2023 National Conference in Sales Management

Norfolk Waterside Marriott
Norfolk, Virginia
March 29th—March 31st, 2023

PROCEEDINGS

Research Papers & Abstracts (By first author's last name)

Teaching Session Abstracts (By first author's last name)

National Conference on Sales Management Mission Statement

The mission of the National Conference on Sales Management (NCSM) is to create and disseminate knowledge on professional selling and sales management. This mission has three legs: Research, PSE, and Business Involvement.

Research – The conference should be a focal point for the development and transfer of knowledge on sales and sales management. We should provide a forum for the development of quality research in the sales and sales management area.

PSE – A related leg is to encourage growth that strengthens PSE and its educational component. The NCSM should be designed whenever reasonable to support the PSE faculty advisors. Our activities should be structured in a fashion that recognizes their important role in the dissemination of sales and sales management knowledge as advisors to students.

Business Community Involvement – The final leg consists of our role in recognizing the opinions and contributions of the people who are working in the field of sales and sales management. Businesspeople can make an important contribution in evaluating the research we are doing and in sharing ideas on trends in sales management and selling. NCSM seeks to enhance the practice of professional selling and sales management by fostering the dialogue between academicians and practitioners.

Through adherence to the mission, the National Conference on Sales Management (NCSM) exists to create the premier national conference for disseminating knowledge in the areas of sales management and professional selling.

FOREWORD

This thirty-seventh volume of the Proceedings from the National Conference in Sales Management contains articles and abstracts of presentations scheduled at the 2023 Conference held March 29th—March 31st at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott in Norfolk, Virginia. Each article was selected after a blind competitive review process and will be presented at the conference by at least one author. In addition, the three-day Conference devotes four sessions to the corporate sponsored Best Sales Teaching Innovation award. Based on the success of the Research Round Table this session continues at this year's conference, as well as four very interesting special session presentations/panel discussions. As always, the 2023 Conference continues to provide the outstanding socializing and networking opportunities that are hallmarks of the NCSM.

As interest in sales research and education has significantly expanded over the years, Conference attendance by both academics and practitioners continues to be strong.

Special recognition for this 2023 Conference goes to:

- Joan Rogala, Executive Director of Pi Sigma Epsilon for her expert support and guidance throughout the conference planning process, and all the staff of Pi Sigma Epsilon for all they do behind the scenes.
- The NCSM Executive Board – David Fleming of Indiana State University for his leadership and guidance as the Executive Director of the NCSM; Christine Lai of Emlyon Business School for serving as Competitive Sessions Chairs; Bryan Hochstein of The University of Alabama and Catherine Johnson of the University of Toledo serving as Co-chairs of the Doctoral Student Sales Research Program; Rebecca Dingus of Ohio University for serving as Sales Education Track Coordinator; David Locander from University of Tennessee Chattanooga for serving as Special Sessions Coordinator; Bruno Lussier from HEC Montréal and Nicole Flink from Weber State University for serving as member at large and assisting with program development.
- All the paper reviewers (see list in separate document) for their constructive feedback to help authors advance their research.
- And all of the contributors and supporters of the Conference who put their valuable time into making this Conference a success.

The goal of the National Conference in Sales Management is to serve as a forum for professionalizing selling and sales management by bringing together a broad spectrum of academics and practitioners. Thanks to the support and effort of everyone associated with this thirty-fifth event, this goal continues to be met.

Stacey Schetzsle	Aaron Arndt
Program Chair	*Proceedings Editor*
University of Tampa	*Old Dominion University*

HERITAGE OF LEADERSHIP FOR NCSM

Year	Program Chair	Proceedings Editor
1986	E. James Randall *Georgia Southern University*	E. James Randall *Georgia Southern University*
1987	E. James Randall *Georgia Southern University*	E. James Randall *Georgia Southern University*
1988	E. James Randall *Georgia Southern University*	David J. Good *Central Missouri State University*
1989	David J. Good *Central Missouri State University*	David J. Good *Central Missouri State University*
1990	David J. Good *Central Missouri State University*	James B. Deconinck *Central Missouri State University*
1991	E. James Randall *Georgia Southern University*	Roberta J. Good *Central Missouri State University*
1992	Ramon A. Avila *Ball State University*	Dan C. Weilbaker *Northern Illinois State University*
1993	Ramon A. Avila *Ball State University*	Dan C. Weilbaker *Northern Illinois State University*
1994	Dan C. Weilbaker *Northern Illinois State University*	Rick E. Ridnour *Northern Illinois University*
1995	Dan C. Weilbaker *Northern Illinois State University*	Timothy A. Longfellow *Illinois State University*
1996	Timothy A. Longfellow *Illinois State University*	Michael R. Williams *Illinois State University*
1997	Timothy A. Longfellow *Illinois State University*	Michael R. Williams *Illinois State University*
1998	Michael R. Williams *Illinois State University*	Michael A. Humphreys *Illinois State University*
1999	Michael R. Williams *Illinois State University*	Michael A. Humphreys *Illinois State University*
2000	Michael A. Humphreys *Illinois State University*	Jon M. Hawes *The University of Akron*
2001	Michael A. Humphreys *Illinois State University*	Jon M. Hawes *The University of Akron*

2002	David A. Reid *The University of Toledo*	Jon M. Hawes *The University of Akron* Scott A. Inks *Middle Tennessee State University*
2003	David A. Reid *The University of Toledo*	Scott A. Inks *Middle Tennessee State University*
2004	Scott A. Inks *Ball State University*	C. David Shepherd *Kennesaw State University*
2005	Scott A. Inks *Ball State University*	C. David Shepherd *Kennesaw State University*
2006	C. David Shepherd *Kennesaw State University*	Mark C. Johlke *Bradley University*
2007	Mark C. Johlke *Bradley University*	C. David Shepherd *Georgia Southern University*
2008	Mark C. Johlke *Bradley University*	Ellen Bolman Pullins *The University of Toledo*
2009	Mark C. Johlke *Bradley University*	Ellen Bolman Pullins *The University of Toledo*
2010	Ellen Bolman Pullins *The University of Toledo*	Concha R. Neeley *Central Michigan University*
2011	Ellen Bolman Pullins *The University of Toledo*	Concha R. Neeley *Central Michigan University*
2012	Concha Allen *Central Michigan University*	Michael L. Mallin *The University of Toledo*
2013	Concha Allen *Central Michigan University*	Michael L. Mallin *The University of Toledo*
2014	Michael L. Mallin *The University of Toledo*	Scott M. Widmier *Kennesaw State University*
2015	Michael L. Mallin *The University of Toledo*	Scott M. Widmier *Kennesaw State University*
2016	Scott M. Widmier *Kennesaw State University*	Lisa R. Simon *California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo*
2017	Scott M. Widmier *Kennesaw State University*	Lisa R. Simon *California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo*
2018	Lisa R. Simon *California Polytechnic State*	David E. Fleming *Indiana State University*

	University, San Luis Obispo	
2019	Lisa R. Simon *California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo*	David E. Fleming *Indiana State University*
2020	David E. Fleming *Indiana State University*	Stacey Schetzsle *University of Tampa*
2021	David E. Fleming *Indiana State University*	Stacey Schetzsle *University of Tampa*
2022	David E. Fleming *Indiana State University*	Stacey Schetzsle *University of Tampa*
2023	Stacey Schetzsle *University of Tampa*	Aaron Arndt *Old Dominion University*

National Conference in Sales Management 2023 Reviewers

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Reviewers:

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Brian Rutherford	*Kennesaw State University*
Mohammad Sakif Amin	*Western Michigan University*
Laurianne Schmitt	*Em Strasbourg Business School, France*
Ying Yang	*University of Iowa*

National Conference in Sales Management 2023 Agenda

Wednesday, March 29th

Start	Presentation Title	Author
1:00	Welcome	
1:05	**Teaching Moment: Session 1**	
	The Academic Ask: Student Solicitation for University Advancement	Kimberly McNeil
	Networking Activity for Sales Classes: Get to Know Each Other Bingo	Linda Mullen
	I saw it on the screen: Helping students understand power in sales and negotiations	Allison Crick-Smith
	Non-Profit Strategic Team Sales Plans: An Advanced Selling Project Where Everybody Wins!	Sarah Magnotta
1:55	**Research: Session 1**	
	Loneliness, Ethical Behaviors, and Performance: Examining Socially Relevant Job Resources	Bruno Lussier
	How Sales Ethics Subcultures Clarify the Relationship between Grit, Unethical Sales Behavior and Performance: A Moderated Mediation Model	Adam Merkle
	Automated Lead Nurturing in Business-to-Business Sales Organizations	Shashank Vaid
3:00	**Teaching Moment: Session 2**	
	Selling on the Green, Scotland, U.K.: A Faculty-Led Study Abroad Experience	Deborah Gray
	Getting Crafty with It: Using Collage-making to Understand Social Styles and Flexing	Emily Tanner
	Warm Up Role Play and Adaptive Selling Exercise	Michael Rodriguez
4:00	Applied Improv in the Sales Classroom	Robert M. Peterson
4:45	Announcements	
5:30	Welcome Reception with light hors d'oeuvres and drinks	

