

A dynamic model of applicant faking

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Abstract

In the past years, several authors have proposed theoretical models of faking at selection. Although these models greatly improved our understanding of applicant faking, they mostly offer static approaches. In contrast, we propose a model of applicant faking derived from signaling theory, which describes faking as a dynamic process driven by applicants' and organizations' adaptations in a competitive environment. We argue that faking depends on applicants' motivation and capacity to fake, which are determined by individual differences in skills, abilities, and stable attitudes, as well as by perceptions of the competition, but also on applicants' perceived opportunities versus risks to fake, which are contingent upon organizations' measures to increase the costs of faking. We further explain how selection outcomes can trigger adaptations of applicants, such as faking in subsequent selection encounters, and of organizations, such as changes in measures making faking costly for applicants in the long term.

Keywords

competition, faking, selection, signaling theory

Faking is applicants' attempts to misrepresent themselves during the personnel selection process. It is a deceptive form of impression management, or an intentional distortion of the

responses or information provided as a way to create a favorable impression (Levashina & Campion, 2006). Faking should be distinguished from social desirability (Burns & Christiansen,

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2011) because unlike social desirability, it corresponds to a job- or organization-specific response distortion strategy with the objective of intentionally and artificially increasing one's scores or perceived performance at selection. Moreover, unlike faking, social desirability involves voluntary response distortion as well as involuntary self-deception. Faking has been studied and discussed extensively in the personnel selection literature and remains an important issue for both scholars and practitioners (Ryan & Ployhart, 2014). Previous work includes mainly research on faking in personality tests (Birkeland, Manson, Kisamore, Brannick, & Smith, 2006; Griffith, Chmielowski, & Yoshita, 2007; Griffith & McDaniel, 2006; Ziegler, MacCann, & Roberts, 2011), but also in interviews (Levashina & Campion, 2006, 2007), biodata inventories (Levashina, Morgeson, & Campion, 2009, 2012), or situational judgment tests (Nguyen, Biderman, & McDaniel, 2005). This work has shown that faking is prevalent: about 30 to 50% of applicants use faking when completing tests and 60 to 99% use faking in job interviews to increase their chances of getting hired (Griffith & McDaniel, 2006; Levashina & Campion, 2007).

Faking can have detrimental consequences for the selection process. It can affect applicants' ranking (Stewart, Darnold, Zimmerman, Parks, & Dustin, 2010; Weiss & Feldman, 2006) and is a potential threat to the validity of selection instruments (Gilmore, Stevens, Harrell-Cook, & Ferris, 1999; Marcus, 2006; Rosse, Stecher, Miller, & Levin, 1998). Moreover, recent evidence suggests that applicants who engage in faking are also more likely to perform poorly on the job (Donovan, Dwight, & Schneider, 2014) and to engage in deviant or counterproductive behaviors at work (O'Neill et al., 2013; Peterson, Griffith, Isaacson, O'Connell, & Mangos, 2011). In sum, identifying the antecedents of faking and, ultimately, those who fake is an important concern for organizations (Stewart et al., 2010).

Several theoretical models have been proposed to explain the conditions and processes that lead people to fake (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011;

Goffin & Boyd, 2009; Griffith, Lee, Peterson, & Zickar, 2011; Levashina & Campion, 2006; Marcus, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006; Mueller-Hanson, Heggstad, & Thornton, 2006; Snell, Sydel, & Lueke, 1999; Tett & Simonet, 2011). Although these models greatly improved our understanding of applicant faking, they mostly offer static approaches that focus on the characteristics of the applicants and the selection instruments. Dynamic aspects, such as how faking evolves over time, for example, based on prior experience, have been largely neglected. As a rare exception, Levashina and Campion (2006) briefly mentioned that past faking should influence future faking in their model for interviews, but they did not specify the direction of the effect nor its underlying mechanisms. So overall, most existing models ignore the dynamic nature of personnel selection and therefore the role that adaptive behaviors of applicants and of organizations play in faking.

In what follows, we propose a dynamic model of applicant faking. This is a novel contribution to the faking literature because, unlike previous static models, our model portrays faking as an adaptive response, taking into account accumulated experiences, previous faking, selection outcomes, and the competitive nature of the selection process. As such, our model shows how faking and selection decisions trigger adaptations in applicants' perceptions, abilities, and behaviors for the next selection process, and how it can pressure organizations to change their selection systems in the long term. Our model is inspired by the signaling framework proposed by Bangerter, Roulin, and König (2012) that explains the dynamic relationships between different actors on the job market in the selection process. However, unlike Bangerter et al. who proposed a general framework explaining a broad range of phenomena (e.g., emergence of new selection methods, organizations' recruitment strategies) and applicant behaviors (e.g., preparation for selection, strategies to distinguish themselves from other job seekers), our

model focuses on applicant faking. The signaling framework thus provides the overarching background for our model, which identifies the specific variables, adaptive mechanisms, and long-term dynamics involved in applicant faking. For instance, our model assigns a prominent role to different forms of competition as an explanatory factor, which allows us to introduce new concepts and predictors to the faking literature. In sum, we translate the general principles of signaling theory into a series of testable research propositions that have the potential to generate novel empirical research to better understand the antecedents, underlying mechanisms, and (direct and indirect) effects of faking, for both applicants and organizations.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows: First, we introduce the signaling theory-approach to personnel selection and describe its relevance to study the dynamic aspects of applicant faking. We then apply some of its key principles to faking and build on these, to describe our dynamic model of faking, together with 12 research propositions. Finally, we delineate directions for future research to test our propositions.

Signaling theory and its applications to applicants' behaviors

Signaling theory is a particularly well-suited starting point to describe the dynamics involved in faking. It originates from earlier research in economics, and was used to describe the rational exchange of information between job market actors (Spence, 1973). Spence described a model whereby education credentials can emerge over time, and after multiple interactions between applicants and employers, as a signal that applicants can use to inform employers of their potential productivity. Signaling theory has also been influential in research on animal behaviors, and particularly in understanding how potential mating partners,

but also predators and preys, could exchange information about their genetic or physical fitness (Zahavi & Zahavi, 1999). The use of signaling theory in economics (and management) has mostly focused on signals display and interpretation. In sharp contrast, its application in evolutionary biology research has not only examined on how animals display and interpret signals, but also investigated the long-term evolution of signaling systems. Therefore, and fundamental to our model, this research highlights that organisms' behaviors evolve over time through engaging in cycles of adaptations and counteradaptations, in an attempt to develop an advantage relative to other competitors. Such adaptive dynamics are known as escalation (Vermeij, 1987) or arms race (Dawkins & Krebs, 1979) and fuel the evolution of species over time. As such, signaling theory allows explaining not only the behaviors of individuals (or organisms) in one interaction, but also how multiple interactions between multiple individuals trigger changes of behaviors over time.

