to be both reliable and valid (e.g., John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991). Each of these items (e.g., “I am talkative”) was rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*). The items were then averaged to create an overall score for extraversion ($\bar{x} = 3.44, SD = 0.81$). The coefficient alpha reliability of this scale was .81.

The final section of the survey gathered demographic information, including sex and race data. The overall response rate for the questionnaire,

which took about 30 min to complete, was 95%. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables are reported in Tables 2 and 3.

Self-Monitoring and Accuracy in Perceiving Others’ Exchange Relations

In our first set of analyses, we focused on the perception of exchange relations among the participants’ (egos) colleagues (alters). Our dependent variable is the accuracy with which the focal individual described the confirmed exchange relations among his clustermates. Each participant (*i*) was asked to indicate whether individual *q* went to individual *j* for help and advice. That person’s response was defined as R_{jq_i} . R_{jq_i} was compared to R_{jq} . To be rigorous in defining R_{jq} (see Carley & Krackhardt, 1996; Krackhardt, 1987), we required that both individual *j* and individual *q* report an exchange relation between *j* and *q* (both alters agreed that an exchange relation exists between them). That is, $R_{jq} = 1$ if and only if $R_{jaj} = R_{jq} = 1$; otherwise R_{jq} equals zero. Finally, if $R_{jq_i} = R_{jq}$ (i.e., the participant correctly perceived the existence or nonexistence of an exchange relation), accuracy equals one. Otherwise, accuracy equals zero.

We included several control variables in our equations to rule out alternative explanations. First, we included a measure of network size (NS) because high self-monitors may have larger networks. In addition, people with larger networks may be more accurate in perceiving others’ exchange relations because they have access to more information about other members of their network. We calculated NS as the number of exchange relations the participant had (e.g., Wasserman & Faust, 1994). NS_i is the number of relations that involved the focal participant *i* ($\bar{x} = 10.21, SD = 5.49$), NS_j is the number of relations that involved person *j* ($\bar{x} = 10.16, SD = 5.52$), and NS_q is the number of relations that involved person *q* ($\bar{x} = 10.20, SD = 5.49$).

13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
.05**	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
.38**	.13**	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
.13**	.38**	.34**	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
.13**	.13**	.38**	.35**	—	—	—	—	—	—
.25**	.25**	.56**	.58**	.08**	—	—	—	—	—
.24**	.02**	.60**	.08**	.58**	.09**	—	—	—	—
.02**	.24**	.09**	.57**	.58**	.10**	.11**	—	—	—
.01**	.02**	.03**	.02**	.00	.05**	.01*	.01**	—	—
.00	.00	-.03**	.00	-.03**	-.01**	-.03**	.00	.20**	—
0.17	0.17	2.11	2.11	2.10	10.21	10.16	10.20	3.42	3.69
0.38	0.38	2.10	2.12	2.13	5.49	5.52	5.49	0.81	0.51

Participants might have a better sense of the presence or absence of a relationship if they are connected to members of the focal dyad. Therefore, we included a control variable, tie strength (TS), that represents the existence of an exchange relation between the participant and members of the focal dyad. TS_{ij} equals one if $R_{ij} > 0$ or if $R_{ji} > 0$, so TS_{ij} equals one if an exchange relation exists between the participant and colleague j . TS_{iq} equals one if $R_{iq} > 0$ or if $R_{qi} > 0$, so TS_{iq} equals one if an exchange relation exists between the participant and colleague q . Participants might also have a better sense of exchange relations that involve people with

whom they are connected indirectly through mutual third-party connections (MT). Therefore, we control for the number of mutual third-party ties around the focal dyad. For example, MT_{ij} is the number of mutual third-party ties that include the participant and colleague j .

