GOALS, EMOTIONS, AND INTERVIEWS: JOB CANDIDATES' INTERPERSONAL GOALS EFFECT ON EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE DURING JOB INTERVIEWS

by

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ABSTRACT

AUSTIN VALVO. GOALS, EMOTIONS, AND INTERVIEWS: JOB CANDIDATES' INTERPERSONAL GOALS EFFECT ON EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE DURING JOB INTERVIEWS. (Under the direction of DR. AMY CANEVELLO)

A job interview is a crucial aspect when attempting to receive a job offer. Because of its importance, an interview can elicit both positive and negative emotions that can have an impact on one's interview performance (Fox & Spector, 2000; Powell et al., 2018). Specifically, a candidate's positive affect and interview anxiety can be significant factors in whether they receive a job offer or not. Self-image and compassionate goals have been shown to influence affective experiences within social contexts (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). Therefore, this study aimed to test whether positive affect and state anxiety in job interviews are predicted by self-image and compassionate goals. Participants (N = 138) were randomly assigned to receive either a compassionate goal manipulation or a self-image goal manipulation or they were assigned to a control group. They then participated in an online mock job interview and reported their positive affect and state anxiety before and during the interview. Results indicate that the self-image goals and compassionate goals manipulations did not work in activating their respective goals. In addition, no differences between the three conditions for either state anxiety or positive affect were found. Implications for these findings are discussed, including recommendations for job interviews in practice.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Job interviews are high stakes situations, where the intricate social interface between the interviewer and job candidate can determine if the candidate is offered a position. Job interviews can be the gatekeeper between a candidate being offered a position or rejected from it, as most information is gathered about candidates during job interviews (Posthuma et al., 2002) and supervisors prefer interviews when making organizational hiring decisions (Lievens et al., 2005). Because of their importance in hiring decisions, job interviews are often emotionally charged situations, where a job candidate's emotions can affect the outcome of an interview (Fox & Spector, 2000). Discovering what factors precede candidates' emotions during an interview can inform best practice so candidates preparing for an interview can excel.

The emotions of job candidates can bolster or hinder their performances during job interviews. A recent meta-analysis found a negative relationship between anxiety (i.e., a negative emotion) during an interview and interview performance (Powell et al., 2018). Specifically, Powell and colleagues found an overall medium negative correlation between participants' reported anxiety and their interview performance ($\rho = -.19$, CI = [-.24, -.14]). For a job with a competitive pool of candidates, this negative relationship between anxiety and interview performance may result in a candidate with augmented anxiety not being offered a position (Powell et al., 2018). In contrast, positive affect is linked to greater success during an interview (e.g., Burger & Caldwell, 2000). Burger and Caldwell (2000) found a significant positive relationship between candidates' positive affect and success in interviews ($r = .35$, $p < .01$), indicating that positive affect may lead to a candidate being viewed more favorably than others. Because of the implications that anxiety and positive affect may have on interview performance, finding interventions that alleviate job candidate's anxiety and promote a positive emotional

experience during the interview may help lead to promoting better performance during the job interview.

One area that shows promise as a potential intervention to use during an interview in order to reduce anxiety and promote positive affect is the type of interpersonal goal a job candidate uses to approach the interview. Explicitly, one's self-image goals to create, preserve, and defend image of the self in order to obtain something for oneself are linked to experiencing anxiety in social situations (e.g., with roommates, romantic partners) (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). In those same social contexts, compassionate goals to support others and not harm them are connected to increased positive affect (Crocker & Canevello, 2008).

The goal of the current study was to examine the role of self-image goals and compassionate goals on job candidates' emotions during a job interview, which is an inherently stressful and important part of the employment process (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004). I argue that candidates' self-image and compassionate goals may contribute to their emotional experience during a job interview. Specifically, this study examined whether self-image goals increased state anxiety during interviews and compassionate goals promoted positive affect during interviews.

Positive Affect and Interview Outcomes

Positive affect is the degree to which someone experiences positive emotions like enthusiasm, pride, and joy (Miller & Krizan, 2016). Researchers typically focus on positive affect in one of two ways: trait positive affect—one's general level of positive affect—or state positive affect, which reports level of positive affect over a short period of time (e.g., a day, an hour, right now, etc.) (Diener & Emmons, 1984). Generally speaking, experiencing both trait and state positive affect can lead to successful life outcomes (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; LeBlanc et

al., 2021). Schutte (2014) found that positive affect is linked to positive life outcomes, such as greater sense of general self-efficacy (i.e., belief in one's ability to perform certain tasks to achieve a goal), greater satisfaction in one's relationships, and greater work satisfaction. Furthermore, Isen (2008) found that positive affect directs individuals to become more adaptable and effective thinkers and decision makers. Because of this, individuals high in positive affect can see an uptick in creative problem solving and improvements in cognitive organization (Isen, 2008). Positive affect also benefits intrinsic factors by increasing self-control, appreciation of positive situations, and motivation (Isen & Reeves, 2005).

Positive affect allows individuals to notice a link between hard work put in on tasks and the difference their effort makes (Isen, 2008). Therefore, it should be expected that positive affect has effects on workplace outcomes. For example, employees experiencing positive affect are typically higher in job satisfaction (e.g., Ayres & Malouff, 2007; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). Not only does state positive affect increase how satisfied employees are with their jobs, but it is also connected to increased job performance among employees (e.g., Kim et al., 2018; Janssen et al., 2010). Employees who experience positive affect are usually more satisfied with their positions and perform at a more optimum level as compared to those who are low in positive affect.

In addition to having a positive impact on workplace outcomes, positive affect also contributes to the outcome of job interviews, as it may impact both the interviewer and the job candidate (Fox & Spector, 2000). Little research examines the relationship between positive affect and interview outcomes (see Burger & Caldwell 2000; Fox & Spector, 2000). However, positive affect can possibly be beneficial during a job interview for at least two reasons. First, the interviewer's perception of how qualified the candidate is and their decision to hire can be

bolstered by positive affect (Fox & Spector, 2000). For example, if a candidate is high in positive affect when asked to recall past work experiences, they are more likely to retrieve positive past examples that are congruent with their positive state (Fox & Spector, 2000). This allows the candidate to paint themselves in a more appealing way to the interviewer by recalling and constructing these images of positive past work experiences. Second, a job candidate's positive demeanor can set off an emotional contagion process, where their own positivity spreads to the interviewer, leading them to see the candidate favorably (Fox & Spector, 2000). In sum, an interviewer's evaluation of a job candidate during an interview can be augmented by the candidate's positive affect.

State Anxiety and Interview Outcomes

State anxiety is a temporal response to a threatening or dangerous situation that provokes feelings of tension and uneasiness within an individual (Spielberger, 1972; Spielberger et al., 1983). Given that job interviews are often the mechanism that hiring managers use to gather information and make hiring decisions (Posthuma et al., 2002; Lievens et al., 2005), job candidates may view the interview as threatening because they see the importance of the interview in getting a job they desire and if they do not perform well enough, they may be rejected from the job. Because of this threatening nature, interviews can provoke state anxiety.

