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REDEFINING THE SALES CALL

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REDEFINING THE SALES CALL

by

M. Judith Billups

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Business Administration
In the
Coles College of Business
Kennesaw State University

Kennesaw, GA
2017

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2017

DEDICATION

To my friends, and colleagues who inspired, supported, and encouraged me throughout the process of earning the DBA. Your prayers and relentless reassurance enabled me to achieve what seemed impossible at times.

To the many young people whose lives I am privileged to influence, I dedicate this dissertation which will hopefully inspire them to pursue their impossible dreams and ambitions throughout their lives as thinkers and learners.

To my precious sister, Joy, and amazing brother, Kenny for their ability to always say the right thing at the right time. And finally, to my nephew, Brandon, and my niece, Haleigh, I hope this achievement will instill in them a passion for lifelong learning.

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ABSTRACT
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The sales process is undergoing a revolution as a result of social media and related technological advancements. Although each step of the sales process is being affected, the most drastically altered step is likely the sales call. The purpose of this research is to examine the impact the type of sales call used by sellers has on both the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson and the seller's attribution of sale call success or failure. The study consists of two essays. The first focuses on the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson based on the frequency and alignment of their use of specific types of sales calls. The second essay centers on the salesperson's attribution pertaining to both sales call success and failure. Three forms of sales call communication are examined: face-to-face sales calls, sales calls using historical sales communication tools, and technologically enhanced sales calls. Panel data is obtained for both buyers and sellers. In the first study, buyers are surveyed to determine if the type of sales call used by the seller met their expectations thereby influencing their evaluation of the salesperson. In the second study, sellers are surveyed to determine how the type of sales call they used affects their attribution related to the sales call success or failure. The data in the first study is analyzed using linear regression to determine which form of sales calls influence

the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson, while the data in the second essay is analyzed using logistic regression since the dependent variable is binary (success/failure). Two moderator variables are considered. In the first essay, the buyer's evaluation of the seller is predicted as being moderated by the phase of the relationship between the buyer and the seller. In the second essay, the seller's attribution of the success or failure is hypothesized as being moderated by the type of sales position the seller occupies. The contribution of this study is at least two-fold. First, this study bridges the gap between face-to-face sales call research and technologically enhanced sales tool research, providing a basis for determining the appropriate balance between the two communication styles. Second, by taking into account the moderating variables of relationship phase and type of sales position, salespeople can make accommodations in their sales call strategy based on the seller/buyer relationship phase or the type of sales position they occupy.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Face-to-face sales calls have traditionally been the main avenue of communication between buyers and sellers in the business-to-business (B2B) domain, and have been identified as the deepest and strongest form of communication between the two parties influencing the successful or unsuccessful outcome of the sales call (Dixon, Spiro, & Jamil, 2001; Weitz, Castleberry, & Tanner, 2007). However, as advanced technologies have emerged, salespeople have often been early adopters of the technological tools, adapting their use to the sales process (Christ & Anderson, 2011). For example, as the postal service and telephone technology appeared and improved, salespeople were among the first to employ these tools to improve sales communication with buyers. In addition to these historical sales tools, salespeople continue to adopt and adapt more modern technological advances such as email messaging, cell phone technology, websites, social media, blogs, and other electronic customer relationship management systems (CRM) to enhance sales calls (Tanner & Shipp, 2004). The inclusion of these historical and modern technological tools is dramatically impacting sales calls. Ferrell, Gonzalez-Padron, and Ferrell (2010) indicate the need to strike a delicate balance between “high touch” and “high tech” (p. 157) suggesting an ideal combination of face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales calls to effectively communicate with buyers.

To facilitate the discovery of the ideal, balanced combination of face-to-face, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales calls, it is necessary to

understand three streams of literature. Since face-to-face sales calls are at the core of selling in a B-to-B context, it is vital to examine this research stream (Cano, Boles, & Bean, 2005; Hamwi, Rutherford, Barksdale, & Johnson, 2013). At the same time, an emerging stream of literature examines the impact of recent technological enhancements on the sales process. This stream of research is needed as well since salespeople have historically been among the first to adapt technological advances to the sales process (Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2012; Schultz, Schwepker, & Good, 2012; Christ & Anderson, 2011). A third stream examining the successful or unsuccessful outcome of sales calls began early in the Internet era (Dixon, et al., 2001; Dixon, Spiro, & Forbes, 2003; Dixon & Schertzer, 2005) forming the foundation for integrating face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools for sellers and buyers.

The appropriate combination of the forms of sales calls aligns with the “prevailing wisdom that technology use is a key driver for growth and profitability” (Ahearne, Jones, Rapp, & Mathieu, 2008, p. 671). Therefore, the successful or unsuccessful outcome of sales calls is vital to consider because it directly impacts the bottom line of firms and is the driving force of business.

Building on these three streams of literature, the purpose of this dissertation is two-fold. The first purpose is to investigate the buyer’s evaluation of the salesperson based on the frequency of the use of face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools, and the alignment of this frequency with the buyer’s expectations. Because successful or unsuccessful outcomes of sales calls have a

direct effect on the firm's revenue stream, the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson is worthy of consideration and study.

The second purpose is to examine the seller's attributions of sales call success or failure based on the use of face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and modern technological enhanced sales tools through the lens of the seller. Sellers typically reflect on the success or failure of recent sales calls and base future behavioral intentions on those reflections (Dixon, et al., 2001). For example, if a seller uses a face-to-face sales call to initiate a relationship with a buyer, then the seller's reflection of the success or failure of the outcome will influence the use of the same technique for future sales calls.

Buyers and sellers evaluate successful or unsuccessful outcomes of sales calls through two very different lenses. Therefore, two moderating variables will also be considered—one through the buyer's lens and the other through the seller's. The first moderator is the impact of the phase of the relationship between the buyer and seller on the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson. According to Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987), relationships between buyers and sellers follow a pattern of progressive phases that mimic the progression of the traditional human marriage relationship. These phases are identified as (1) awareness, (2) exploration, (3) expansion, (4) commitment, and (5) dissolution (p.15). Based on this research, the seller's choice of using traditional face-to-face sales calls versus a combination of face-to face plus historical sales tools or technologically enhanced sales calls may influence the buyer's evaluation of the success or failure of the salesperson over the course of the relationship. For example, the initial (awareness) stage of the relationship represents a time in which the buyer recognizes that a potential seller exists that may be a "feasible exchange partner" (Dwyer, et al., 1987, p.

15). During this phase of the buyer/seller relationship, buyers may evaluate the salesperson as more successful if the seller utilizes face-to-face sales calls as opposed to historical sales tools or technologically enhanced sales calls. As the relationship progresses to the commitment phase, the buyers and sellers have gone through the process of exploration and expansion in which they have become attracted to each other as providers of mutually needed benefits, negotiated the terms of the relational exchanges, and agreed on the expectations each of the parties have for the other. After successfully navigating these stages of the relationship and finally reaching the commitment phase, the buyer may favor the use of historical sales tools or modern technologically enhanced tools once the relationship has been firmly established. The commitment phase of the relationship can be likened to the marriage vow or pledge stage of a marital relationship where relational continuity between exchange partners is promised (Dwyer, et al., p. 19).

The second moderator is salesperson specific. The seller's evaluation of the success or failure of communications with buyers potentially could be impacted by the type of sales position the seller occupies. According to Moncrief, Marshall, and Lassk's (2006) contemporary taxonomy of sales positions, there are six types of sales positions that include consultant, new business/channel development, missionary, delivery, sales support, and key account seller (p. 58-63). Each type of sales position represents a set of different activities the seller performs. For example, a seller who occupies a "missionary" type sales position might use more face-to-face sales calls rather than historical sales tools or technologically enhanced sales tools because this type of seller

engages in a great deal of relationship selling with buyers often delivering samples (p. 62-63).

The current study makes two important contributions. First, this study bridges the gap between research on three topics: face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales calls, and provides a basis for determining the appropriate balance among the three. Second, by taking the moderating variables of relationship phase and type of sales position into account, salespeople can make accommodations in their sales call strategy based on the individual client relationship phase or the type of sales position they occupy. This is important because sales calls are the fundamental form of communication between buyers and sellers, directly influencing the firm's revenue stream, which is the essence of the business process (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). As technology continues to revolutionize the sales process, it is vital to examine the elements involved in redefining the sales call.

CHAPTER 2: ESSAY 1

Abstract

Recent technological advances such as the Internet, social media, and related technologies are revolutionizing the field of sales. Sales calls are the fundamental means of sales communication between salespeople and buyers. Traditionally, sellers used face-to-face sales calls as the primary form of contact with buyers. Throughout history, however, salespeople have routinely adapted innovations in technology to the sales process, aiding them to more effectively influence buyers – to the extent that sellers are known as early adopters of historical communication tools, specifically telephone, postal services, and printed materials. As the Internet, social media, and related technologies continue to offer enhancements to sales calls, sellers are incorporating these mechanisms to communicate with buyers as well. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to examine the buyer's expectation of the seller's use of various forms of sales calls (face-to-face, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools) in relation to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson. The phase of the relationship (exploration, expansion, commitment,) between the buyer and the seller is expected to moderate the strength of the relationship between the form of sales call and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

Redefining The Sales Call: The Buyer's Perspective

The field of sales is currently undergoing such a radical change that researchers are calling it a “revolution in sales” (Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2012). This revolution is due to the technological advances that are dramatically affecting sales communication with buyers, including the Internet, social media, virtual meeting technologies, and electronic Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems (Rapp, Agnihotri, & Forbes, 2008; Robinson, Marshall, & Stamps, 2005). Throughout history, salespeople have recognized the advantages of incorporating technological advances into their sales communication activity with buyers. For example, the telephone and postal services changed how salespeople were able to communicate with customers over a century ago. Given the impact of these historical changes in communication tools, sellers often respond so positively and rapidly to new technological changes that they are considered “early adopters” of such improvements (Christ & Anderson, 2011; Widmier, Jackson, & McCabe, 2002).

Sellers have traditionally approached buyers by means of face-to-face sales calls and researchers have devoted attention to better understanding the impact of face-to-face sales calls (e.g. Hamwi, Rutherford, Barksdale, & Johnson, 2013; Weitz, Castleberry, & Tanner, 2007). However, given the complexity of selling today, salespeople incorporate many different technological strategies to communicate with buyers trying to achieve a delicate balance between “high touch” and “high tech” (Ferrell, Gonzalez-Padron, & Ferrell, 2010, p. 157). The buyer ultimately makes purchasing decisions based on his or her evaluation of the salesperson's actions (e.g. sales calls) (Dixon, Spiro, & Jamil, 2001). Therefore, it is critical to understand how the seller's use of traditional face-to-

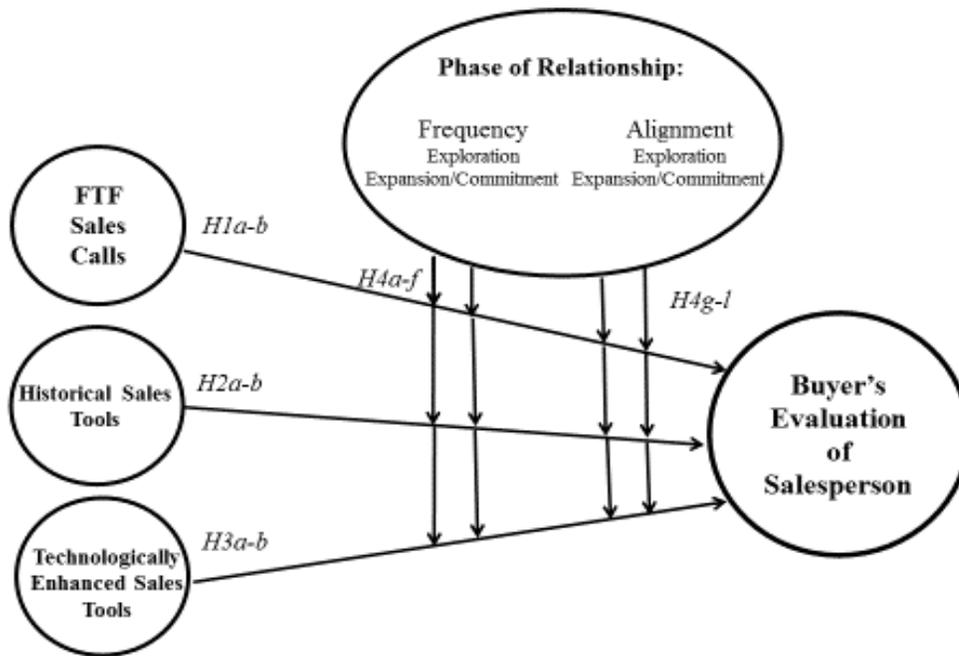
face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools impacts the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

The academic literature provides guidance for using face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools. However, these three streams are emerging in divergent studies and failing to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these tools interact with each other. For example, Hamwi, et al. (2013) focused on the frequency of face-to-face sales calls by examining the ideal versus actual number of sales calls using disconfirmation theory as the theoretical foundation. The findings revealed that buyers evaluated salespeople more positively when the number of sales calls met the buyers' expectations. While examining the frequency of face-to-face sales calls is important, the study failed to look at other touch points between buyers and sellers, such as historical sales communication tools and technologically enhanced sales tools. Christ and Anderson (2011) took a historical look at how sellers have used sales communication tools over the years, but did not take modern technological enhancements into consideration. Marshall, et al. (2012) acknowledged the impact of modern technologies on the sales process, but did not consider face-to-face sales calls or historical sales tools. Technological advances have contributed many different communication tools to the buying and selling process. Therefore, in order to provide the comprehensive understanding needed, it is important to examine the buyers' evaluation of the seller based on the use of face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and modern technologically enhanced sales tools.