We included demographic predictors to control for the effects of social similarity. Same race (SR) is a dummy variable that equals one if the two focal individuals are of the same racial status. SR_{ij} equals one if ego and alter j both occupy a majority racial status or a minority racial status (i.e., both are White or both are non-White). SR_{iq} equals one if ego and alter q

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables (Analysis of Exchange Patterns) in Study 4

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Seek advice	—									
2. Give advice	.57**	—								
3. Low status	.74**	.00	—							
4. High status	-.01	.71**	-.22**	—						
5. Section 1	.26**	.28**	.13	.15	—					
6. Section 2	-.30**	-.32**	-.01	-.02	-.47**	—				
7. Race	.11	.08	.05	.00	.04	-.11	—			
8. Sex	.02	.11	-.06	.08	.01	.00	.16*	—		
9. Extraversion	-.03	.08	-.01	.19*	.07	.04	.02	.01	—	
10. Self-monitoring	-.09	.11	-.16*	.16*	-.02	.00	.13	-.03	.18*	—
<i>M</i>	7.07	7.07	3.01	3.01	0.33	0.32	0.72	0.73	3.44	3.69
<i>SD</i>	4.80	4.54	2.97	2.61	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.44	0.80	0.51

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

Table 4
Summary of Logistic Regression Analyses Predicting Accuracy

Step	Overall Model		Predictor variable										
	χ^2 ($N = 85,439$)	Pseudo R^2	ST _{ij}	ST _{iq}	ST _{iq}	SR _{ij}	SR _{iq}	SR _{jq}	SS _{ij}	SS _{iq}	SS _{jq}	TS _{ij}	TS _{iq}
1	9688.43**	0.13	0.19**	-0.04	-1.92**	-0.07**	-0.03	-0.33**	-0.03	-0.09**	-0.37**		
2	10586.65**	0.14	0.12*	-0.03	-1.81**	-0.08**	-0.03	-0.30**	-0.05*	-0.10**	-0.34**	0.05	-0.05
3	10606.60**	0.14	0.12*	-0.03	-1.81**	-0.08**	-0.03	-0.31**	-0.05*	-0.10**	-0.34**	0.05	-0.05
4	10610.76**	0.14	0.03*	-0.03	-1.81**	-0.08**	-0.03	-0.31**	-0.05*	-0.10**	-0.34**	0.06	-0.05

Note. Individual and section fixed effects were used as controls in each analysis. *i* represents ego (i.e., the respondent) and *j* and *q* represent Alter 1 and Alter 2, respectively; ST = same team; SR = same race; SS = same sex; TS = tie strength; MT = mutual ties; NS = network size; GMAT = Graduate Management Admission Test Ego; EXTR = extraversion ego; SM = self-monitoring ego.

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

occupy the same racial status. SR_{jq} equals one if alter *j* and alter *q* occupy the same racial status. Same sex (SS) equals one if the two focal individuals are the same sex. SS_{ij} equals one if ego and alter *j* are SS. SS_{iq} equals one if ego and alter *q* are SS. SS_{jq} equals one if alter *j* and alter *q* are SS.

In this set of data, the participant (*i*) was asked to describe exchange relations from one colleague (*j*) to another (*q*). As a result, we have multiple observations for each *i*, *j*, and *q*. This clustering is a violation of the independence assumption and may artificially decrease the size of our standard errors, which could, in turn, inflate the levels of our significance tests. To control for nonindependence among our observations, we created 179 ($N - 1$) individual fixed effects. The predictors for the 3 individuals involved in the focal triad are set equal to one, and the other fixed effects are set equal to zero.

One might argue that accuracy increases with self-monitoring because high self-monitors are more intelligent than low self-monitors. To account for the focal participant’s level of intelligence, we included Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) scores in our analyses. Finally, we attempted to control for common group membership in a couple ways. First, different norms may have emerged in each of the three clusters that affected the development of exchange relations (although participants were randomly assigned to their respective clusters). To control for this possibility, we included dummy variables for two of the three sections in each of the analyses. Second, in their 1st year of the MBA program, students were assigned to project teams (similar to those described in Study 3), and group assignments composed much of their course work. We attempted to control for common group membership in each of the analyses. Same team (ST) is a dichotomous variable that equals one if the participant and the focal contact are members of the same project team and equals zero otherwise. ST_{ij} equals one if person *i* and person *j* are members of the same team. ST_{iq} equals one if person *i* and person *q* are members of the same team. Finally, ST_{jq} equals one if person *j* and person *q* are members of the same team.