Interview anxiety, or feelings of uneasiness and nervousness within the context of a job interview (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004), promotes processes that thwart positive interview outcomes (Sieverding, 2009; Young et al., 2004). Anxious individuals tend to focus on non-task related items (e.g., thinking: "what does the interviewer think of me?") instead of focusing on answering interview questions (Feiler & Powell, 2016). This can make candidates appear

insecure and apprehensive, creating an unfavorable impression on the interviewer and leads to less interview success (Cook et al., 2000; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004).

Although interview anxiety hinders interview performance, recent data suggests that it is unrelated to job performance. Schneider and colleagues (2019) used a selection context where levels of interview anxiety and interview performance were reported in employees before they were hired and job performance was measured after hiring. Results demonstrated that interview anxiety had a negative relationship with interview performance (i.e., how well the candidates answered the six interview questions asked). However, when supervisors were asked to rate employees' job performance, results indicate that interview anxiety was unrelated to job performance. Even though interview anxiety is unrelated to job performance, individuals may not get job offers to begin with because of their interview anxiety leading to poor interview performance.

Predictors of Positive Affect and Anxiety

Because positive affect and anxiety may influence how well a candidate performs during the interview or whether they are offered a position, it is important to understand what contributes to positive affect and anxiety during interviews. First, aspects of personality, specifically extraversion, predict increased positive affect (Fleeson et al., 2002). A second predictor of positive affect is cognitive appraisal (Beal et al., 2005). Stressful situations, such as job interviews, can induce a state of challenge, rather than a state of threat, leading to positive emotional outcomes (Seery, 2011).

Similarly, personality can predict changes in anxiety. Anxiety can be augmented for those lower in emotional stability (Schneider, 2015). In regard to cognitive appraisal, those who enter a state of threat are prone to experience negative emotional outcomes (Maier et al., 2003). If in a

state of threat, job candidates believe the cognitive resources the interview demands exceed the cognitive resources they possess, leading to negative emotions like anxiety (Seery, 2011).

While both aspects of cognitive appraisal (i.e., challenge, threat) and personality (i.e., extraversion, emotional stability) are connected to positive affect and anxiety, creating an intervention using either of these may prove difficult. In terms of cognitive appraisal, research has indicated that being in a state of challenge is not always associated with greater positive affect than if in a state of threat (see Seery, 2011), indicating that a challenge intervention may not influence positive affect in the desired positive direction. For personality, traits are relatively stable across one's life (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000), so developing an effective intervention aimed to change levels of extraversion and/or emotional stability may prove difficult. Therefore, within the context of a job interview, the current study looks to other potential interventions that may help increase positive affect and attenuate state anxiety.

Interpersonal Goals

While personality and cognition appear to play a role in affective experiences, interpersonal goals may be a better intervention to alleviate anxiety and bolster positive affect within an interview context. Specifically, self-image and compassionate goals (Crocker & Canevello, 2008) may provide insight into job candidates' affective experiences during job interviews.

Self-image goals. Within a social context, people want others to acknowledge their desirable qualities (Schlenker, 2003). For example, during a job interview, candidates will feature their desirable qualities in attempt to have the interviewer recognize these traits, which builds a positive image of the candidate. Likewise, self-image goals focus on constructing,

maintaining, and defending desired public and private images of the self to gain or obtain something for the self (Crocker & Canevello, 2008).

Self-image goals shape affective experiences. People with self-image goals try to control how others view them by conveying that they possess favorable qualities and lack unfavorable qualities (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). When one is high in self-image goals, they view relationships as more competitive and zero-sum, leading to decreased feelings of social support (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). Decreased social support, in addition to attempting to control how others view them, results in increased social anxiety (Crocker & Canevello, 2008).

Self-image goals link to job candidates' state anxiety. Self-image goals also predict general feelings of distress, including anxiety. When people have self-image goals they focus on trying to have others view them in desirable ways, which makes them feel more distressed and anxious (Crocker et al., 2010). During social exchanges, those with self-image goals are casting judgment and expecting to be judged in returned, leading these individuals to be concerned about the impressions others hold of them, thus evoking feelings of unease, including anxiety (Canevello & Crocker, 2015; Crocker et al., 2009).

Therefore, within the context of a job interview, job candidates' self-image goals are likely to increase their state anxiety for two reasons. First, job interviews encourage candidates to promote their accomplishments. This should promote anxiety in candidates with self-image goals because those with self-image goals not only want to promote themselves but control the way the interviewer is perceiving them by only showing their positive qualities and hiding their negative qualities. Second, job interviews, by their nature, involve judgment from the interviewer. Therefore, candidates with self-image goals may have an augmented state of anxiety because the evaluative context enhanced their awareness of the importance of impression management in

them being offered a job. Thus, within the context of a job interview, I predicted that high self-image goals will predict greater anxiety.

Hypothesis 1: *Job candidates in the self-image goals condition will have higher anxiety during a job interview, compared to those in the compassionate goals condition and control condition.*

Compassionate goals. Compassionate goals emphasize supporting others and not harming them, not for personal gain, but for the sake of others' well-being (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). When people have compassionate goals, they are aware of both others' emotions and actions and their own, they believe that what is good for one person is beneficial to others around them and are ultimately more connected with others during conversations. When someone's goal is to support others, they work with others to ensure that their goals are met. Therefore, those with compassionate goals may become more cooperative and collaborative with others (Canevello & Crocker, 2017; Crocker & Canevello, 2008).

Compassionate goals are associated with positive affective experiences. Since those with compassionate goals are more concerned with the well-being of others and hold beliefs that people should take care of one another, endorsing these goals leads to greater feelings of social support, which lead to overall positive affective outcomes, such as feeling clear, connected, peaceful, and loving toward others (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). When compassionate goals are endorsed, people enter a more cooperative mindset, which then leads individuals to feel clear, connected, and at ease in social situations—even if the situation is stressful (Canevello & Crocker, 2017).

Compassionate goals link to job candidate's positive affect. When people are higher in compassionate goals, they enter a more collaborative and cooperative mindset, bringing an

increase in positive affect, even in the context of close relationship stressors (Canevello & Crocker, 2017). While previous findings suggest that compassionate goals are associated with higher positive affect, it is not known whether this association holds in situations that are, by definition, evaluative, such as a job interview. If a job candidate is high in compassionate goals in the context of a job interview—an inherently stressful and evaluative situation—compassionate goals may lead to increased positive affect because they focus candidates' attention on how they can support others and away from the evaluative nature of the situation. This may have led to feelings of ease, connectedness, clarity, and being more at ease socially, which makes the overall emotional experience more positive.

Hypothesis 2: *Job candidates in the compassionate goals condition will have higher positive affect during a job interview, compared to those in the self-image goals condition and control condition.*

CHAPTER 2: METHOD

Participants and Recruitment

Undergraduate juniors and seniors, graduate students, students in the Belk College of Business, and faculty and staff at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte were recruited for a mock job-interview study via email and were offered a $15 Amazon gift card as an incentive for participating (see Appendix A). In total, 150 participants participated in this study. Six participants were removed due to an error with random assignment (i.e., they were not assigned to one of the three conditions) and six additional participants were removed due to missing data.