Recently, Bangerter et al. (2012) proposed a general framework of personnel selection based on signaling theory. According to this framework, applicants and organizations often have imperfectly aligned interests due to the competitive nature of the selection process. For instance, applicants have little incentives to provide accurate information about themselves to organizations unless it is to their advantage (i.e., it helps them get the job). Signaling theory highlights how applicants and organizations can nevertheless benefit from exchanging so-called honest signals to reliably assess potential fit. Honest signals of applicants are signals that provide reliable information about the applicant's true qualities. To be considered as honest, signals must either be costly, that is, involve investment costs or must be hard to fake, that is, are beyond the conscious control of applicants. Education credentials represent an example of costly signals because they require applicants to invest resources to get a degree. Alternatively, ability test scores are

hard-to-fake because of their nonfalsifiable nature. Moreover, honest signals must be associated with cheating costs, that is, consequences for applicants if they send falsified signals and get caught (e.g., being eliminated from the selection process). Without cheating costs, unqualified applicants could start mimicking the signals sent by qualified applicants, which would undermine the value of such signals. The same rules also apply to signals sent by organizations to applicants, for instance to guarantee positive reactions from applicants (Gilliland, 1993). Exchanging honest signals is thus a way to guarantee an effective selection process for both applicants and organizations (Bangerter et al., 2012). Yet, organizations may rely on other types of signals (i.e., that are less costly or easier to fake), and may not invest enough resources to keep cheating costs high. This is the case when they evaluate applicants based on interview performance or personality test scores only, and are thus not able to distinguish honest from intentionally distorted responses. In these situations, organizations give less qualified applicants the opportunity to send falsified signals to mimic the qualities of truly qualified applicants, in other words, to engage in faking.

Translating the principles of signaling theory to applicant faking

The framework suggested by Bangerter et al. (2012) is a general theoretical approach that underlines the dynamic nature of the selection process through adaptive behaviors of both applicants and organizations to selection. It is a particularly well-suited basis to extend our understanding of faking because it points to explanatory mechanisms that have been overlooked in existing models of faking. In what follows, we describe four principles derived from the signaling approach to selection in which we ground our dynamic model. Based on

these principles, we then outline in more detail what specific variables should play a role in explaining applicant faking.

The competition principle

The signaling framework proposes that applicants' behaviors are (in part) adaptive responses to the fact that they compete with other applicants for a job. In other words, applicants are motivated to adapt their behavior if they realize that simply sending the signals that organizations expect from them may not be enough to outperform other applicants. Yet, applicants differ in their willingness to adapt and their propensity to send signals that distinguish them from their competitors. Because of individual differences in personality or attitudes, some applicants actively engage in adaptive strategies to better showcase their qualities to employers and outperform their competitors, whereas others do not. Applying this principle to faking suggests that applicants' motivation to fake as well as subsequent changes in this motivation as a result of adaptations can be seen as a combination of adaptive responses to the (perceived) competition and individual differences in stable attitudes towards faking.

The mind-reading principle

Applicants try to mind-read organizations to identify the selection criteria that organizations use, in order to adapt their behavior adequately and increase their chances of getting hired. Moreover, not all applicants are equally able to detect the criteria and adapt their behavior accordingly. Some applicants are better at mind-reading than others because of individual differences in skills, preparation, or experience with selection. As such, applicants' capacity to fake as well as subsequent changes in this capacity can be seen as a combination of their ability to detect organizations' selection criteria (or the constructs measured by the selection tools) and individual differences in skills

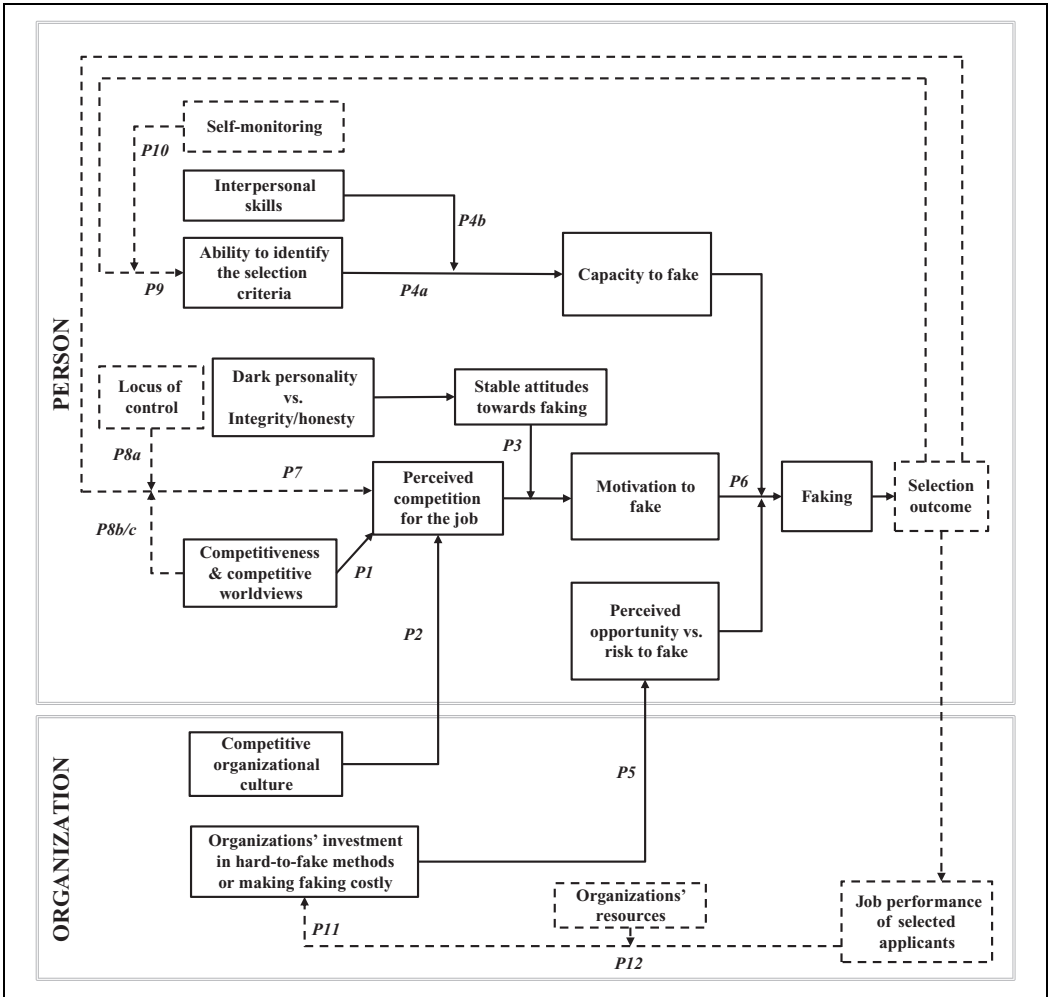


Figure 1. A dynamic model of applicant faking. Solid lines/boxes indicate variables and relationships at Step 1 (static part of the model) and dotted lines/boxes indicate variables and relationships at Step 2 (dynamic part of the model).

necessary to meet these criteria (e.g., to fake effectively).

The vulnerability principle

Signals used by organizations differ in their vulnerability to applicants' adaptations. Some signals are more difficult to manipulate than other. Some organizations invest more resources into limiting applicants' opportunities to engage in

signal manipulation or into catching manipulators. Additionally, applicants may obtain information about selection tools used by organizations, making it easier to adapt their behavior. As such, applicants' opportunity to fake can be seen as contingent on organizations' investment (and subsequent changes in this investment) in hard-to-fake selection methods, in making faking risky or costly for applicants, and in communicating how they react to applicants who fake.