Results

Accuracy Analyses

Parameter estimates from a logistic regression model are reported in Table 4. The predictors are entered in a block format. The final model in the table contains the entire set of predictors, although the fixed effects are not reported. Consistent with our hypothesis, self-monitoring influenced the accuracy with which participants perceived exchange relations among other members of their social network. The coefficient of the self-monitoring variable is positive and significant ($\beta = .05$; $p < .05$), which indicates that high self-monitors were more accurate in reporting the exist-

tence (and lack thereof) of exchange relations among other members of their social group.

Self-Monitoring and the Status Dynamics of Exchange Relations

In our second set of analyses, we examined whether high self-monitors were more likely to be sought out for help and whether they were more likely to refrain from requesting help compared with low self-monitors. In addition, we considered whether high self-monitors tended to occupy a relatively higher status position in their exchange relations (i.e., situations in which they do not seek help but are sought out by others for help).

Recall that for every interaction, we collected two reports on each side of the exchange relation, R_{iji} and R_{ijj} for the connection from ego to alter as well as R_{jii} and R_{jij} for the exchange relation from alter to ego. In this analysis, we again focused on confirmed exchange relations, in which both parties agreed that an exchange relation exists (see Carley & Krackhardt, 1996). To create a measure of ego’s tendency to seek help, we summed all the cases in which R_{iji} = R_{ijj} = 1 (the ego seeks help, and the exchange relation is confirmed by the alter). To create a measure of ego’s tendency to be sought out for help, we summed all the cases in which R_{jii} = R_{jij} = 1 (the ego is sought out for help, and the exchange relation is confirmed by the alter).

To test whether high self-monitors were more likely to occupy a position of higher status in their exchange relations, we calculated a measure of the ego’s tendency to occupy a high-status position in an exchange relation by summing the number of cases in which the alter sought help from the ego, but the ego did not seek help from the alter (for cases in which this was confirmed by both parties).⁴ We also calculated a measure of the ego’s tenden-

⁴ There are four possibilities for each exchange relation: the focal actor (a) gives and receives help, (b) does not give and does not receive help, (c) gives help, but does not receive it, or (d) receives help, but does not give it. We examine three variables: first, whether people give help (combining a and c), second, whether people receive help (combining a and d), and third, as a measure of social status, whether people find themselves in exchange relations in which they give help but do not receive it (c). Thus, although all three measures are related, our measure of social status is not the same as the first measure of help giving or the second measure of help receiving.

Predictor variable								
MT _{ij}	MT _{iq}	MT _{jq}	NS _i	NS _j	NS _q	GMAT	EXTR	SM
0.06**	0.01	-0.16**	-0.06**	-0.07**	-0.05**			
0.06**	0.01	-0.16**	-0.06**	-0.07**	-0.05**	-0.03**	0.05**	
0.06**	0.01	-0.16**	-0.06**	-0.07**	-0.05**	-0.03**	0.04**	0.05*

cyto occupy a low-status position in an exchange relation by summing the number of cases in which the ego sought help from the alter, but the alter did not report seeking help from the ego (and this was confirmed by both parties).

Once again, we included the simple demographic controls that were used in our previous analysis. We also included our measures of extraversion, GMAT score, and fixed effects for cluster membership.

Results of Helping Behavior and Status Dynamics Analyses

Parameter estimates from an ordinary least squares regression are reported in Table 5. As we predicted, high self-monitors were less likely to seek help and advice from others ($\beta = -.14, p < .05$). Aside from being less willing to seek help, high self-monitors were also more likely to be sought out for help by other members of their group ($\beta = .15, p < .05$). It is important to note that these

results are based on confirmed exchange relations rather than on self-report measures. That is, the reports provided jointly by both ego and alter participants indicating whether the ego sought help from the alter and whether the alter sought help from the ego were positively affected by the ego's level of self-monitoring.

