The Arison School of Business at the IDC Herzliya invites you to a summer meeting on:

"Stability and flexibility in goal pursuit"

July 26, 2012

Organizers: Varda Liberman and Yaacov Trope

Program

9:00 Registration + coffee & refreshments

9:30 Greetings – Ron Shachar, Dean
Yaacov Trope

10:00 Ayelet Fishbach (University of Chicago, Booth):
“Feedback on Goal Pursuit”

10:40 Discussion

11:00 coffee break

11:15 Aner Sela (University of Florida, Warrington):
“Less is More: Variety as a Preference Strength Signal”

11:55 Discussion

12:15 Lunch break
13:45 Gal Zauberman (University of Pennsylvania, Wharton):
“Future Time Perception and Intertemporal Preferences”

14:25 Discussion

14:45 coffee break

15:00 Nira Liberman (Tel Aviv University):
“Tight versus Loose Goal Monitoring: Antecedents, Consequences and Dysfunctions”

15:40 Discussion

16:00 General discussion

18:00 Reception

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Abstracts

Feedback on Goal Pursuit
Ayelet Fishbach - University of Chicago, Booth

My research explores the feedback individuals give, seek, and respond to in the course of pursuing their goals. I propose that positive feedback on accomplishments motivates goal pursuit when it signals an increase in goal commitment, whereas negative feedback on lack of accomplishments motivates goal pursuit when it signals insufficient goal progress. I review research suggesting that whether individuals are drawn to evaluate their level of commitment versus rate of progress determines the type of feedback (positive or negative) that best motivates them to pursue their goals.

Less is More: Variety as a Preference Strength Signal
Aner Sela - University of Florida, Warrington

We propose that people strategically choose different amounts of variety to convey information about the strength of their preferences for the selected options and the extent to which the qualities of the selected options reflect their personal traits. A series of studies demonstrates that people choose a small variety when they want to signal strong, self-related preferences for the selected options and to associate themselves with the symbolic qualities of those options, but choose a large variety when they wish to avoid associating themselves with the qualities of the selected options. The findings have important implications for theories of variety-seeking and self-presentation, as well as for marketing practice.
Future Time Perception and Intertemporal Preferences
Gal Zauberman - University of Pennsylvania, Wharton

There has been a great deal of research on how people trade off costs and benefits that occur at different points in time. The current work looks at the psychological mechanisms affecting how individuals form preferences for outcomes in the near versus more distant future. Whereas much of the work on intertemporal choice attributes changes in discounting and present-biased preferences to emotional and cognitive mechanisms governing the evaluations of immediate and distant outcomes, our work shows that many of the classic findings in the literature, including hyperbolic discounting, can be explained by how people perceive future time durations. Our work demonstrates that people do not perceive future time accurately and that this perception is susceptible to a range of contextual influences, such as time-space interdependence and sexually arousing imagines, which then influence intertemporal preferences. These contextual influences on future time judgments will be the focus of the talk.

Tight versus Loose Goal Monitoring:
Antecedents, Consequences and Dysfunctions
Nira Liberman – Tel Aviv University

Theories of action control include a Test-Operate-Test-Exit component, which compares a current state to a desired state, terminates action once the discrepancy is sufficiently small and continue action as long as a large enough discrepancy is present and progress is sufficient. Sometimes, however, discrepancy to the end-state and rate of progress are not easily estimated. For example, a person might not know how close she is to the goal of understanding the material she reads, or a manager might not know how close she is to the goal of motivating her workers. We suggest that when monitoring progress towards goal attainment is difficult, individuals may relax monitoring, tighten monitoring or use proxies, which are indirect indicators for end states and for rate of progress. We discuss the antecedents and consequences of each strategy based on social psychological theories of self-regulation. We examine the dysfunctional aspects of tight monitoring and of using proxies in monitoring goal progress and demonstrate some of them in experimental studies.