Of the remaining 138 participants, 101 (73.2%) identified as women, 34 (24.6%) as men, and 3 (2.2%) were gender non-conforming. The racial demographics are as follows: White (34.8%), Asian (26.1%), Black (21.0%), Hispanic/Latinx (6.5%), and Other (11.6%). There were 114 students who participated, with the following class breakdown: Juniors (21.1%), Seniors (26.3%), and Graduate Students (52.6%). There were 24 faculty and staff members who participated, 25% of whom had college degrees (bachelor's or associate's) and 75% had a graduate degree (master's or Ph.D.). Participants in this sample had, on average, attended 7.6 interviews (*SD* = 6.5) before completing the study. For students, the average number of previous interviews was 6.4 (*SD* = 5.4) and for faculty and staff, the average was 13.2 interviews (*SD* = 8.9).

Procedure

Participants completed this study in two sessions. In the first portion of this study, participants were sent a link two days prior to the interview session to complete pretest measures in order to assess previous interview experience, demographics, and other measures not relevant

to this project.[1] Approximately two days after completing the pretest measures, participants were sent a Zoom link for the mock job interview. Immediately before the interview, participants electronically completed pre-interview measures of state anxiety, positive affect, self-image goals, and compassionate goals.

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of three conditions: the control condition, the self-image goal condition, or the compassionate goal condition. In all conditions, participants read the instructions on the computer screen and heard them via audio recording. Those in the control condition received the following instructions: "This interview will consist of 4 structured questions. These interview questions are typically more specific and require you to be detailed in your response. It is important you take your time in responding to the questions. Also, please note that the interviewer will not be providing verbal or non-verbal feedback, such as nodding or smiling, during the interview. Therefore, please do not take such behavior as a reflection of your interview performance."

Those in the self-image goal condition received the same instructions as those in the control condition, with the following additional instructions: "When answering the following questions, we encourage you to promote yourself and your accomplishments in a way that might make you stand out over other applicants for this position." Those in the compassionate goal condition received the control condition instructions and also received the following instructions: "Rather than trying to show superiority to other applicants and protecting yourself by focusing on your strengths while hiding weaknesses, you may feel more comfortable and do a better job

[1]This was part of a larger protocol in which participants completed measures unrelated to this investigation in the pretest, pre-interview, and posttest. In addition, participants participated in two job interview rounds. The first round had no manipulation and the second round (this study) manipulated participants' goals.

by talking about ways you can use this job to contribute to a larger mission beyond your own accomplishments and promote a greater good" (Abelson et al., 2014).

After receiving the prompt, the participants completed the interview. They were asked four structured interview questions by a research assistant interviewer (see Appendix B for a detailed script).[2] The interview questions were consistent across all conditions and all interviewer-interviewee pairs were gender-matched (i.e., same-gender)[3]. Interviewers were undergraduate research assistants, trained to standardize their reactions across conditions (i.e., no verbal or non-verbal feedback) and blind to condition. After completing the mock interview, participants completed posttest measures of state anxiety, positive affect, and self-image and compassionate goals during the interview.

Measures

State Anxiety

State anxiety was measured at the pre-interview and posttest using the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger et al., 1983). I measured state anxiety at both pre-interview and posttest because I was interested in the change in state anxiety between the timepoints (i.e., if Hypothesis 1 was found significant, was there a significant increase in state anxiety from pre-interview to posttest?). Twenty items began with one of two stems (pre-interview and posttest): "Read each statement and choose the option to indicate how right now, in this moment, I feel:" (pre-interview) or "Read each statement and choose the option to indicate how you felt during the interview, I felt:" (posttest) and were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very much so*). Sample items included: "I feel worried," "I am tense," and "I feel nervous." Internal

[2]Some interview questions used in this study were from a mock interview study by Feiler and Powell (2016).
[3]One research assistant interviewer identified as non-binary.

reliability was α = .95 at the pre-interview and α = .89 at the posttest. The measure, including all items, appears in Appendix C.

Positive Affect

This study measured positive affect during the pre-interview and posttest using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule—Short Form (Watson et al., 1988). Positive affect was measured at pre-interview and posttest because, like with state anxiety, I was interested in the change from pre-interview to posttest (i.e., if Hypothesis 2 was found significant, was the difference in positive affect from pre-interview to posttest significant?). Ten items began with one of two stems (pre-interview and posttest): "Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, in the moment" (pre-interview) or "Indicate the extent you felt this way during the interview" (posttest) and were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*very slightly or not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Sample items included: "excited," "proud," and "determined." Internal reliability was α = .93 for both the pre-interview and posttest. The measure and all items can be found in Appendix D.

Compassionate Goals and Self-image Goals

Participants' completed measures of self-image and compassionate goals at the pre-interview and posttest, using the scale developed by Crocker and Canevello (2008). These measures were completed in the posttest to evaluate the effectiveness of the manipulation. In addition, the goals were measured in the pre-interview to test whether the self-image and compassionate goals manipulations were more effective for those who arrived to the study with high self-image or compassionate goals, respectively. Twenty-eight items beginning with one of two stems (pre-interview and posttest): "In general, how much do you want/try to do each of the following:" (pre-interview) or "During the interview, how much did you want to or try to:"

(posttest) were rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Sample items for the self-image goals sub-scale included: “avoid the possibility of being wrong,” “avoid being rejected by others,” and “avoid showing your weaknesses.” Sample items for the compassionate goals sub-scale included: “have compassion for others’ mistakes and weaknesses,” “be supportive of others,” and “make a positive difference in someone else’s life.” The self-image goals subscale reliabilities for the pre-interview and posttest were $\alpha = .87$ and $\alpha = .91$, respectively; and the compassionate goals subscale reliability was $\alpha = .81$ for the pre-interview and $\alpha = .88$ for the posttest. All items appear in Appendix E.

Previous Interview Experience

To assess participants’ experience with interviews, participants listed the number of job interviews they have previously attended.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Manipulation Check

I conducted a one-way ANOVA to test whether the those in the self-image goal condition reported higher self-image goals during the interview (i.e., Time 2/posttest), compared to the compassionate goal and control conditions. Similarly, I conducted a second one-way ANOVA to test whether the those in the compassionate goal condition reported higher compassionate goals during the interview (i.e., Time 2/posttest), compared to the self-image goal and control conditions. The results for both ANOVAs appear in Table 1, along with the means and standard deviations of self-image goals and compassionate goals for each condition. Those in the self-image goal condition did not report greater self-image goals compared to the compassionate goal and control conditions, ($F(2, 135) = 1.25$ $p = .291$). Likewise, those in the compassionate goal condition did not report greater compassionate goals compared to the self-image goal and control conditions, ($F(2, 135) = .65$, $p = .526$). Thus, the self-image and compassionate goals manipulations were unsuccessful. In Appendix F, I discuss a pilot study that was conducted prior to this study in order to test the effectiveness of the self-image goal and compassionate goal manipulations.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Way Analyses of Variance in Self-Image Goals and Compassionate Goals at Time 2 Between Conditions

Measure	Control Group		Self-Image Group		Compassionate Goals Group		*F*(2, 135)	*P-Value*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Self-Image Goals	3.162	0.787	3.298	0.670	3.395	0.637	1.246	0.291
Compassionate Goals	3.777	0.701	3.909	0.610	3.903	0.550	0.645	0.526

Note: The data represents self-image goals and compassionate goals during the interview. Self-image goals and compassionate goals were both measured on a 1-5 Likert scale.