In addition to these results indicating the bilateral direction of help seeking and being sought out for help giving, we also considered whether self-monitoring related to the status ordering within dyads. Recall that exchange relations in which actor A seeks assistance from actor B but B does not seek assistance from A are high-status exchange relations for B and low-status exchange relations for A. Indeed, when considering the number of high-status exchange relations as the dependent variable, we found that high self-monitors were more likely than low self-monitors ($\beta = .14, p < .05$) to occupy a high-status position in their exchange relations (being sought out for assistance, but

Table 5
Summary of Regression Analyses Predicting Exchange Patterns

Step	Overall model		Predictor variable							
	F	Adjusted R ²	Race	Sex	GMAT	Extraversion	Give advice	Seek advice	Size	Self-monitoring
Seek advice (n = 177)										
1	12.46**	.34	.07	-.05	-.03	-.05	.54**			-.14*
2	11.25**	.34	.07	-.05	-.03	-.06	.54**			
Give advice (n = 177)										
1	13.60**	.36	-.02	.10	.05	.06		.52**		.15*
2	12.18**	.36	-.01	.10	.05	.07		.52**		
Low status (n = 177)										
1	7.32**	.22	.05	-.10	-.05	-.00			.48**	-.18**
2	6.72**	.22	.04	-.11	-.05	-.01			.48**	
High status (n = 177)										
1	6.04**	.18	-.05	.06	.04	.14*			.40**	.14*
2	5.42**	.18	-.05	.06	.04	.14*			.40**	

Note. GMAT = Graduate Management Admissions Test Ego.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

not seeking assistance from others). Further, when considering the number of low-status exchange relations as the dependent variable, we found that high self-monitors were less likely than low self-monitors ($\beta = -.18, p < .01$) to occupy a low-status position in their exchange relations with others (seeking assistance from others, but not being sought out for assistance).⁵

Discussion

The results for Study 4 confirm our predictions about the relationship between self-monitoring and the perception and dynamics of exchange relations. High self-monitors were more accurate in reporting exchange relations involving other members of their social group. Further, high self-monitors appeared to be more sensitive to the status implications of social exchange, serving as the target of helping requests rather than the requester. This finding was driven both by the tendency to refrain from seeking assistance and by the tendency to be sought out for assistance. These results were robust even when controlling for several alternative explanations, such as the competing influence of demographic similarity, common group membership, network size, intelligence, and extraversion.

General Discussion

High self-monitors tend to experience greater levels of success in managing everyday social situations (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Laboratory studies have found that high self-monitors are more effective in experimental groups, often emerging as leaders in situations that call for exceptional presentation and communication skills (Garland & Beard, 1979; Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991). Beyond the confines of the laboratory, high self-monitors tend to be better performers (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001) and to develop more favorable reputations (Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994), and they are more likely to be promoted to higher ranking positions in organizations (Kilduff & Day, 1994). What may be driving the success of high self-monitors? We propose that one determinant of their success may be a strong need for social status—an elevated position of respect and influence among their peers.

In the present research, we have attempted to explain how self-monitoring relates to the perception and development of status dynamics in exchange relations. High self-monitors were better judges of others' interpersonal exchange relations, outperforming low self-monitors on a task that required them to learn a novel set of relationships—not only who knew whom, but who had relatively higher status (i.e., who influenced whom). We also examined how self-monitoring might affect exchange behavior. As we predicted, high self-monitors were more successful in eliciting conferrals of status, in part because they were judged to be more generous than low self-monitors. Finally, we tested the robustness of these findings by examining exchange relations in a set of social groups in which the boundaries of group membership were clearly defined. We found that high self-monitors were more accurate in perceiving the nature of others' exchange relations. Again, consistent with our arguments about status, high self-monitors tended to occupy higher status positions in these exchange relations, more frequently being the target of requests for help, and less frequently being the requester.

These findings extend past research on how high self-monitors manage their interpersonal relationships by showing a different side of self-monitoring. For example, Snyder and Simpson (Snyder, 1987; Snyder & Simpson, 1984) found that high self-monitors were more aggressive than low self-monitors in initiating and terminating their relationships, particularly with romantic partners. Rather than settle on a single dating partner, high self-monitors jumped from one relationship to the next. These findings suggest that high self-monitors adopt an uncommitted orientation toward relationships. Our findings tell a different story—we find that high self-monitors are willing to invest resources in their exchange partners by demonstrating generosity, a clear sign of commitment according to exchange theorists (e.g., Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). However, such generosity may not be entirely altruistic. Instead, high self-monitors may be making these investments in their exchange relations with an expectation of a valuable return—a position of elevated status among their peers.