Thursday, March 30th

Start	Presentation Title	Author
9:00	Welcome	
9:05	**Research: Session 2**	
	Toward a Universally Applicable Measure of Frontline Employee Sales/Service Ambidexterity: Scale Development and Empirical Validation	Benjamin Britton
	Sales Content Platform Usage and Sales Success	Heiko Wieland
	Surviving the Great Resignation: “Best to Sell For” Firms and Human Factors that Drive Sales Performance and Salesperson Sentiment & Retention	Bryan Hochstein
10:15	**Teaching Application: Session 1**	
	Aristotle in an Elevator: Mastering a Student’s Speed-Sell Pitch through the Three Modes of Rhetoric	Brock T. Adams
	Lessons from Our Sales Journey: From Guest Speaker, To Sales Workshop, To Named Sales Suite	Connie R. Bateman
	Are you a Pro? Using RNMKRS for Complex Buying Situations	Stefanie Boyer
11:15	**Research: Session 3**	
	Effectiveness Drivers of Value-Based Selling: Evidences from an Emerging Market	Rakesh Singh
	Linking B2B sales Performance to Salespeople’s Creative Selling and Self-efficacy	Romain Franck
	What Makes Salespeople Happy? Antecedents and Consequences of Salesperson Well-being	Tyler Hancock
12:00	Lunch	
1:30	**Teaching Application: Session 2**	
	Expanding the Buyer Persona: Using a “Buyer Job Role Lens” to Impact Student Development of Sales Questions for Customer Discovery	Nicole A. Flink
	Empowering and Enabling Students to Better Understand Their Sales Journey	Jeffrey Hoyle
	Game Time! Sales Mentor Draft & Rally Season	April F. Kemp
2:30	The Importance of a High-Quality Sales Journal: The Role of Authors	Adam Rapp
3:45	**Teaching Application: Session 3**	

Start	Presentation Title	Author
	Salesforce Trailmix for Professional Selling Course: Modern Selling For Sales Education	Michael Rodriguez
	Sales and Marketing Rock: Using Songs in the Classroom	Gregory A. Rich
4:45	Announcements	
6:30	Spirit of Norfolk for Dinner Cruise	

Friday, March 31st

Start	Presentation Title	Author
9:00	Welcome	
9:05	From the Sales Trenches to CEO: Stihl Straight Talk About Sales	Terry Horan
10:15	**Research: Session 4**	
	Exploring the Effectiveness of Storytelling in Buyer–Seller Interactions – A Mixed-Method Study	Melanie Bowen
	Um, I Was Kind of Thinking That Maybe Using Filler Words Hurt Sales Call Success… Ya Know What I Mean?	Allison Crick-Smith
11:45	Lunch	
1:15	Announcements and Board Meeting Report	
1:30	**Research: Session 5**	
	Integrating Buyer Behavior Research and Sales Strategy: Selling the Way the Buyer Wants to Buy	Jeff Tanner
	Workplace Isolation of the Road Warrior Sales Force: A Job Demands-Resources Perspective	Scott C. Ambrose
	Examining the Antecedents and Consequence of the Monetary Sweepstake in Social Selling	An Jiyoon
	Rejecting the Sales Role: Toward a Model and a Measure?	Emily Tanner
	The Role of Supervisor's Empathy and Enthusiasm on Employee's Creativity and Sales Performance: Structured Abstract	Simon Boissonneault
	Sales Prospecting: The Role of Momentum and Salesperson Characteristics in Securing Sales Meetings	Kaitlin Gravios
	Self-Power: Customer-Company Identification fuels Organizational Goal Performance Despite Negative On-line Presence	Christine Summers

3:20	Overview of the Sales Researchers’ Collaboration Consortium: Vision, Mission, and Results	Bryan Hochstein
4:20	Closing remarks and announcement of 2024 NCSM location	

WORKPLACE ISOLATION OF THE ROAD WARRIOR SALES FORCE: A JOB DEMANDS-RESOURCES PERSPECTIVE

Scott C. Ambrose (Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University), Brian N. Rutherford (Kennesaw State University) and Greg W. Marshall (Rollins College)

ABSTRACT

Job demands-resources theory (JD-R) was introduced in 2001 (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli) and originally focused on the impact of job demands and job resources as influencing levels of job stress/burnout (Bakker, Demerouti and Euwema 2005). Throughout the past two decades, the theory has been applied in a wide variety of job settings and has evolved to encompass additional aspects of the work environment. Central to most studies using this theoretic lens, different forms or types of demands and resources are examined. Job demands include physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job requiring sustained physical or mental effort such as having emotionally demanding interactions with clients or customers (Bakker and Demerouti 2017). On the contrary, job resources are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects which aid in achieving work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate personal growth and development. In addition, employees have personal resources such as optimism and self-efficacy that can play a similar positive role as job resources (Bakker and Demerouti 2017). Advancements within the theory have provided evidence that job demands and resources create differing paths. Resources are linked to motivational constructs, including commitment; whereas job demands are linked to strain constructs, including burnout (Bakker and Demorouti 2017). For instance, Bakker and Demerouti (2017) describe a pathway in which role ambiguity (demand) leads to emotional exhaustion (strain) and subsequent health problems as evidenced by extended absence from work. Whereas, lack of feedback (resource) can lead to withdrawal and lack of organizational commitment (motivation) as evidenced in frequency of absences from work. In addition, the theory suggests that resources can help buffer negative pathways involving job demands. Hence, JD-R has evolved to become a robust lens through which to study a wide variety of work environments over the last 20 years.

One such complex work environment for which JD-R has been applied is sales – both in business-to-business (e.g., industrial) and in the business-to-consumer (e.g., retail) settings (e.g., Gilbert, Krush, Trainor and Wayment 2022; Menguc, Auh, Fisher and Haddad, 2013; Zablah et al., 2012). This study focuses on the boundary-spanning nature of business-to-business sales in which the salesperson typically spends more time outside the firm than inside the firm meeting with customers and navigating their respective territories. These sales roles include a number of interactions with customers/clients and differences in the assessment of job performance. As a result, traditional business-to-business sales literature provides a number of constructs which can be operationalized through a job demands-resources theoretical lens. Narrowing the scope further within a business-to-business salesperson context, this study focuses on the road warrior in particular. Tentative criteria for what constitutes a road warrior salesperson have recently been offered within academia. According to Rutherford, Ambrose and Waguespack (2022) the road warrior is one that that spends at least 35 nights in a hotel over the course of a year and averages at least one business trip by commercial air in a given

month. This definition has been developed from a more generalized definition of road warriors first introduced in the travel-related trade press (Global and Gillespie 2018) and adapted based on analyzing road warrior salesperson travel patterns.

The road warrior salesperson faces a number of additional demands and strains compared to a traditional business-to-business salesperson. Road warriors, for example, experience higher levels of travel and nights away from home than a typical salesperson that works in either business-to-business sales (Rutherford, Ambrose and Waguespack 2022) or in retail sales, where travel is limited or non-existent. As a result, the road warrior salesperson will face demands and challenges not faced by, or to the same extent, as the salespeople examined within the current literature. Initial findings, for instance, indicate that travel friction – the wear and tear associated with travel – leads to emotional exhaustion (Ambrose, Rutherford and Waguespack 2021). In turn, the resources drawn on and provided to road warrior salespeople could potentially differ from the management of resources available to traditional business-to-business salespeople and employees within a general context. While the need for understanding the road warrior salesperson is present, research examining the road warrior salesperson is nascent.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate both job demand and resources through a JD-R lens in the specific context of a road warrior sales force. To examine job demands, the traditional sales literature often focuses on role stress constructs. For example, Lewin and Sager (2007) empirically examine a model in which stressors such as job tension, role overload, and role ambiguity lead to salesperson burnout. Consistent with the traditional sales literature, this study will focus on both role ambiguity and conflict. Resources will be examined through workplace isolation (Marshall, Michaels and Mulki, 2007; Mulki, Locander, Marshall, Harris and Hensel 2008), with colleague isolation (lack of) being viewed as a personal resource and company isolation (lack of) being viewed as a job resource. Analysis was conducted using SPSS version 28 and Amos version 29. The structural equation model indicated strong overall fit and support for the hypothesized linkages.

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EXAMNING THE ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCE OF THE MONETARY SWEEPSTAKE IN SOCIAL SELLING

Jiyoon An (Fayetteville State University)

ABSTRACT

Social selling is "a selling approach, which leverages social and digital channels for understanding, connecting with, and engaging influencers, prospects, and existing customers at relevant customer purchasing journey touchpoints for building valuable business relationships" (Ancillali et al., 2019, p. 303). The rise of social media has facilitated the growth of social selling across various contexts, including products, services, and ideas. Scholars have noted the procedural nature of social selling for value cocreation process with high strategic importance because it allows revealing perceived value from different parties (e.g., host vs. guest) (Andzulis et al., 2012). This process involves information sharing, customer service, and trust building, which helps pull customers to salesperson-generated messages and push information to the consumer-salespeople network.

The initial phase of the social selling strategy is establishing a digital presence and visibility. Sweepstake, a competition to win an award, can be useful for social selling's initial phase. Downs (2015) has examined the popularity of using sweepstakes as an attention-gathering vehicle and identified the evoked sense of hope to win the award to explain its success. Belk and colleagues (2003) suggest that this commodification of hope with economical irrationality fostered consumers' engagement with salespeople and transported them to the fantasy of happiness beyond reality. Kim and her colleagues (2013) have investigated that 60% of TV commercials for internet gambling websites have used the sweepstake for promotion by emphasizing big payout amounts.

Although existing literature is instructive, it is not without limitations. As previous research has examined the sweepstake in the context of traditional media (e.g., TV, archive data) in the context of conventional selling rather than social selling, this paper aims to update our understanding of using sweepstakes in social selling using social media data. Two thousand seven hundred sixty-five tweets with #cashappfriday have been collected by the Application Programming Interface (API) of Twitter from July 29 to August 10, 2022. The hierarchical regression was conducted with the independent variables (anticipation, joy, and trust) from NRC lexicon-based emotional analysis and the dependent variable (the number of tweets favorited by users as an effective measurement of social selling).