Although gender does not typically moderate the effects of compassionate goals (see Crocker & Canevello, 2008), in the broader literature on gender, women respond more strongly to relational situations (Burda et al., 1984). Compassionate goals are relational in nature, as they focus on supporting others for the sake of others' well-being. Thus, it is possible that women may be more sensitive and responsive to a compassionate goal manipulation. Therefore, I tested whether gender moderated the relationship between condition and self-reported compassionate goals at Time 2 in order to address the possibility that women might be more sensitive to the compassionate goals manipulation. To do this, I conducted a 3 (condition: self-image goals, compassionate goals, control) by 2 (gender: male vs. female) factorial ANOVA. The interaction between gender and condition was not significant ($F(2, 129) = 2.157$, $p = .120$), suggesting that women in the compassionate goals condition were not more susceptible to the compassion goals prompt.

Primary Analyses

Self-image Goals and State Anxiety

Hypothesis 1 predicted that those in the self-image goal condition would report higher state anxiety during the job interview (i.e., Time 2, measured during the posttest), compared to the other two conditions. To test this, I conducted a one-way ANOVA in which the state anxiety scores during the job interview were tested for differences by condition. Results indicate that there were no differences between the three conditions ($F(2, 135) = 1.40$, $p = 0.250$; see Table 2 for means and standard deviations of state anxiety by condition). Thus, the self-image goal condition did not differ from the other two conditions in state anxiety during the interview, failing to support Hypothesis 1.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Way Analyses of Variance in State Anxiety and Positive Affect at Time 2 Between Conditions

Measure	Control Group		Self-Image Group		Compassionate Goals Group		*F*(2, 135)	*P-Value*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
State Anxiety	2.108	0.704	1.896	0.602	2.063	0.642	1.399	0.250
Positive Affect	2.957	1.055	3.320	0.799	3.084	0.920	1.698	0.187

Note: The data represents Time 2 measures (i.e., posttest/during the interview) of state anxiety and positive affect. Positive affect was measured using a 5-point Likert scale and state anxiety was measured with a 4-point Likert scale.

Those with more interview experience may feel less anxious in subsequent interviews (Feeney et al., 2015) and those with more interview experience may also have lower self-image goals during job interviews. Thus, it is possible that the link between self-image goals and interview anxiety may be confounded with interview experience. There was a moderate negative correlation between previous interview experience and state anxiety at Time 2 found in this study ($r(128) = -.23$, $p = .008$). To remove variance attributed to previous interview experience, an additional test on Hypothesis 1 that controlled for previous interview experience was conducted.[4] To do so, I conducted two multiple linear regressions where the study conditions were represented by dummy-coded variables (First regression code: self-image goal condition = 0; compassionate goal condition = 1. Second regression code: self-image goal condition = 0; control condition = 1). Anxiety at Time 2 was regressed upon the dummy-coded condition variables and previous interview experience. Results show that while controlling for previous interview experience, there were no significant difference in state anxiety at Time 2 between those in the self-image goals condition and the compassionate goals condition ($\beta = .32$, $t(79) =$

[4] For previous interview experience all evident outliers were removed (i.e., any number greater than 40 interviews)

1.46, p = .147) or between those in the self-image goals condition and the control condition (β = .34, t(84) = .21, p = .101). This indicates, while controlling for previous interview experience, the three conditions did not differ in nor significantly predict state anxiety at Time 2.

Compassionate Goals and Positive Affect

Hypothesis 2 predicted that those in the compassionate goal condition would be higher in positive affect during the interview, compared to those in the self-image goal and control conditions. To test this hypothesis, I conducted a one-way ANOVA in which positive affect at Time 2 was compared between the three conditions. As shown in Table 2, results suggested no difference in positive affect during the interview between the three conditions (F(2, 135) = 1.698, p = 0.187). Thus, these results did not support Hypothesis 2.

Exploratory Analyses

The manipulations in this study did not impact self-image or compassionate goals during the interview. However, because self-image and compassionate goals were also measured before the manipulations, I was able to test whether participants' goals before the interview predicted their affect during the interview. In other words, I was able to test whether having high self-image goals before the interview predicted higher state anxiety during the interview (i.e., Hypothesis 1) and whether having high compassionate goals before the interview predicted higher positive affect during the interview (i.e., Hypothesis 2). I addressed each of these questions in exploratory analyses.

Further Examining Self-Image Goals and State Anxiety

Although those in the self-image goal condition did not report higher state anxiety compared to the other two conditions, I conducted additional analyses to explore the relationship

between participants' self-reported self-image goals before the interview and state anxiety. Table 3 reports correlations for all variables.

Table 3

Means, standard deviations, and correlations of study variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Self-image Goals T1	3.23	0.55								
2 Self-image Goals T2	3.29	0.70	.75**							
3 Compassionate Goals T1	3.97	0.45	.08	.11						
4. Compassionate Goals T2	3.86	0.62	.14	.28**	.64**					
5. Positive Affect T1	3.12	0.91	-.15	-.06	.19*	.40**				
6. Positive Affect T2	3.13	0.93	-.16	-.09	.15	.41**	.89**			
7. State Anxiety T1	2.07	0.63	.23**	.21*	-.06	-.23**	-.68**	-.66**		
8. State Anxiety T2	2.02	0.65	.21*	.20*	-.07	-.22**	-.54**	-.67**	.83**	
9. Previous Interview Experience	7.65	6.51	-.02	-.01	.08	.10	-.01	.03	-.21*	-.23**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. T1 = Time 1 (before the interview/pre-interview); T2 = Time 2 (during the interview/posttest). * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$.

It is possible that before the interview, those with high self-reported self-image goals also reported high state anxiety. This is indeed reflected in the correlation between self-image goals at Time 1 (i.e., pre-interview) and state anxiety at Time 1 ($r(136) = .23$, $p = .008$). Because of this correlation, there is a possibility that those with high self-image goals carried the anxiety they arrived with throughout the entirety of the interview. In other words, having high self-image goals before the interview may have not predicted a change in state anxiety during the interview. Instead, having high self-image goals at both timepoints may have resulted in high state anxiety at both Time 1 and Time 2. Therefore, I wanted to test whether pre-interview self-image goals predicted a change in state anxiety from before to during the interview (i.e., remove the variance attributed to arriving with high state anxiety in the relationship between self-image goals at Time 1 and state anxiety at Time 2). To test this, I conducted a multiple linear regression, in which state anxiety at Time 2 was regressed on self-image goals and state anxiety at time 1. Self-image goals at Time 1 did not predict a change in state anxiety at Time 2 ($\beta = .02$, $t(135) = .41$, $p = .682$).