The purpose of this study is to examine the buyer's expectation of the seller's use of different forms of sales calls and tools in relation to the buyer's evaluation of the

salesperson. By gaining the buyer's perspective of the use of face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and modern technologically enhanced sales tools, salespeople can ultimately make accommodations in their sales strategy to meet buyer's expectations more effectively (Boujena, Johnston, & Merunka, 2009). Building on this foundation, key factors in the relationship between the buyer and seller should also be considered (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). This is important because buyers may evaluate salespeople differently depending on the phase of the buyer/seller relationship.

The model below depicts the proposed relationships among the constructs. The buyer's evaluation of the seller will be influenced by the form of sales call the seller uses (face-to-face, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools). The model also shows the potential moderating effect of the phase of the buyer/seller relationship on the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson. The buyer's evaluation of the salesperson may be influenced depending on how long the buyer has known the seller and in which phase of the relationship the parties are engaged.



¹Figure 1. The buyer's perspective model.

Theory Overview

In order to align the current study with previous research on buyers' perceptions of salespersons' performance, the proposed study will use disconfirmation theory (Hamwi, et al., 2013). Disconfirmation theory establishes the process by which humans form expectations of outcomes prior to experiencing the product or service. Following the experience of the product or service, comparisons are made between the expectations formed at the outset and the actuality of the result of the experience. If the expectations established prior to the experience were met, then it would result in confirmation of the

¹ FTF means face-to-face

expectations. Failure to meet the expectations results in negative disconfirmation (Oliver, 1980). Buyers have an expectation about the form of sales calls a seller will use. If this expectation is reached by the seller, the buyer will experience confirmation of their expectations, leading to a positive evaluation of the salesperson. If the seller's communication does not meet the expectations of the buyer, then the buyer will experience negative disconfirmation which will lead to a negative evaluation of the salesperson (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988).

Literature Review

Buyer's evaluation defined. Previous research on buyers' evaluations of sellers indicates that negative evaluations result in diminished sales outcomes (Spiro, Perreault, & Reynolds, 1977; Wotruba, 1980), while positive evaluations by buyers can result in an immediate increase in sales and also impact buying intentions for the future (Doney & Cannon, 1997). Buyers typically rely on salespeople as the primary link between their firm and the seller's firm, so the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson is a direct reflection on the evaluation of the firm (Weitz & Bradford, 1999; Johnson, Barksdale, & Boles, 2001; Reynolds & Beatty, 1999; Anaza & Rutherford, 2011; Palmatier, Scheer, & Steenkamp, 2007). Buyer's evaluations of a company's salesperson are often the most important consideration when assessing a company regardless of the products or other factors (Jones, Moore, Stanaland, & Wyatt, 1998). Therefore, it is critical for sellers to adapt their sales call strategy to positively influence buyers' evaluations.

Dixon, et al. (2001) defined successful sales calls as ones that result in closure of the sale. Sellers can adapt their sales call strategy more effectively when they are aware of the buyer's expectations of the form of sales call they prefer, which increase the

likelihood of positively meeting expectations (Stafford & Stafford, 2003, p. 40). Prior research has investigated the buyers' expectations of salespeople and indicates several common expectations that buyers have regarding interactions with sellers, ranging from their product expertise to their compatibility (Peterson & Lucas, 2001). Therefore, in order for sellers to positively influence buyers' evaluations of the salesperson, sellers must meet buyers' expectations regarding the form of sales calls used.

Previous research indicates that not closing the sale would be considered sales failure (Dixon, et al., 2001, p. 64). The buyer's negative evaluation of the salesperson, therefore, has a direct impact on the company's bottom line. The seller's ability to appropriately adapt the form of sales call used to meet the buyer's expectations will enhance the buyer's evaluation (Roman & Iacobucci, 2010; Franke & Park, 2006). If the seller fails to meet the buyer's expectation regarding the form of sales calls used, then the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson will become more negative.

In line with disconfirmation theory, the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson also incorporates the buyer's expectations of the form of sales call the seller will use to communicate with them. Buyers develop expectations of how many times a salesperson should call on them within a certain time period using different forms of sales calls. Buyers also establish an ideal number of different types of sales calls they prefer the seller will use. When salespeople are able to align their number of sales calls to match the buyer's expectations, buyers will evaluate sellers more positively (Tosi, 1966; Hamwi, et al., 2013).

Face-to-face sales calls defined

Face-to-face meetings are interpersonal interactions between individuals who are “collocated” or in the same place (Kirkman, Rosen, Tesluk, & Gibson, 2004). In alignment with previous research, face-to-face sales calls are defined as meetings between buyers and sellers who are together in the same space engaging in interpersonal interaction. Sellers using face-to-face sales calls approach potential buyers in person to represent their product or service line using what researchers have suggested is the richest medium for buyer/seller communications (Daft & Lengel, 1984). Face-to-face sales are also considered by previous researchers as the strongest and deepest form of communication between buyers and sellers (Weitz, et al., 2007; Spiro & Weitz, 1990).

Historical sales tools defined. Christ and Anderson (2011) traced the historical development of the impact of technology on the sales process. They categorized the changes in the sales process relating to emerging technologies as follows: improved transportation developments, improved communication devices, improved presentation strategies, and relationship management technologies. For example, as communication devices like the telephone and the U.S. Postal Service evolved, buyers and sellers altered the way they interacted with each other in response (Christ & Anderson, 2011, p. 180). Instead of relying solely on face-to-face interactions, business letters, sales collateral, and printed product brochures could be mailed ahead of a sales appointment to influence the buyer’s evaluation of the seller before the initial meeting. Although adopting technological improvements can be challenging at first (Rapp, et al., 2008; Hunter & Perreault, 2007), firms continue to appreciate the value of utilizing these tools knowing that the investment will benefit the sales force’s productivity while increasing profitable

buyer-seller relationships (Hollenbeck, Zinkhan, French, & Song, 2009). Building on previous research, therefore, historical sales tools are defined as sales communication tools sellers employ to interact with potential buyers including telephone, postal services, or printed materials (Hollander, 1953).

Technologically enhanced sales tools can be defined as ones that include the use of modern technologies including the Internet, social media, and virtual communities. Previous research indicates that salespeople are incorporating many technological enhancements to their sales calls and experiencing improved performance as a result (Rodriquez, Peterson, & Krishnan, 2012; Trainor, 2012). The use of marketing related technology applications also enables salespeople to efficiently and effectively carry out their duties as “boundary-spanners” within organizations, bridging the gap between their own selling organizations and those of the buyers on whom they call (Levin, Hansen, & Laverie, 2012, p. 379). CRM systems and word-of-mouth marketing strategies have also been impacted by the inclusion of social media to the extent of changing the titles to “social CRM” and “eWOM,” respectively (Trainor, 2012). Although implementation of sales force technology enhancements to the sales process can meet initial resistance by sellers, firms continue to utilize technological enhancements to sales calls to improve the buyer’s evaluation of salespeople (Rapp, et al., 2008).

Direct Hypothesis Development

Linking face-to-face sales calls to the buyer’s evaluation of the salesperson. Sellers, when using face-to-face sales calls to approach and interact with potential buyers, may positively impact the buyer’s evaluation. Cano, Boles, and Bean (2005) found that face-to-face sales calls were still preferred by buyers to alternative methods of

communication (historical sales tools or technologically enhanced sales tools). Buyers who are in the same physical location as the seller and interact personally with them have the opportunity to assess the salesperson based on the interchange between the two, thereby influencing the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson (Kirkman, et al., 2004).

According to disconfirmation theory, buyers establish expectations about the form of sales calls sellers will use. Sellers who meet buyers' expectations regarding the number of times (frequency) that sellers use face-to-face sales calls will positively influence the buyer's evaluation. Also by aligning the use of face-to-face sales calls to match the ideal expectation established by the buyer, the buyer's evaluation of the seller will be positively influenced as well. Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H1a: Seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls will be positively related to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H1b: Alignment of face-to-face sales calls will be positively related to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

Linking historical sales tools to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

According to Kowalkowski and Brehmer (2008), using and adapting technology is an important driver for changes in buyer/seller exchanges. Throughout history, sellers have used telephone communication, postal services, and printed material as sales tools. Telephone communication and written correspondence has been linked to positive buyer evaluations of sellers when used to contact buyers for appointments or follow-up on account services (Cano, et al., 2005). As the supporting mechanisms of the historical

tools improved over the course of history, sellers continuously utilized these tools to influence their buyers' evaluations of them (Christ & Anderson, 2011).

Buyers set expectations of how often sellers should use historical sales tools (telephone, postal services, and printed materials). Theoretically, if the seller meets the buyer's expectation of the number of times the seller uses historical sales tools, then the buyer's evaluation will be more positive. Likewise, when the seller's actual number agrees with the buyer's ideal expected number, a positive evaluation of the seller would be likely. Many historical sales tools are still used frequently by sellers to influence buyer's evaluations of salespeople. Therefore, the use of historical sales tools will influence the buyer's evaluation of salespeople and the following is hypothesized:

H2a: Seller's frequency of historical sales tools will be positively related to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H2b: Alignment of historical sales tools will be positively related to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

Linking technologically enhanced sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson. Strategic use of the Internet, social media, and related technologies by sellers can enhance buyers' evaluations of salespeople because of the unique, interactive features of the applications (Rapp & Panagopoulos, 2012; Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap, & Singh, 2012; Rodriguez, et al., 2012). Sellers can disseminate pertinent information quickly and effectively to millions of potential buyers at a time, while dissatisfied buyers can also instantly influence millions of prospective buyers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Internal social media networks and intranet tools are also used

within companies and between buyers and sellers (Andzulis, Panagopoulos, & Rapp, 2012; Trainor, 2012). Sellers who modify or adapt their selling behavior based on the buyer's needs will positively impact buyers' evaluations of the salesperson (Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986).

Based on disconfirmation theory, buyers may expect sellers to use technologically enhanced sales tools. In response to buyer's expectations, sellers will continue to evolve using adaptive selling techniques to improve buyer's evaluations of the seller (Marshall, Moncrief, & Lask, 1999). Boujena, et al. (2009) examined the buyer's perceived benefits of sales force automation systems by their sellers and the results indicated that buyers do perceive benefits (p. 137). However, as noted by Goodhue and Thompson (1995), "the technology must be utilized, and the technology must be a good fit with the tasks it supports" (p. 213). Sellers must choose the tool that fits correctly and use it correctly to positively influence the buyer's evaluation (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005). Therefore, according to disconfirmation theory, sellers using technologically enhanced sales calls who meet buyers' expectations of the frequency of the use of such calls will receive more positive evaluations from the buyer. Buyers' evaluations are expected to be more positive if sellers also align their actual frequency of use of technologically enhanced sales calls with the ideal number of times expected by the buyer (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005). Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H3a: Seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls will be positively related to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H3b: Alignment of technologically enhanced sales tools will be positively related to the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

Moderator: The Phase of Relationship

Relationship development overview. Dwyer, et al. (1987) compared buyer and seller relationships to those within a traditional marriage arrangement, noting five distinct stages or phases: awareness, exploration, expansion, commitment, and dissolution (p. 15). During the awareness phase, buyers and sellers attempt to increase their attractiveness to each other without a significant amount of relational contact. Similarly, in the dissolution stage, one or both of the parties will initiate disengagement resulting in transactional activities rather than relational. Therefore, the current study will focus on the exploration, expansion, and commitment phases since these represent more significant relational activity between buyers and sellers.