The analysis revealed the positive effects of anticipation and joy on social selling effectiveness, moderated by trust. This evidence-driven social selling approach can help advance social selling performance with natural language processing software as a sales enablement technology. Startup entrepreneurs may adopt social selling with the sweepstake technique, overcoming the liability of newness for greater visibility. The moderation analysis implies that the sweepstake will be more effective for a brand with low trust, which is relevant to a growth business. This empirical finding can be powerful in practicing social selling to the underserved community, like Cash App, a peer-to-peer payment platform among African Americans and Hispanic community members (Pew Research, 2022). For policymakers, this Natural Language Processing (NLP)-based method helps assist entrepreneurship more systemically to share successful social selling practices and prepare them for programmatic sales campaigns rather than relying on anecdotal experience from serial entrepreneurs. Further research may extend this research to understand other well-received social selling techniques

across various contexts (e.g., language, product type) to advance the scholarship of social selling.

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TOWARD A UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE MEASURE OF FRONTLINE EMPLOYEE SALES/SERVICE AMBIDEXTERITY: SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPIRICAL VALIDATION

Benjamin P. Britton (The University of Central Arkansas)

ABSTRACT

This essay details a scale development and validation procedure for the sales/service ambidexterity (SSA) construct. SSA has been defined as "the simultaneous pursuit of service and sales goals" (Yu, Patterson, & de Ruyter 2013; pg. 53). Scholarly interest in this topic may be thought of, at least to some extent, as a reflection of the ongoing trend toward the increased dynamism, complexity and activity requirements of organizational frontline roles (Rapp, Baker, Hartmann, & Ahearne 2020). Research into this construct is needed as the specific capabilities and measurement properties of employee SSA characteristics are still developmental in nature as there does not exist an empirically-validated SSA scale that is broadly applicable across the universe of frontline roles. Additionally, the concept of SSA itself has a variety of nuanced definitions across several studies with varying research contexts. In short, the SSA construct lacks formalization as it is devoid of a commonly shared definition, as well as a consistent form of measurement and conceptualization. The present study aims to address this research gap by providing the literature with a robust conceptual foundation in conjunction with an empirically validated measurement model for SSA

To address these aforementioned gaps in the SSA literature, I first conduct a thorough review of the extant literature pertaining to the SSA construct. I begin with a discussion of the theoretical origins for individual-level ambidexterity, by outlining research about its evolution from the more well-researched notion of organization-level ambidexterity. The concept of organizational ambidexterity as such is a much broader conceptual domain that I overview briefly before narrowing down to ambidexterity specifically within a service and sales context. After this general overview, the manuscript then shifts to elaborating on the limitations that existing studies that offered SSA scales have. I break these limitations down into three general categories: 1) constrained role applicability; 2) methodological problems; and 3) contextual ambiguity. Following this section, I then move on to detailing the methodological process that was undertaken to derive the present SSA scale.

Moving onto the Method section, I provide a table outlining the methodological steps that were undertaken (i.e., Table 2). Then I introduce the first study, which was a series of semi-structured depth interviews I conducted (n = 23) following the approach outlined by Corbin and Strauss (1990). The results of the depth interviews revealed that the participants felt that their sales- and service-related role functions were highly intertwined and that in general these two categories of tasks were generally seen as being highly interrelated and for some, inseparable. The present study used the insights gained from these interviews to derive an updated definition of SSA: (i.e., "The capacity to consistently achieve both sales and service goals when interacting with customers. Individuals high in SSA achieve both sales and service goals near simultaneously as they can quickly switch between service and selling behaviors and even deliver them in tandem during their customer interaction").

Moving forward, I then move on to the "item generation" section of the manuscript. The items generated were inspired from data obtained from the depth interviews, a pool of 42 items was first created. Then, I assembled a panel of eight marketing faculty members who were subject-matter experts in the SSA area. The items were presented to them via a

spreadsheet where they were then given instructions to rate the overall quality and applicability of each item on a 1 – 3 scale (i.e., 1 = bad; 2 = not sure; 3 = good). Only items with average ratings of >2.5 on both dimensions were retained (n = 21). Next, I begin Study 2, which entailed the initial round of empirical testing. To provide an initial assessment of the 21 items, participants were recruited from Prolific.co (N = 321) and asked to rate their level of agreement with the 21 item SSA scale as well as several other classification questions. Participants were pre-screened to ensure they were working full-time, in a customer facing role, with the ability to negotiate with customers. I broke the survey participants into two groups originally: service employees (n = 110) and sales employees (n = 221). I performed a principle components analysis (no rotation) on both groups and retained only items which received factor loadings of >0.7 on both the service and sales subsamples. This reduced the item pool to a set of 12 items. I then provide a summary table of the loadings for each item within each subsample (i.e., Table 7).

Next, I move on to Study 3 wherein I empirically assess a new sample of sales employees (collected by the panel data firm "Centiment"; n = 212) by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the refined set of 12 items which were modeled as reflective indicators of the SSA construct. This initial measurement model exhibited sufficient model fit ($\chi2$/df = 2.99; RMSEA = 0.097; CFI = 0.938; TLI = 0.924). To further refine the scale howevver, items loading < 0.707 were cut. This resulted in a revised measurement model consisting of 9 items, model fit improved substantially ($\chi2$/df = 1.496; RMSEA = 0.048; CFI = 0.990; TLI = 0.986). This 9-item set of scale items had strong construct reliability (CR = 0.936), and average variance extracted (AVE = 0.621). Lastly, the manuscript moves on to Study 4 which was a final validation and test of the SSA construct's nomological network. A final CFA was conducted on the SSA scale along with the other constructs of interest and demonstrated good model fit ($\chi2$/df = 2.197; RMSEA = 0.059; CFI = 0.950; TLI = 0.943). Two of the SSA scale items needed to be dropped from this measurement model due to sub-satisfactory loadings (i.e., loading < 0.707). Convergent and discriminant validity were established as each construct had AVE values >0.5 and exceeded the squared correlation values between the SSA construct and all other constructs included within the measurement model (see Tables 8 – 10).

After this final round of data collection and item purification, I then sought to establish scale norms by employing a "competing" structural equation modeling approach where I texted the same structural model using the present manuscript's newly created SSA scale, and juxtaposed those results with one using a different SSA scale (i.e., Jasmand et al. 2012). The independent variables of the structural model were the constructs "multitasking" and "polychronicity" (these were chosen for their strong theoretical relevance to SSA as detailed in prior SSA scholarship that I summarize), SSA was positioned as the mediator, and sales performance was the dependent variable. The differences between the overall performance of the two measures of SSA in terms of their empirical relationships between the other latent constructs in the model as well as overall model fit, were negligible (see Tables 12 and 13). The manuscript then moves to a discussion highlighting its contributions to the SSA literature, as well as its shortcomings, and potential viable research avenues for future SSA scholarship. Finally, the manuscript concludes with discussion of the implications its findings have for sales and marketing managers, and a discussion of its theoretical contributions.

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EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STORYTELLING IN BUYER–SELLER INTERACTIONS – A MIXED-METHOD STUDY

Melanie Bowen Justus (Liebig-University Giessen)
Christine Lai-Bennejean (EMLYON Business School)

INTRODUCTION

Stories are essential to draw attention, prompt understanding and convey emotions. Depending on the aims, one can tell different types of stories in different communication forms (Denning 2006).

Storytelling refers to the act, process or skillset of telling a story (Herman and Vervaeck 2019). The value of storytelling has been recognized in various disciplines including education, sociology, psychology, and business (e.g., Polletta et al. 2011; Robin 2006). Although increasing attention has been paid to storytelling in business, research on storytelling and its impact on buyer-seller interactions is still in its infancy (Lacoste and La Rocca 2015).

The seller's storytelling process may involve multiple actors and medias (Boldosova 2020). In order to further develop the research on storytelling in the buyer-seller interactions, this research is designed to answer the following questions:

1) How are the stories told through salespeople's coordination over different resources? Specifically, we want to understand whether and how different sources (e.g., structured and unstructured data) available to the salesperson inform their stories and whether the stories are composed differently depending on when and how they are told throughout the customer journey.

2) How do the buyers perceive the evolution of the stories when they disagree with the seller or have inconsistent experiences when interacting with the seller? Specifically, we aim to understand how customers are part of the storytelling process, by, for example, initialing interrupting, or complementing the salesperson's storytelling.

3) How does the storytelling impact on the quality of the buyer-seller relationship? In B2B sales, buyers cognitively process the storytelling for the purpose of knowledge transfer and also affectively appraise the storytelling by receiving emotional signals from salespeople. Specifically, we aim to investigate how different stories affect buyers cognitive and affective responses as well as trust in the buyer-seller relationship. In answering these research questions, our research extends the limited knowledge on storytelling in B2B.

BACKGROUND

The power of stories has been recognized in a number of disciplines, such as sociology (e.g., Polletta et al. 2011), psychology (e.g., Wyer 1995), and management (e.g., McKee and Fryer 2003) and marketing (e.g., Campbell and Kirmani 2000; van den Hende et al. 2012).