Further Examining Compassionate Goals and Positive Affect

While those in the compassionate goal condition did not report higher positive affect compared to the other conditions, I aimed to explore whether self-reported compassionate goals before the interview predicted greater positive affect during the interview. Possibly, those with higher self-reported compassionate goals came into the study with greater positive affect. Indeed, the zero-order correlation between compassionate goals at Time 1 and positive affect at Time 1 showed that those with high self-reported compassionate goals also had high positive affect before the interview ($r(136) = .19$, $p = .028$). There was also a significant correlation between compassionate goals at Time 2 and positive affect at Time 2 ($r(136) = .41$, $p < .001$). Thus, it

was possible that participants with higher positive affect before the interview then carried that positive affect throughout the interview.

Specifically, I was interested in whether pre-interview compassionate goals predicted a change in positive affect from before to during the interview. In other words, was the relationship between compassionate goals at Time 1 and positive affect at Time 2 significant if the variance attributed to positive affect at Time 1 were removed? To test this, I conducted a multiple linear regression, in which positive affect at Time 2 was regressed on compassionate goals and positive affect at Time 1. Compassionate goals at Time 1 did not predict positive affect at Time 2 when positive affect at Time 1 was included in the model ($\beta = -.02$, $t(135) = -.48$, $p = .636$).

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

This study aimed to better understand how job candidates' self-image and compassionate goals impacted their state anxiety and positive affect during a job interview. Results from this study illuminated several implications to help inform future research in this area. First, the manipulations used within this study did not successfully induce self-image or compassionate goals. Furthermore, neither of the hypotheses were supported in the experimental findings. Those in the self-image goal condition did not have higher state anxiety during the interview and those in the compassionate goal condition did not have greater positive affect. Finally, as revealed in the exploratory analyses, self-reported self-image goals did not impact state anxiety during the interview, nor did self-reported compassionate goals impact positive affect during the interview. The implications of these findings are discussed below.

Failed Manipulations

There are a number of potential reasons why the manipulations failed, including the context of an interview, the study taking place online, and extraneous participant variables.

Context of the Interview

Strength of the Evaluative Context. The evaluative context of the online mock job interview may have not be strong enough to activate self-image goals, resulting in the manipulation failing. During an interview, most candidates want to convey that they are the right fit and the best candidate for a position (Ellis et al., 2002). Conveying the right fit may consist of a candidate presenting the appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and personality to the interviewer evaluating them, making the interview itself a highly evaluative context. This strong evaluative context should result in increased self-image goals, as job candidates are trying to portray and defend images of themselves to the interviewer.

It is possible that participants did not perceive the mock online job interview as highly evaluative. This is reflected in the means for self-image goals reported both before (*M* = 3.23, *SD* = .55; on a 1 to 5 scales) and during the interview (*M* = 3.29, *SD* = .70). The means for self-image goals for this study are similar to those in previous, non-evaluative studies (e.g., Crocker & Canevello, 2008). Had participants perceived this as a strong evaluative context, the mean for self-image goals before the interview should have started high and seen an increase during the interview, as they tried to create, maintain, and defend images of themselves throughout the interview. Similarly, the means for state anxiety were relatively low both before (*M* = 2.07, *SD* = .91; one a 1 to 4 scale) and during the interview (*M* = 2.02, *SD* = .93), suggesting that participants may have perceived this interview as less evaluative as an in-person mock job interview or an actual job interview, for these may have induced greater levels of anxiety.

Goals Participants Arrived With. In addition, because of the way the study was advertised, participants may have come to the study with specific employment-related goals (e.g., earn money, practice interviewing experience). This study was advertised to participants as an opportunity to practice their interview skills and earn money (i.e., Amazon gift card) while doing so. Participants' goals could have been to practice for an upcoming interview, strengthen their interviewing skills, or to earn an Amazon gift card. When the self-image goal or compassionate goal manipulations were presented, participants' may have valued their initial goals more than those described in the manipulation so that participants' goals did not change in response to the manipulations.

Differences from Abelson et al. Compassion Goal Manipulation. Interestingly, however, the exact prompt used in this study's compassionate goal condition was shown to be successful in manipulating compassionate goals in another study using a mock job interview

paradigm (Abelson et al., 2014). Abelson and colleagues' study had two key difference that may explain why their compassionate goals manipulation was successful: the highly controlled context and the specific tailoring of their interview. Abelson et al.'s study took place in a research lab setting, where participants would receive their study prompt an hour before participating in the interview portion of the study. For the interview portion, participants assumed the role of a job interviewee, read a job description tailored towards their individual career goals, and then—in front of a panel of two lab technicians—the participants would give a 5-minute speech as their job interview.

The highly controlled context of Abelson and colleagues' study can possibly explain why their compassionate goals prompt was successful. In their study, the interviews were conducted in-person, so the research team could ensure that participants followed study directions accordingly (i.e., listened to the compassionate goals prompt when given). In contrast, the current study was conducted online, in a place of participants' choosing, which resulted in far less control over participants' actions throughout the duration of the study. This difference of control between the studies may explain why the manipulation worked in the highly controlled setting (e.g., can ensure the participants listen to and attend to the manipulation) and the manipulation not working in the less-controlled setting (e.g., participants may have ignored the manipulation, participant was distracted and missed the manipulation, etc.).

In addition, Abelson and colleagues' compassionate goals prompt may have worked because they specifically tailored their job interview to participants. Abelson et al. had job descriptions that were specific to the career aspirations for each participant. As a result, the participants may have cared more about the interview itself, as it was relevant to and aligned with their career aspirations. This may have led to the participants actively applying the

instructions given to them in the compassionate goals condition. In contrast, participants in this study were told to treat this as general job interview. This possibly lowered the effort participants put into the study or resulted in the participants being unable to fully immerse themselves into the job interview scenario, as the context here was far less personalized compared to the Abelson et al. study.

Online Interview

The online context may also have contributed to the ineffectiveness of the manipulations. This study was originally designed to take place in an in-person lab setting. However, because of to the COVID-19 pandemic, I adapted it to an online format. This switch to an online format could have attenuated the emotions and goals of participants. Originally, participants would have completed the entirety of the study in person, resulting in more potential stressors related to the mock job interview, like picking out what to wear, what time and how to get to the mock job interview, and meeting with the interviewer face-to-face. However, because this occurred entirely online, participants simply had to click a link to join the mock job interview, mitigating the concerns that could have arisen if the study were in-person. At the time this study was developed, there were no studies that specifically looked at emotions or goals within the context of an online job interview. In addition, the data were collected at the height of the pandemic, when people were fairly comfortable with doing all work-related activities online. Because of this familiarity with an online format, participants could have been more comfortable participating in an online job interview, possibly resulting in both goals and emotions being inhibited.

Extraneous Participant Variables

Contextual variables, such as participants not following instructions regarding their environment or computer volume, participant fatigue, or participants acclimating to the study, could also have interfered with the manipulations. Lab technicians were not able to directly control participants' physical environments. Although participants were instructed to sit in a quiet room with headphones on, it is possible that participants could have been in noisy or distracting spaces or had muted their volume, causing them not to hear the manipulation instructions clearly or completely. This may have interfered with the effectiveness of the manipulation.