The exploration phase is a “search and trial” phase in which both buyers and sellers recognize a mutually beneficial reward-cost outcome with a potential exchange partner (Jap & Ganesan, 2000, p. 231). The two parties begin to negotiate the terms of the relationship by communicating and bargaining until they develop dependable norms or standards of conduct with each other. This leads to the expansion phase in which there is increasing interdependence of the two parties and a continual increase in benefits they receive from each other (Frazier, 1983). The commitment phase consists of a pledge between the two parties to continue the relationship. At this phase, buyers and sellers have established an enduring arrangement based on consistent performance during the previous relationship phases (Dwyer, et al., 1987).

Relationship development phase as a moderator. Based on disconfirmation theory, for sellers to effectively meet the expectations of buyers, it is important for sellers to recognize that the expectations of buyers will change as their relationship progresses

through the phases. Periodically, sellers need to readdress and gain insight into what the buyers' expectations are and update their approach in order to appropriately adapt (Anderson & Narus, 1990). For example, Selnes (1998) found that the higher the rate of constructive communication regarding sales calls, the higher the level of buyer satisfaction. Sellers can increase the rate of constructive communication by checking back consistently with buyers and adjusting their sales call strategy to align with the buyer's expectations.

Based on the phase of the relationship, the buyer may prefer different forms of sales calls (face-to-face, historical sales tools, or technologically enhanced sales tools). For example, during the exploration phase, buyers may prefer sellers to use more face-to-face sales calls, while during the commitment phase, buyers may prefer more technologically enhanced sales tools. The phase of the relationship may strengthen the relationship between the form of sales calls used by the seller and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson (Jap & Ganesan, 2000). For the analysis, the exploration phase is considered the reference group so only the expansion and commitment phases are included in the analysis. Therefore, the following moderated relationships are hypothesized:

H4a: The expansion phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of face-to-face sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4b: The commitment phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of face-to-face sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4c: The expansion phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of historical sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4d: The commitment phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of historical sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4e: The expansion phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4f: The commitment phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4g: The expansion phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between alignment of face-to-face sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4h: The commitment phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between alignment of face-to-face sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4i: The expansion phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between alignment of historical sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4j: The commitment phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between alignment of historical sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4k: The expansion phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between alignment of technologically enhanced sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

H4l: The commitment phase of the relationship will impact the strength of the relationship between alignment of technologically enhanced sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson.

Methodology

The hypotheses above were tested using the methods described below. The qualitative studies were conducted to generate an exhaustive list of sales call tools which in turn, informed the development of the final survey instrument. The details of the qualitative studies and the quantitative study are presented below.

Qualitative Study

Scale Item Development Overview

Prior to launching the quantitative survey, a series of qualitative studies were first conducted. The purpose of the qualitative studies was to generate a comprehensive list of different types of sales call tools that buyers and sellers use to communicate with each other. In order to capture as many different types of sales tools as possible, personal interviews were conducted with a small sample of business-to-business buyers and sellers. This determined which sales tools the respondents used on a regular basis. To

ensure an exhaustive list of items, an additional qualitative study using Qualtrics was then conducted to identify any additional sales communication tools that may not have emerged in the preliminary study. Analysis of the results of this study indicated a need to further define the technologically enhanced category. After modifications were made to this category, a final qualitative study was conducted. The results of each of the qualitative studies are summarized below.

The Preliminary Qualitative Study

Preliminary results. In the preliminary study, respondents were selected who were currently employed as either professional business-to-business buyers or sellers. Personal interviews were conducted with each of the buyers (5) and sellers (5) asking them to complete two different tasks. The first was to list as many different types of sales communication tools as they could recall using during the last four-week period in their buying or selling role. For the second task, the respondents were asked to categorize the tools into one of three categories: face-to-face, historical communication tools, and technologically enhanced tools. The instrument is included in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Preliminary Qualitative Study Instrument

Preliminary Qualitative Study Instrument
Thank you for agreeing to help identify the types of sales communication tools buyers and salespeople use to interact with each other. Buyers and salespeople communicate with each other in many different ways. They employ tools like face-to-face meetings, email messages, and/or sending documents through mail delivery services.
Q1 For the purpose of this study, please try to recall your recent interactions with buyers/salespeople and list as many different ways you have communicated with those buyers/sellers as you can remember. There is no limit to the number of communication tools you can list, so try to recall as many different ones as you can.
<p>Q2 Now that you have listed as many different tools as you can recall, please categorize them into three different categories. The first one will be called face-to-face sales communication. The second one will be called historical sales tools. That is, over the course of history, buyers and sellers have quickly responded to improvements in communication tools like telephone technologies and mail delivery services to communicate with each other so historical sales tools will include tools that have been used for many years. The third category involves communication tools that use the Internet and related technologies. Review the list of communication tools you created above and assign each one of the tools to one of the following categories by placing the appropriate number below beside each tool that you listed (a tool cannot be listed in more than one category):</p> <p>(1) Face-to-face sales tools - communication that occurs in person.</p> <p>(2) Historical sales tools - communication that uses tools that have developed over the course of history.</p> <p>(3) Technologically enhanced sales tools - communication tools that utilize the Internet or related technologies.</p>

In part one of the interviews, respondents listed 35 different types of sales communication tools. In part two of the interviews, all of the respondents (100%) agreed that face-to-face sales calls, trade shows, across the table meetings, and other meetings should be classified into the face-to-face category. However, when classifying the types of sales communication tools into the remaining two categories (historical and technologically enhanced), they did not all agree. Overlap between the two categories emerged. Of the respondents that mentioned conference calls (n = 5), 80% assigned

conference calls to the historical category while one of the respondents assigned them to the technologically enhanced category (20%). Similar overlap occurred for faxes. Of the respondents that mentioned fax (n = 7), 86% assigned fax to the historical category while one of the respondents assigned fax to the technologically enhanced category (14%). The results from the preliminary qualitative study are outlined in the Tables below (see Tables 2 & 3). The combined results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 2: Sellers Preliminary Qualitative Study Results

Preliminary Qualitative Study Results by Respondent			
Participant	FTF	Historical	Technologically Enhanced
Seller #1	Face-to-Face	US Mail	Websites
	Trade shows	Email *	Texts
		Fax	Scan
		Phone	Facebook
		Catalogs	CRM programs
		Brochures	
		Samples	
Seller #2	Face-to-Face	Phone	Email **
			Website links
Seller #3	Face-to-Face	Phone	Email
		Fax **	Scan
		Brochures	Skype
		White papers	Online 3 D models
		Conference calls	Video
			PowerPoint Presentations
Seller #4	Face-to-Face	Letters	Websites
		Brochures	Email **
		Phone	Text messaging
			Fax ***
			YouTube
			WebExs
Seller #5	Face-to-Face	Mail	Email **
		Brochures	Texts
		Printouts	Scan
		Phone	Demonstrations on CDs
		Fax **	

**Indicates overlap

Table 3: Buyers Preliminary Qualitative Study Results

Preliminary Qualitative Study Results by Respondent			
Participant	FTF	Historical	Technologically Enhanced
Buyer #1	Face-to-Face	Phone	Email **
	Trade Shows	Fax **	Texts
		Fed Ex	Websites
		UPS	Online Catalogs
		US Mail	
		Catalogs	
		Samples	
Buyer #2	Face-to-Face	Catalogs	Email **
	Meetings	White papers	Websites
		Fax **	Webinars
		Brochures	Email attachments
		Pamphlets	Downloads
		US Mail	
		Conference calls **	
Buyer #3	Face-to-Face	Phone	Skype
	Trade Shows	Conference calls **	LinkedIn
	Meetings	US Mail	Facebook
		UPS	Websites
		FedEx	Email **
		Brochures	Scans
		Catalogs	Attachments
		Website links	
Buyer #4	Face-to-Face	Phone	Skype
	Across the table	Email *	Websites
	Meetings	UPS	Doc Exchange
		Fax **	Desktop Sharing
		Brochures	
		Conference calls **	
		FedEx	
	US Mail		
Buyer #5	Face-to-Face	US Mail	Conference calls **
		FedEx	Scans
		UPS	Attachments
		Phone	Skype
		Brochures	Email **
		White Papers	

**Indicates overlap

Table 4: Combined Summary of Results

Combined Summary of Results		
Face-to-Face	Phone	Skype
Trade Shows	Email *	LinkedIn
Across the table	UPS	Facebook
Meetings	Fax ***	Websites
	Brochures	Email *
	Conference calls **	Scans
	FedEx	Attachments
	US Mail	Website links
	Catalogs	Doc Exchange
	White Papers	Desktop Sharing
	Samples	Online Catalogs
	Pamphlets	Webinars
		Email attachments
		Demonstrations on CDs
		YouTube
		WebExs
		Online 3 D models
		Video
		PowerPoint presentations
		CRM programs
		Conference calls **
		Fax ***

Notes:

- 1). * Email: Seller #1 and Buyer #4 categorized email into historical tools while all the others placed it in the technologically enhanced category.
- 2). ** Conference Calls: Buyer #5 categorized conference calls into technologically enhanced while all others placed conference calls in the historical category.
- 3). *** Fax: Seller #4 categorized fax into technologically enhanced while all others placed fax in the historical category.

Modifications Based on the Preliminary Results

In order to address this overlap between categories, a fourth category was indicated, as well as modifications to the current definitions of the current categories to provide clarity of the category choices for respondents in the on-line qualitative study. The face-to-face category remained the same but includes trade shows as a form of face-to-face communication based on the findings of the first study. The name of the second category, historical, also remained the same. However, based on the findings, the definition of historical was adjusted by adding the phrase “and have been used by buyers and sellers for an extended period of time” to provide clarity for respondents. The third category was entitled *traditional* technologically enhanced sales tools and included sales communication tools that have been in use for a significantly long period of time and are commonly used. The fourth and final category, *modern* technologically enhanced sales tools, includes recently developed tools resulting from extensive use of the Internet and related technologies. The adaptation of the categories addresses the overlap and enables respondents to better classify the different types of sales communication tools. The modified definitions are as follows:

- 1). Face-to-face sales tools: communication that occurs in person such as face-to-face sales calls, trade shows, and in-person meetings.
- 2). Historical sales tools: communication that uses tools that have developed over the course of history and have been used by buyers and sellers for an extended period of time.

3). *Traditional* technologically enhanced sales tools: communication that utilizes technological advancements that are routinely used by buyers and sellers in their usual work environment and have been in use for a significantly long period of time.

4). *Modern* technologically enhanced sales tools: communication that uses recently developed tools resulting from extensive use of the Internet and related technologies.