Up until now, research within the marketing domai has mainly focused on the role of stories in persuasion-based business-to-consumer environments (e.g., Campbell and Kirmani 2000), particularly, the role and relevance of stories in advertisement and for brand building has been investigated (see for example Anaza et al. 2020; Polyorta et al. 2007; Mattilla 2000; Padgett and Allen 1997). Addtionally, research as investigated the role of protagonists in stories (van den

Hende et al. 2012); the relevance of a meaningful link between products and the story told (Glaser and Reisinger 2022), as well as how consumers tell stories (Woodside et al. 2008)

Although sales is also a persuasion-based marketing activity (Gilliam and Flaherty 2015; Lacoste and La Rocca 2015) that can benefit from storytelling, research focusing on the role of storytelling in sales is scant (Boldosova 2020; Lacoste and La Rocca 2015). To the best our knowledge, only a small number of research articles focusing on storytelling in sales are published (i.e., Boldosova 2020; Giliam and Flathery 2015). Boldosova (2020) investigates the content of smart service stories and how Big Data Analytics can inform storytelling. The findings indicate that storytelling can be regarded as a sensemaking and sense-giving process in which buyers and sellers contribute to the story development. Giliam and Flaherty (2015) on the other hand investigate salespeople and buyer storytelling motives and typical characteristics of stories told by salespeople. Their findings indicate that salespeople use stories to transfer information, establish credibility, persuade, get acquainted, build rapport, break tension, and make buyers more comfortable and communicative while attempting to build relationships. In contrast, buyers typically use stories for describing their needs.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research uses a mixed methods approach that combines in-depth interviews and a quantitative survey to better understand whether and how storytelling affects buyer-seller exchanges and the development of relationships.

The interviews provide insights on how salespeople integrate different sources to develop and form their storytelling and how the stories are adapted with resources throughout the customer journey. Moreover, they help us understand how buyer's cognitive and affective responses to the seller's storytelling are formed.

CONCLUSION

Given the limited number of research articles studying storytelling in B2B buyer-seller interactions, we consider this research as the entry into further investigations of the role of storytelling in sales. Our research explores how an authentic storytelling is composed and perceived and its impacts on the buyer-seller relationship is examined. Thus, we pave the way for additional research on this timely and relevant topic. The findings advance our understanding of how salespeople identify and coordinate reliable online and offline sources to develop their stories. Our findings further provide insights on how buyers perceive the storytelling of salespeople and how stories evolve along the customer journey. From a managerial perspective, this research provides managers with insights on an effective coordination of marketing and sales sources in storytelling.

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LONELINESS, ETHICAL BEHAVIORS, AND PERFORMANCE: EXAMINING SOCIALLY RELEVANT JOB RESOURCES

Bruno Lussier (HEC Montréal), Laurianne Schmitt (EM Strasbourg Business School)
Willy Bolander (Texas A&M University)

INTRODUCTION

The social nature of selling faces a significant challenge in the form of the decreased emphasis on traditional face-to-face sales interactions. This trend was amplified in recent years as salespeople adhered to social distancing and quarantines (Hartmann and Lussier 2020). This assault on the social nature of sales results in salesperson loneliness – herein defined as the negative feelings when relationships are missing (de Jong-Gierveld and van Tilburg 2006) – and gives rise to two research questions: *(1) What is effect of salesperson loneliness on salespeople's ethical behaviors and performance? (2) How do socially relevant personality traits alter the effect of salesperson loneliness on ethical selling behaviors and performance?*

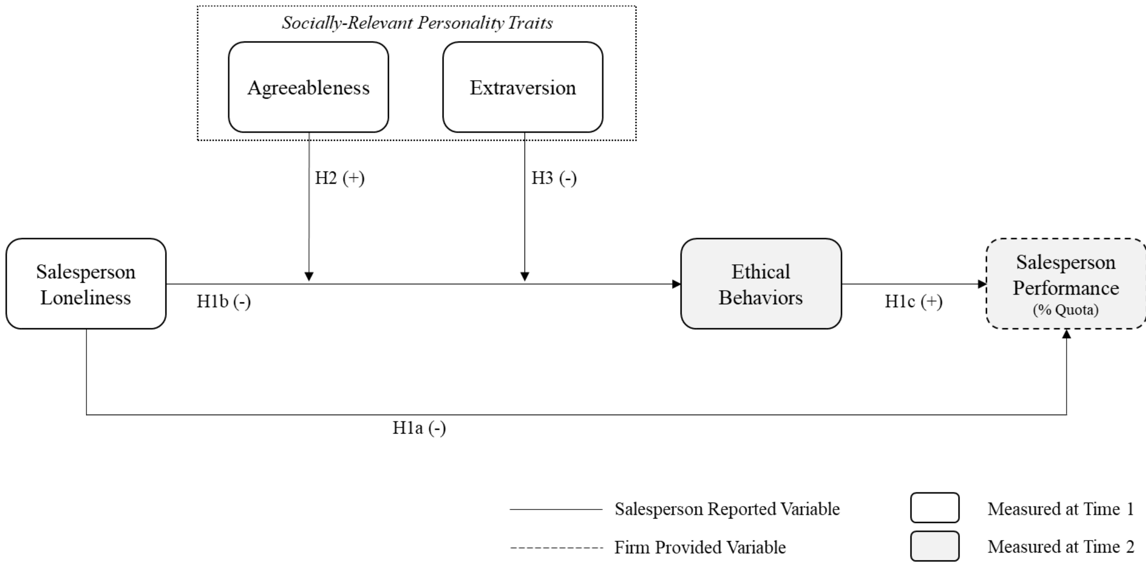
CONTRIBUTIONS, MODEL, AND HYPOTHESES

We theorize based on broaden and build theory (Fredrickson 2001), and demonstrate empirically, how loneliness will manifest in reduced ethical behaviors and lower sales performance. This aspect of our work contributes to the ethics literature by extending on the growing stream of literature that examines emergent states like, for example, emotional exhaustion (Lussier, Hartmann, and Bolander 2021) and resource depletion (Bolander et al. 2017) as drivers of unethical behaviors.

We consider how agreeableness – defined as an individual's tendency to be likable, pleasant, and responsive to the needs of others (Graziano and Tobin 2009) – and extraversion – defined as an individual's tendency to be assertive, talkative, and motivated to engage in social contact (Wilt and Revelle 2009) – alter the way salespeople respond to the experience of loneliness. In short, we theorize that agreeableness will inoculate salespeople against the negative effects of loneliness while extraversion will aggravate these same effects.

As a theoretical contribution, we extend broaden and build theory (Fredrickson 2001) by looking at its inverse in what we deem the "narrow and constrain" view. In short, broaden and build says that when experiencing positive emotions or states, individuals will engage in a thought process that allows them to have a broader view of a given situation (Fredrickson 2001). In this paper, we extend this in a valuable way by stating plainly that individuals experiencing a *negative* state must possess a narrow view of a given situation. Broaden and build theory is employed as a theoretical lens to understand these relationships, which are depicted in our conceptual model in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Therefore, we hypothesize that:
H1a. Loneliness is negatively related to sales performance.
H1b. Loneliness is negatively related to ethical behaviors.
H1c. Ethical behaviors are positively related to sales performance.
H2: The negative effect of loneliness on ethical behaviors is reduced when agreeableness is high.
H3: The negative effect of loneliness on ethical behaviors is augmented when extraversion is high.

METHOD

Hypotheses were tested using a unique survey-based dataset from salespeople over two-month period. Specifically, we collaborated with a market research firm which operates an online data panel comprised of North American professionals in a wide range of industries. The wave 1 data included 505 complete questionnaires. In wave 2, we obtained responses from 310 of these original respondents (61.4%). We used well-established measures in our study to assess loneliness (de Jong-Gierveld and van Tilburg 2006), ethical behaviors (Schwepker and Schultz 2015), and personality (agreeableness and extraversion) (Laverdière, Morin, and St-Hilaire 2013). Objective sales performance—represented as performance as a percentage of quota—was gathered for each salesperson over a one-time monthly timeframe. We employed PLS-SEM to test our model.

RESULTS

The results show that loneliness is negatively related to sales performance ($b = -.08$, $p < .10$) and ethical behaviors ($b = -.17$, $p < .05$), supporting H1a and H1b. Next, in support of H1c, ethical behaviors are positively related to sales performance ($b = .13$, $p < .10$). Also, the interaction of loneliness and agreeableness is significant and positive ($b = .08$, $p < .10$), in support of H2. Last, the interaction between loneliness and extraversion was significant and negative ($b = -.09$, $p < .10$), supporting of H3.

DISCUSSION

Scarce research in the fields of marketing and sales ethics has examined salesperson loneliness.

Moreover, research that explores the relationship between loneliness, ethical behaviors, and performance often overlooks moderators of these relationships. To the best of our knowledge, no extant research provides insight into how the negative association between loneliness and ethical behaviors can be attenuated or amplified by key personality traits. In conducting research that addresses this gap, we offer several scholarly insights.

We uncovered socially relevant personality variables that attenuate (in the case of agreeableness) or amplify (in the case of extraversion) the negative relationship between loneliness and ethical behaviors.

Further, we take a unique approach to broaden and build theory (Fredrickson 2001) by considering its natural opposite (which we call "the narrow and constrain view"). This re-framing represents a strong theoretical contribution as it opens an entire world of research questions that can be considered through this inverted broaden and build lens.

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WHAT MAKES SALESPEOPLE HAPPY? ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF SALESPERSON WELL-BEING

Michael L. Mallin, Tyler S. Hancock, Ellen B. Pullins, and Catherine M. Johnson
(The University of Toledo)

INTRODUCTION

How important is it for salespeople to be happy? Are happier salespeople higher performers and better organizational citizens? Are they less likely to leave their jobs? These are just a few questions that a sales manager might be interested in better understanding. The purpose of this research is to draw upon broaden-and-build resource theory to explain how positive psychology constructs (psychological capital, meaningful work, and mindfulness) impacts salesperson happiness (subjective well-being) and, subsequently, outcomes relative to performance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCBs), and turnover intention.