Participants also may have experienced fatigue, as this study is part of a larger project. Specifically, before participants went through this study's interview round, they had to complete an initial round of interview questions directly beforehand. The first interview round could have fatigued the participants and resulted in the prompt being less effective than if they were to receive it at the very beginning of the first interview round, where participants would have been less fatigued.

Furthermore, this initial interview round could have acclimated the participants to the study, determining their set of goals and emotions for the following interview round. Therefore, when participants were given the manipulation prompt, it may not have had an effect because they already had the first interview round and knew what goals were necessary for them in the following interview round.

Self-Image Goals and State Anxiety

In exploratory analyses, self-reported self-image goals before the interview were related to state anxiety before the interview and self-image goals during the interview were related to state anxiety during the interview. However, exploratory analyses revealed that having high self-

image goals before the interview did not predict a change in state anxiety from before to during the interview. Although self-image goals did not predict a significant change in anxiety during the interview, self-image goals did significantly relate to anxiety both before and during the interview. What this possibly suggests is that those with high self-image goals may have high state anxiety, regardless of the context. Therefore, if someone with high self-image goals is in an evaluative context like a job interview, they are likely to possess high levels of state anxiety throughout the interview process. This association between self-image goals and state anxiety may lead to poor interview performance and, as a result, rejection from a job.

Compassionate Goals and Positive Affect

Exploratory analyses revealed that compassionate goals before the interview were related to positive affect before the interview and compassionate goals during the interview were related to positive affect during the interview. The significant relationship between compassionate goals and positive affect both before and during the interview indicates that having compassionate goals is linked to experiences of positive affect, even within an evaluative context like a job interview. Although compassionate goals before the interview did not significantly predict a change in positive affect during the interview, the positive affect those with compassionate goals came into the interview with may have carried throughout the entirety of the interview, resulting in no significant change from before to during the interview. This relationship between compassionate goals and positive affect may lead to increased interview performance, which then potentially improves the likelihood of receiving a job offer

Implications

One of the takeaways from this study is that self-image goals and compassionate goals were connected to a candidate's emotional experience during a job interview. Given that self-

image goals were associated with higher anxiety, focusing on reducing one's self-image goals can lead to a reduction in anxiety, possibly within the context of a job interview. There are several interventions an organization may implement that aim to reduce self-image goals during a job interview. First, the job description may limit the focus on individual-related outcomes, like performance metrics. While it is important to know the qualifications of a candidate, mentioning individual-related outcomes in a job description may make a job candidate focus solely on the self and not others around them. In addition, the organization may focus on the way it presents itself to the general public. For example, the way a mission statement is written can inform what type of organization one is applying for. If the mission statement focuses solely on being top tier in the industry, an individual may take that as a signal to increase self-image goals, for the mission statement seems focused on individual success related outcomes. Finally, the questions asked during an interview may prompt self-image goals further. Given that an interview is an evaluative context, most job candidates are already focused on how they are presenting themselves. Therefore, if they are asked a question that allows them to promote themselves in some way (e.g., What are your greatest accomplishments at your last job?), this may lead to an increase in self-image goals and, consequently, anxiety.

On the other hand, compassionate goals were linked to high positive affect, both before and during the job interview. Organizations may want to initiate interventions that increase compassionate goals, for they may be beneficial in creating a more pleasant emotional experience for a job candidate in a high-stakes social context like an interview. As with self-image goals, the way a job description is written may signal specific compassionate goals. Focusing on the collaborative and communal environment of a job may help candidates increase compassionate goals, because this description showcases an other-oriented environment. The

questions asked by the interviewer may promote compassionate goals, in that the questions and the interviewer focus on how this job might contribute to the greater good. The interviewer can ask questions that are other-oriented (e.g., If given a project, how would you collaborate with your team to get it done?). The job description, interviewer, and interview questions may all be utilized to promote compassionate goals and increase positive affect of the job candidate.

Future Research

Given that the evaluative context of the interview, or lack thereof, may have been an issue for the effectiveness of this study, future research should aim to use more evaluative paradigms. In turn, a more evaluative context may increase the salience of emotions and goals during the study. One way this could be done is by tailoring the interview to participants' individual career goals. For example, before completing the mock job interview, participants could be asked about their future career aspirations. Then, each mock interview session can have a job description read by the participants that is individually tailored to their specific career aspirations. This could make participants more invested in the mock interview, for it could help them perform well in a real interview for a desired position in the future.

Future research might also target the self-image goals and compassionate goals manipulation. For example, instead of having participants read and hear prompts that aimed to increase the goals, the specific interview questions in the study change based on the condition they are assigned to. Those in the self-image goals condition answer questions that are focused on individual achievements and presenting oneself. In the compassionate goals group, the questions focus on others and how this position may be used to better the well-being of others. While this hypothetical study addresses slightly different issues, this would be a more direct

application of the goals, instead of being given instructions at the beginning of the interview in the hopes that participants apply said instructions.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Self-image goals are connected to state anxiety and compassionate goals are connected to positive affect, even within the context of a mock job interview. Therefore, focusing on these goals when preparing for a job interview may prove to be beneficial for a job candidate. Previous research has indicated the importance of job candidates' emotional experiences in predicting their interview performance (e.g., Fox & Spector, 2000; Powell et al., 2018), so these emotional experiences can be better understood if the factors preceding them (e.g., candidates' goals) are researched. This study's data is a first step in examining whether job candidates' emotional experiences are influenced by their goals, specifically, their self-image and compassionate goals. Future research can look further into the relationships between these interpersonal goals and emotional processes during job interviews to get a fuller understanding what may predict the emotional experiences of job candidates.

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Appendix A

Participant Recruitment Materials

Subject: Practice Online Interviewing and Earn a $15 Amazon Gift Card

Do you want online interview experience?

Do you want to earn $15 to practice your interviewing skills?

Our lab is looking for students and staff that want to practice their interviewing skills to help with a research study.

Online interviews are becoming increasingly more relevant due to the current times. This study offers an opportunity to gain experience with online interviews.

This study will take place in two virtual sessions, requiring about 2 hours total of your time. For the first session, you will complete a 60-minute online pre-interview questionnaire that will ask questions about your personality, thoughts, feelings, social skills and job interview experience.

Approximately 2 days after the first session, in a separate 60-minute Zoom session, you will participate in a mock job interview and complete additional survey questions before and after the interview. The mock job interview will be video recorded.

At the end of the study, you will receive a **$15 Amazon gift card** for your participation.

If you are interested in participating, please fill out this quick pre-screening survey: http://uncc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0kTZBYxJd9T9y6N

This will determine if you are eligible to participate. Slots will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. Please feel free to share this opportunity with other UNC Charlotte students.

If you are eligible to participate, a member of our research team will email you to schedule your interview.

Sincerely,

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University of North Carolina at Charlotte | Colvard 3074

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This study has been approved by the UNC Charlotte IRB (Protocol 21-0138)

Appendix B

Interview Study Procedures

Lab Technician to participant: "Welcome to our Interview Preparedness Study. Just as a reminder, you are to treat this study as a real interview so please refrain from using your phone or any other devices that may distract you."