Qualtrics Qualitative Study

Qualtrics results. The results of the first round of the qualitative study conducted through Qualtrics are summarized in Tables 5 and 6. In total, two rounds of data were collected in this phase. This phase utilized the four modified categories that resulted from the preliminary qualitative study (face-to-face, historical, traditional technologically enhanced, and modern technologically enhanced). The results of the second round using Qualtrics are summarized in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 5: Qualtrics Round #1 Results

Participants	Sales Tools	Categories			
		Face-to-face	Historical	Traditional Technologically Enhanced	Modern Technologically Enhanced
Seller #1	Bing				Bing
	Google	Google			
	Yahoo		Yahoo		
	Apple			Apple	
Seller #2	Mail		Mail		
	Phone			Phone	
	Text				Text
	WebEx	WebEx			
Seller #3	Phone		Phone		
	Email				Email
	In Person	In Person			
Seller #4	Sales Force				
Seller #5	Email				Email
	Phone		Phone		

Table 6: Qualtrics Round #1 Results

Categories					
Participants	Sales Tools	Face-to-face	Historical	Traditional Technologically Enhanced	Modern Technologically Enhanced
Buyer #1	Amazon	Amazon			
Buyer #2	In person				
	Computer				
Buyer #3	None	None			
Buyer #4	Phone			Phone	
	Email				Email
	Letter			Letter	
	In Person	In Person			
Buyer #5	Email				

Table 7: Qualtrics Round #2 Results for Sellers Survey

Categories					
Participants	Sales Tools	Face-to-face	Historical	Traditional Technologically Enhanced	Modern Technologically Enhanced
Seller #1	Phone	Phone			
	Text	Text			
	Email		Email		
	Visit on Home	Visit on Home			
Seller #2	Sales	Sales			
	Google	Google			
	Amazon	Amazon			
Seller #3	WebEx	WebEx			
	Microsoft	Microsoft			
	Cisco Connect	Cisco Connect			
Seller #4	Face-to-face	Face-to-face			
	Phone	Phone			
	Email	Email			
	Twitter	Twitter			
	Facebook	Facebook			
	LinkedIn	LinkedIn			
	Tradeshows	Tradeshows			
	Entertain	Entertain			
Seller #5	Email		Email		
	Phone	Phone			
	In Person	In Person			
	Text		Text		

Table 8: Qualtrics Round #2 Results for Buyers Survey

Categories					
Participants	Sales Tools	Face-to-face	Historical	Traditional Technologically Enhanced	Modern Technologically Enhanced
Buyer #1	Email				Email
	Phone			Phone	
	Face-to-face	Face-to-face			
	Website		Website		
Buyer #2	Face-to-face	Face-to-face			
	Trade Shows	Trade Shows			
	Skype				Skype
	Phone		Phone		
	CDs		CDs		
	Catalogs			Catalogs	
	US Mail		US Mail		
Buyer #3	Face-to-Face	Face-to-Face			
	Email		Email		
	Fax		Fax		
	Phone	Phone			
	Mail			Mail	
Buyer #4	Face-to-face	Face-to-face			
	Mail	Mail			
	Email	Email			
Buyer #5	In Person	In Person In Person			
	Website	Website			
	Email		Email		
	Phone		Phone		
	Text				Text

Qualtrics Qualitative Study Summary

Analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the addition of the new categories and definitions failed to identify any new items that had not emerged in the previous round. The goal of the qualitative studies was to ensure that an exhaustive list of sales tools and appropriate categorization was attained. While it was important to modify and test the new definitions and categories, failure to uncover additional items indicates that saturation was achieved. The previously used definitions and categories provided the exhaustive list necessary. Therefore, the original three categories (face-to-face, historical, and technologically enhanced) were used in the final instrument.

Repetition of many of the tools mentioned by the respondents indicated common themes. The tools that were repeated by multiple respondents were used to modify the quantitative study. For example, most respondents listed telephone and conference calls as communication tools they used with buyers or sellers. If items were mentioned by multiple respondents, the items were retained to modify the quantitative study. If items were specific to only one respondent and not mentioned by others, the item was deleted from the modification process. Specifically, only one respondent mentioned using 3D on-line models and only one mentioned presentations on CDs. These items were removed because they are specific to the individual respondent and not relevant to the entire panel of quantitative respondents.

Development of Scale Items

In order to streamline the list of items, similar communication tools were combined to reduce the number of items. Mail delivery services including US Mail, UPS, and FedEx were combined since all three simply deliver materials to buyers and/or sellers. Written materials such as brochures, pamphlets, white papers, and catalogs were combined because they are all written collateral pieces that buyers and sellers use in presentations and demonstrations with each other. These materials can be exchanged by means of in-person delivery, on-line delivery, or service delivery. Electronic tools were also combined into similar groups. Social media outlets including Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn were combined together. Skype and WebEx meetings were combined as were Doc Exchange and Desktop Sharing because of the similarity of the tools. In addition to samples, trial offers was another item that salespeople frequently use, so they were added to the sample category. Salespeople often leave product samples with potential buyers, but they also offer free trial uses of products or services. Since samples and free trial offers are similar offerings, these two were combined as well.

A summary list of the items is provided below in Table 9.

Table 9: Qualitative Results

Qualitative Results		
Face-to-face	Historical	Technologically Enhanced
Face-to-Face	Phone and Conference calls **	Skype and WebExs
Trade Shows	Email **	LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook
	US Mail UPS and FedEx	Email **
In Person Meetings	Fax **	Websites, Links, Scans and Attachments
	Brochures, Pamphlets, White Papers and Catalogs	Doc Exchange and Desktop Sharing
	Samples or Trial Offers	Demonstrations on CDs
		Online 3 D models

** Indicates overlap between categories

Scale item development. Based on the results of the qualitative studies, the definition of success and failure for the seller's survey was added to provide additional clarity for the respondents. The definitions are included below in Table 10. These definitions were inserted into the surveys before each set of questions asking the respondents to recall a recent successful/unsuccessful sales interaction. The final scale items are contained in Table 11.

Table 10: Refined Successful/Unsuccessful Definitions

Successful/Unsuccessful Definition	
Successful	<p>Salespeople typically set goals for sales interactions that they have with buyers. For example, the goal of an initial sales interaction might be simply to establish rapport while the goal for a later interaction could be to close the sale.</p> <p>If the goal is achieved, salespeople consider the sales interaction successful. For the next series of questions, please recall a recent successful sales interaction with a specific buyer.</p>
Unsuccessful	<p>Salespeople typically set goals for sales interactions they have with buyers. For example, the goal of an initial sales interaction might be simply to establish rapport while the goal for a later interaction could be to close the sale.</p> <p>If the goal is not achieved, then salespeople consider the sales interaction unsuccessful. For the next series of questions, please recall a recent unsuccessful sales interaction with a specific buyer.</p>

Table 11: Final Scales Items

Final Scale Items	
Thinking of this recent successful/unsuccessful sales interaction, indicate how often you meet, in person, within the last four weeks with the specific buyer listed above:	
<input type="checkbox"/> In person meetings (including face-to-face sales calls and meeting at trade shows) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> During those meetings did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers or other written information to this buyer? ____Yes ____No	
<input type="checkbox"/> If yes, how many times? _____	
b) During these meetings did you provide samples or trial offers to this buyer?	
____Yes ____No	
<input type="checkbox"/> If yes, how many times? _____	
Thinking of this same buyer, indicate how often you used the following within the last four weeks to communicate with them:	
Personal phone calls or conference calls	_____
Text messaging	_____
Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)	_____
Skype or WebEx	_____
Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange	_____
Sending or receiving a Fax	_____
Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail	_____
Sending or receiving something through email	_____
Links to websites	_____
Other 1, please explain	_____
Other 2, please explain	_____
During these communications did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers or other written information to this buyer? ____Yes ____No	
<input type="checkbox"/> If yes, how many times through?	
UPS, FedEx, or US Mail	_____
Text messaging	_____
Email	_____
Faxes	_____
Links to Websites	_____
Other, please explain	_____
During these communications did you provide any samples or trial offers to this buyer?	
____Yes ____No	
<input type="checkbox"/> If yes, how many times through?	
UPS, FedEx, or US Mail	_____
Text messaging	_____
Email	_____
Faxes	_____
Links to Websites	_____
Other, please explain	_____

Quantitative Study

Sample

The sample of business-to-business buyers needed for the quantitative study was obtained by using a reputable online access panel (Qualtrics). The online sample well represents the overall population with respondents screened for participation, based on the requirements of the study which are: 1) respondents must buy products or services and 2) have face-to-face contact with sellers. Previous survey research confirms the benefits of using online access panels, noting the advantages as prescreening of respondents, cost efficiency, and timeliness of responses (Hartmann, Rutherford, Feinberg, & Anderson, 2014). Organizational buyers from a wide range of firms were included in the sample. Panel data usage is suggested for use with cross-sectional studies and longitudinal studies (Zikmund & Babin, 2010; Hair, Black, & Anderson, 2010). By surveying these professionals, the perceptions of the buyers were ascertained regarding their evaluation of the salesperson in relation to the frequency of the types of sales calls and the alignment with the buyer's expectations (Hamwi, et al., 2013).

The size of the sample is important to ensure generalizability. Previous researchers examining buyers' evaluations of sellers have used a wide range of sample sizes including small samples around 70 respondents (Stafford & Stafford, 2003) to larger samples over 200 respondents (Hansen & Riggle, 2008). The general rule of thumb is a minimum 5 observations per parameter while 15 to 20 observations are more desirable (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010, p.175). Based on this rule of thumb, an appropriate sample size would be between 90 and 180 in order to achieve 5 to 15 observations per item. Therefore, data from 150 buyers from various industries was

purchased for the purpose of this research. To ensure adequate sample size, Qualtrics provided an additional 10% resulting in a total of 165.

In order for respondents to participate in the survey, they had to confirm that they met two conditions: 1) their firm procures products or services from selling firms; 2) they have face-to-face contact with sellers. In addition, respondents were evaluated based on their purchase volume (more than \$1000 per month), their professional title, and the quality and completeness of their responses. The respondents that successfully passed the screening questions were then asked to recall a recent sales call they received from a seller. Next, they were asked to provide the name of the company the seller represented. After identifying the company name, a series of questions regarding the actual number of times the seller used different types of sales calls followed. Next, the buyer was asked how many times he or she preferred the seller to use each different type of sales call.

Data collection method. The data panel provider sent an email inviting its qualifying members to participate in the survey. The first phase of the data collection, the soft launch, collected approximately 10% of the needed data for preliminary examination. The first fifteen responses were collected and examined. The validity of the responses to the survey items was analyzed and found to be sufficient. The second phase, the hard launch, was then conducted to collect the remaining sample.

Sample profile. Initially, 1819 emails were sent to respondents. However, 812 of those receiving the emails attempted to take the survey after the overall quota was filled, leaving a total of 1007 actual responses. Of these respondents, 560 did not qualify to take the survey and 288 were identified as respondents that completed the survey without the spending the minimum amount of time (5 minutes) needed to be considered valid and

were eliminated by Qualtrics. The remaining 159 completed responses were examined for missing data, response accuracy, and any other issues which disqualified them as useable responses. Six of the responses were disqualified and were replaced by Qualtrics which resulted in a total of 165 total useable responses. By dividing the total useable responses (165) by the 1007 actual responses, a response rate of 16.3% resulted.

Additional analysis examined the buyer's responses for: 1) the amount of annual purchases they made; 2) job titles that represented business-to-business buyers; and 3) data quality and completion. Respondents were removed if they purchased less than \$1000 per month (12). An unrelated item was added to the Likert scale for the dependent variable instructing respondents to answer "strongly disagree." If they failed to do so, they were removed (3). If substantial amounts of data was missing from a response (5) or if the responses were nonsensical such as xxx or 123 indicating the respondent was not engaged in the survey (8), then they were also removed. Responses that contained extreme numbers in the answers to items (outliers) were also removed (3), while straight-lined answers were also removed (2). In total, 33 respondents were removed leaving 132 complete surveys. After these respondents were removed, the response rate was calculated by dividing the remaining responses (132) by the 1007 actual responses resulting in a usable response rate of 13.1%.

When the moderating variables were included in the analysis, 28 respondents were removed from the final sample because the respondents in the attraction and dissolution phases were not examined in the final regression analyses. This process reduced the number of respondents to 104. By dividing the final useable responses of 104

by the 1007 actual responses, the final response rate was 10.3%. According to Hair, et al. (2010), the sample size of 104 fits the established guidelines and rules of thumb.

The average age of the respondents was 46 and males accounted for 64% of the sample. The median annual salary was \$72,000, while the median annual purchasing volume was \$3,000,000. The majority of the respondents conducted purchasing duties domestically (54%), while 44% purchased both domestically and internationally. Only 2% indicated that they only performed their purchasing duties internationally. The characteristics of the respondents are summarized in the Table 12.

Table 12: Respondent Profile for Buyers Survey

Respondent Profile for Buyers Survey	
Male	64%
Female	36%
Age (Average)	46 years old
Annual Compensation (Median)	\$72,000
Annual Purchasing Volume (Median)	\$3,000,000
Domestic Scope	54%
Domestic and International Scope	44%
International Only	2%

Measures

Survey items from existing scales were adapted to measure the constructs in this study. Adaptations were based on the results of the extensive qualitative research conducted to inform the development of the final items for the survey instrument. For example, previous researchers have measured both the frequencies of sales calls, as well as the alignment of the actual number versus the ideal number expected by buyers (Hamwi, et al., 2013). To measure the frequency of the seller's use of different types of sales calls, respondents were asked to recall the actual number of times the seller used

different types of sales calls and enter that number for the frequency measure.