The escalation principle

Escalation states that when organizations rely on signals that are less costly or easier to fake (e.g., interview performance), applicants can easily engage in adaptations to falsify their signals (i.e., engage in faking), to gain a competitive advantage over other applicants. But this advantage may be short-lived because other applicants may engage in similar behaviors. Moreover, organizations would be pressured to counteradapt by investing more resources to increase cheating costs or change the signals they use, leading to another round of adaptations by applicants, etcetera. Therefore, the act of faking and how successful it was (e.g., its impact on test scores or job offers) should not be the final step of the faking model, but should also be the starting point for adaptive dynamics on both the side of the applicant and the side of the organization.

Based on these considerations, we describe next a dynamic model of applicant faking (see Figure 1). In a first step, we describe the variables and mechanisms leading applicants to engage in faking. We build our model around three key antecedents, based on the first three signaling principles described before: (a) applicants' motivation to fake derives from the competition principle; (b) capacity to fake from the mind-reading principle; and (c) perceptions of the opportunity versus risks of faking from the vulnerability principle. These three antecedents can be found in most faking models (e.g., Levashina & Campion, 2006; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006), despite the use of different labels, terminology, or arrangements of predictors, thus facilitating comparisons between our dynamic model and other models. As a second step, based on the fourth principle described before (i.e., the escalation principle), we describe how faking can trigger adaptive responses of applicants to subsequent selection processes, as well as organizations' adaptive responses in the long term. Thus, we propose 12 research propositions, based on this model.

Importantly, our model includes both predictors discussed in previous research (e.g., individual differences in traits, skills, or abilities) and new predictors suggested by signaling theory (e.g., various forms of competition). Thus, our model does not represent a comprehensive list of all potential predictors of applicant faking but it focuses on those variables that are aligned with the principles derived from signaling theory and that play a central role for the dynamic adaptations of applicants or organizations.

A dynamic model of faking – Step I: Antecedents of applicant faking

Applicants' motivation to fake

Motivation to fake has been identified as an immediate key predictor of actual faking in previous models (e.g., Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; Levashina & Campion, 2006; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006; Tett & Simonet, 2011). Several potential antecedents of motivation to fake have been discussed in this literature. For instance, earlier models have suggested that applicants may be more motivated to fake if they believe there is a lack of fit between their perceived qualities and the job requirements or organizations' values (Levashina & Campion, 2006), when faking is perceived as a good option to obtain a high score on a selection test (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; Goffin & Boyd, 2009), or when the job is particularly attractive (Marcus, 2009; Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006; Snell et al., 1999).

Alternatively, according to the competition principle derived from signaling theory, applicants' behaviors can be seen as adaptive responses to the competition with other job seekers. As outlined before, competition is a key explanatory factor of behavior in this perspective but has largely been neglected by previous models of faking. The higher the competition, that is, the greater the pressure to outperform other applicants, the more applicants may be

motivated (or feel pressured) to emphasize personal achievements. We thus propose that applicants' motivation to fake is directly influenced by their perception of the competition for the job, such that higher perceived competition increases the motivation to engage in faking. Moreover, we argue that perceived competition for the job depends on three different factors related to competition: At the individual or person level, we examine the impact of the stable dispositions of competitiveness and competitive worldviews. At the organization level, we discuss the impact of organizations' competitive culture. Finally, we also suggest that stable attitudes towards faking, grounded in applicants' values or personality, moderate the relationship between perceived competition and motivation to fake. We discuss these variables and mechanisms in detail next.

Perceived competition for the job. We suggest that applicants' motivation to falsify signals will depend on their perceptions of how many rivals, that is, similarly or better qualified applicants, they will face and what rivals will do, in other words, how strong the competition for the job is. The more intense the competition is perceived to be, the more applicants will see faking as an adaptive or legitimate response to outperform competitors and get the job. Although some of the existing models of faking underline the importance of applicants' perceptions of other applicants' attitudes and behaviors (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; Snell et al., 1999), they do not specifically highlight competition as the key mechanism at play. Yet, some researchers have pointed out the potential for such adaptive mechanisms. For instance, the greater the perceived competition, the more applicants may believe that "not faking may leave them at a competitive disadvantage" (Griffith & McDaniel, 2006, p. 7), especially if faking is perceived to be widespread (Griffith & Converse, 2011). In such situations, applicants may believe that honest strategies could get them eliminated from the selection process

(Morgeson et al., 2007). We thus expect applicants to be more motivated to fake when they perceive the competition for the job to be intense. We discuss next three variables that fuel this perception.

Competitiveness and competitive worldviews.

Competitiveness or attitudes toward competition as a stable disposition are typically activated by comparisons between the self and others in win-lose situations like sport activities or selection (Kohn, 1992). Competitiveness has been suggested as an antecedent of faking previously (Tett et al., 2006; Tett & Simonet, 2011), but the concept of competitiveness as well as the underlying mechanisms for a relationship with faking has never been outlined in detail. Two basic dimensions of competitiveness can be distinguished: Competitiveness that characterizes individuals who enjoy competitions because it provides an opportunity for self-improvement, and competitiveness that characterizes individuals who enjoy competitive situations mainly because they gain satisfaction from winning them (also described as hyper-competitiveness). The former focuses more on the process (e.g., task mastery) whereas the latter focuses more on the outcome (i.e., winning; Houston, McIntire, Kinnie, & Terry, 2002; Ryckman, Hammer, Kaczor, & Gold, 1996). Both dimensions are related to achievement striving (Ross, Rausch, & Canada, 2003), and thus to a personality facet that has been suggested to be related to faking (Goffin & Boyd, 2009). Nevertheless, in our view, only one dimension should increase the motivation to fake. More specifically, we suggest that applicants high in the dimension of competitiveness that is characterized by the motivation to win (i.e., hyper-competitiveness) may be more likely to see the selection process as a competitive tournament, and thus indirectly, to engage in faking as an adaptive response to win. Alternatively, applicants who enjoy competition as an opportunity for development may perceive every experience with selection

(including failure) as a way to improve, and may thus not be more motivated to fake.

Cultural worldviews linked to competition may be another powerful precursor of faking. More specifically, competitive worldviews, that is, the tendency to see the world as a “competitive jungle characterized by a ruthless, amoral struggle for resources and power in which might is right and winning everything” (Duckitt, Wagner, Du Plessis, & Birum, 2002, p. 92) is relevant in this context. People with strong competitive worldviews perceive the social world as a Darwinian-type of struggle where one has to be ruthless at times in order to survive, and where the strong win and the weak loose. Competitive worldviews derive from the personality dimension of tough-mindedness and exposure to social environments that are characterized by in-group dominance, inequality, and competition (Duckitt & Fisher, 2003; Duckitt & Sibley, 2010). They are related to derogatory attitudes towards people perceived as competitors for limited resources (e.g., negative attitudes or prejudice against minority groups; Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt et al., 2002). Individuals who believe that the world is a ruthless, competitive jungle may not necessarily enjoy competitions and winning (as individuals high in competitiveness do), but believe that they have to do whatever it takes to obtain scarce resources, such as a job, before others take them away. Thus, applicants with strong competitive worldviews may be particularly likely to perceive the competition for the job as being not only high but also as merciless and hence, indirectly, highly motivated to fake in the selection process. In summary, we forward the following proposition about the relationships between the two personal-level forms of competition and motivation to fake:

Proposition 1: Applicants’ (a) hyper-competitiveness and (b) competitive worldviews will positively influence applicants’ perceived competition for the job and, indirectly, their motivation to fake.