Broaden-and-Build theory (Fredrickson, 2001) rests on the notion that an individual's positive emotions expand their cognitive and affective states resulting in intensified behaviors and performance. These positive emotions tend to be discrete and serve to broaden people's thoughts and subsequent actions thereby building up a set of enduring personal resources. When individuals experience positive emotions, they tend to build resources that helps them to tackle challenges by approaching a problem using creativity and/or reflection rather than avoiding them. Applying broaden-and-build theory to the practice of professional selling may explain how certain salesperson resources may contribute positive thinking and feeling so that favorable functional outcomes (e.g., sales performance) and/or behaviors (e.g., organizational citizenship) prevail. *Subjective Well-Being* is the theoretical term for happiness -- thinking and feeling that one's life is going well (Diener and Biswas-Diener 2008). A central tenet of Broaden-and-build theory is the notion that increased positive cognitive or affective states are the result of leveraging positive emotions (or resources). To explore what makes salespeople happy (i.e., subjective well-being), we draw upon three antecedent constructs: *psychological capital* – a personal factor, perceptions of *meaningful work* – an organizational factor, and *mindfulness* - an environmental factor.

ANTECEDENTS TO SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Luthans et al. (2006, p. 388) defined Psychological Capital or PsyCap as, "*An individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success*." When employees possess high PsyCap, they are better able to engage in positive behaviors like taking different perspectives, leveraging optimism, and being adaptive which all help to increase their well-being. Similarly, a salesperson with high PsyCap will be better equipped to deal with not only professional situations, but also personal issues in a constructive way, thus increasing their well-being. We suggest, *H1: Salesperson PsyCap will be positively related to salesperson subjective well-being.*

How an individual views their work contributions as being purposeful and significant in the scope of benefitting the greater good is the essence of the definition of *meaningful work* (Steger 2017). From a resource view, meaningful work may provide a means to protect or rebuild a sense of self when feelings of stress, anxiety, and other dysfunctional cognitive or affective states occur. If a salesperson believes that their work is meaningful and makes a positive impact, this should contribute to their feelings that they have purpose in life, an important part of well-being since they believe that the work that they do has value. In addition, dysfunctional outcomes, and behavior such as burnout and intentions to quit tend to be minimized. Thus,

H2: Salesperson meaningful work will be positively related to salesperson subjective well-being

Mindfulness has been studied in the context of positive psychology as "being in the here and now". It has been conceptualized both as a state of mind as well as a personal trait. Generally defined, mindfulness is one's awareness of and attention to what is taking place in the present (Brown and Ryan 2003). Mindful individuals tend to be actively engaged and notice new things in their internal and external environments. Mindfulness may be considered a positive psychological personal resource that can be drawn upon to create positive emotions that drive functional outcomes and behaviors as well serving to decrease negative emotions that impact dysfunctional outcomes and behaviors. A salesperson who is mindful and therefore more aware of and engaged in their environment should be more likely to be able to achieve environmental mastery, an important component of well-being. Given this,

H3: Salesperson mindfulness will be positively related to salesperson subjective well-being.

CONSEQUENCES OF SALESPERSON SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

To explore the consequences of salesperson happiness (i.e., subjective well-being), we draw upon three constructs that have vast interest to sales management: *performance* – considering dimensions of both salesperson subjective and objective measures, *organizational citizenship behavior*, and *turnover intention*. Salespeople with high subjective well-being will experience more positive emotional states and positive emotions than their colleagues with low well-being. We expect that salespeople with high subjective well-being will be better equipped to solve problems, interact with customers, and generally make decisions that help them in their jobs. Thus,

H4: Salesperson subjective well-being will be positively related to salesperson performance.

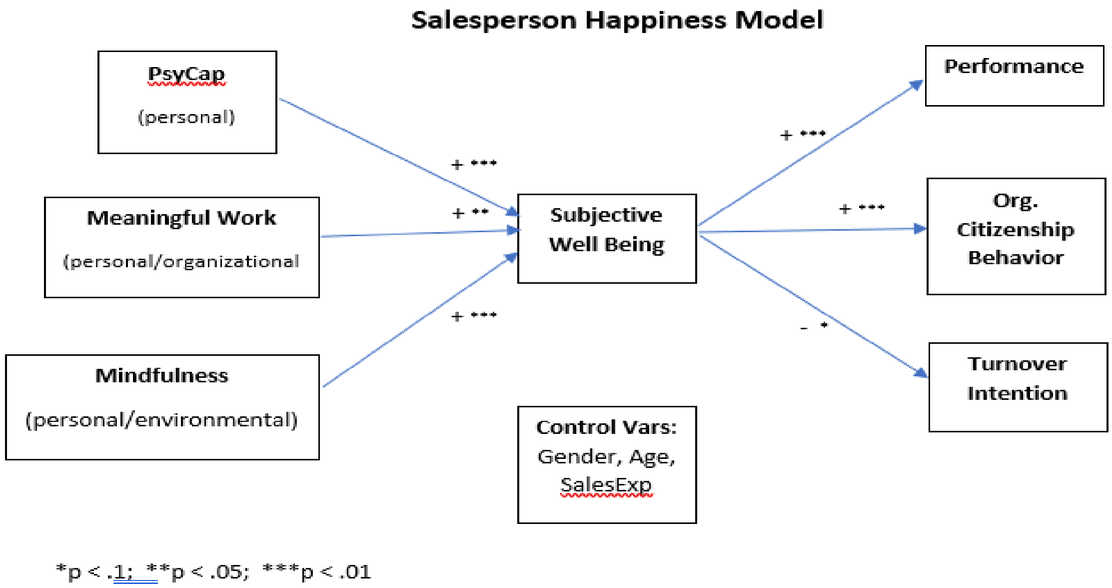
Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs) are employee behaviors outside of their job duties that benefit their firm in some way. There is evidence in general employee contexts that when employees are in a good mood, they are more likely to specifically engage in extra-role behaviors, or OCBs. We believe that this relationship should logically extend to salespeople and thus that Salesperson subjective well-being will be positively related to OCBs.

H5: Salesperson subjective well-being will be positively related to salesperson organizational citizenship behavior.

Salesperson *turnover intention* may also be related to subjective well-being. Since high subjective well-being salespeople experience more positive moods, emotions, and are generally happier, and fulfilled, they are more likely to see this positive affect in their jobs as well, which should lower the discontentment that might lead an individual to seek out a change.

H6: Salesperson subjective well-being will be negatively related to salesperson turnover intention

The following figure summarizes this conceptual model and the results from our empirical analysis:



METHOD, ANALYSIS, AND RESULTS

The study employed a cross-industry sample of salespeople using Amazon's MTurk. Participants were included if they: listed their functional areas as sales; held job titles closely mirroring "salesperson" (includes business development, account management, etc.); and stated that they were not a retail salesperson. Those who met the study requirements were given access to an online Qualtrics survey. Participants were paid a nominal wage to reduce misrepresentation and increase attention to survey question detail. A final sample of 216 subjects completed the survey. Subjects self-described as selling B2B (79%), non-retail B2C (21%), and government or non-profit organization sales (1%). Study respondents, on average, were 33.34 years of age and had been with their company for 6.94 years. On average, 53.9% of their compensation came from variable incentives. We confirmed the convergent validity of the model measures by computing the average variance extracted (AVE). We estimated the measurement model and tested the path relationships using SmartPLS partial least squares structural model. Our results show a significant relationship among all paths in our model of salesperson happiness. Another interesting note about our results was the mediating impact of subjective well-being in linking our antecedent conditions to sales outcomes.

These results can prove useful to sales managers as they are now faced with managing salesperson well-being. Programs that educate and bolster salesperson mindfulness, hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism can help to assure subjective well-being states among salespeople so that they have the resources to leverage for performance and citizenship. Further, coaching and socialization can highlight the meaning of the sales work in which salespeople engage.

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DO SALES ETHICS SUBCULTURES IMPACT THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SALESPERSON GRIT, UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR, AND PERFORMANCE?

Adam C. Merkle (University of Tampa), Louis J. Zmich (University of Tampa), and Britton R. Leggett (University of Arkansas at Monticello)

ABSTRACT

It takes time and effort to form lasting relationships with buyers, especially in B-to-B settings (Schwepker & Good, 2021). As the boundary-spanners of the company, salespeople often face long sales cycles, while experiencing frequent rejection from potential buyers (Boichuk et al., 2014). During these sales cycles, salespeople need to provide value for professional buyers and simultaneously build trust over the course of weeks, months, or years. Perhaps this is why salespeople often come to mind when thinking of individuals who possess high levels of patience, endurance, and commitment to achieve a goal. This concept is called grit, and is defined as a person's ability to passionately persevere in their attempt to obtain long-term objectives (Duckworth et al., 2007).

Literature about grit within the sales discipline is steadily growing (Dugan et al., 2019). At that time, 20 relevant grit studies were related to the sales context, but even fewer studies on grit had examined the grit-salesperson dichotomy specifically. Findings are wide-ranging and offer evidence that grit partially predicts the probability of remaining in a sales position, job satisfaction, job performance, loyalty, turnover intentions, and salesperson ethical behavior (Schwepker & Good, 2021).

Only two studies, at this time, closely examine the relationship between salesperson grit and ethical behaviors. Both present evidence that higher levels of grit among salespeople are related to lower levels of unethical behavior among that group (Schwepker & Good, 2021; Lussier et al., 2021). Other research has suggested that too much grit in a salesperson could be a gateway to the dark side, where the lines between ethical and unethical sales behaviors become blurry (Dugan et al., 2019). Is the relationship between salesperson grit and unethical behavior curvilinear? None of these studies included a measure of the external environment surrounding salespeople. This is surprising because the culture of an organization, the ethical values of sales managers, and the prevailing ethics of other sales team members are frequently cited as key determinants of salesperson ethical behavior.

