Use of Seeker and Peer Feedback in Ideation Contests: An Anchoring Effect Perspective

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Date: 19 September 2018 (Wednesday)
Time: 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
Venue: ISOM Conference Room 4047

Abstract

Ideation contests help solution-seeking firms (seekers) address their problems by engaging agents (solvers) in the crowd to generate ideas. An integral aspect of these contests is the solvers’ use of feedback during ideation. In this study, we examine how solvers use developmental feedback in ideation contests by considering the anchoring heuristic that affects their judgments and decisions. During contests, solvers can receive feedback for their ideas from different sources (i.e., seekers or peers) and of different levels of practicality (i.e., the extent to which the feedback is helpful and appropriate for the contests). In our theorizing, we formulate distinct expectations about how solvers anchor their ideas to seeker feedback and peer feedback. From these expectations, we hypothesize the impact of feedback source and practicality on solvers’ feedback use. Results from an experiment show that solvers’ use of seeker feedback differs from their use of peer feedback. In particular, solvers’ adoption of low-practicality seeker feedback is relatively high in comparison to the other types of feedback; specifically, solvers used low-practicality seeker feedback 1) about as much as they use high-practicality seeker feedback and 2) much more than they used low-practicality and high-practicality peer feedback. Such solver behaviors indicate a potential drawback of encouraging seekers to give feedback, which is prevalent on contest platforms. Our findings expand the understanding of the scope of the anchoring effect and provide insights into solvers’ use of feedback in ideation contests.