

Min-Su

Please remember to read through ALL of this document!

Min-Su is a university student at Macalester College, Minnesota. About one year ago, he joined Amazon Mechanical Turk to earn some side money to work towards paying off his education. Min-Su is an incredibly busy student—in addition to pursuing a double major in Linguistics and English, he is part of a fraternity, works as a tutor at a local high school, and is the Resident Assistant in his college dormitory (where he is responsible for the well-being of first-year students). When working on Amazon Mechanical Turk, Min-Su generally tries to keep focused, but often interrupts his work to reply to messages on social media. He is thinking of running for a leadership position in his fraternity this year, and knows that he should stay abreast of the news in the house. In addition, both the high school students he tutors and his dormitory residents sometimes send him questions on Facebook Messenger, so Min-Su almost always keeps Facebook open so that he can respond promptly. However, since the survey tasks on Amazon Mechanical Turk do not usually take very much time, Min-Su finds no problem in multi-tasking and has earned a generally good average HIT acceptance rate.

On Friday, Min-Su completed a HIT on Amazon Mechanical Turk after spending 40 minutes on the HIT, and his work was rejected. **He has appealed to a “jury” of fellow Amazon Mechanical Turk workers (you!) to help decide this case.** Your job is to read both sides of the story and answer the question, **is it fair to reject Min-Su’s task?** Please use the following to answer:

*Y if Min-Su’s task should be **REJECTED**.
*N if Min-Su’s task should be **ACCEPTED**.

Min-Su: “This task was one of several that I did on Friday afternoon, because I had just gotten out of class and had a few extra hours to spare. I had been working pretty much non-stop on Amazon Mechanical Turk stuff for about an hour and a half, during which I encountered this particular HIT, and completed it just as I would any other task. I felt like I was kind of on a roll. I was in the zone, and I did maybe 3 or 4 HITs in quick succession. Some of them definitely took a lot longer than others. I also answered a few Facebook messages during that time, but I don’t think there was a lot going on that day. I do remember that at one point, when I was working, I got a message from one of my residents that she was locked out of her room. As Resident Assistant, it was my responsibility to manage any lockouts, so I had to go down from the 15th floor (where I live) to the 3rd floor to help get her inside. That was probably the only major interruption I can think of, and it was just a really quick trip. I came right back and continued working. When I found out that my HIT got rejected, I was really shocked, especially because it

was the longest survey. I need that money to pay for college. It's not fair to have me work for almost an hour and give me no pay."

Requestor: "I flagged this particular task for review because I noticed that it took the worker 40 minutes to complete—whereas the average completion time is about 15 minutes. I thought it was strange that the worker would take twice as long to complete the task, especially because I try to compensate them with a reasonable hourly wage. When I looked into the quality of the task, it seemed like the writing was very brief and hurried, which I felt was inconsistent with having done a 15-minute task in 40 minutes. I mean, my task required you to write a paragraph, and the work I received had only written three sentences. In 40 minutes! Can you believe? In the past, I've had some workers leave the window on my tasks open for a very long time to deliberately get a higher bonus. I think these types of workers ruin the system for everyone else, who's working in good faith, so I generally try to have very little tolerance when I suspect that someone is trying to game the system. I thought this work was very suspicious, so I decided to reject the HIT. After all, those three sentences were not going to be useful to me anyway."

Please deliberate Min-Su's case with your teammates. *Is it fair to reject Min-Su's task?*
Answer *Y or *N when you are ready.