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Illumination of Negotiation

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Negotiations are ubiquitous. To promote cooperative behavior, negotiation training has focused on personality and skills, which are both difficult to learn or change. The influence of environmental factors on negotiation has been neglected although it's a feature easier to change. Light is used in consumer research to influence people's behavior but its influence on negotiation is unknown. This study aims to find out whether optimized lighting (i.e., multiple sources, indirect-direct) promotes cooperative negotiation in comparison with standard neon lighting. To test this hypothesis, we performed an online study and presented participants with a negotiation scenario illustrated with the renderings of a meeting room with either optimized or standard lighting. Then, we asked participants about their perception of the negotiation partner, their affect, and the negotiation strategy they would pursue. Results show that participants in the optimized lighting condition intend to adopt a more cooperative strategy than participants in the standard lighting condition. Optimized lighting seems to make people more cooperative. The mechanism behind this effect still remains to be investigated.

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