Our research explores this gap in the literature by evaluating the impact of the sales ethics subculture on these relationships. The sales ethics subculture refers to a salesperson's perception of the ethical values of their immediate peers working on the same sales team. Many studies about grit among salespeople focus on individual traits and attributes of the salesperson. Yet the vast majority of professional salespeople operate on a sales team. Sales is an inherently social occupation where outcomes often depend upon interactions with other people. A primary objective of this study, therefore, is to begin a new line of investigation into previously established relationships. We additionally include the concept of prosocial rule-breaking as it has not been previously explored in this context.

These ideas were tested through an online survey primary data collection. The sample included 197 qualified front-line salespeople. Years of experience with their current employer

ranged from one to 30, with a mean of four years. The mean total years of sales experience with all employers was eight. The mean age of the respondents was 31 with an overall range between 19 and 68. The mean number of sales positions held during their career was three. A total of 69% of respondents self-reported as business-to-business, with the remainder working in business-to-consumer environments. The sample was balanced across every sector of the economy with more than five percent each coming from seven distinct industries. No industry represented more than 30% of the total. The sample is adequately representative and generalizable across the population of experienced salespeople. Structural equation modeling was used to evaluate the results.

The findings offer evidence that sales ethics subcultures change the relationship between gritty salespeople and unethical sales behavior. These results suggest that a boundary condition may exist where the positive impacts of grit in a salesperson are blocked by the mounting pressure from an unethical sales subculture. Sales managers can curb these tendencies through the hiring, promotion and cultivation of hardworking and persistent (gritty), ethical salespeople. But hiring and training gritty salespeople does not alleviate the unethical social pressure coming from the immediate sales team. Additionally, the present study takes a nuanced approach to sales performance by examining how salespeople build relationships with buyers by examining salesperson grit in the context of both subculture and relational sales performance. Other results offer new information to improve our understanding about how and when grit and sales ethics subculture affect various salesperson behavioral outcomes.

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EFFECTIVENESS DRIVERS OF VALUE-BASED SELLING: EVIDENCES FROM AN EMERGING MARKET

Priyavrat Sanyal (Indian Institute of Management Visakhapatnam), Rakesh Kumar Singh (Institute of Management Technology), Gautam Srivastava (Manav Rachna International Institute of Research & Studies), and Sandeep Puri (Asian Institute of Management)

ABSTRACT

Rising importance of service elements in the market offering has a redefining impact on the function of selling and sales management. This paper examines the conceptual foundations of sales-service ambidexterity, political skills and the mechanism through which it can influence the effectiveness of value-based selling. Using the motivation, opportunity and abilities (MOA) framework, this paper argues that ambidextrous salespeople are more likely to engage in effectively with their customers through a knowledge exchange which creates the opportunity for them to understand their customer's business model and craft value proposition accordingly. Further, the paper emphasizes on the interaction of salesperson's political skill with value-based selling to achieve optimal performance. A survey design was used to collect data from B2B salespeople and the hypothesized model was tested for empirical support. Theoretical and managerial implications are presented.

STATEMENT OF KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

We contribute to the sales literature in multiple ways. First, we delineate the role of information exchange in explaining the practice of value-based selling which underlines the importance of building and maintaining effective information exchanges between salespeople and their customers. Second, we argue that some salespeople are better equipped to deliver enduring customer value and bring sales-service ambidexterity into the focus. We extend the conceptual understanding of value-based selling by integrating a motivational driver, salesperson's sales-service ambidexterity, with the efficacy of information exchanges that creates value creation opportunities. Third, our framework contributes to the debate on how best the sales interfaces can be managed in the in the changing environment. Specifically, we make an attempt to answer this question; "how may sales function's interactions with nonmarketing functions amplify or impede their ability to offer superior customer value" (Singh et al. 2019). Building on extant literature on intra-organizational skills, we conceptualize the moderating role of political skill on value-based selling and sales performance relationship. We argue that political skill serves as an important enabler that facilitates interaction of sales function with other functions in the organization and creates value creation and value delivery abilities of the salesperson. The positive interaction between political skill and value-based selling explains the mechanism through which sales function's ability is amplified in terms of superior value delivery.

From managerial perspective, this framework offers two key contributions to practice: (a) Sales managers who promote sales-service ambidexterity and are actively integrating technology into their sales processes will reap richer benefits in form of faster technology adoption by their salespeople. (b) sales managers should proactively recruit salespeople with an orientation that reflects sales-service ambidextrous orientation and invest in training programs to enhance their political skill. A key highlight of sales roles in emerging markets is their unstructured nature, which drives the salesperson to use creative ways in their selling process (Agnihotri et al., 2012). This makes the discussion on salesperson ambidexterity more relevant in the emerging markets.

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INTEGRATING BUYER BEHAVIOR RESEARCH INTO SALES STRATEGY: SELLING HOW THE BUYER WANTS TO BUY

John F. (Jeff) Tanner Jr. (Idaho State University)

INTRODUCTION

Selling the way the buyer wants to buy, a foundational principle of selling, has focused on how presentations may be altered to address buyer needs, either for product features or how information is processed (Castleberry and Tanner 2021). However, sales strategy research has often failed to leverage organizational buying research to address situations of greater complexity than how or what to present in a sales call. This paper aims to address that shortcoming by conceptually integrating organizational buying theory into sales strategy.

To accomplish this goal, a brief review of the sales strategy literature is presented, then organizational buying literature is detailed to highlight research propositions of high priority. In particular, the buying center characteristics of role/motivation, fragmentation, and institutional memory are examined as a foundation for future research in sales strategy effectiveness.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF SALES STRATEGY LITERATURE

Sales strategy has been defined as how a company allocates resources at the individual customer level in order to achieve marketing outcomes (Panagopoulos and Avlonitis 2010). Four dimensions of sales strategy have been proposed: customer segmentation, customer prioritization/targeting, developing relationship objectives/selling models, and use of multiple sales channels (Panagopoulos and Avlonitis 2010). Most sales strategy research has focused on one dimension at a time, limiting consideration of interactions across dimensions (Katsikia, Theodosiou and Makri 2019).

One study of sales organizations in Austria and the UK examined customer value (segmentation) and product/market scope (prioritization) together, finding that these were only weakly related to salesperson performance and sales organization effectiveness (Baldauf, Cravens, and Percy 2001). A limitation of that study is that it did not consider channels or models.

Selling models have been examined piecemeal, such as in the form of such studies as activities related to relationship strength (e.g., Frankwick, Porter, and Crosby 2001), salesperson sales/service ambidexterity (e.g., Lam, DeCarlo, and Sharma 2019) and sales tactics (e.g., Strutton, Pelton, and Tanner 1996). While some of these studies have examined selling activities and models from the customer perspective (e.g., Liu and Leach 2001), few have explicitly applied organizational buying theory to develop normative models of sales model effectiveness.

Adding to the challenge, the four-dimensional model can be collapsed into two dimensions. Segmentation and prioritization are essentially two sides of the same coin, as it is difficult to imagine any allocation of resources that did not inVol.ve some prioritization following segmentation. Indeed, as the Baldauf et al. (2001) study indicates, these two dimensions are likely to be studied together, and some of the earliest sales strategy research was focused on exactly that process of segmentation and prioritization (e.g., LaForge, Cravens, and Young 1986).

Further, the sales strategy field has, at times, combined models and channels. For example, key account management is both a model and a channel. One could argue, though, that ambidexterity (Lam, DeCarlo and Sharma 2019) and adaptive selling (Arndt 2021) are two dimensions of sales models that are not channel-specific. Either could be applied in a key account setting, for example, or in a transactional sales setting. Thus, the dimensionality of sales strategy is open for debate.

Application of organizational buying research, though, has often been limited to segmentation/prioritization, and then only in the discussion of implications rather than in developing research questions and guiding further research. Moreover, several key elements have been ignored in the sales strategy research, elements that should influence both segmentation/prioritization and models/channels. To address these shortcomings, we consider three organizational buying characteristics and the potential influence for sales strategy effectiveness; namely, buying center role/motivation composition, buying center fragmentation, and institutional memory.

BUYING CENTER ROLES & MOTIVATIONS

The buying center is an ad hoc group within an organization that forms for the purpose of making a buying decision (e.g., Howard and Doyle 2006). Often, members of the buying center are described by the roles they play, including initiator (those who recognize the need and begin the buying process), influencer (those who actively attempt to secure a particular outcome or passively engage in activities that influence the outcome), user, controller (those who determine the budget), decider, purchaser, and gatekeeper (those who determine salesperson access to individuals in the buying center or those who determine what information is made available to the buying center) (Dwyer and Tanner 2009). Research has considered buying center composition under various conditions, such as environmental uncertainty (e.g., McCabe 1987), innovation adoption (e.g., Mojir and Sudhir 2022), time, complexity, and type of product (e.g. Garrido-Samaniego and Gutierrez-Cillan 2004), and more. Further, research has considered individual participation in the buying center as a function of risk and motivation, whether as an influencer (e.g., Garrido-Samaniego and Gutierrez-Cillan 2004) or across all roles (e.g., Tanner and Castleberry 1993). As mentioned earlier, any integration of buying center role theory, however, is usually left to the implications section and all too often, simply described as segmentation on role and/or needs.

Sales strategy research should consider research questions like these that are based on organizational buying research.

- What sales strategies can effectively reduce personal risk to buying center members, especially potential advocates? Should sales strategies increase perceptions of risk under some conditions (for example, with fear appeals), and with what members of the buying center (from both an effectiveness and ethics perspective)? Can risk-based sales strategies result in a more favorable buying center?
- While personal and organizational needs have to be met, what sales strategies can effectively address this duality of needs? How does the duality of needs differ by role and buying conditions?
- Under what conditions can buying processes be altered by sales strategies to create a more favorable outcome? For example, should an in-supplier focus on the decider and an out-supplier on users, and when might that vary?

