

the researchers say. But the results of a thought experiment suggest that in theory, an adjustment could ameliorate the problem. The data indicates that if a firm were to raise the potential scores of women rated high in performance by one level (changing low to medium and medium to high), it would eliminate the gender promotion gap and increase the quality and performance of promoted workers. "While this particular policy may be challenging to implement (managers may respond by shading female potential ratings down in anticipation of this gender-specific bonus), it suggests that firms stand to gain from finding ways to debias their otherwise informative assessments of potential," the researchers write.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH "Potential and the Gender Promotion Gap," by Alan Benson, Danielle Li, and Kelly Shue (white paper)

TIME MANAGEMENT

Don't Ditch Your Paper Calendar

Mobile calendars, found on every smartphone, are quick and convenient to use. But a new study finds a significant downside.

In the first of three experiments, the researchers randomly divided participants into two groups, giving some of them monthly paper calendars and instructing the others to use their smartphone calendars. The participants were asked to copy any existing plans

to their calendar and then schedule two additional events: a study session and a leisure activity. Email surveys two weeks later showed that 52% of those with paper calendars had followed through in attending the added events, versus just 33% of those using digital calendars.

In the second experiment, participants about to embark on a home-improvement project were asked to enter the relevant activities into a paper or a mobile calendar. Some in the mobile group were further instructed to think about those activities in relation to one another and to activities already in the calendar as they made their schedules. All participants then indicated the extent to which the planning process helped them see a big picture of upcoming events and rated their plans on characteristics including concreteness, feasibility, and overall effectiveness. Independent raters assessed the participants' plans on the same characteristics. The people with paper calendars reported the strongest sense of seeing a big picture, and the mobile-calendar participants who were encouraged to think in relational terms were next. Although calendar type did not influence people's own ratings of

their plans, the independent judges thought the plans submitted on paper calendars demonstrated the highest quality, followed by those submitted by mobile-calendar participants instructed to take a relational perspective.

The third experiment reinforced the finding that people using paper calendars were more likely than digital-calendar users to carry out their scheduled activities, and it showed that this happened because they were better able to take a big-picture view of their plans. "The mobile interface encourages local attention by leading consumers to focus on individual days and time periods," the researchers write. "The opportunity to see all planned events together allows paper-calendar users to think about their activities globally, which likely helps them identify environmental contingencies, and subsequently more effectively prioritize and organize their tasks."

ABOUT THE RESEARCH "How Using a Paper Versus Mobile Calendar Influences Everyday Planning and Plan Fulfillment," by Yanliu Huang, Zhen Yang, and Vicki G. Morwitz (Journal of Consumer Psychology, forthcoming)

