

Costly Beliefs in Elicitation

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Abstract: Incentives are often deployed in eliciting beliefs, with the idea that providing incentives will help us collect better belief measures. Implicitly, in deciding to provide belief incentives we are often trying to counteract costs in understanding the construct or formulating a clear quantitative belief, or to push against ego-relevant or partisan motives that might distort the true information. But if this is the case, if providing an accurate belief is effortful, then stark marginal incentives are paramount. In this paper we construct a simple experimental testbed for examining these forces, and quantifying the effect of clear marginal incentives on accuracy/effort in belief formation.