This apparent link between self-monitoring and exchange dynamics may help explain previous empirical findings in the self-monitoring literature. High self-monitors enjoy many benefits in their professional careers, including a faster rate of promotion and more favorable performance evaluations (e.g., Flynn, Chatman, & Spataro, 2001; Kilduff & Day, 1994). At the same time, self-monitoring has been associated with the development of social exchange, particularly in professional networks (e.g., Mehra et al., 2001). The ability to perceive and manage exchange dynamics may help explain the advantage that high self-monitors hold over low self-monitors. People who have an accurate view of their own and others' exchange relations, as well as a more favorable reputation, may be in a better position to obtain resources, build support for their ideas, and influence group decisions. This suggests a possible mediating relationship between self-monitoring, exchange relations, and individual outcomes, so self-monitoring may affect individual success by way of its influence on the perception and development of social exchange.

Limitations

Although our results were consistent with our predictions, they raise a number of important questions. For example, we were unable to test the lasting impact of self-monitoring on the perception and dynamics of exchange relations because our studies were cross-sectional. It may be that self-monitoring has an initial impact on the perception or management of exchange dynamics but that the effect is fleeting rather than permanent. Are high self-monitors more concerned with making a good first impression or do they maintain a consistent pattern of helping behavior regardless of how

⁵ It is possible that low self-monitors adopt different relationship strategies from high self-monitors. Whereas high self-monitors seek out high-status positions in their exchange relations, low self-monitors may seek out equal status (i.e., ego and alter seek one another out for advice or ego and alter do not seek one another out for advice). We tested this idea by examining the association between the number of each kind of equal-status relationship and self-monitoring. In both cases, the self-monitoring score did not have an effect, which indicates that the only link here is link between high self-monitors and their tendency to avoid low-status positions and to attain high-status positions in their exchange relations. We thank an anonymous reviewer for calling this idea to our attention.

long they have known their exchange partners? To answer this question, future research might gather longitudinal data on how self-monitoring influences patterns of giving and receiving help over an extended period of time.

Some of our measures might also have limitations. In Study 3, we relied on others' impressions of generosity, but these impressions may have been inflated. Perhaps high self-monitors were not contributing more to their coworkers than they received in return, but they were skillful at managing this reputation. Studies that consider not only reputation but also actual performance are needed to confirm the link between self-monitoring and helping behavior. In addition, in Study 3, the reliability score for our measure of generosity was somewhat low (.70), and our measure of social status was heavily skewed toward interpersonal influence. Future research might try to develop more robust, and perhaps more generalizable, measures of helping behavior and social status. Also, in Study 4, the possibility exists that our results were influenced by order effects. Given that participants first responded to the item "whom would you go to for help or advice?," they may have been encouraged to think about the status implications of seeking help more than if they had first responded to the opposite item, "who would come to you for help or advice?" Perhaps a diary study in which participants are asked to record each episode of helping behavior would be useful in testing these ideas more rigorously.

Finally, the analyses conducted in Study 2 and Study 4 suggest that high self-monitors are more accurate than low self-monitors in perceiving others' exchange relations. Although this result is intriguing and consistent with our predictions, we also note the magnitude of the accuracy effect in Study 4 is relatively small (5% change in accuracy when moving from a minimal to an extreme level of self-monitoring). The size of this effect is limited, in part, by the size of the groups being studied. The groups examined in Study 4 are considerably larger than those examined in Study 2 (approximately 60 vs. 12), and in these large groups, the overwhelming majority of dyads did not have an exchange relation (the average number of confirmed relationships per student was approximately 10 out of 60). Thus, most people likely (and correctly) assumed that the overwhelming majority of possible dyadic exchange relations do not exist. Not only does this make our test more conservative, it also limits our ability to judge the extent to which self-monitoring enhances accuracy in the perception of exchange relations. In the future, it would be worthwhile to examine real-world groups that are smaller to test whether the effect of self-monitoring on accuracy in judging exchange relations is substantive.

