Staggered Effort Based Decision Making Verbal Instructions Standard Operating Procedure

Post-consent:

Thank you for coming in and volunteering to participate. We’ll be asking you to do a few things today like watching a computer screen, pressing a button repeatedly making decisions about monetary reward.

We ask you to please try to perform your best on the tasks.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Practice: Max Press: Please read the instructions carefully.

1. First you will be required to press a key as quickly as you can over 20 seconds. Try your best to maximize the number of presses within the allotted time.

Press S or L with your non-dominant pinky finger (left or right respectively).

1. >> Instructor makes note of their maximum press rate by looking at logfile. Can be done any time after practice is completed.. <<

Practice: Effort Levels:

1. You will be presented with varying levels of the effort task similar to the task you just completed.
2. The different levels will either be 20%, 50%, 80%, or 100% of your maximum effort. Your job is to fill the bar to the indicated percentage. For example, in a 50% trial you must press the (S or L) key with your (Left or Right) pinky finger until the bar is half full.
3. Please try your best to complete each trial.
4. While you are in the scanner you will be making decisions for money either for an indicated effort level or for no effort. The no effort option will always be for $1.00.

*For example, you will decide between $3.00 at 80% effort or $1.00 for no effort.*

1. The button-pressing task will not be done in the scanner but will be done either immediately after the scan.

Effort Game:

1. While in the scanner you will be making choices about money and whether you would like to do the effortful option or the no effort option.
2. In your first run, you will be paired with one other person in this room. You are on the same team. You will not learn this person’s identity, but you will both see one another’s’ choices, actions, and results. The choices you both make will result in real money being added to a shared bank. At the end of the game, that amount will be split evenly among you.
3. In your second run, you will be paired with one other person in this room. Your goal is to beat them. You will not learn this person’s identity, but you will both see one another’s choices, actions, and results. The choices you make will result in real money being added to your bank. At the end of the game, that amount will given to the winner. The loser wins nothing.
4. Press T to start the experiment. Press Q to quit out of the experiment at any time.
5. After every choice you will immediately perform a button pressing task.
6. The information for the effort level and the reward level will be presented on the screen with some delay. After all information is presented and the “CHOOSE” text appears you can make your decision.
7. To accept the effortful option you press the Y key

To reject the effortful option (A.K.A. choose the non-effortful option for $1.00) press the N key

1. You will only receive compensation for non-effortful decisions and for effortful decisions that you complete outside of the scanner. Compensation will be a percentage of your total earnings on the task.
2. Now you will perform the button-pressing task for the choices that you have made in the scanner.
3. At the end of the run you will be asked a few questions about your experience. Press the B and Y keys to move the sliding scale and press the bottom R button to finalize your choice.

Post-Experiment: Thank you for participating in the experiment today. Was anything confusing? What was your strategy? Did you end up changing many of your decisions? Why or why not? How much did fatigue play a role? What do you think the study was about? Overall experience (boring, fun, motivating, etc)? If you have any questions or concerns about your involvement in the study, please do not hesitate to contact us at any point.