BUYING CENTER FRAGMENTATION

Buying centers can vary along two important dimensions: Time and personnel. Some buying cycles are very quick; others can be very long. Some can inVol.ve many people, while autonomous decisions are made by one individual (Dwyer and Tanner 2009). Further, some can inVol.ve personnel within one functional area while others can inVol.ve multiple areas. Longer cycles inVol.ving more people who enter and exit the process, based on the stage and their role, are considered to be fragmented.

Accelerating the velocity of the buying cycle can increase salesperson productivity by reducing the number of sales calls required per sale (e.g., Dixon et al., 2022). But while that truism may work in many cases, little research has empirically documented whether that is always ideal (for example, velocity may be of different importance to a market share leader and a challenge) and what sales strategies may effectively accelerate a decision. While addressing risk, as mentioned earlier, may have the desired effect, and increasing or reducing fragmentation may be the mechanism by which a risk-based strategy works, there may be other factors such as environmental uncertainty that should influence sales strategy.

Fragmentation may be the least studied area proposed in this paper, perhaps because of the focus on buying in buying center research, as opposed to relationships. However, fragmentation continues to occur after acquisition and throughout consumption, particularly when individuals begin to consider replacements. Fragmentation throughout the acquisition and consumption cycles may be where sales ambidexterity (Lam, DeCarlo, and Sharma 2019), the degree to which salespeople balance customer acquisition and retention, can come into play.

From the few studies on fragmentation, and building on research questions posed earlier, some of the research questions that need to be addressed are:

- What is the interplay between fragmentation and ambidexterity? For example, in situations where a buying center is highly fragmented, both in terms of time and functional areas, should high ambidexterity be a sales model or sales channel? What conditions, such as selling organization characteristics like market share or in/out supplier, influence that choice?
- Other than managing risk, what strategies can affect fragmentation, and thereby sales cycle velocity?

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

The final construct of consideration for this paper is institutional memory, or the shared perspective of what has happened in the past (Corbett et al. 2020). This construct has not explicitly been studied in organizational buyer behavior but implicitly addressed, such as in Tanner's (1998) study of users and how they intended to participate in future purchases because of what occurred in previous purchases. Future research should consider the degree to which sales strategies can shape a customer's institutional memory and how that will affect sales performance.

CONCLUSION

This sampling of research questions, while abbreviated, illustrate the colorful mosaic of opportunities available by considering organizational buying research from a sales strategy perspective. The author's hope is that an ensuing dialog will result in more research integrating buying behavior theory and sales strategy research.

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2023 NCSM Teaching Session Abstracts

ARISTOTLE IN AN ELEVATOR: MASTERING A STUDENT'S SPEED-SELL PITCH THROUGH THE THREE MODES OF RHETORIC.

Brock T. Adams and Blake Nielson (Weber State University)

The primary purpose of this teaching application is to help students build their professional sales. skills by delivering an engaging elevator pitch under the three proofs of rhetoric: ethos, logos, and pathos (Poulakos, 1984; West & Turner, 2010). The elevator pitch is one of the staples on the collegiate competitive sales circuit, as well as a skill that is fundamental to networking students with potential employers and career opportunities. Having a dynamic and engaging elevator pitch can lead to optimal successes down the road. First, this teaching application allows students to gain a deeper understanding of Aristotle's tradition and assumptions and modify their own speed-selling pitch under the three lenses of rhetoric. Second, this teaching application helps them incorporate personalized narratives into their speed-sell pitch which in turn allows them to be more memorable in the competitive atmosphere (McCabe & Peterson,1990). Finally, completing this activity also helps them understand the various layers of the people they are connecting with in their class and how listening to diverse perspectives can invigorate the transcendent cultural community in which they participate.

LESSONS FROM OUR SALES JOURNEY: FROM GUEST SPEAKER, TO SALES WORKSHOP, TO NAMED SALES SUITE

Connie R. Bateman (University of North Dakota)

Lessons from our sales journey. The SLGs of our sales courses center on building sales identity, experiences, and skillsets. Through one guest speaker relationship, a joint vision was cast with his Corporation to partner with us to provide sales students with a taste of real-world sales training experience in the form of a day workshop. Since then, three DISC Training Sales Workshops have sporadically been conducted (each imperfect, but better in design and outcome than the last). With engagements from ‘friends of the sales program’ and other support, our sales minor launched in Fall 2020. Today, the sales minor is growing. Corporate executives recently funded a named Professional Sales Suite in our new building. In future, Professional Sales Training workshops will occur each Spring. Corporation, department, and college share ‘stake’ in the event; student vetting processes have evolved; an informal board is being formed; and a supporting alumni fund setup. This proposal shares best/worst practices.

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TEACHING APPLICATION: ARE YOU A PRO? USING RNMKRS FOR COMPLEX BUYING SITUATIONS

Stefanie Boyer (Bryant University)

The RNMKRS Pro is an advanced version of the popular sales training application designed to challenge even the most seasoned sales students. It provides students with qualified roleplay training and feedback to build their confidence and skills during dynamic and challenging buyer meetings. The simulation uses a mobile device including video training, quizzes and real time roleplays with an animated customer bot who is not interested in meeting. Students must use reasoning to determine the leave behinds and do extensive research to get the buyer's attention and get the next meeting. Roleplay data shows that the number of qualified practice plays correlate with student performance in live competitions and roleplay/speed sell opportunities. Playing is as simple as signing up, registering students and encouraging them to practice. Our detailed leaderboards provide faculty with real time reporting and data analysis to inform teaching methods. Faculty can grade the entire semester of work with a few clicks of the mouse. Join at RNMKRS.ORG.

EXPANDING THE BUYER PERSONA: USING A "BUYER JOB ROLE LENS" TO IMPACT STUDENT DEVELOPMENT OF SALES QUESTIONS FOR CUSTOMER DISCOVERY

Nicole A. Flink (Weber State University) and Barb Barney-McNamara (UCLA Extension)

A strategic understanding of a potential decision-makers job role in a business-to-business context is essential to a student's ability to develop more complex questions during the discovery stage of the sales process. Buyer personas are often used in marketing and sales education to help students understand and target customers to personalize product offerings. However, students may not be exposed to a deeper understanding of a decision maker's job role, or the challenges associated with the everyday execution of those duties, and this may limit the student's ability to develop a strategic needs identification and keep students in a "generalized" approach. Thus, experiential learning activities designed to develop this skill for students are an important consideration. This two-class period exercise is designed to provide instructors with classroom materials to facilitate student learning of typical job responsibilities of business-to-business decision-makers to elevate the needs discovery stage of the sales process.

A FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE OR THE ULTIMATE DIGITAL BADGE EXPERIENCE

Deborah M. Gray (Central Michigan University)

"But Scotland is more than just the historical and cultural home of golf; it is its epicenter." –Malcolm Campbell, The Scottish Golf Book

Golf is widely known to be the "international language of business," and research suggests that networking is imperative for career success in business, particularly in industries like sales and marketing. Scotland is widely known to be the "home of golf" and so what better place to teach students how to use golf as a business networking tool? The objective of Selling on the Green is to teach students how to use golf as a business networking tool while simultaneously helping them develop their intercultural competence. Students who take this 3-credit, 14-day Scotland, U.K. based class will: 1. Learn, perform, and practice golf networking skills, 2. Create and execute a "golf and your personal brand," plan, 3. Plan and execute a business golf meeting, 4. Engage in successful intercultural communication activities, 5. Demonstrate intercultural competence through the exploration of Scottish attitudes, perspectives, and beliefs 6. Demonstrate intercultural competence by articulating an informed perspective on the role of golf in Scottish culture and history. Alternatively, this course can be offered as 2-day local co-curricular program to earn a non-credit digital badge.

EMPOWERING AND ENABLING STUDENTS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THEIR SALES JOURNEY

Jeffrey Hoyle (Central Michigan University)

What if one could create a laboratory to try B2B sales techniques in an authentic way that allows for experimentation in conjunction with access to a clickable resource? One way is by creating a collegial culture that encourages diverse perspectives established on self-enablement. By allowing engagement with resources like curated content from thought leaders, students are enabled to try new things (Bain, 2012; Dewey, 1926). Such a sales resource would encourage a lifetime of learning throughout a salesperson's career, from student years thru retirement, by enhancing collaboration between all members of the sales community. Incorporating a unique resource, Mix Deck (www.mixdeck.io) into sales classes allows students to connect with thought leaders to observe, contribute, and better understand how sales skills from the classroom are used in actual settings. This tool answers Dewey's quest from 1926 to make "the connection of the acquisition of knowledge in the schools with activities, or occupations, carried on in the medium of associated life" (p. 401) while allowing authentic learning experiences. With this strategy, students get actively involved at an earlier stage of their learning journey, and the insights they hear stretch beyond their faculty member. Executed properly, a curated-offering strategy like www.mixdeck.io engages students by helping them find information in real time with a custom recommendation. Students who value advice and wish to better understand sales skills they have learned in the classroom are attracted to www.mixdeck.io (adapted from The Age of Continuous Connection. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2019/05/the-age-of-continuous-connection?autocomplete=true). Examples of projects will be presented and discussed in this presentation.

GAME TIME! SALES MENTOR DRAFT & RALLY SEASON

April F. Kemp, Timothy Butler, and Tara' Lopez (Southeastern Louisiana University)

"A Mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself." –Oprah

Mentorship can be a vital component of academic and professional development. However; implementing a formal mentor process in a university setting, while there already exists a long list of duties for sales faculty, can seem overwhelming. To address this challenge, an easy-to-implement process called **Game Time! Sales Mentor Draft & Rally Season** is discussed during this session.

