

# Katie S. Mehr

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## Employment

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**Alberta School of Business, University of Alberta**  
Assistant Professor of Marketing

July 2023 - Present

## Education

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**The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania**

2018 - 2023

Ph.D. in Operations, Information, and Decisions – Decision Processes

*Dissertation Title:* How Does Rating Specific Features of an Experience Alter Consumers' Overall Evaluation of That Experience?

*Dissertation Committee:* Joseph Simmons (advisor), Alice Moon, Deborah Small

**Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick Campus**

2014 - 2018

B.S. *summa cum laude* with Highest Honors in Economics, Minors in Mathematics and Statistics

## Publications and Manuscripts in the Review Process (abstracts on page 4)

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**Mehr, Katie S.** and Joseph P. Simmons, “How Does Rating Specific Features of an Experience Alter Consumers’ Overall Evaluation of That Experience?” under third-round review at the *Journal of Consumer Research*.

**Mehr, Katie S.**, Amanda E. Geiser, Katherine L. Milkman, and Angela L. Duckworth (2020), “Copy Paste Prompts: A New Nudge to Promote Goal Achievement,” *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, 5(3), 329-334.

**Mehr, Katie S.**, Jackie Silverman, Marissa A. Sharif, Alixandra Barasch, and Katherine L. Milkman, “The Motivating Power of Streaks: Increasing Persistence Is as Easy as 1, 2, 3,” revising for third-round re-submission to *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

## Working Papers

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**Mehr, Katie S.** and Joshua Lewis, “Risky or Typical? How Perceived Diagnosticity Affects Consumers’ Response to Rater Disagreement.”

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## Selected Research in Progress

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**Mehr, Katie S.** and Joseph P. Simmons, “Response Separation: How Question Order Affects Consumers’ Evaluations.”

**Mehr, Katie S.,** Katherine L. Milkman, and Angela L. Duckworth, “Do Streaks Motivate Achievement?: A Field Experiment.”

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## Conference Presentations

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*(includes only presentations that I delivered)*

How Does Rating Specific Features of an Experience Alter Consumers’ Overall Evaluation of That Experience?

- Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Judgment and Decision Making preconference, Virtual, 2022. (flash talk)
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Virtual, 2021.
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Virtual, 2020. (poster)

Copy Paste Prompts: A New Nudge to Promote Goal Achievement.

- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Montreal, Canada, 2019. (flash talk)

The Motivating Power of Streaks: Increasing Persistence Is as Easy As 1, 2, 3.

- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Virtual, 2020.
- Association for Consumer Research, Virtual, 2020.
- Society for Consumer Psychology, Huntington Beach, CA, 2020.
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Montreal, Canada, 2019. (poster)

Risky or Typical? How Perceived Diagnosticity Affects Consumers’ Responses to Rater Disagreement.

- Association for Consumer Research, Virtual, 2021.

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## Invited Talks

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University of Alberta, Alberta School of Business (2022)

University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business (2022)

University of Houston, C.T. Bauer College of Business (2022)

University of Florida, Warrington College of Business (2022)

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## Awards and Honors

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Wharton Risk Center Russell Ackoff Doctoral Student Fellowship Award, 2019, 2020, 2021

Wharton Mack Institute for Innovation Management Doctoral Student Fellowship Award, 2021

Honorable Mention Poster Award, Society for Judgment and Decision Making, 2019

Henry Rutgers Scholar, 2018

Matthew Leydt Society, 2018

Phi Beta Kappa, 2017

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## Teaching Experience

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### Guest Lecturer

- Evaluating Evidence (Undergraduate, Spring 2022)

### Teaching Assistant

- Managerial Decision Making (MBA, Spring 2022, Spring 2023)
- Negotiations (MBA, Spring 2021)
- Decision Processes (Undergraduate, Fall 2019)