Competitive organizational culture. Beyond person-level traits, applicants’ perceived competition may also be influenced by situational cues suggesting an intense competition to obtain the job. For instance, some organizations have a more competitive culture or climate than others (Fletcher, Major, & Davis, 2008). Similarly, organizations may sometimes be inclined to advertise how difficult their selection process is, to create a reputation of being selective and increase their attractiveness (Collins & Han, 2004). One way to do that is to promote their very low selection ratio as early as in their job advertisements and on their websites. Yet, highlighting how intense the competition is may trigger a stronger motivation to fake in applicants, as a response. For instance, Ones and Viswesvaran (2007) showed higher personality test scores than the general norm in a sample where the selection ratio was particularly low (i.e., .03). Although they did not test if these higher scores were indeed caused by applicant faking or by other factors, it is likely that the low selection ratio triggered perceptions of stronger competition for the job. To reduce faking, Tett and Simonet (2011) suggested that organizations should downplay the competitive culture of the selection process, for example by encouraging recruiters to avoid making applicants aware that “few are expected to make the cut” (2011, p. 310). We concur with this position and further suggest that organizations’ competitive culture (e.g., advertising that a fierce competition is taking place among the elite to get hired) is likely to trigger perceptions of particularly strong competition for the job and thus, indirectly, a stronger motivation to fake. We thus forward the following proposition:

Proposition 2: Competitive organizational culture will positively influence applicants’ perceived competition for the job and, indirectly, their motivation to fake.

Stable attitudes towards faking. It has been suggested that some applicants are so-called players who acknowledge the need to adapt the way

they present their credentials (and sometimes falsify them) to please employers and outperform their competitors, while others are so-called purists who only accept to present their authentic self, even if it means failing to get the job (Bangerter et al., 2012; Brown & Hesketh, 2004). In the context of faking, this distinction suggests that even though all applicants form perceptions of how much competition they face when applying for a job, not all applicants will react to it in the same fashion. If applicants have positive stable attitudes towards faking (i.e., they are players), they will see faking as an appropriate and adaptive response to deal with the competition. Alternatively, if applicants have negative stable attitudes towards faking (i.e., they are purists), they will refuse to engage in faking to deal with the competition.

The impact of stable attitudes towards faking can also be linked to the impact of individual differences on faking, because some individual differences determine attitudes towards faking. For instance, people high in Machiavellianism believe that others can be manipulated to achieve their own goals (Christie & Geis, 1970). In the selection process, Machiavellian applicants may attempt to manipulate the organization's representative to get the job. Accordingly, several models of faking have highlighted Machiavellianism as a potential antecedent of applicants' motivation to fake (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; Levashina & Campion, 2006; Tett & Simonet, 2011). And some studies have found positive relationships between Machiavellianism and applicant faking (Hogue, Levashina, & Hang, 2013; Levashina & Campion, 2007; Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006). We argue that applicants high in Machiavellianism have more positive attitudes towards faking, and thus perceive the use of faking as an acceptable adaptive response to win the competition for the job. On the other hand, earlier models have suggested that people with high integrity (Levashina & Campion, 2006; Snell et al., 1999; Tett & Simonet, 2011) or who value honesty as a moral or religious

principle (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; Goffin & Boyd, 2009; Griffith et al., 2011; McFarland & Ryan, 2000) should be less motivated to fake. And some studies have found negative relationships between integrity or honesty and applicant faking (Levashina & Campion, 2007; O'Neill et al., 2013). We therefore argue that applicants high in integrity or honesty have more negative attitudes towards faking, and are likely to reject faking as a potential response to competition, even when competition is fierce. Taken together, we propose that the relationship between perceived competition for the job and motivation to fake will be moderated by applicants' stable attitudes towards faking:

Proposition 3: The relationship between perceived competition for the job and motivation to fake will be stronger for applicants with positive attitudes towards faking, but weaker for those with negative attitudes towards faking.

Applicants' capacity to fake

According to the mind-reading principle, applicants are motivated to mind-read organizations' criteria to adapt their behavior and send the appropriate signals, but they differ in their ability to do so. Translating this principle to the context of faking, we propose that applicants differ in their capacity to engage in faking because they differ in their ability to identify organizations' selection criteria or constructs that are assessed at selection, and in their interpersonal skills to use the appropriate faking tactics. We discuss this in what follows.

Ability to identify the selection criteria. The concept of mind-reading implies that applicants first try detecting what qualities organizations are interested in, and then use this information to adapt their strategies accordingly (e.g., provide appropriate responses in an interview or a test). As such, applicants must be able to detect the

constructs (or criteria) that are measured or they will not be able to fake successfully, that is, improve their scores or raters' evaluations of their performance through faking (Levashina & Campion, 2006; Marcus, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2006). Applicants can try to detect what criteria are assessed during the selection process using cues obtained from the organizations (e.g., by interpreting the questions that are asked in interviews or the items in tests). The ability to identify criteria (ATIC) has been examined in various selection contexts, and has been shown to increase both selection performance and faking (Klehe et al., 2012; Kleinmann et al., 2011; König, Melchers, Kleinmann, Richter, & Klehe, 2007). Moreover, applicants' ATIC is related to cognitive abilities (Kleinmann et al., 2011), a factor positively related to applicants' capacity to fake (Levashina et al., 2009; Tett, Freund, Christiansen, Fox, & Coaster, 2012). We thus propose that the more applicants are able to detect the constructs that organizations assess at selection, the higher their capacity to fake.

Interpersonal skills. Detecting what the organization is looking for is valuable only if applicants can use this information to send the right signals (e.g., engage in the appropriate behavior). Applicants with higher interpersonal skills or social skills are likely to be better at interpreting situational cues from the environment and to use appropriate faking tactics (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; Levashina & Campion, 2006; McFarland & Ryan, 2006). Alternatively, applicants lacking such skills may fail to use the right faking tactics at the right time or fake ineffectively in social situations like employment interviews (e.g., inappropriately compliment the interviewer, excessively exaggerate facts). We thus forward the following proposition about the relationships between applicants' ATIC and capacity to fake, as well as the moderating effect of interpersonal skills:

Proposition 4: (a) Applicants' ability to identify the selection criteria (ATIC) will

positively influence their capacity to fake, but (b) this relationship will be stronger for applicants with stronger interpersonal skills.

Applicants' perceived opportunity vs. risk to fake

According to the vulnerability principle, motivated and capable applicants will be more likely to engage in faking if they perceive that there is an opportunity but little risk associated with such behavior (Goffin & Boyd, 2009; Levashina & Campion, 2006; Marcus, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2000). Signaling theory posits that opportunities and risks depend on how much organizations invest in making attempts to falsify signals costly, and on how applicants perceive this situation. Indeed, perceived ease versus difficulty of faking is one of the core features of applicants' expectations concerning forthcoming selection procedures (Schreurs, Derous, Proost, Notelaers, & De Witte, 2008). Organizations can engage in two types of strategies to make faking more costly: Increase the risks of faking for applicants or use selection methods that are harder to fake.