Adaptations based on the qualitative results also asked how many times sellers offered samples, trial offers, or written materials during face-to-face sales calls. Next, respondents were asked to indicate the ideal number of times they would have preferred the seller use each type of sales call. Respondents entered a numerical value for the frequency measure and the alignment measure. For example, the following questions were adapted for the current study to measure frequency for face-to-face sales calls: 1). Currently, about how often are you contacted face-to-face by your salesperson during a one month period? 2). Ideally, about how often would you like to be contacted face-to-face by your salesperson during a one month period? This question measured alignment for face-to-face sales calls. Based on the results of the qualitative study results described above, similar adaptations were made for measuring historical and technologically enhanced sales tools (See Table 11 for Final Scale Items). To measure frequency, respondents were asked how many times the seller used each type of sales call tool. To measure alignment, they were asked how many times they would have preferred the seller to use each type of sales call.

The buyer's evaluation of the seller was expected to depend on the frequency and alignment of the seller's use of each type of sales call. The buyer's evaluation of the seller was measured by adapting items from the Brown (1995) study. This study used a 7-point semantic differential scale to assess the buyer's evaluation of the seller. Respondents were asked to evaluate the seller on each of the following five dimensions: bad/good; ineffective/effective; not useful/useful; unlikeable/likeable; unhelpful/helpful. The anchors were strongly disagree/strongly agree. The phase of the relationship between

the buyer and the seller was expected to moderate the relationship between the type of sales call the seller used and the buyer's evaluation of the seller. To measure the moderator variables, respondents were asked two questions. First, they were asked to briefly describe their relationship with the seller. Then they were asked to self-identify the phase they thought best represented the current relationship with a seller by choosing one of five categories: attraction, exploration, expansion, commitment, or dissolution (Dwyer, et al., 1987). The final survey is included in Appendix A.

Analytical approach

Given the single dependent variable and three independent variables, multiple regression was used to analyze the data (Hair, et al., 2010). Multiple regression is widely used because the technique predicts the extent to which each independent variable (or variables) can predict the dependent variable. The statistical significance, magnitude of the impact, and the direction of the effect can be explained by examining the regression coefficients.

In order to assess the moderation effect of the phase of the relationship variable, regression with moderation was also used. The standard approach established by Baron and Kenny (1986) requires a three-step process beginning with initial analysis of only the independent variables and the dependent variable. This was followed by additional analysis including the moderator variable. Finally, the interaction term was calculated and included. If the R^2 change was statistically significant, then moderation was indicated.

Results

Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was performed on the dependent variable. The results indicated that only one factor was extracted. This was expected since only one factor was used to measure the dependent variable as shown in Table 13. A reliability analysis was run on the dependent variable as well. The resulting Cronbach's alpha was .952.

Table 13: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q7_1badgood	5.8846	1.13469
Q8_1ineffect	5.8269	1.23416
Q9_1notuseful	5.9712	1.11874
Q11_1likeable	6.1827	.97308
Q12_1unhelpful	6.0192	1.22261

Regression Results

The regression analyses were then conducted. Given the interval dependent variable measures, the summated average was calculated for the values of the dependent variable (DVSumAV) and entered into SPSS. The measures for the independent variables were ratio scores so summations were created for them. The sales call tools that were considered historical (telephone, fax, and UPS/FedEx) were grouped together and a summation was created (HistSum). The same procedure was applied to the sales call tools that were considered technologically enhanced (email, texts, social media, Skype, desktop sharing, and websites) and a summation was also created (TESum). The types of

sales calls were further coded into either actual (FTFA, HistSumA, TESumA) or alignment (FTFalign, Histslign, TEalign).

When planning to include the moderation variables in the analysis, examination of only three of the five phases was decided. During the first (attraction) and final (dissolution) phases, the interchanges between buyers and sellers are mostly transactional rather than relational. Therefore, the exploration (Explor), expansion (Expan) and commitment (Comm) phases were used.

Results of Hypotheses Testing

Frequency. Frequency refers to the actual number of times a seller uses each type of sales call. Results for H1a, which positively links the actual number of times sellers use face-to-face sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, yielded a beta of .294 ($p < .05$). This hypothesis was supported. The actual number of times sellers use face-to-face sales calls does, therefore, positively impact the buyer's evaluation of the seller. Results for H2a, which positively links the actual number of times sellers use historical sales call tools to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were non-significant. The beta yielded was -.189 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported. Results for H3a, which positively links technologically enhanced sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were non-significant. The results yielded a -.083 beta ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported.

Moderators

The hypotheses that predicted a moderating effect of the phase of the relationship on the type of sales call tool used and the buyer's evaluation of the seller were tested next. Dummy variables were created to represent each of the categories (k) of nonmetric

variables used in the regression analysis. The three phases were represented by the following dummy variables: (DumExplor 0, 0), expansion (DumExpan 1, 0), and commitment (DumComm 0, 1). The first dummy variable was considered the reference group ($k-1$) and only two of the dummy variables were included in the analysis (Hair, et al., 2010, p. 87). Next, the interaction terms were calculated for both actual and alignment variables. Finally, regressions were conducted.

Results for H4a, which predicted the expansion phase moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant. The beta for the interaction term was .050 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported. Likewise, results for H4b, which predicted the commitment phase moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant, yielding a beta of -.025 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported.

Results for H4c, which predicted the expansion phase moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of historical sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant. The beta yielded was -.040 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported. Similarly, results for H4d, which predicted the commitment phase moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of historical sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant yielding a beta of .287 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported.

Results for H4e, which predicted the expansion phase moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant. The beta yielded was .300 ($p > .05$). This

hypothesis was not supported. Results for H4f, which predicted the commitment phase moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were significant yielding a beta of .522 ($p < .05$). This hypothesis was supported. The actual number of times sellers use technologically enhanced sales calls during the commitment phase does positively impact the buyer's evaluation of the seller. The results are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14: Direct Effects of IVs on DVs, Direct Moderator Effects and Interactions terms for type of sales call frequency

Independent Variables: Type of sales calls	Step 1: Direct Effects	Step 2: Direct moderator effect	Step 3: Interactions for FTF-Expan/Comm	Step 4: Interactions for Hist-Expan/Comm	Step 5: Interactions for TE-Expan/Comm
FTFA	.294 ^{a**}	.307**	0.297	.343**	.317**
HistSumA	-0.189	-0.203	-0.218	-.350	-.283**
TESumA	-0.083	-0.118	-0.105	-0.149	-0.545
Expan		.301**	.277**	.340**	0.234
Comm		.371**	.387**	0.251	0.178
FTFA*Expan			0.05		
FTFA*Comm			-0.025		
HistSum*Expan				-0.04	
HistSum*Comm				0.287	
TESum*Expan					0.30
TESum*Comm					.522**
Adjusted R ²	0.079	0.164	0.149	0.188	0.203
F Change	3.942**	6.103**	0.127	2.427	3.354**

FTFA=Face-to-face actual; HistSumA=Historical actual; TESumA=Technologically Enhanced actual.

**Significant at .05.

^a Standardized coefficients are provided.

Alignment

Alignment refers to the buyer's preferred number of times the seller used the different types of sales calls. The results for the alignment hypothesis, H1b, that links the alignment of the number of face-to-face sales calls positively to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, yielded a beta of .047 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported. The hypothesis which positively links the alignment of sellers use of historical sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of the seller, H2b, was also not significant, yielding beta of -.040 ($p > .05$). This result is non-significant. This hypothesis was not supported. Results for H3b, which links the alignment of seller's use of technologically enhanced sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of the seller was significant and negative. The beta yielded was -.288 ($p < .05$). This hypothesis was supported. Misalignment of the seller's use of technologically enhanced sales calls creates a negative impact on the buyer's evaluation as hypothesized.

Results for H4-g, which predicted the expansion phase moderates the relationship between the seller's alignment of face-to-face sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant. The beta yielded was -.068 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported. Results for H4-h, which predicted the commitment phase moderates the relationship between the seller's alignment of face-to-face sales calls to the buyer's evaluation of sellers, were not significant. The beta yielded was -.375 ($p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported. Results for H4-i, which predicted the expansion phase would moderate the relationship between the use of historical sales tools and the buyer's evaluation of sellers yielded a beta of .036 ($p > .05$).

The commitment phase, H4-j, results yielded a beta of .116 ($p > .05$). Similarly, the results for the moderation effect of the phases of the relationships on the seller's use of technologically enhanced sales tools were non-significant as well. The beta for H4-k was .173 ($p > .05$) and the beta for H4-l was .119 ($p > .05$). The summary of the results is provided in Table 15.

Table 15: Direct Effects of IVs on DVs, Direct Moderator Effects and Interactions Terms for Type of Sales Call Alignment

Independent Variables: Type of sales calls	Step 1: Direct Effects	Step 2: Direct moderator effect	Step 3: Interactions for FTF-Expan/Comm	Step 4: Interactions for Hist-Expan/Comm	Step 5: Interactions for TE-Expan/Comm
FTFAlign	.047 ^a	0.096	0.445	0.107	0.075
HistAlign	-0.04	-0.016	-0.064	-0.105	-0.031
TEAlign	-.288**	-.259**	-.271**	-.256**	-.405**
Expan		0.187	.245**	0.183	0.128
Comm		.315**	.329**	.321**	.265**
FTFAlign*Expan			-0.068		
FTFA*Comm			-0.375		
HistAlign*Expan				0.036	
HistAlign*Comm				0.116	
TEAlign*Expan					0.173
TEAlign*Comm					0.119
Adjusted R ²	0.057	0.102	0.117	0.091	0.104
F Change	3.079**	3.511**	1.798	0.391	1.088

FTFAlign=Face-to-face alignment; HistAlign=Historical alignment; TEAlign=Technologically Enhanced alignment.

**Significant at .05.

^a Standardized coefficients are provided.

Discussion and Implications

Seller's frequency of sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson

The significant relationship between the actual number of times sellers use face-to-face sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the seller confirms previous research on face-to-face sales calls. For example, Cano, Boles, and Bean (2005) found that while sellers may use alternative methods of communication (historical sales tools or technologically enhanced sales tools), buyers still prefer face-to-face communication with sellers. Buyers have the opportunity to evaluate sellers based on the personal interaction they experience when they are in the same physical location (Kirkman, et al., 2004). Support for H1a therefore, suggests that face-to-face sales calls continue to make a difference for the buyer's evaluation of the seller.

Lack of support for H2a indicates that the number of times sellers use historical sales tools (telephone, fax, and UPS/FedEx) does not impact the buyers evaluation of the seller. According to Christ and Anderson (2011), throughout history, sellers have been among the first to use improvement and advancements in sales communication tools to influence buyers. Previous research has linked telephone communication and written correspondence to positive buyer evaluations of sellers when used to contact buyers for appointments or follow-up on account services (Cano, et al., 2005). One potential explanation for the lack of support of H2a may be the rapid changes taking place with communication tools overall. It may have been difficult for buyers to pinpoint the precise tool the seller used that affected his or her evaluation of the seller as they were bombarded by communications from sellers on a daily basis.

As technological advances have been made over time, electronic communication tools using the Internet, social media, and related technologies have been used strategically by sellers because of the unique, interactive features of the applications (Rapp & Panagopoulos, 2012; Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap, & Singh, 2012; Rodriquez, et al., 2012). Sellers continue to adapt their selling behavior by using these sales call tools intending to positively influence buyers (Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986). Interestingly, however, the lack of support for H3 indicates that the buyer's evaluation of the seller is not impacted by the number of times seller use these tools to communicate with them.

Alignment of sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the salesperson

The current study is aligned with previous research based on disconfirmation theory (Hamwi, et al., 2013). Disconfirmation theory suggests that if the seller aligns the number of sales calls to the ideal number the buyer is expecting, then the buyer's evaluation of the seller will be positively impacted (Oliver, 1980). Lack of support for H1b indicates no significant relationship between the seller's alignment of the number of face-to-face sales calls with the number the buyer expected.

