



We are more likely to comply when the person making the request has authority over us



Hofling et al. (1966)

“This is Dr. Smith, from Psychiatry, calling. I was asked to see Mr. Jones this morning, and I’m going to have to see him again tonight. I don’t have a lot of time, and I’d like him to have some medication by the time I get to the ward. Will you please check your medicine cabinet and see if you have some Astroten? That’s A-S-T-R-O-T-E-N.



Reasons for the Nurse Not to Obey

- The prescription was given by phone, in direct violation of hospital policy.
- The medication had not been cleared for use nor placed on the ward stock list.
- The prescribed dosage was dangerous.
- The directive was given by a man the nurse had never met.



Yet _____% of the nurses from
22 separate stations obeyed!

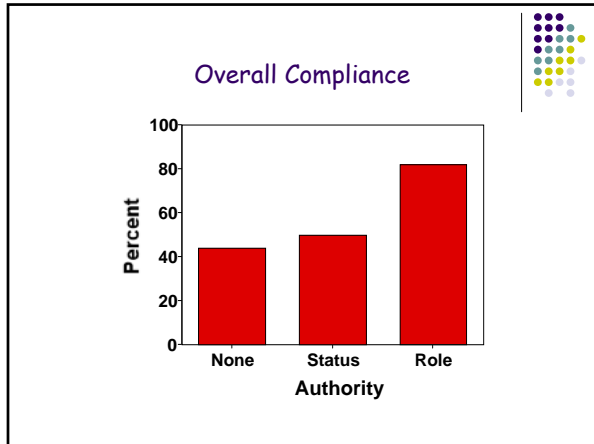