"The purpose of this study is to learn about preparedness for job interviews. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, please check the "I consent" document at the bottom of the page.

"In this study, you will be subjected to two rounds of interview questions.[5] Before and after each round, you will complete surveys that will be unrelated to the interview itself so please answer them honestly. We will also be video-recording the lab session. This session will take approximately one hour to complete"

"The risks associated with this study are minimal. There are no known risks to participation in this study. We do not expect you to experience any discomfort greater than what you would experience in your everyday life. You will receive tips to improve your interview skills at the end of this study. We expect this research to make a valuable contribution to understanding job interviews."

"There will be two rounds of interviews, each consisting of 4 structured questions. Please note that the interviewer will not be providing verbal or non-verbal feedback, such as nodding or smiling, during the interview. Therefore, please do not take such behavior as a reflection of your interview performance."

"Upon completing both interview rounds, you will be compensated with a **$15 Amazon Gift Card** for your time today. The gift card will be sent directly to your email."

"We will not link your name with any of the information you provide today, and efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential."

"You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty. You may discontinue participation at any time."

"Do you have any questions about the study or your participation?"
[If YES: Respond / Clarify]
[If NO: Continue]

"Okay, after reviewing the consent document, if you are deciding to participate in this study, please click "I consent" at the bottom of the screen. The link for this document and other surveys for this study will be in the chat."

[5] The script mentions two interview rounds, the first of which was not used for the current study, as this study was part of a larger project. For this study, only data collected from the second interview round was used. Included in this appendix is the script for the study's introduction, informed consent process, second interview round, and debriefing.

Participant Link: http://uncc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0qaEhNcA7om5gnY

[Once participant says they finished the consent form]

This part is only for those that agreed to be recorded in the pre-study survey (i.e., it will automatically start recording when you join

"On the set of surveys you filled out before coming in, you marked that you agreed to be recorded. Did you mark that you consent to be recorded on this form?"

[If YES: Continue]

[If NO: state the following] "Okay, we will stop recording now and any recorded data from when you entered this Zoom call will be promptly deleted."

Lab Technician: "Okay, now you are going to answer a few more surveys on your computer before continuing to the second round of interview questions. During this portion of the study, you will need to have your computer's sound on, as you will be receiving some instructions through the computer. As a reminder, these survey questions are unrelated to your interview, so please answer them honestly. In addition, I ask that you mute your microphone but leave your camera on during this portion of the study. Once you are finished with the questionnaires, unmute your microphone, announce you are finished, and await further instructions. To advance to the next screen, type in the word pencil into the password box."

[**Participant sees and hears (pre-recorded) control, self-image goal, or compassionate goal condition instructions before starting interview round #2; condition was blind to the participant and research assistants]**

Control Instructions	"This interview will consist of 4 structured questions. These interview questions are typically more specific and require you to be detailed in your response. It is important you take your time in responding to the questions. Also, please note that the interviewer will not be providing verbal or non-verbal feedback, such as nodding or smiling, during the interview. Therefore, please do not take such behavior as a reflection of your interview performance."
Self-image Goal Instructions	"This interview will consist of 4 structured questions. These interview questions are typically more specific and require you to be detailed in your response. It is important you take your time in responding to the questions. Also, please note that the interviewer will not be providing verbal or non-verbal feedback, such as nodding or smiling, during the

	interview. Therefore, please do not take such behavior as a reflection of your interview performance. **When answering the following questions, we encourage you to promote yourself and your accomplishments in a way that might make you stand out over other applicants for this position."**
Compassionate Goal Instructions	"This interview will consist of 4 structured questions. These interview questions are typically more specific and require you to be detailed in your response. It is important you take your time in responding to the questions. Also, please note that the interviewer will not be providing verbal or non-verbal feedback, such as nodding or smiling, during the interview. Therefore, please do not take such behavior as a reflection of your interview performance. **Rather than trying to show superiority to other applicants and protecting yourself by focusing on your strengths while hiding weaknesses, you may feel more comfortable and do a better job by talking about ways you can use this job to contribute to a larger mission beyond your own accomplishments and promote a greater good" (Abelson et al., 2014).**

*****Lab Technician turns off camera/audio and waits for participant to announce they are done*****

Lab Tech: **turn on camera and audio when participant is finished** "Thank you. The interviewer will be with you shortly for the next portion of the interview. After this interview round, I will provide the password to advance to the next set of questionnaires"

[Lab Tech leaves Zoom session, Interviewer enters]

Interviewer: We are now going to start the second round of interview questions. Are you ready to begin? (wait for response) Okay, let's get started.

Interview Round #2

Question 1:

"It is often necessary to adjust our method or style of communicating to meet the needs of the individual or group we are addressing. Give me an example of a time when you used a different approach or interpersonal style to more effectively communicate with a peer or supervisor."

(After answering question) "Alright, we are now going to go to the next question."

****If participant is talking for more than two minutes, when they have a break in talking, politely cut them off****

Question 2:

"Describe a time where you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills."

(After answering question) "Okay, let's move on to the next question."

****If participant is talking for more than two minutes, when they have a break in talking, politely cut them off****

Question 3:

"Imagine that I am your co-worker and we are working on a project together. You can tell that I am not enthusiastic and I tell you that I think the project is unimportant and a waste of time. What would you say to motivate me or change my attitude?"

(After answering question) "Alright, next question."

****If participant is talking for more than two minutes, when they have a break in talking, politely cut them off****

Question 4:

"Describe a time when you failed to solve a problem."

(After answering question) "Okay, that concludes the interview questions. Thank you for your time. The lab technician will be with you shortly. Please stay on the call for further instructions."

****If participant is talking for more than two minutes, when they have a break in talking, politely cut them off****

End of interview round #2

Interviewer: “Okay, that concludes the interview questions. Thank you for your time. The lab technician will be with you shortly. Please stay on the call for further instructions.”

[Interviewer leaves Zoom session, Lab Technician joins]

Interviewer completes measures on their quality of the Zoom video and audio.

Lab Technician: “Please answer the final round of surveys on your computer. As a reminder, these survey questions are unrelated to your interview so please answer them honestly. Once again, I ask that you mute your microphone but leave your camera on during this portion of the study. Once you are finished with the questionnaires, unmute your microphone, announce you are finished, and await further instructions. To advance to the next screen, type in the word *balloon* to the password box.”

*****Lab Technician turns off camera/audio and waits for participant to announce they are done*****

Lab Technician: **turn on camera and audio when participant is finished** “Thank you for taking part in this study.”

“The purpose of this project is to better understand the emotional states of job candidates during job interviews. A job interview is a major part of the employment process where many recruiters/interviewers make their decisions on whether or not to hire a candidate. Because of this, the candidate can experience a range of emotions leading up to and during the job interview. This makes it even more important for the candidate to manage the emotions they are experiencing in order to perform to the best of their abilities during the interview. This study seeks to find if a candidate's goal beliefs (i.e., self-image and compassionate goals) can have an influence on their emotional experience (i.e., state positive and negative affect). The findings for this study can lead to a better understanding of emotions during job interviews, goal beliefs influence on one's performance, and more overall success for candidates throughout the employment process.