Similarly, H2b was also not supported. The alignment of the number of times sellers used historical sales calls was not significantly related to the buyer's evaluation of the seller. Previous research found a significant relationship between sellers who meet the expected number of sales calls (alignment) and the buyer's evaluation of the seller (Hamwi, et al., 2013). However, this study did not find support for H1b and H2b.

Support was found for H3b. Alignment of technologically enhanced sales calls was significantly related to the buyer's evaluation of the seller. The relationship was significant and negative indicating that buyers' evaluations of sellers are influenced by sellers meeting their expected number of technologically enhanced sales calls. Buyers expect an ideal number of technologically enhanced sales calls from sellers and when misalignment occurs, a negative impact results on the buyer's evaluation of the seller. This is an important finding given the increased use of technologically enhanced sales tools by sellers. For example, if sellers use emails, texts, or links to websites more or less than the buyer prefers, the buyer may evaluate the seller negatively. Although technologically enhanced sales tools may be a convenient and cost effective means of communicating with buyers, sellers who misalign the use of such tools risk making a negative impact on the buyer that can ultimately result in lost revenue.

Implications

The results of this study indicate that while technological advances continue to impact the sales field, face-to-face communication remains a valuable means of building meaningful buyer/seller relationships. This is an important finding given the trend in the sales field to rely extensively on technological means of communication with buyers. Although face-to-face interactions have been shown to be costly (Weitz, et al., 2007), this study shows that face-to-face sales calls continue to positively impact buyers.

The alignment of technologically enhanced sales calls to the buyer's expectations was an interesting finding, especially since it does have a negative impact on the buyer's evaluation of the seller. If the seller uses a number of email messages that is either more or less than the buyer expects, for example, the buyer's evaluation is negatively impacted.

This finding is beneficial for salespeople and sales managers alike because even though face-to-face sales calls demand more time and money, they do make a difference for buyers. Practitioners can benefit from the findings of this study by continuing to invest in the value of face-to-face sales calls and seeking to match the ideal number of technologically enhanced sales calls the buyer prefers.

Limitations

As with all studies, this study has limitations. First, responses from business-to-business buyers from a wide cross-section of industries were purchased in order to secure adequate sample numbers for the study. Buyer data is expensive and time-consuming to obtain so a large, diverse sample was selected for this study. Buyers in specific industries may prefer different types of sales calls depending on the nature of their organization or product lines. Second, the current study did not examine the differences that the experience level of the buyer may have on the preference of seller's use of sales calls. Perhaps, buyers with more experience prefer different types of interactions with sellers than buyers new to the field. Third, generational differences were not considered in this study. Results may vary widely for younger buyers and older ones.

Future Research

In the future, similar research could be applied to specific industries. For example, buyers of manufacturing materials may have different preferences than buyers from consumer goods companies. By selecting specific industries and examining the preferences for different types of sales calls, further progress could be made to benefit salespeople and sales managers alike.

Similarly, comparing the preferences of novices versus experts in the purchasing field may yield significant differences. Experts, for example, may prefer to meet with sellers in face-to-face settings more frequently than novices because the experts have more experience evaluating non-verbal signals than novices. Buyers who are new to the field or the position may not be comfortable meeting sellers in a face-to-face setting and might prefer technologically enhanced communication.

Likewise, the generational differences may impact the preferences buyers have. By examining older buyers who might lack the technological capabilities of their younger counterparts, results may indicate how sellers might best approach buyer within each age group. Younger buyers may not be comfortable meeting strangers in a face-to-face setting and choose to use technologically enhanced sales calls instead.

Conclusion

This study examines the different types of sales call tools based on categories driven by qualitative data collected from business-to-business, industrial buyers from several different industries. Based on responses from the qualitative studies, modifications were made to the quantitative scale items. The final survey instrument was distributed to an online data panel of a wide range of industrial buyers that represented a diverse sample.

Three categories of sales calls were ultimately formed and include face-to-face sales calls, historical sales calls, and technologically enhanced sales calls. The linkage between face-to-face sales calls and the buyer's evaluation of the seller produced significant results indicating that buyers continue to respond positively to sellers who use

face-to-face contact. This is an important finding as the trend toward using more electronic sales communication tools continues to climb. Researchers and practitioners alike may reconsider the use of face-to-face communication tools strategically based on the results of this research.

Although the hypotheses regarding the positive impact of the other two categories of sales calls (historical and technologically enhanced) on the buyer's evaluation were not supported in the direct effect analysis, when the alignment for all three categories were analyzed, there was a significant result for the alignment of only the technologically enhanced sales calls. The negative direction of this result indicates that if the number of times sellers used these types of sales tools (emails, webpage links, social media, etc.) did not match the buyer's preferred ideal number of times, then there was a negative impact on the buyer's evaluation. This finding is important because sellers may resort to using technologically enhanced sales tools rather than face-to-face but misalignment with these tools is negatively related to buyer's evaluations.

The purpose of this study was to examine the buyer's expectation of the seller's use of different forms of sales calls in relation to the buyer's evaluation of the seller. The findings indicate that when sellers use face-to-face sales calls, there is a positive impact on the evaluation by buyers. Additionally, if the number of technologically enhanced sales calls is misaligned, it is negatively related to the buyer's evaluation. As the sales field continues to be revolutionized by technological changes such as the Internet, social media and related technologies (Marshall, et al., 2012), the study of sales call communications with buyers will be critical to the success of firms in the future.

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CHAPTER 3: ESSAY 2

Redefining the Sales Call: The Seller's Perspective

Abstract

Although salespeople engage in a success-driven profession, they experience sales failure frequently. One of the primary means by which sellers can improve their success rate and reduce their failure rate is by properly employing sales calls and tools. Face-to-face sales calls have been used by sellers most consistently in the past. However, sellers have also used historical sales tools as developments improved in telephone and mail delivery services to augment communication with buyers. As technology has evolved over recent decades, sellers have also used technologically enhanced sales tools to communicate with buyers. Regardless of type of sales tool deployed, following a sales interaction with buyers, sellers routinely reflect on the experience and assign attributions to the success or failure of the sales call. The purpose of this study is to assess how sellers attribute the success or failure of sales to the types of sales calls and tools they used: face-to-face, historical, or technologically enhanced. The type of sales position the seller occupies may moderate the strength of the relationship between the type of sales call used and the seller's attribution of the success or failure of the sales.

Redefining the Sales Call: The Seller's Perspective

While the sales force engages primarily in a success-driven profession (Morris, LaForge, & Allen, 1994), along with successes also come inevitable failures (Dixon & Schertzer, 2005). Sales failure can be defined as a seller's failure to close the sale with the buyer, which directly impacts the bottom line for firms, resulting in significantly reduced revenue generation (Dixon, Spiro, & Jamil, 2001). Given the inherent level of sales failures, it is vital to the ongoing motivation of the sales force, as well as the ultimate profitability of the firm, to monitor and manage sales failure (Mallin & Mayo, 2006).

To aid in the understanding of successful and failed sales calls, research suggests that a primary means by which salespeople can facilitate their success rate and decrease their failure rate is through proper execution of sales calls (Dixon, et al., 2001). Developing foundational research on this topic, Dixon, et al. (2001) examined successful and unsuccessful sales calls by having salespeople recall recent sales calls that resulted in success or failure. Sellers were then asked to explain their interpretation of the cause of the result and assign an attribution or reason why they believe the result occurred (Weiner, 1986). Since sales calls are the primary means by which sellers communicate with buyers, it is important to consider how communication tools used by sellers impact the attributions they assign (e.g. Dixon & Schertzer, 2005; Dixon, Forbes, & Schertzer, 2005; Kelley, 1973; Sujan, Sujan, & Bettman, 1988; Sujan, Weitz, & Sujan 1988).

In light of research on the additional methods and tools that are being used to facilitate sales call results, the communications tools used by salespeople to engage buyers may provide an avenue for better understanding the linkage between previous

attribution studies and factors influencing sales success and failure. Specifically, the seller's choice of communication tools used to contact buyers may alter the attribution of success or failure he or she assigns to the sales interaction. Strong communications are important throughout the relationship in order to initiate, develop, and build trusting and committed relationships (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Mohr & Nevin, 1990; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). However, as additional tools add to the volume of communication options that buyers and sellers can use to maintain the relationship, both desire the most effective methods to communicate with each other (Bean, Boles, & Cano, 2003). Specifically, types of communications used during sales calls may be a bridge between attributions and sales call results given that salespeople are the primary source of communication between buying and selling firms (Weitz & Bradford, 1999; Rutherford, Boles, Barksdale, & Johnson, 2008; Palmatier, Scheer, & Steenkamp, 2007).

In today's selling environment, the sales force uses three primary types of communication tools (face-to-face calls, historical tools, and technologically enhanced tools). Face-to-face sales calls occur when buyers and sellers are located in the same physical proximity. Historical tools are communication advancements including telephone or postal services. Technologically enhanced sales tools include electronically mediated tools using the Internet or virtual meeting platforms.

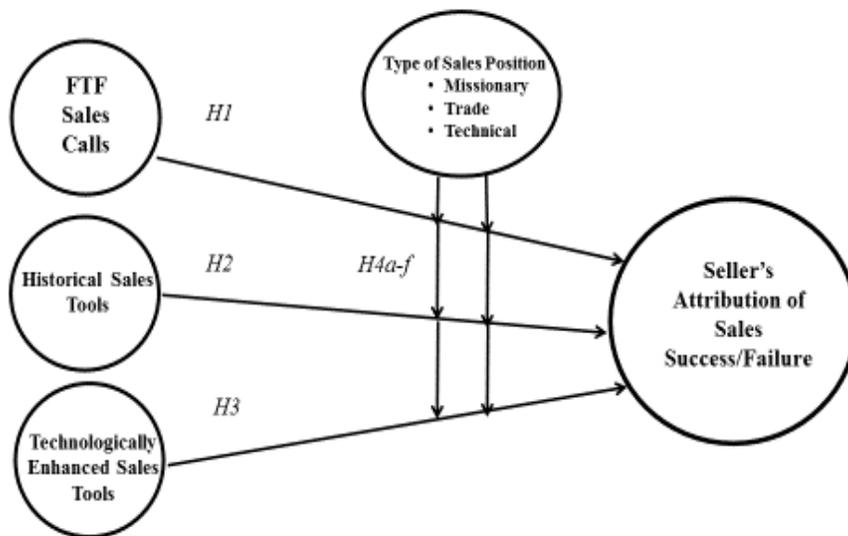
Traditionally, sellers relied upon face-to-face sales communication tools because of the strength and richness associated with this type of communication (Daft & Lengel, 1984; Hamwi, Rutherford, Barksdale, & Johnson, 2013). However, throughout history, as improvements were made to communication tools (telephone and postal services), sellers have swiftly adapted and used these tools to enhance their communication activities with

buyers (Christ & Anderson, 2011; Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986). For example, as postal services evolved along with transportation advances, sellers could utilize overnight delivery services instead of conventional slow-moving mail delivery to communicate with buyers (Christ & Anderson, 2011). Currently, the Internet, social media, virtual meeting applications, and electronic messaging systems are fundamentally altering the way in which salespeople communicate with buyers by providing the means for asynchronous communication with multiple recipients (Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2012; Rapp, Agnihotri, & Forbes, 2008). Although each type of communication tool is important to a seller's attribution of sales call results, previous researchers suggest the need for a balanced combination of these tools (Ferrell, Gonzalez-Padron, & Ferrell, 2010) that may also depend on the type of salesperson.

The purpose of this study is to examine the seller's attribution of the sales call successes and failures to the frequency of sales call tools used to communicate with buyers. Given that sellers occupy different types of sales positions (Moncrief, 1986; Marshall, Moncrief, & Lassk, 1999; Moncrief, Marshall, & Lassk, 2006), the type of sales position a seller occupies may strengthen or weaken the relationship between the type of sales call tool and the sales call result. Hence, the type of sales position will be examined as a moderator between the sales call tool frequencies (face-to-face, historical, and technologically enhanced) and sales call results (successful/unsuccessful). Results from this study will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the sales communication tools between buyers and sellers advancing sales research. For practitioners, this understanding will allow salespeople the opportunity to adjust their sales call tool strategy to more effectively increase success and decrease failure.

The relationships between the constructs are illustrated in the model below.