Organizations' investments in increasing the risk associated with faking. In order to make faking riskier for applicants, organizations can develop methods to identify and punish applicants who engage in such behaviors. Previous research has highlighted several such methods that differ in effectiveness. First, organizations can engage in reference or background verification, for instance to identify falsified information about education credentials or job experiences (Kuhn, Johnson, & Miller, 2013; Levashina & Campion, 2009). Second, organizations can use bogus items and response elaboration techniques, for instance by presenting applicants with made-up facts and identifying those who pretend to know them. Such an approach has been used to detect faking in biodata inventories (Levashina et al., 2009, 2012; Schmitt & Kuncze, 2002) or personality tests (Fan et al.,

2012). Third, research has examined several techniques to identify faking in personality testing (Burns & Christiansen, 2011), including faking scales or indicators (Kuncel & Borne-man, 2007; Levashina, Weekley, Roulin, & Hauck, 2014; Zickar & Drasgow, 1996), response latencies (Holden & Hibbs, 1995), and eye tracking technology (van Hooft & Born, 2012). Organizations could then attempt to correct test scores for faking (Ellingson, Sackett, & Hough, 1999; Goffin & Christiansen, 2003) or eliminate identified fakers (Berry & Sackett, 2009). However, most of this research has been done using social desirability scales as indicators of faking. And social desirability is arguably not the most appropriate way to capture faking, which may explain why many such attempts have been shown to be ineffective or associated with undesirable effects (Griffith & Peterson, 2008; Kuncel & Tellegen, 2009; Schmitt & Oswald, 2006). Finally, organizations could also expect from interviewers that they identify fakers during interviews or assessments (Robie, Tuzinski, & Bly, 2006), but initial evidence suggests that interviewers have difficulties to detect faking (Roulin, Bangerter, & Levashina, 2015).

Organizations' use of methods to identify and punish fakers can influence applicants' perceptions of the risk of faking in two ways: First, organizations can directly inform applicants of the methods they use. This approach involves warning applicants that those who attempt to fake in a test will be caught. Although organizations are often bluffing and cannot actually catch fakers (Griffith & McDaniel, 2006) and such an approach may remove actual trait variance, evidence suggests that applicants who were warned about faking obtained lower scores on selection tests and faked less (Dwight & Donovan, 2003; Fan et al., 2012). Alternatively, organizations can systematically identify and punish fakers, thus building a reputation of being efficient at faking detection over time, and indirectly influencing applicants' perceptions and behaviors in the long run.

Organizations' investments in hard-to-fake methods. The alternative approach for organizations involves investing in harder to fake methods, thereby directly reducing applicants' opportunities to fake. Such methods include using ability tests (Lievens & Burke, 2011), combining personality and other predictors such as ability tests (Converse, Peterson, & Griffith, 2009), using less transparent items, tests, or questions (Marcus, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006), forced-choice personality tests (Converse et al., 2008), or speeded personality tests (Komar, Komar, Robie, & Taggar, 2010). Organizations can also change the format of their interviews. For instance, using a structured interview reduces applicants' opportunity to fake as compared to unstructured forms of interviewing (Levashina, Hartwell, Morgeson, & Campion, 2014). Using interview questions based on applicants' past work experiences (past-behavior interviews) is also likely to limit the opportunity to fake more than using questions based on hypothetical scenarios (i.e., situational interviews) because of their more verifiable nature (Levashina & Campion, 2006, 2007). In summary, we forward the following proposition about the relationships between organizations' investments to make faking more costly and applicants' perceived opportunity versus risks to fake:

Proposition 5: Applicants will perceive more risk but less opportunity to fake when the hiring organization invests in (a) increasing the risks associated with faking and (b) the use of hard-to-fake methods.

Faking behavior

As mentioned before, applicants' motivation, capacity, and perceived opportunity versus risk to fake are aligned with basic principles of the signaling framework, and are part of several existing models of faking (e.g., Levashina & Campion, 2006; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006; Tett & Simonet, 2011). Although no

empirical study has yet simultaneously tested the effect of all these components, research seems to converge so that all three components need to be present, at least to some extent, before applicants actually engage in faking. That is, in order to fake, applicants need to be motivated to fake, capable of faking, and perceive the opportunity to fake. For instance, applicants who are highly motivated and capable to fake will not engage in faking if they perceive the risks associated with such behavior as too high. Alternatively, applicants who are highly motivated and perceive good opportunities to fake will be less likely to engage in such behavior if they lack the adequate skills, that is, their capacity to fake is low. Motivation to fake appears to be the core predictor, also in earlier research. A good example of this is Ellingson and McFarland's (2011) motivational model of faking suggesting that applicants will fake mostly if their motivation to do so is high enough. In line with these arguments, we propose that motivation to fake is the prime antecedent of faking behaviors, whereas capacity and perceived opportunity will play the role of moderators in this relationship.

Proposition 6: The more applicants are motivated to fake, the more they will engage in faking, but this relationship will be moderated by (a) applicants' capacity and (b) perceived opportunity to fake.

A dynamic model of faking – Step 2: Dynamic adaptations

Research suggests that, overall, faking can be effective to achieve better performance evaluations or scores in interviews (Levashina & Campion, 2007), personality tests (McFarland & Ryan, 2000; Peterson, Griffith, & Converse, 2009), or biodata inventories (Levashina et al., 2009). In some cases, faking may help applicants to obtain the job. For instance, it has been estimated that if organizations hire half of applicants they could hire up to 31% of people

who falsified responses during the selection process (Griffith et al., 2007). Of course, most organizations have a selection ratio far below 50%, meaning that most applicants (even some who faked and performed relatively well) will not be hired. Additionally, some applicants who faked may get caught and eliminated from the selection process, especially when dealing with organizations that effectively invest in increasing the risk associated with faking.

In line with the principle of escalation, we propose that faking is not only an outcome but also the starting point of an adaptive process, for applicants and for organizations. Therefore, in a second step, we describe next how initial faking can trigger adaptive responses of applicants and organizations, together with potential moderating and mediating mechanisms, which then influence the probability of future faking. We first describe how faking, depending on the selection outcome and the way it is interpreted, triggers adaptations in the motivation and capacity to fake in subsequent selection processes, mainly via their impact on perceived competition. Then, we discuss how applicant faking influences the job performance of new hires in organizations and, indirectly, gives rise to organizations' adaptive responses.

Faking and applicants' adaptive process

Signaling theory has been used extensively in animal research to explain the evolution of species, for instance to demonstrate how predators or prey are pressured to adapt (over time and through generations) in order to survive (Vermeij, 1987; Zahavi & Zahavi, 1999). We suggest that adaptation can also be a response mechanism for job applicants, because they are eventually pressured to secure a (good) job to "survive." They will use the outcome of the selection process and the feedback they receive to reevaluate their chances of success in future selection encounters and adapt their behaviors accordingly. Yet, we argue that adaptations are more likely following failure than following

success. When the selection outcome is positive for the applicant the pressure to adapt is minimal. If applicants receive a job offer, they will likely not be involved in another selection process in the near future, and will thus not be required to adapt their behaviors. If they advance to the next step of the selection process, applicants are likely to interpret this as a signal that their initial strategy was effective and simply reuse a similar approach in next selection encounters. Only when the selection outcome is negative, that is, when applicants are rejected or eliminated from the selection process, are they pressured to adapt their behavior in their next attempt to increase their chances of getting hired. Therefore, in the next paragraphs, we focus on adaptations following failure at selection and describe how such a negative outcome can trigger adaptations in applicants' motivation and capacity to fake and, ultimately, influence the probability to fake in the next selection encounter.