Future Directions

There are several possible directions for this line of research to follow. First, scholars interested in self-monitoring and empathic accuracy might attempt to further delineate the mechanism(s) accounting for some of the present findings. Although we hypothesized that high self-monitors would be more accurate in their perceptions of others' exchange relations, it remains unclear how they manage to form such accurate impressions. Given a small fictitious group, such as that used in Study 2, high self-monitors may find it easy to retain information about others' exchange relations, especially when this information is made explicit. In

large groups of 60 people, however, such as those included in Study 4, this information is not explicit or easily retained. Perhaps high self-monitors improve their performance in perceiving others' exchange relations by effectively organizing the members of their social group into smaller cliques (i.e., they may not know who is connected to whom, but they may be making more informed guesses).

Second, we found that helping behavior, or generosity, can lead to conferrals of social status, but this may not be true in all situations. In Study 3 and Study 4, participants were rated by people with whom they shared some interdependence (close coworkers and fellow classmates). Norms of helpfulness may be stronger in these situations because interdependent actors rely on cooperation to achieve mutual success. In contrast, members of a group who are not interdependent with one another, but are instead competing with one another, may not afford social status based on cooperative efforts, at least not to the same degree. If high self-monitors perform helping behavior to attain status, as we suggest, they may be motivated to provide help only in situations in which cooperative behavior is normative and therefore a determinant of status (e.g., Snyder & Monson, 1975). Identifying the conditions in which high self-monitors are better able to use helping behavior as a means to elicit conferrals of status may be a useful endeavor in future research.

Third, we predicted that high self-monitors would be loath to request help and would be sought out more frequently for help. Whereas the former is clearly under the high self-monitor's control (resisting the urge to request help), the latter is not. How do high self-monitors become seen as a "go-to" person when others are in need? The results from Study 3 indicate that self-monitoring was related to impressions of generosity, but the link between being sought out for help and *actually* helping is unclear. It may be that high self-monitors receive more requests for help than do low self-monitors but are not necessarily more willing to help when others ask. Future studies that account for the incidence of helping requests are needed to test the possibility that high self-monitors are, in fact, more compliant than low self-monitors when they are presented with requests for help.

Finally, we based our predictions on the assumption that requesting help lowers one's status, whereas providing help increases it. This assumption has often been taken for granted in the literature on helping behavior and social exchange (e.g., Blau, 1963; Homans, 1958; Mauss, 1925). However, there may be situations in which this is not the case. Requesting help from high-status colleagues can be used as a form of ingratiation in which the requester elevates his or her status, at least in the eyes of the target (e.g., Jones, 1964). Given high self-monitors' need to project a situationally appropriate image, future research might consider ways in which high self-monitors alter their behavior—so that they become help seekers—if the situation provides some advantage for doing so.

Conclusion

In summary, these findings represent an important initial step toward explicating the relationship between self-monitoring and social status, especially as it relates to the perception and development of exchange relations. We found that self-monitoring was closely related to the accuracy with which people perceived others'

exchange relations, particularly status-asymmetric relations. Further, consistent with the notion that high self-monitors are more sensitive to status dynamics, we found that high self-monitors developed a more generous image (by providing help and by not requesting it) that, in turn, enabled them to elicit conferrals of status from others. Taken together, the findings suggest that personality traits, particularly self-monitoring, may play a significant role in perceiving and managing the status dynamics of exchange relations. We hope that this work can inspire future research on the connections between self-monitoring, exchange behavior, and social status.

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Appendix

Items Used to Measure Need for Social Status

I want my peers to respect me and hold me in high esteem.
 I am not concerned with my status among my peers. (reverse scored)
 Being a highly valued member of my social group is important to me.
 I would like to cultivate the admiration of my peers.
 I enjoy having influence over other people's decision making.
 It would please me to have a position of prestige and social standing.

I don't care whether others view me with respect and hold me in esteem. (reverse scored)
 I care about how positively others view me.
 $N = 100$; $\alpha = .82$

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