Within the model, the seller's use of face-to-face sales calls, historical sales tools, and technologically enhanced sales tools will impact the seller's attribution of the success or failure of sales calls with buyers. Also, the type of sales position occupied by the seller will moderate the strength of the relationship between the sales communication tool and the seller's attribution of the results.



²Figure 2. The seller's perspective model.

Theory Overview

Attribution theory is the process by which humans attempt to understand the causes and ramifications of events that occur based on either external (environmental) causes or internal (personal) causes (Heider, 1958). Following an activity, people tend to reflect back on it to understand what behaviors were responsible for the outcome especially when the outcome was unexpected (Wong & Weiner, 1981). Building on

² FTF means face-to-face

Heider's initial conceptualization of attribution theory, Weiner (1972, 1979, 1985, 1986, & 1990) has established the framework upon which most attribution research is based. Depending on the attribution assigned to the event, expectancies are established for similar, future events which can lead to adjustments in behavioral intentions (Weiner, 1986; Oliver 1980).

Recently, researchers have studied the attributions that salespeople make regarding sales call success and failure (Dixon, et al., 2001; Dixon, Spiro, & Forbes, 2003; Dixon, et al., 2005; Dixon & Schertzer, 2005). For example, salespeople who experience successful results attribute their success to underlying reasons that they believe caused the success. After attributing the cause of the result, salespeople form expectancies of similar outcomes when they undertake a similar task in the future. Using an adaptive approach, salespeople often change their behavior toward a future task based on the attribution assigned to the previous one believing that the specific behavior caused the result (Weitz, et al., 1986). Similarly, when a salesperson reflects on a sales call result that was unsuccessful, the salesperson may recognize behaviors that could be altered in order to achieve a more desired result in the future (Weiner & Kukla, 1970; Wong & Weiner, 1981). Consistent with previous research, attribution theory will be applied in this study.

Literature Review

Salespersons' attributions of results of sales calls defined. Salespeople routinely reflect on sales calls evaluating whether the results have been successful or unsuccessful (Dixon, et al., 2001). Dixon, et al., (2001) described successful sales calls as ones resulting in sales closure. Previous research shows that salespeople attribute the positive

results of successful sales communication to specific behaviors associated with the outcome thereby forming expectations for similar sales interactions in the future (Johnston & Kim, 1994; Badovick, Hadaway, & Kaminski, 1992; Dixon, et al., 2001). Building on previous research, the present study will focus on a recent successful sales call in which a salesperson engaged.

Salesperson failure has been defined as a salesperson's inability to meet performance expectations typically associated with revenue generation goals (Morris, et al., 1994, p. 7). Sales failure refers to a salesperson that attempts to positively influence a buyer but does not close the sale (Friend, Curasi, Boles, & Bellenger, 2014). Specifically, sales calls not resulting in sales closures are considered unsuccessful by salespeople (Dixon, et. al., 2001). In alignment with previous studies, the present study will focus on a recent unsuccessful or failed sales call in which a salesperson engaged.

Face-to-face sales calls defined. Face-to-face sales calls provide the most effective form of communication between buyers and sellers and, as such, have consistently been used for centuries. Kirkman, Rosen, Tesluk, and Gibson (2004) define face-to-face meetings as interpersonal interaction between two parties who are collocated in the same place. Similarly, face-to-face sales calls also occur when sellers meet with buyers in person to communicate and present their firm's offerings. Previous research has shown that face-to-face sales calls provide the seller with the deepest and most meaningful form of communication with buyers providing the richest medium (Weitz, Castleberry, & Tanner, 2007; Spiro & Weitz, 1990; Daft & Lengel, 1984).

Historical sales tools defined. Christ and Anderson (2011) reviewed the impact of technology on the roles of salespeople throughout history. Interestingly, they found that

salespeople typically are early adopters of technology in sales practices. Sellers traditionally make use of the most up-to-date technology in their sales role including such activities as organizing, presenting, reporting, and communicating with buyers (Widmier, Jackson, & McCabe, 2002). As improvements were made to transportation, communication, and presentation devices, salespeople recognized the value of using these tools to positively influence their sales communication outcomes with buyers. For example, as telephone communication improved over the course of history, salespeople quickly adapted its use to the sales process by phoning clients to set up appointments or answer questions. Similarly, as the postal service networks grew, sellers took advantage of the service by sending business letters and sales collateral, including catalogs or brochures, to buyers through the mail. Therefore, historical sales tools are defined as sales communication tools that sellers have traditionally employed to enrich sales calls results with buyers that do not include modern sales tools that use the Internet and related technologies.

Technologically enhanced sales tools defined. The use of the Internet and sophisticated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) computer applications are drastically changing the way salespeople perform their jobs (Trainor, 2012; Rapp, et al., 2008). Salespeople utilize technologically enhanced sales tools including email follow up or Facebook friendships to establish and maintain relationships with buyers (Marshall, et al., 2012; Robinson, Marshall, & Stamps, 2005). Therefore, technologically enhanced sales calls are defined as sales calls that include the use of the Internet, social media, or CRM software.

Direct Hypothesis Development

The impact of face-to-face sales calls. Previous research indicates that buyers still prefer face-to-face sales calls instead of historical or technologically enhanced sales tools (Kirkman, et al., 2004; Cano, Boles, & Bean, 2005). Face-to-face sales calls provide the richest, most productive information with which sellers can evaluate the communication results with buyers (Daft & Lengel, 1984). The seller's attribution of success or failure of sales call results may depend on the frequency with which sellers use face-to-face sales calls (Hamwi, et al., 2013).

Using the premise of attribution theory within a sales context, sellers may recall the number of face-to-face sales calls they used with buyers, and attempt to explain why the result was either a success or a failure (Teas & McElroy, 1986). Depending on the attribution assigned, the seller may continue to use the sales call tool if the sales result was successful, or change to a different tool if the result was unsuccessful (Dixon, et al., 2001). For example, sellers who attribute successful sales calls to their strategy choice adjust their future behavioral intentions to use that strategy (Dixon, et al., 2003).

Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H1: Seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls will be positively related to the seller's attribution of sales success.

The impact of historical sales tools. Historical sales tools including telephone and postal services are valuable modes of communication for transferring information to buyers (Hansen & Riggle, 2008; Mohr & Nevin, 1990). However, buyers are often overwhelmed by the volume of communication attempts from sellers using such tools (Associated Press, 1998). It is important, therefore, for sellers to evaluate the frequency

with which they use historical sales tools and attribute such use to both sales successes and failures (Hamwi, et al., 2013).

As sellers reflect on the frequency of their use of historical sales call tools, they may assign attributions regarding the success or failure of sales calls to the use of these tools (Teas & McElroy, 1986). This attributional search empowers salespeople to adapt the frequency of their future use of historical tools based on the attribution they assign to the result they receive (Weiner, 1986; Dixon, et al., 2001). If the seller uses frequent historical sales tools and experiences positive results, then the seller will assign a successful attribution to the sales call. Conversely, the frequency of use could result in a negative attribution and sales failure.

Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H2: Seller's frequency of historical sales tools will be positively related to the seller's attribution of sales success.

The impact of technologically enhanced sales tools. Technologically enhanced sales tools provide sellers with the opportunity to frequently communicate with buyers (Rapp & Panagopoulos, 2012; Rodriquez, Peterson, & Krishnan, 2012). Sellers can interact with numerous potential buyers often, while at the same time establishing and maintaining multiple relationships (Marshall, et al., 2012; Trainor, 2012; Andzulis, Panagopoulos, & Rapp, 2012). Sellers must strategically use these sales tools, providing the appropriate frequency of communications, being careful not to overwhelm buyers and/or potential buyers (Associated Press, 1998). Salespeople can adapt or modify their frequency of use of technologically enhanced sales tools to positively impact the sales call results with their buyers (Weitz, et al., 1986).

Attribution theory suggests that individuals naturally desire to understand why their behavior results in different outcomes so they search for the reason for the result and then attribute the outcome to that reason (Teas & McElroy, 1986). Salespeople reflect on the frequency with which they used technologically enhanced sales call tools and assign an attribution that explains the outcome. Depending on the attribution assigned, the seller will consider the result of the frequency of use as either successful or unsuccessful (Dixon, et al., 2001).

Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H3: Seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales tools will be positively related to the seller's attribution of sales success.

Moderator: The Type of Sales Position

Type of sales position overview. For over a half a century, researchers have attempted to categorize the activities that salespeople do in order to classify them into different types of sales positions (McMurray, 1961; Newton, 1973). As the sales field continues to evolve, researchers readdress the activities associated with different types of sales positions resulting in more relevant classifications (Moncrief, 1986; Marshall, et al., 1999). The most contemporary taxonomy of sales positions resulted in the following categories of sales positions: consultant (or technical) sellers, new business sellers, missionary sellers, delivery sellers, sales support sellers, and key account sellers (Moncrief, et al., 2006).

Each of these types of sales positions comes with its own different functions and outcomes that can influence the seller's attribution of successes and failures of sales calls. For example, missionary sellers ranked highest in building relationships and developing

demand for their firm's products, with pharmaceutical salespeople as the primary example (Davidson & Sivadas, 2004; Johnston & Marshall, 2013). Trade sellers, on the other hand, concentrate more of their time on stocking shelves and writing up orders (Avlonitis & Panopoulos, 2006). Based on the activities associated with the sales position, missionary sellers may choose to use more face-to-face sales communications while trade sellers may rely more heavily on historical or technologically enhanced sales tools to communicate with buyers (Moncrief, et al., 2006).

Type of sales position as a moderator. Previous research using type of sales position as a moderator has focused primarily on three of the six types of sales positions: missionary sellers, trade sellers, and technical sellers (Futrell, 2005; Honeycutt, Ford, & Simintiras, 2003). Researchers have used these three types of sales positions in studies consistently over the last decades in both conceptual and empirical studies (Smith, Jones, & Blair, 2000; Stevens & Macintosh, 2003). To be consistent with previous research (Avlonitis & Panopoulos, 2006) the types of sales positions for this study will also be limited to the missionary, trade, and technical sellers.

Using attribution theory as the foundation, the type of sales position a seller holds may impact their attributions of sales success and failure because of the diverse activities involved in each type of position (Dixon, et al., 2001; Moncrief, 1986; Moncrief, et al., 2006). Success by sellers in one type of sales position may be very different than those in another. Therefore, the type of sales position may moderate the salesperson's attribution of successful and unsuccessful sales calls based on the type of sales position he or she occupies. The following moderating relationships are hypothesized:

H4a: The trade type of sales position will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of face-to-face sales calls and the seller's attribution of sales success or failure.

H4b: The technical type of sales position will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of face-to-face sales calls and the seller's attribution of sales success or failure.

H4c: The trade type of sales position will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of historical sales calls and the seller's attribution of sales success or failure.

H4d: The technical type of sales position will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of historical sales calls and the seller's attribution of sales success or failure.

H4e: The trade type of sales position will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls and the seller's attribution of sales success or failure.

H4f: The technical type of sales position will impact the strength of the relationship between frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls and the seller's attribution of sales success or failure.

Methodology

Sample

Business-to-business (B2B) salespeople representing a wide range of businesses and industries were included in the sample. Following previous sales management

research, the current study used panel data purchased from an online access panel representing salespeople from numerous industries and organizations in order to better generalize results (Hartmann, Rutherford, Hamwi, & Friend, 2013; Arnett & Wittman, 2014). According to Hartmann, Rutherford, Feinberg, and Anderson, (2014), online data collection techniques offer advantages in accessing cross-sectional specialized samples. For example, respondents can be pre-screened in order to qualify for the study while salespeople not identified as B2B salespersons can be filtered out of the sample.

Given the binary nature of the dependent variable, the size of the sample must be large enough so that each of the two groups (success or failure) can be meaningfully interpreted. While Hosmer and Lemeshow (2000) recommend a sample size greater than 400 when analyzing data using logit regression, previous sales and marketing researchers using the same analytical techniques have used substantially smaller sample sizes. For example, Jensen and Jepsen (2007) examined the importance of present online marketing communications (OMC) compared to future expectations of emerging short message service/multimedia message service types of marketing communications using a sample size of 129. Oppewal, Louviere, and Timmermans (2000) examined the effect of sales trends on strategic choices using a sample size of 183 respondents. Ahearne, Gruen, and Saxton (2000) considered the differences between advertising messages for simple versus complex products using a sample of 211 respondents. Based on the sample sizes used in previous research and established rules of thumb (10-15 observations per parameter), a sample of 220 B2B salespeople was acquired (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010, p. 322).