Adaptations in the motivation to fake. Applicants may experience a failure after engaging (or not) in faking. If they did engage in faking, one possibility is for them to learn a lesson and decide to reconsider their strategy. For instance, they may try to engage in less faking in subsequent attempts because they realize that they do not possess the required qualities to fake effectively. However, the most likely form of adaptation after failure may consist in engaging in more faking (or to start faking if they previously refrained from using such a strategy) in subsequent selection encounters. Indeed, recent evidence suggests that applicants who retake a personality test after initial failure tend to engage in more faking (Hausknecht, 2010; Landers, Sackett, & Tuzinski, 2011).

We propose that the underlying mechanism of this behavioral change resides in applicants' perception of the competition and their motivation to fake. Failing to get selected and learning that somebody else received the job is likely to render the competitive nature of

selection more salient. That is, applicants will become more attentive to the fact that they are competing against other, equally well-qualified or even better job seekers, for a limited number of jobs. This will increase the perceived competition and motivation to fake at the next application, ultimately to outperform competitors. If applicants' motivation to fake was initially low (i.e., they faked only to a small extent), the adaptive reaction would be to fake more. If their motivation to fake was already higher (i.e., they faked extensively), the adaptive reaction would likely be to continue faking, to remain competitive and possibly try to engage in more effective forms of faking when possible.

Proposition 7: Applicants' failure at selection will increase perceived competition for the job and, indirectly, the motivation to fake in the next selection process.

However, in line with the competition principle of the signaling framework (see previous lines), applicants will differ in the way they react and adapt their motivation to fake following failure. Accordingly, we discuss in what follows how individual differences may moderate the relations described in Proposition 7. We propose two potential moderators that seem central for understanding the reactions: Locus of control and person-level forms of competition.

Locus of control. Applicants may attribute their failure at selection to internal or external factors, and this depends to a significant extent on their locus of control (LoC; Campbell & Sedikides, 1999). LoC describes the dispositional tendency to believe that one has control over the external environment (internal LoC) versus believing that events are due to others, fate or chance (external LoC; Rotter, 1966). LoC is one of the four core self-evaluations traits (Judge & Bono, 2001). Individuals with internal LoC may initially be more motivated to fake than individuals with external LoC because of their strong belief in their own

agency and ability to influence outcomes. However, during the adaption process following failure at selection, people with external LoC may be more likely to increase faking at the next selection process than those with internal LoC. Indeed, LoC is particularly relevant for understanding how individuals react to an event and adapt their behaviors to future contexts (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Weiner, 1986). This is especially evident in situations that represent a threat to the self, such as failures or negative feedback at important tasks. Several lines of research suggest that individuals with internal LoC are better able to deal with such situations adequately and constructively because, for example, they engage in more problem-focused coping, as compared to emotion-focused coping (Ng, Sorensen, & Eby, 2006). Individuals with external LoC, however, are more driven by the desire to (defensively) protect their self-concept, with a tendency to blame others for their bad fate. In comparison to those with an internal LoC, individuals with an external LoC show a stronger self-serving bias, that is, they are more likely to attribute positive events (e.g., successes) to themselves and negative events (e.g., failures) to outside factors (Campbell & Sedikides, 1999). Taken together, the previous arguments suggest that while individuals with internal LoC may *initially* be more motivated to fake than those with external LoC, individuals with external LoC are more likely to attribute past failures at selection to outside factors, including fierce competition. Perceptions of high competition should in turn augment their motivation to fake in the future. Put differently, we suggest that the proposed link between failure at selection and motivation to fake in the future is particularly strong for applicants with external LoC because they are more likely to attribute past failure to strong competition.

Competitiveness and competitive worldviews. The two person-level factors related to competition, competitiveness, and competitive

worldviews, are also likely to moderate how applicants adapt following failure at their last application attempt because they should render elements of competition more salient. Thus, they increase the likelihood that failure is interpreted in a way that relates it to elements of competition, and the motivation to win. More specifically, individuals high in hyper-competitiveness enjoy competing against others and want to win competitions (Houston et al., 2002). They should thus be more likely to interpret their failure at selection in a hyper-competitive framework, and by reacting in a way that increases chances of winning the next competition. Similarly, individuals with strong competitive worldviews perceive the world as a competitive jungle where only the strongest win and obtain limited resources (Duckitt et al., 2002). They are thus more likely to interpret a negative outcome as a failure in their struggle for resources, and will be even more motivated to do whatever it takes to obtain those resources at the next occasion. As such, we propose that adaptations in the motivation to fake following failure at selection are particularly strong for applicants high in hyper-competitiveness and competitive worldviews:

Proposition 8: Applicants' adaptations in perceived competition for the next job and, indirectly, in their motivation to fake will be stronger for (a) applicants with external locus of control and applicants who are high in (b) hyper-competitiveness and (c) competitive worldviews.

Adaptations in the capacity to fake. Because people learn from experience (Herriott, Levinthal, & March, 1985), applicants may also benefit from experiencing a failure at selection and hence increase their capacity to fake in subsequent selection encounters. We argue that applicants reflect on their failure, evaluate which faking strategies were effective and which were ineffective. Moreover, the selection experience allows them to accumulate general

knowledge about selection methods and selection criteria used by organizations. Both elements will ultimately increase their ability to identify selection constructs and/or criteria (or to “mind-read” organizations), and apply more effective faking strategies. This increase in the capacity to fake is likely to happen despite the fact that organizations often use different selection criteria so that specific knowledge about the criteria for one job in an organization may be less pertinent for another job. Applicants who go through several selection procedures develop their general ability to detect the cues and information provided by the organization, which helps them identify the performance criteria (Kleinmann et al., 2011). Indeed, applicants’ ATIC is positively related to their experience with selection (Kleinmann et al., 2011; König et al., 2007). As such, we suggest that applicants’ ATIC and, indirectly, their capacity to fake increases after a failure (and even more so after multiple experiences).

Proposition 9: Applicants’ experience with the selection process will increase their ability to identify the selection criteria and, indirectly, their capacity to fake in the next selection process.

We discussed before how applicants’ interpersonal skills moderate the initial impact of their ATIC on their capacity to fake. Similarly, we suggest that self-monitoring will moderate the extent to which they benefit from their experience with selection, in terms of increased ability. Self-monitoring is the ability to manage and control one’s expressive behaviors or self-presentations, and evaluate others’ reactions to it, in order to achieve the desired impression (Snyder, 1974). Previous empirical models have suggested that applicants high on self-monitoring should be better at faking because they can more easily regulate their behavior according to the situation (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011; McFarland & Ryan, 2000; Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006). Yet, studies have failed to find empirical support for this

relationship (Delery & Kacmar, 1998; Hogue et al., 2013; Mersman & Shultz, 1998). We thus suggest that self-monitoring may not have a direct effect on applicant capacity to fake, but may facilitate applicants’ adaptations, by increasing their ATIC. More precisely, because applicants high in self-monitoring are better at monitoring and strategically adapting their behavior, they may benefit more from prior experience with selection. They may be better at accumulating valuable insights about how to identify the performance criteria and how to obtain high scores, which translates into a higher capacity to fake in the next selection encounter. In sum, we forward the following proposition:

Proposition 10: Applicants’ adaptations in their ability to identify the criteria and, indirectly, capacity to fake will be stronger for applicants high in self-monitoring.