Students are often looking for mentors during their collegiate experience to gain knowledge and insight from professionals working in the field. Additionally, professionals and alumnae sometimes look for ways to get involved at universities, including recruiting for their company, and giving back to their local community. As sales professors are constantly looking for ways to add value to their programs and are challenged to have enough hours in the day to give effective feedback to students (i.e. role-play videos), aligning students with mentors can be an effective strategy. While there are often many people who want to get involved in a sales program, organizing a Sales Mentor Program may seem like a daunting task. However; with the right process in place, such as the **Sales Mentor Draft & Rally Season**, a successful program can have several useful benefits for all parties involved.

Mentoring is an avenue to enhance a student's professional and personal growth. By aligning a student with a mentor, they will not only receive valuable skills but also access to information, a sense of belonging, and social support. Mentoring, especially to students, is not only able to provide academic skills training but also provide them with emotional and social support

Instructions on how to implement the innovation:

1. Recruit Assistant Coaches (Mentors)
2. Host a Pre-Season Kickoff Networking Event
3. Conduct the Draft Day to Match Students with Mentors
4. Set Up Weekly Calls to Review Practice Footage
5. Game Time (i.e. Competition)
6. Playoffs (Calls/Ride-a-long)
7. Post-Season Feedback Survey

An organized Sales Mentoring Program, such as the **Sales Mentor Draft & Rally Season**, can be implemented at different levels, including those with little support or funding. Here are a few suggestions on how to use the innovation:

- Build a Potential Draft List with Assistance from Your Alumni and Development Offices
- Mentors can have Multiple Mentees until you build a longer list
- Once-a-Year Model
- Mentoring can include Virtual Options
- Focus on Mentoring for a Particular Event/Reason

NON-PROFIT STRATEGIC TEAM SALES PLANS: AN ADVANCED SELLING PROJECT WHERE EVERYBODY WINS!

Sarah Magnotta (Towson University)

A challenge from the local business community and sales program partners has been the integration of projects to simulate real-world interactions reinforcing higher-level sales topics, such as team selling and strategic sales planning. Further, many of the partners are non-profit organizations and have shown an interest in hiring sales students to enhance fundraising efforts., but who lack those particular skills. This activity involves students working in teams to create a strategic sales plan to seek out new donors for an on-campus income-based professional clothing closet. The activity draws upon real-world selling activities requiring students to sell goods (football tickets, lemonade, etc.), and encompasses the team and strategic components in which students must articulate what they are selling as a non-profit, designate and fulfil their role in the team, then map out the sales plan from identifying potential customers to selecting the most strategic customer to pursue. The activity is adaptable for many contexts and course modalities, provides an opportunity for positive public relations for the sales program and individual sales students, and is strong reinforcement of otherwise-abstract concepts from class- a win for everyone!

THE ACADEMIC ASK: STUDENT SOLICITATION FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Kimberly McNeil (NC A&T State University), Jacqueline Williams (NC A&T State University) and G. Carletta Simmons (UNC-Greensboro)

An opportunity exists to provide sales students with an activity to gain appreciation for the transferability of their sales skills into various arenas. Many sales programs require students to use the sales process with a mock product. In our sales curriculum, we include an assignment that we have coined “The Academic Ask” that provides a unique twist to both the sales context and process. This activity challenges sales students to process soliciting funds for university advancement initiatives from current undergraduate students.

For years, universities facing financial pressures have been seeking ways to increase resources geared toward amenities and campus improvements. Fundraising is one way to mitigate these pressures that exist. Universities use various types of fundraising mechanisms to solicit various target donors. This activity brings value to students because it requires them to formulate ideas using their newly forming skill set in an arena whereby they can 1) relate to the proposed needs (expanded university services) and 2) relate to the prospects (matriculating university students).

The overall objective of this assignment is to have students process three critical steps of the sales process and submit deliverables that will be helpful in role play practice. In teams of two, students are provided a scenario of university needs. Given that information, students must think through the approach, needs discovery, and handling objections.

NETWORKING ACTIVITY FOR SALES CLASSES: BINGO

Linda Mullen (Georgia Southern University)

The first week of school students are settling into the semester, dropping, adding classes, finding classrooms, and financial aid, etc. Therefore, the first week, classes are centered on networking activities. The first day notecards with information on name, email, etc. and “What are 3 things most people do not know about you,” is on the back of the notecard. Using this information, the second day of class (still the first week), Bingo is introduced.

The notecard information with “What are 3 things most people do not know about you,” are used to create the BINGO squares for each student. For example, one student states she knows 9 languages. So, this information is placed in a square. “I breed fish,” is placed in another square, and so on with a square for each student. Students receive a BINGO card and fill in the cards with the names of each student that represent their square. Everyone gets up and walks around meeting in pairs to get Bingo cards filled. Pairs exchange their information and squares are filled in. Activity takes about 40 -45 minutes.

After cards are filled out, we recap. Each student talks about the square they represent and may give more information on what information was on the square. Using the example above. First student knows 9 languages, second student breeds fish. Students love this networking activity. Students report this activity as an uncomfortable experience at first but love the results.

SALES AND MARKETING ROCK: USING SONGS IN THE CLASSROOM

Gregory A. Rich (Bowling Green State University)

Many of us fondly remember learning about grammar, science, history, math and civics through the songs of *Schoolhouse Rock!* These memories inspired me to write and record several original songs about key concepts associated with sales and marketing courses. This presentation explores the benefits of incorporating songs (and music videos of these songs) as a pedagogical tool for our academic discipline. I highlight how using songs can make marketing and sales lessons more engaging, memorable, and enjoyable for students. I discuss the impact of music on cognition, emotion, and learning, as well as the potential for songs to stimulate creativity and critical thinking. Further, I provide examples of teaching activities that demonstrate how to use these songs for both in-person and online delivery. For example, I assign student groups to create and post their own *TikTok* videos based on these songs. Overall, this presentation highlights the value of using songs as a pedagogical tool in marketing and sales education.

SALESFORCE TRAILMIX FOR PROFESSIONAL SELLING COURSE: MODERN SELLING FOR SALES EDUCATION

Michael Rodriguez (Campbell University)

Modern Selling for Sales Education Trailmix provides a tool for sales educators to compliment a Fundamentals of Sales or Advanced Selling Course. Students are able to further their sales skills through videos, exercises and quizzes provided by each unit anytime, anywhere. The innovation also provides an opportunity for students to explore other Trailmixes and earn globally-recognized credentials that demonstrate a student's expertise to current and future employers. The author has organized a number of modules into a Trailmix that aligns with the sales process in a Professional Selling course.

Sales educators are not only looking for complimentary resources for their sales class but one that is free and easy to use. Trailhead from Salesforce (https://trailhead.salesforce.com/home) is a well-known resource already used across sales programs. The challenge is aligning the lectures/topics with the plethora of modules provided by Trailhead.

The following teaching resource, **Modern Selling for Sales Education,** provides a tool for Sales educators to help their students learn both fundamental and advanced sales skills for today's modern sales professionals.

Teaching Objectives

- *Introduce fundamental and advanced topics in sales*
- *Provide complimentary resources for Introduction and Advanced Selling Courses*
- *Start student journey in gaining badges and status in Salesforce Trailhead*
- *Learn new skills in asynchronous environment.*

This teaching innovation provides an easy, hands-on exercise for sales students to better understand the sales profession and learn advanced selling techniques.
https://trailhead.salesforce.com/en/users/mrodriguez342/trailmixes/professional-sales-skills

WARM UP ROLE PLAY AND ADAPTIVE SELLING EXERCISE

Michael Rodriguez (Campbell University)

The following teaching innovation provides an opportunity for students to start role playing on the first day of class. The exercise, called ***"The Warm Up Role Play"*** enables sales educators to assess how students understand the fundamentals of having a sales conversation. One student (the seller) plays the role of an ambassador for their current university. The other student (the buyer plays themselves but a high school junior applying to colleges. Their sales objective is to get another student to apply to their college. The teaching innovation allows sales students to understand the four key components of a sales meeting: Approach, Needs Identification, Value Proposition and Move the Sale Forward. There is also a second part of the exercise where the student participates in the exercise again, but the seller adapts to a specific communication style of the future candidate.

Teaching Objectives

- *Introduce Role Play Exercise Early*
- *Understand foundation of sales process*
- *Understand components of the sales conversation*

Seller (University Ambassador): You are meeting with a rising high school senior looking at colleges. As an ambassador for your university, your goal is to have the potential student apply to your university.

Buyer (College Applicant): The other student plays themselves but as a rising senior in high school. The student should think back about their needs and decision making process when looking at potential colleges.

Getting Crafty with It: Using Collage-making to Understand Social Styles and Flexing

Emily Tanner (West Virginia University)

The purpose of this exercise is to become familiar with the four different social styles (analytical, driver, expressive, amiable) and begin to think about how to adapt one's own style to effectively sell to a buyer with a differing (or same style). This exercise has 2 parts and I generally use 2 class periods. Part 1: Break students into small groups and have them build a collage using PowerPoint of the social styles matrix. For each social style, the group needs to find 3 famous people with that style and 5 other images that reflect the social style (32 images total). Then the group will pick one famous person from each style and create a slide that shows how a salesperson would flex their style to sell to that famous buyer. Part 2: Each group then gets 3-5 minutes to present one of the social styles and the flex slide corresponding to their style. If I have the time, I will do multiple rounds of the presentations so the class can see multiple versions of the style profiles.