

**Invitation to the eighth  
Webinar “Institutional and Organizational Economics”**

April 11, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m (Paris)

## **Narratives as a Persuasion Tool in Performance Appraisals**

**Marie-Claire Villeval**

Research Professor, CNRS

Head of the GATE-Lab, University of Lyon, France

We investigated whether individuals use narratives about the role of luck to influence decision-makers' interpretation of noisy performance signals in a tournament setting. In an experiment, pairs of workers were either rewarded for accurately estimating their relative performance (Control treatment), persuading a manager they outperformed their competitor (Strategic treatment), or both (Trade-Off treatment). Results show that workers were most likely to adopt self-serving narratives attributing signals of lower performance to bad luck in the Strategic treatment. This tendency was reduced in the Trade-Off treatment where accuracy incentives were introduced. While self-serving narratives influenced managers' decisions regarding the allocation of the winner's prize, they did not change workers' beliefs, suggesting that the narratives did not deceive them.

**Keywords:** Narratives, persuasion, beliefs, tournament, performance evaluation, online experiment

Based on a paper co-written with Alice Soldà (EM Lyon):

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=5162354](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5162354)

**To attend the webinar, please register to the following link:**

<https://framaforms.org/webinar-institutional-and-organizational-economics-april-11-2025-from-200-pm-to-315-pm-paris>

**Deadline to register is April 9, 2025**

Webinar co-organizers: Virgile Chassagnon ([virgile.chassagnon@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr](mailto:virgile.chassagnon@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr)) & Alexis Garapin ([alexis.garapin@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr](mailto:alexis.garapin@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr))