

Web only file: Supplement 1 - Description of the deception test

We deceived participants by making them believe that they were participating in a driving proficiency test. Upon arrival at the headquarters (Mechelen) of the Belgian Red Cross-Flanders, participants placed their mobile phones in a locker and went to the test room. This room contained four chairs placed side by side in front of a games computer with a steering wheel, and accelerator and brake pedals. The study participant took a seat in the middle next to the imminent 'victim'. Two actors in the role of passive bystanders sat at the sides. The actors were blinded towards group status. The test supervisor left the room while the participants practiced on the computer game. Shortly after this the victim started the simulation by grabbing his chest and imitating shortness of breath. The victim also had a pale and sweaty appearance. The other actors reacted as if they were concerned but did not know what to do. When a help-seeking reaction occurred, or after 3 minutes without a help-seeking reaction, the test supervisor informed the participant about the deception and the reasons for the test. A hidden camera filmed the assessment. A counselor specialised in supporting people involved in distressing situations facilitated a defusing immediately after the test. Content experts and researchers in medical education, experimental psychology and social psychology evaluated the test scenario before the trial.