Faking and organizations’ adaptive process

Our model also delineates how organizations adapt to faking as a function of past experiences at selection. We propose that applicant faking will trigger long-term adaptive reactions from organizations only if two conditions are met. The first condition is that due to applicant faking, organizations do not hire those applicants who truly are the most qualified for the job. From a signaling perspective, faking represents applicants’ attempt to falsify signals in selection to mimic the qualities of the ideal applicants. And, as mentioned before, such attempts are often effective. The second condition is that, due to these suboptimal hiring decisions, the performance of the new hires is lower, compared to the truly best applicants who were not hired. Hence, this effect may not be observable after only one hire, it becomes apparent with time, after several hires.

One way to test if faking indeed has such harmful effects is to explore its impact on the predictive validity of selection instruments. In

the employment interview literature, several researchers have suggested that applicants' use of faking may attenuate interview validity (Delery & Kacmar, 1998; Gilmore et al., 1999; Levashina & Campion, 2006). Barrick, Shaffer, and DeGrassi's (2009) meta-analysis also shows that applicants who engaged in impression management obtained much higher ratings of interview performance, but only slightly higher ratings of job performance. Moreover, the relationship between impression management use and job performance is likely to be much weaker (or even negative) if only deceptive forms of impression management (i.e., faking) are considered (Levashina & Campion, 2006). In the testing literature, although the impact of faking on the validity of personality or integrity tests has been debated (Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kamp, & McCloy, 1990; Morgeson et al., 2007; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998), empirical studies and simulations alike have provided ample evidence of the negative effects of faking. For instance, faking reduces the validity of personality tests, especially if faking is negatively related to performance and a small proportion of applicants fake (Komar, Brown, Komar, & Robie, 2008). It can affect the ranking of applicants (Griffith et al., 2007; Stewart et al., 2010; Winkelspecht, Lewis, & Thomas, 2006), meaning that less competent applicants who faked may be hired over those who are both honest and competent (Tett et al., 2012). When organizations use a small selection ratio, they may be more likely to hire applicants who engaged in faking (Mueller-Hanson, Heggstad, & Thornton, 2003).

Recent research also suggests that fakers and nonfakers differ in their behaviors and performance once they are on the job. For instance, applicants who faked on selection tests exhibit lower levels of performance on the job than nonfakers (Donovan et al., 2014). Faking during selection is also related to deviant or counterproductive work behaviors, which may include wasting organizations' time, unauthorized absences, or theft (O'Neill et al., 2013;

Peterson et al., 2011). For organizations, the general conclusion is that applicants' falsifications on tests may result in negative outcomes, such as hiring lower quality applicants.

Yet, there may be exceptions, depending on the form of faking and the work context. For instance, faking in employment interviews can take various forms (Levashina & Campion, 2007) and while some forms of faking (i.e., inventing qualifications that one does not actually possess) are likely to be harmful in most situations, others (e.g., exaggerating ones' past accomplishments) could be associated with abilities that can be valuable in some work contexts. As such, the actual relationship between faking and performance may not always be negative, but could be zero or even positive depending on job type. In other words, in situations where the ability to convince or persuade others is part of the job description, applicants' ability to deceive the interviewer and influence the selection outcome may translate into higher job performance. In sales jobs, for example, the ability to exaggerate one's accomplishments could translate into the ability to promote the qualities of products and services to customers. There is some evidence that impression management or faking can be positively related to job performance rated by supervisors or assessors (Ingold, Kleinmann, König, & Melchers, 2015; Kleinmann & Klehe, 2010), which were probably influenced by exactly the valuable promotion abilities mentioned before.

Adaptations in the investment in increasing the costs of faking and hard-to-fake methods. As mentioned before, organizations basing their selection decisions on instruments that are relatively easy to fake, such as personality tests, may end up hiring a large proportion of fakers. And, if many fakers are hired, negative outcomes for organizations, such as a decrease in overall employee performance or commitment, or an increase in employee counterproductive behaviors at work become more likely. Also, faking may eventually lead to voluntary

turnover or termination for employees who faked but who actually had a poor fit with the job or organization. Thus, in line with the escalation principle derived from the signaling framework (see previous lines), organizations will be pressured to adapt their selection process.

Organizations and applicants find themselves in an arms race where adaptation is a necessity if one wants to avoid that the other party gets a competitive advantage. For organizations, this means that they try to minimize the possibility for unqualified applicants to fake their way into jobs. But organizations also compete among one another (e.g., to hire the best applicants). Adapting the selection processes so that the truly most qualified applicants are hired is also a way to stay competitive. In sum, in the long run, organizations are likely to react to frequent faking by increasing the costs of faking for applicants. As outlined in detail in previous lines, they can do so by reducing applicants' opportunity to fake, such as using more structured interviews (Levashina & Campion, 2006), or by increasing the risks associated with faking, such as engaging in systematic background checking (Levashina & Campion, 2009).

Proposition 11: Over time, frequent applicant faking will lead to decreased job performance and will trigger adaptations by organizations, such as growing investments in (a) increasing the risks associated with faking for applicants or (b) more hard-to-fake selection methods.

The extent to which organizations are able to adapt will depend on their resources. Previous research has highlighted that institutional pressures, such as financial resources or current practices, generally influence the choice and implementation of an organization's selection methods (Klehe, 2004). Similarly, organizations' resources may limit their capacity to adapt their selection processes. For instance, some organizations (e.g., small companies)

may not have the financial resources or the expertise to invest in rendering faking more costly. Some organizations may also be better at discovering the long-term impact of faking on job performance or terminations than others, for instance because they regularly assess the effectiveness of their selection process, have more sophisticated performance appraisal systems, or conduct interviews with departing employees. Those organizations are more likely to see the benefits of investing in making faking costly.

Proposition 12: Organizations will be more likely to adapt and increase the cost of faking and/or investments into hard-to-fake methods when they have more resources that can be allocated to this purpose.

Discussion

Theoretical implications and contributions to faking research

In this paper, we presented a model of applicant faking grounded in signaling theory that contributes to the theory and body of knowledge about applicant faking by underlining the roles played by applicants and organizations in a dynamic way. Building on four key principles derived from the signaling approach to personnel selection (Bangerter et al., 2012), the model identifies the specific variables, adaptive mechanisms, and long-term dynamics involved in faking. For instance it delineates how faking depends on applicants' motivation to fake, capacity to fake, and perceptions of the opportunity versus risks of faking. This model assumes that these three components need to be present, at least to some extent, before applicants actually engage in faking but that motivation to fake plays the most important role. The model further outlines how the motivation, capacity, and perceived opportunity versus risk to fake depend on, and interact with, inter-individual differences (e.g., skills and abilities, competitiveness, attitudes towards faking) and

organizational factors (e.g., organizations' investments to make faking costly). Using these three components as the backbone, our model allows for comparisons with existing theories and models, but also empirical findings, on applicant faking from both the interview (e.g., Levashina & Campion, 2006, 2007) and the testing literatures (e.g., Griffith & McDaniel, 2006; McFarland & Ryan, 2000).