### Undergraduate Advising

- University of Pennsylvania College Achievement Program Graduate School Mentoring Initiative (Undergraduate, Spring 2021 - Spring 2022)
- Judgment and Decision Making Research Immersion (Undergraduate, Fall 2018 – Spring 2022)
- Senior Honors Thesis Advising (Undergraduate, Fall 2018 - Spring 2019)

### Course Coordination

- Judgment and Decision Making Research Immersion (Undergraduate, Spring 2020 - Spring 2021)

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## Professional Service

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- Mentor, Wharton Doctoral Council (2020-2022)
- Reviewer, Society for Consumer Psychology (2022)
- Reviewer, Association for Consumer Research (2023)

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## Professional Affiliations

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Association for Consumer Research, Society for Consumer Psychology, Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Society for Personality and Social Psychology

## Research Abstracts

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**Mehr, Katie S. and Joseph P. Simmons, “How Does Rating Specific Features of an Experience Alter Consumers’ Overall Evaluation of That Experience?” under third-round review at the *Journal of Consumer Research*.**

How does the way companies elicit ratings from consumers affect the ratings that they receive? In 10 pre-registered experiments, we find that consumers rate subpar experiences more positively overall when they are also asked to rate specific aspects of those experiences (e.g., a restaurant’s food, service, and ambiance). Studies 1-4 established the basic effect across different scenarios and experiences. Study 5 found that the effect is limited to being asked to rate specific features of an experience, rather than providing open-ended comments about those features. Studies 6-9 provided evidence that the effect does not emerge because rating positive aspects of a subpar experience reminds consumers that their experiences had some good features. Rather, it emerges because consumers want to avoid incorporating negative information into both the overall and the attribute ratings. Lastly, study 10 found that asking consumers to rate attributes of a subpar experience reduces the predictive validity of their overall rating. We discuss implications of this work and reconcile it with conflicting findings in the literature.

**Mehr, Katie S., Amanda E. Geiser, Katherine L. Milkman, and Angela L. Duckworth (2020), “Copy Paste Prompts: A New Nudge to Promote Goal Achievement,” *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, 5(3), 329-334.**

Consumers often struggle to achieve self-set, life-improving goals. We introduce a novel, psychologically wise nudge - the copy-paste prompt - that encourages consumers to seek out and mimic a goal-achievement strategy used by an acquaintance. In a large (N = 1,028) preregistered, longitudinal study, participants randomly assigned to receive a copy-paste prompt spend more time exercising the following week than participants assigned to either a quasi-yoked or simple control condition. The benefits of copy-paste prompts are mediated by the usefulness of the adopted exercise strategy, commitment to using it, effort put into finding it, and the frequency of social interaction with people who exercise regularly. These findings suggest that further research on the potential of this virtually costless nudge is warranted.

**Mehr, Katie S., Jackie Silverman, Marissa A. Sharif, Alixandra Barasch, and Katherine L. Milkman, “The Motivating Power of Streaks: Increasing Persistence Is as Easy as 1, 2, 3,” revising for third-round re-submission to *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.**

Financial incentives are one of the most frequently-used and effective tools for motivating employee persistence. We build on a growing literature showing that the efficacy of incentive schemes can be enhanced when insights from behavioral science are incorporated into their design. Specifically, we introduce and test the value of a psychologically-motivated incentive structure: “streak incentives,” or rewards that offer people increasing payouts for completing multiple consecutive desired behaviors. We theorize that such incentives motivate persistence by conveying a social norm, encouraging goal setting, and boosting self-efficacy. Across five pre-registered studies, we show that, contrary to the predictions of the “rational actor” model of standard economic theory, people show greater persistence when rewarded

with streak incentives than when they are rewarded with larger, flat incentives. This effect is not driven by the increasing nature of streak incentives; rather, people are motivated by the requirement that they complete work tasks consecutively to earn higher payment amounts. Moreover, mediation analyses provide some evidence for all three theorized mechanisms: social norms, goal setting, and self-efficacy. Taken together, our results suggest that encouraging streaks is an easy, low-cost way to increase persistence in organizations and other contexts.