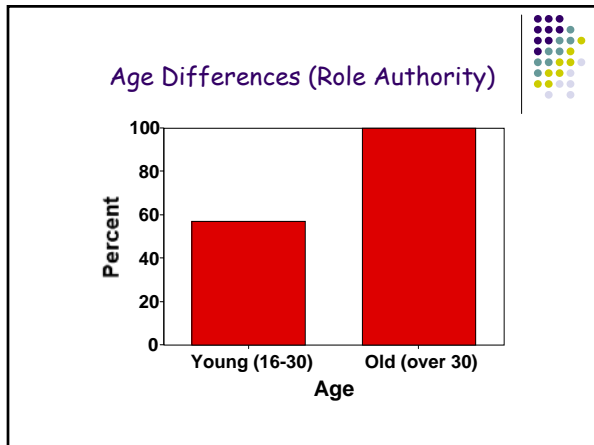
Symbols of Authority

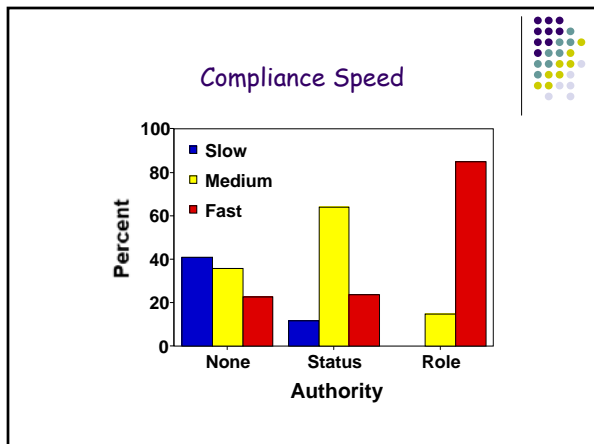
- Titles
- Clothing
- Automobiles

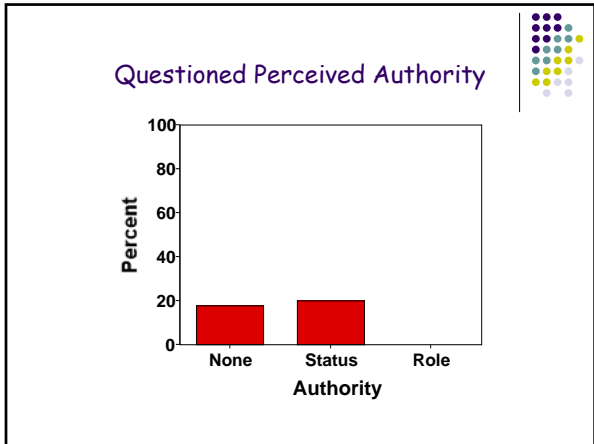


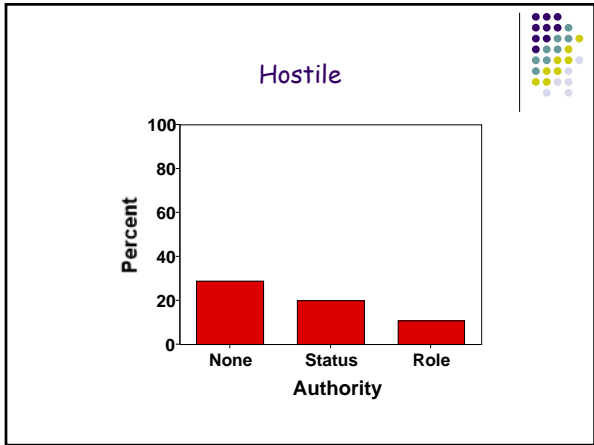
Clothing

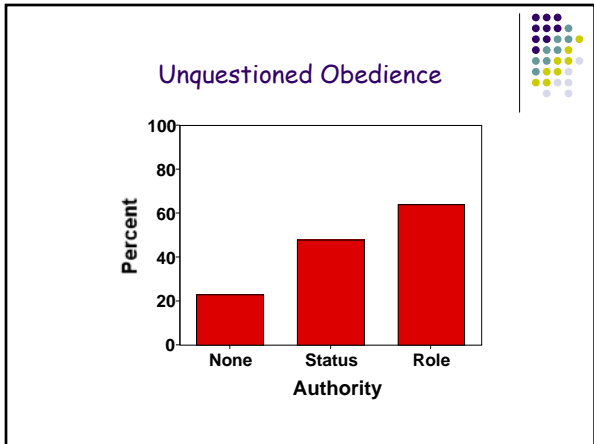


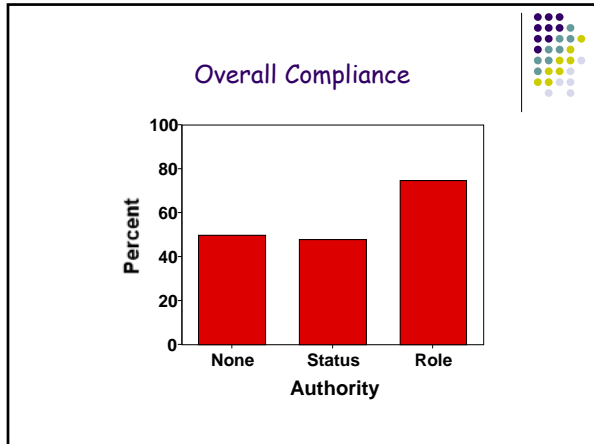


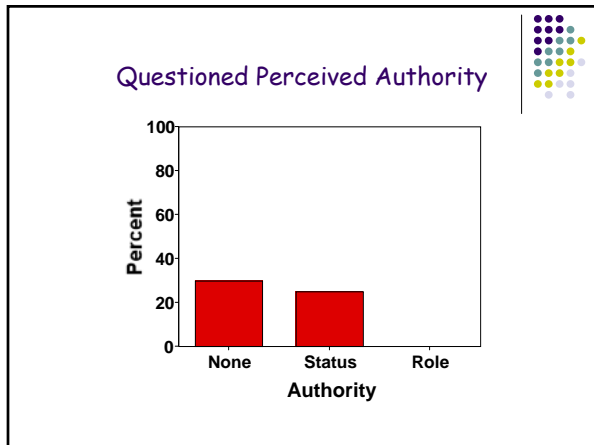


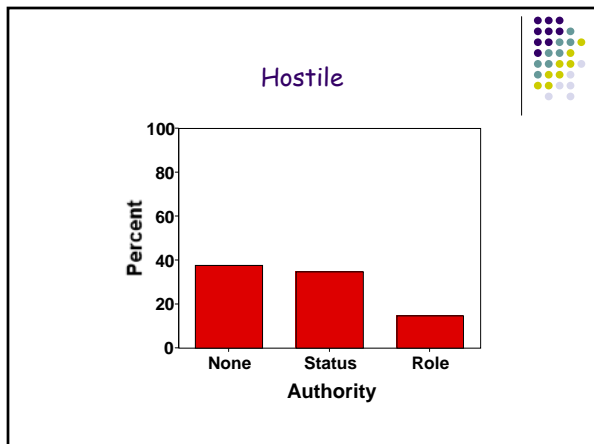


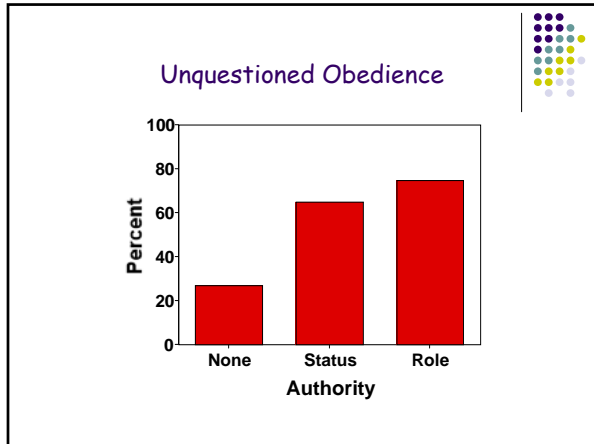










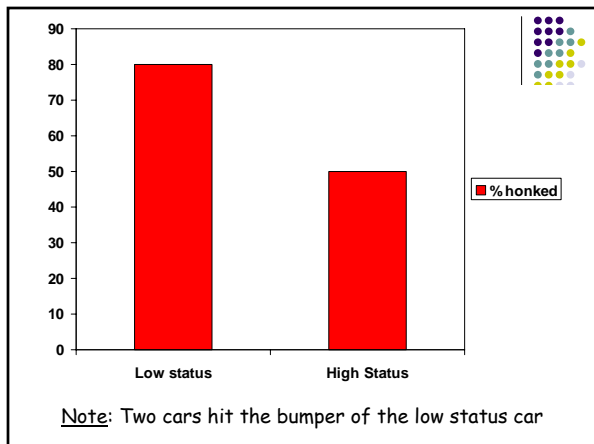


Doob & Gross (1968)

Independent variable:

- _____
- _____

Dependent variable:
Percent of drivers who honked their horn.



Your Counterattack



- Is this authority truly an expert?
 - This question helps us consider the substance of authority rather than the symbols of authority.
- How truthful can we expect this expert to be?
 - This question helps us consider how trustworthy the authority is