Our model goes beyond existing models of faking, as it highlights the dynamic components of faking that have been largely ignored in past research and emphasizes the long-term implications of faking for applicants and organizations. It outlines how applicants' experience with the selection process and interpretations of the selection outcome trigger adaptations in their motivation and capacity to fake in subsequent selection encounters. For instance, it describes how applicants' whose faking strategy was unsuccessful and who attributed this failure to external factors (e.g., competition) will react by faking more in their next selection encounter. Over time, accumulated experiences of failures may trigger vicious cycles where applicants react with increased dishonesty. Similarly, our model describes how applicant faking can impact selection outcomes and, indirectly, job performance. This pressures organizations to adapt in the long run, for instance by changing their selection methods to increase the costs of faking. We also highlight factors (e.g., applicant level of self-monitoring, organizations' resources) that can act as moderators of applicants' and organizations' adaptations.

Our model also assigns a central explanatory role to various forms of competition, clarifying their potential impact on applicants' motivation to fake and, indirectly, faking. Competition has been either ignored or only briefly mentioned in previous models of faking (Tett et al., 2006; Tett & Simonet, 2011). Others have suggested that applicants adapt their behaviors, including faking, based on their beliefs about what their rivals will do (Ellingson & McFarland, 2011;

Griffith & McDaniel, 2006; Snell et al., 1999), but did not outline the mechanisms that trigger such adaptations. Also, some empirical results about applicant faking have been attributed to competition (e.g., König, Wong, & Cen, 2012; Ones & Viswesvaran, 2007; Robie, Emmons, Tuzinski, & Kantrowitz, 2011), but relations between competition and faking have not been directly tested. Our model proposes that applicants are motivated to fake, at least partly, in response to the competitive situation they face. In other words, it suggests faking as a way to deal with the perceived competition for the job. Moreover, the model describes perceived competition as influenced by person-level factors (i.e., competitiveness and competitive worldviews) and organizational factors (i.e., organizations' competitive culture). Finally, it also acknowledges the role of individual differences as a determinant of applicants' adaptations, posing that attitudes towards faking will shape how applicants will react to perceived competition.

Directions for future faking research

We presented 12 research propositions that we believe can generate novel empirical research. We next provide some suggestions to test them. For instance, except for some initial attempts (e.g., Robie et al., 2011), research examining the relationship between perceived competition, or its antecedents, and faking (Propositions 1 and 2) is limited. As a first step, future studies could measure person-level forms of competition and see if they explain significant variance in applicants' perceived competition for the job, motivation to fake, and actual faking. Initial evidence shows that competitive worldviews are indeed a powerful predictor of faking but the precise mechanism is still unclear (Roulin, Binggeli, & Krings, 2013). Researchers could also assess the relationship between the competitive culture of the hiring organization (e.g., by evaluating or experimentally manipulating the content of organizations'

career websites) and applicants' motivation to fake. All the aforementioned proposed research could also include measures of stable attitudes towards faking (and/or their proposed antecedents) to test the mediating mechanisms suggested in Proposition 3.

Future research could further examine the relationship between applicants' ATIC and the capacity to fake (Proposition 4), for instance using existing ATIC measures (e.g., Kleinmann et al., 2011) and "faking good" instructions from personality testing research (e.g., Zickar & Robie, 1999). More research could also investigate the effectiveness of various actions that organizations can implement to make faking costly for applicants in reducing applicant opportunity to fake (e.g., Proposition 5), for instance by comparing faking when organizations advertise (or not) their methods of faking detection. This avenue has already been explored, when warning applicants before completing a personality test (Dwight & Donovan, 2003; Fan et al., 2012). But such an approach could be replicated with other methods, such as job interviews or biodata inventories. More generally, research could examine the combined effect of applicants' motivation, capacity, and perceived opportunity to fake on actual faking (Proposition 6), and further assess how they interact to influence faking. Some researchers have investigated the motivation part (e.g., McFarland & Ryan, 2006) or the ability part (e.g., Mersman & Shultz, 1998), but not all three components together.

Longitudinal studies could examine how applicants adapt their behavior over time (e.g., following applicants on the job market over the span of several applications) to test the adaptive, dynamic, and long-term aspects of our model (Propositions 7 and 9). So far, there is only some initial evidence that applicants' faking evolves over time, with personality tests (Hausknecht, 2010; Landers et al., 2011). Similar research should be conducted with faking in interviews or other forms of tests. Moreover, research could examine the

adaptation mechanisms further. As described before, individuals may react differently to rejection and thus adapt their strategy of faking differently (Propositions 8 and 10). Therefore, future research could study how individuals who fake react to failure at selection, by incorporating individual differences related to attribution and to competition that should influence the way they adapt their motivation to fake. Moreover, different adaptations in the capacity to fake after failure may be studied by including individual differences in self-monitoring, because people with low self-monitoring may simply not be able to learn from their experience and fake more (Levashina & Campion, 2006; McFarland & Ryan, 2000).

Future research could examine the actual impact of faking on the quality of hires or job performance. By definition, faking corresponds to applicants' attempts to misrepresent themselves to increase their chances of getting hired, which should negatively impact the selection outcomes for organizations. Yet, despite recent attempts (e.g., Donovan et al., 2014; O'Neill et al., 2013), existing evidence is still scarce and the impact of faking on validity is still debated (Hough et al., 1990; Marcus, 2006). Interestingly, many studies suggesting that faking does not impact the validity of personality tests (e.g., Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998; Schmitt & Oswald, 2006) have used social desirability to capture faking. But recent research suggests that social desirability may not be an appropriate measure of faking (e.g., Griffith & Peterson, 2008) and it is possible that skilled applicants faked on these measures. Measuring faking in high-stake selection contexts can be difficult, but there are examples of successful attempts using self-reports, bogus items, or randomized response techniques (see for instance König et al., 2012; Levashina & Campion, 2007; Levashina et al., 2009).

Finally, future research could examine how organizations adapt their investment in making faking costly over time, depending on the overall quality (and subsequent job performance) of

hired applicants (Proposition 11), and what is the actual impact of organizations' resources on these adaptations (Proposition 12). For instance, recent research suggests that the predictive validity of integrity tests has decreased over time (van Iddekinge, Roth, Raymark, & Odle-Dusseau, 2012). At the same time, research has shown that applicants can easily fake integrity tests (McFarland & Ryan, 2000). Maybe the decrease in validity can be explained, at least partly, by organizations' incapacity (or lack of resources) to respond to applicant faking and to make faking on integrity tests more costly.

Overall, our model highlights a series of specific factors that dynamically interact to give rise to applicant faking and outlines short-term and long-term effects of faking for applicants and organizations. We believe that testing the dynamic aspects involved in faking will help advance research on faking. Our model would best be tested using a longitudinal approach, as we proposed. However, we acknowledge that such long-term investigations can be costly and difficult to undertake. For example, finding the appropriate samples and making sure that participants remain in the study after several selection attempts may be demanding. To make empirical examination of our model more feasible, researchers could start by focusing on a limited number of paths and thus test a limited number of the research propositions. Some research propositions could also be tested in several, subsequent studies.

Conclusion

Personnel selection is, by nature, a dynamic and adaptive process involving applicants and organizations. Yet, the existing literature has only offered static approaches to study faking. Building on signaling theory, we offer a dynamic model of applicant faking describing such behaviors as an adaptive response to deal with the competitive nature of the selection process contingent on accumulated knowledge about selection and organizations' attempts to make faking more risky. Moreover, we formulate 12 testable

research propositions deriving from this new perspective on faking. We encourage researchers to consider a dynamic perspective on faking that investigates the interactions between antecedents of applicant faking and their evolution over time through adaptations.

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