You were randomly assigned to one of three conditions. Depending on the condition you were assigned to, after the first round of interview questions, you were either told promote yourself to make you stand out, talk about ways you can use this job for the greater good, or you were given no prompt.

We also told you that you would receive feedback on your interviewing skills and that better feedback is linked to doing well on a job interview in the real world. This was said to increase the realism of the study. Therefore, we will not be providing you with feedback today but if you would like specific feedback on your interviewing skills, we included the contact information for career services.

Because this is an ongoing study, we ask that you do not share information about your session with anyone. Doing so could compromise the study as a whole.

We would like to emphasize that there are no correct responses in this study. We were looking at people's emotional reactions during a job interview. Your responses will be confidential."

If you click to the next screen, you will find a debriefing form that you may keep a copy of if you print your screen.

Once you have read this, and printed it if you would like to keep a copy, you may leave the Zoom session and exit out of the survey.

Your $15 Amazon gift card will be sent to your email within 1 week of participation. Thank you again for your participation!"

[Debriefing form will be on participant's screen]

****Instructions for RAs after participant has left****

End the zoom session when they leave. This will save the video from the session to the cloud.

Appendix C

State Anxiety Inventory

Scoring: Add the weighted scores for the twenty items, including reversed scores. Range: 20 to 80.

Reverse scoring: Items 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19, and 20

Spielberger, C. D., Gorsuch, R. L., Lushene, R., Vagg, P. R., & Jacobs, G. A. (1983). *Manual for the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Stem before the interview: Read each statement and choose the option to indicate how *right now, in this moment,* I feel: **Stem after the interview:** Read each statement and choose the option to indicate how *during the interview,* I felt:		Not at All	A little bit	Somewhat	Very Much So
1.	Calm	1	2	3	4
2.	Secure	1	2	3	4
3.	Tense	1	2	3	4
4.	Strained	1	2	3	4
5.	At ease	1	2	3	4
6.	Upset	1	2	3	4
7.	Worried over possible misfortunes	1	2	3	4
8.	Satisfied	1	2	3	4
9.	Frightened	1	2	3	4
10.	Comfortable	1	2	3	4
11.	Self-confident	1	2	3	4
12.	Nervous	1	2	3	4
13.	Jittery	1	2	3	4
14.	Indecisive	1	2	3	4
15.	Relaxed	1	2	3	4
16.	Content	1	2	3	4
17.	Worried	1	2	3	4
18.	Confused	1	2	3	4
19.	Steady	1	2	3	4
20.	Pleasant	1	2	3	4

Appendix D

PANAS-SF

Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54(6), 1063–1070. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063

Scoring: Add the weighted scores for the twenty items. Range: 20 to 100.

Positive Affect items: 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19

Stem before the interview: Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, in the moment. Use the following scale to record your answers. **Stem after the interview:** Indicate to what extent you felt this way during the interview. Use the following scale to record your answers.		Not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
1.	Interested	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Distressed	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Alert	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Upset	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Excited	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Inspired	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Guilty	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Scared	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Strong	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Hostile	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Determined	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Irritable	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Ashamed	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Attentive	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Nervous	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Enthusiastic	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Active	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Jittery	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Proud	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Afraid	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E

Compassionate and Self-Image Goals

Adapted from: Crocker, J., & Canevello, A. (2008). Creating and undermining social support in communal relationships: The role of compassionate and self-image goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*(3), 555–575. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.95.3.555

Compassionate goals: 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 24,
Scoring: Add the weighted scores for the 13 above items. Scores range from 13 to 55

Self-image goals items: 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28
Scoring: Add the weighted scores for the 15 above items. Scores range from 15 to 75

Stem before the interview: In general, how much do you want/try to do each of the following **Stem after the interview: During the interview, how much do you want/try to do each of the following**		Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot	Extremely
1.	Have compassion for others' mistakes and weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Avoid the possibility of being wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Convince others that I am right.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Be supportive of others.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Avoid showing my weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Be constructive in my comments to others.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Avoid being selfish or self-centered.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Get someone to acknowledge my positive qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Avoid doing things that aren't helpful to me or others.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Get others to do things my way.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Avoid neglecting my relationships with others.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Avoid doing anything that would be harmful to others.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Be aware of the impact my behavior might have on others' feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Avoid being blamed or criticized.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Make a positive difference in others' lives.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Avoid revealing my shortcomings or vulnerabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Avoid closing myself off emotionally from others.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Get others to respect or admire me.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Make sure I'm not taken advantage of in any way.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Demonstrate my intelligence.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Avoid saying things to others that I don't mean.	1	2	3	4	5

22.	Demonstrate my positive qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Create for others what I want to experience myself.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Do things that are helpful for both me and others.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Avoid being rejected by others.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Avoid taking risks or making mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Avoid coming across as unintelligent or incompetent.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Avoid appearing unattractive, unlovable, or undesirable.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F

Pilot Study

This appendix discusses a pilot test that was ran to test the manipulations used in this study. Similar to the main study discussed in this paper, the pilot test asked participants to fill out measures of state anxiety, positive affect, self-image goals, and compassionate goals in the pretest portion. Next, participants were randomly assigned to receive a control, self-image goal, or compassionate goal prompt via pre-recorded audio (same prompts as the main study). Then, participants typed answers to 4 interview questions, similar to the ones of found in the current study. In the posttest, participants reported their state anxiety, positive affect, self-image goals, and compassionate goals.

Statistical analyses revealed that those assigned to the self-image goal condition did not report greater self-image goals and those in the other two conditions and those in the compassionate goal condition did not report greater compassionate goals than the other two conditions. However, this study was completed on a voluntary basis and after two months of data collection, only 27 participants took part in the study, resulting in an underpowered study. Because of time constraints, more efforts could not be made to recruit the number of participants necessary for this pilot test.

Therefore, in order to analyze the prompts, I looked at the qualitative responses to the interview questions to see if participants were responding to the question in a way that indicates they heard their condition's prompt and are applying it to the interview questions. Upon analyzing the responses, I was satisfied with how participants were responding to questions in their assigned condition. For example, when asked the question "Describe a time where you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills", someone in the self-image goal condition responded: "Studying for the exam that determined if I would get into graduate school was very stressful. **I had to study 40 hours a week, in addition to being a full time student, working, and volunteering**. I had to learn how to balance my time and cope with the stress. **I was successful in the end and gained admission."** The response to this question indicates an effort to promote oneself to seem superior to other applicants and was quite self-focused, which was what was instructed for those in the self-image goal condition.

For the same question, someone in compassionate goal condition responded: **"**In my current position, I have been working as a team lead, scheduling staff member, and authorizations specialist, all at once…Doing this for over a year, I have learned how to prioritize tasks, maintain my relationships despite my own stressors, and **contribute more to the community as a whole as a result**. I have been able to **display the same** kindness and **care to each patient and coworker** I interact with due to my mastery of handling multiple responsibilities**."** This participant used words that focused more-so on the greater community and less so on themselves, applying the instructions in the compassionate goal condition that stated to focus on "ways you can use this job to contribute to a larger mission beyond your own accomplishments and promote a greater good."