Data collection method. Qualtrics sent an email to qualified B2B sellers inviting them to participate in the survey. During the initial phase of the data collection, approximately 10% of the data was collected (soft launch). This data was examined and the validity was found to be sufficient. The final stage (hard launch) was then conducted to collect the remainder of the data.

Sample profile. Initially, 1574 respondents were contacted by email. Of those receiving the emails, 627 were not included because they attempted to take the survey after the quota was filled resulting in 947 actual responses. Of these respondents, 632 did not qualify to take the survey, and 105 were eliminated by Qualtrics because they failed to spend the minimum amount of time (5 minutes) necessary for their responses to be considered valid. The remaining responses were further examined for missing data, accuracy of responses, and other disqualifying issues. Ten of these responses were disqualified and were replaced by Qualtrics resulting in a total of 220 responses. A response rate of 23.2% was calculated by dividing the total useable responses by the 947 actual responses.

The seller's responses were then analyzed for: 1) job titles that accurately represented business-to-business salespeople; and 2) data quality and completion. To ensure the respondents were paying attention to the survey, an unrelated item was embedded in one of the Likert scales asking respondents to answer "strongly disagree." Respondents who failed to answer correctly were removed (11). Responses that were missing significant amounts of data (6) or contained responses that did not make sense such as xxx or 123 were also removed (24). Extreme answers to items were considered outliers and were removed (4), while responses that were straight-lined were also

removed (1). After these 45 respondents were removed, 174 complete respondents were left resulting in a response rate of 18.3%.

The average age of the respondents was 36 and 56% were males. The median annual salary was \$58,000 and the median annual sales volume was \$1,000,000. Domestic sellers represented 4% while 57.7% reported selling both domestically and internationally. Those who sold only internationally accounted for 37.3% of the total sample. Respondent's characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent Profile for Seller's Study

Respondent Profile for Seller's Study	
Male	56%
Female	44%
Age (Average)	36 years old
Annual Compensation (Median)	\$58,000
Annual Sales Volume (Median)	\$1,000,000
Domestic Scope	4%
Domestic and International Scope	57.7%
International Scope	38.3%

Measures

Measures for the current study were adapted from previous research where possible (Hamwi, et al., 2013). To measure the independent variables, respondents were asked to indicate how often they use each type of sales call tool for a given buyer (face-to-face, historical tools, and technologically enhanced tools) over a four-week period. Development of these measures was based on the frequency of face-to-face sales calls item used by Hamwi, et al. (2013). However, the literature lacks items for historical and technologically enhanced tools. While items to measure both of these constructs were adapted from the face-to-face sales calls item, additional steps were required to ensure full assessment of the constructs.

To ensure proper item development, extensive qualitative research was conducted prior to finalizing the quantitative survey. A small number of salespeople (5 sellers) were asked to generate an exhaustive list of sales communication tools. Respondents were then asked to assign each sales tool to a specific category resulting in two categories—historical or technologically enhanced sales tools. The results of the three qualitative studies (5 buyers and 5 sellers) using both personal interviews and two Qualtrics panels are described in detail in Essay 1. The results were used to accurately classify these tools into either the historical or technologically enhanced sales tool category and drove the development of the final survey items summarized in Table 11 of Essay #1.

To measure the dependent variable, respondents were asked to reflect on either a recent sales call success or a recent sales call failure when answering questions pertaining to the independent variables. The sample was split (N=88), with the first group answering the successful items first. This sample is considered the analysis sample (Seller's #1). The remaining sample (N=86) were asked the failure items first. The second sample is considered the holdout sample (Seller's #2). Responses pertaining to sales call success were coded as 1 and responses pertaining to sales call failure were coded as 0. The final two surveys, Seller's #1 and Seller's #2, are included in Appendix A.

To measure the moderator, respondents were given a set of activities associated with each type of sales position (Moncrief, et al., 2006). They were then asked to self-identify which type of sales position most closely matches their current sales position. Based on their responses, each was assigned to a specific type of sales position category (Moncrief, et al., 2006). The six types of positions were coded as follows: 1) New, 2) Missionary, 3) Trade, 4) Technical, 5) Key, and 6) Support.

Analytical Approach

The binary dependent variable (success/failure) required specific regression analysis techniques. Probit and logit regressions both assume a binary variable and will rescale any number so that it falls between 0 and 1 yielding a predicted probability (Doyle, 1977). The difference between the two lies in the underlying assumptions. Probit assumes a normal distribution and creates probabilities under a normal curve. Logit, on the other hand, does not assume a normal distribution. According to Hair, et al., (2010), one of the primary advantages of logit regression is the general lack of assumptions required by the analysis technique (p. 323). Although probit and logit provide almost identical results, the logit models are used most extensively in marketing (Chandukala, Kim, Otter, Rossi, & Allenby, 2007). Therefore, for the analysis of the binary dependent variable for this study, logit regression was used.

To use logistic regression to analyze the data, the binary dependent variable must be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. This applies to the dependent variable (success/failure) in this study. This form of regression analysis is appropriate when attempting to predict or explain the category into which an observation will be classified.

The dependent variable, success or failure, was coded 1 for success and 0 for failure. The three independent variables face-to-face, historical, and technologically enhanced were measured using ratio scores or frequencies. Face-to-face sales calls were in a single category but sales call tools that were considered historical (telephone, fax, and UPS/FedEx) were grouped together and a summation score was created for them (HistSum). Technologically enhanced sales call tools (email, texts, social media, Skype, desktop sharing, and websites) were also grouped together and summated (TESum).

Analysis for the moderator variable was conducted according to the established procedure outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). First, an analysis of the independent variables was conducted without the moderator. Secondly, the moderator variable was included in the analysis. Finally, the interaction term was included in the analysis.

Results

Logistic Regression Results

Analysis sample: Seller's #1. A correlation test was conducted to check for multicollinearity among the variables. Significant multicollinearity between the variables HistSum and TESum was found (.828). When this is indicated, Forward Wald is used instead of Enter in the logistic regression analysis. This allows for the most significant variables to enter the model first followed by the less significant ones.

Results for H1, which positively links the frequency of the seller's use of face-to-face sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success, was not supported ($p > .05$). Results for H2, which positively links the frequency of the seller's use of historical sales call tools to the seller's attribution of sales success was also not supported ($p > .05$). Results for H3, which positively links the frequency of the seller's use of technologically enhanced sales call tools to the seller's attribution of sales success was supported ($p < .05$). The number of times a seller uses technologically enhanced sales calls does, therefore, positively impact the seller's attribution of sales success.

Logistic regression estimates the model by calculating the maximum log likelihood ($-2LL$). Beginning with a tentative model in which only the constant is included, the likelihood is revised until the improvement is very small. The model is said

to have converged at this point. The initial $-2LL$ for this model was 243.988. The estimation terminated at iteration 6 because the changes were less than .001 resulting in a final model estimate of 197.748.

By predicting the odds of an observation's membership in the target group (success, for example), comparison can be made to the odds of membership in the reference group (failure). By dividing the odds of probability of membership in the target group by the probability of membership in the reference group, an odds ratio is created. The odds ratio compares the odds of predicting correct group membership to incorrect group membership. If the ratio is 1, the prediction for membership is equally likely for both groups. The odds ratio for the technologically enhanced sales call variable was significant. The odds ratios for this model are included in Table 2.

Table 2: Logistic Regression Estimation for Analysis Sample
Overall Model of Fit: Goodness-of-Fit Measures

	Change in -2LL					
	Value	From Base Model				
-2 Log Likelihood (-2LL)	197.748	46.240				
Cox and Snell R ²	.231					
Nagelkerke R ²	.308					
	Value	Significance				
Hosmer and Lemeshow	14.442	.025				
Variables in the Equation						
Independent Variables	B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
TESum	.129	.027	23.028	1	.000**	1.138**
Variables not in the Equation						
FTF						
HistSum						

**Significant at p. < .000

B=Logistic coefficient

Exp(B)=Exponentiated coefficient

The hit ratio for this model indicates that 70.5 % of the observations were correctly classified using this model. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Classification Table

Observed	Predicted		Percentage Correct
	Failure	Success	
S/F			
Failure	73	15	83.0
Success	37	51	58.0
Overall Percentage			70.5

Seller's #2: Holdout sample. A correlation test for the holdout sample was conducted and multicollinearity was indicated (.721) so Forward Wald was used instead of Enter in the analysis for the holdout sample as well. Results for H1, which positively

links the frequency of the seller's use of face-to-face sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success, was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H2, which positively links the frequency of the seller's use of historical sales call tools to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H3, which positively links the frequency of the seller's use of technologically enhanced sales call tools to the seller's attribution of sales success was supported ($p. < .05$). The number of times a seller uses technologically enhanced sales calls does, therefore, positively impact the seller's attribution of sales success.

The initial $-2LL$ for the holdout sample was 238.443. After three iterations, the estimation was terminated because the estimates changed by less than .001. The final model had a $-2LL$ of 231.718 as noted in Table 4.

Table 4: Logistic Regression Estimates for Holdout Sample
Overall Model of Fit: Goodness of Fit Measures.

Change in -2LL						
	Value	From Base Model				
-2 Log Likelihood (-2LL)	231.718	6.725				
Cox and Snell R ²	0.038					
Nagelkerke R ²	0.051					
	Value	Significance				
Hosmer and Lemeshow	6.566	0.475				
Variables in the Equation						
Independent Variables	B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
TESum	0.045	0.018	6.09	1	.014**	1.046**
Variables Not in the Equation						
FTF						
HistSum						

**Significant at p. <.05

The hit ratio for this model indicates that 57.6% of the observations were correctly classified by this model. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Classification Table

Observed	Predicted		Percentage Correct
	Failure	Success	
S/F			
Failure	31	14	68.9
Success	24	21	46.7
Overall Percentage			57.6

Moderators

The type of sales position occupied by the seller was hypothesized to moderate the strength of the relationship between the type of sales call tool used by the seller and the seller's attribution of sales success. Previous research using type of sales position as a moderator has focused primarily on three of the six types of sales positions: missionary, trade, and technical which is also referred to as consultant (Futrell, 2005; Honeycutt, et al., 2003). To align the current study with previous research, the same three types of sales positions were used for this study. The three variables were dummy coded prior to conducting the analysis using the following coding: missionary (DumMission 0, 0), trade (DumTrade 1, 0), and technical/consultant (DumConsult 0, 1). According to Hair, et al. (2010), only two of the dummy variables were included in the analysis leaving out the first as the reference group ($k-1$).

The calculation of the interaction terms was performed and the moderation tests were conducted for the analysis sample. Results for H4a, which predicted the trade type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4b, which predicted the technical type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$).

Results for H4c, which predicted the trade type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of historical sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4d, which predicted the technical type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's

frequency of historical sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4e, which predicted the trade type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4f, which predicted the technical type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). The results for the moderation tests for the analysis sample are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of Moderation Tests for Analysis Sample (Seller's #1)

Variable Name	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp (B)
FTF	.059	.108	.297	1	.586	1.060
HistSum	-.020	.037	.306	1	.580	.980
TESum	.119	.038	9.692	1	.002**	1.126**
DumTrade	-.765	.761	1.011	1	.315	.465
DumConsult	-.278	.752	.137	1	.711	.757
FTFxDumTrade	.515	.380	1.833	1	.176	1.673
FTFxDumConsult	.241	.284	.722	1	.395	1.272
HistSumxDumTrade	.026	.306	.007	1	.933	1.026
HistSumxDumConsult	-.135	.159	.728	1	.393	.873
TEExDumTrade	.198	.177	1.256	1	.262	1.219
TEExDumConsult	.079	.100	.623	1	.430	1.082
Constant	-.915	.305	9.010	1	.003	.400

** Significant at $p. < .05$

Moderation tests were conducted for the holdout sample. Results for H4a, which predicted the trade type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4b, which predicted the technical type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of face-to-face sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$).

Results for H4c, which predicted the trade type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of historical sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4d, which predicted the technical type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of historical sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4e, which predicted the trade type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was not supported ($p. > .05$). Results for H4f, which predicted the technical type of sales position moderates the relationship between the seller's frequency of technologically enhanced sales calls to the seller's attribution of sales success was also not supported ($p. > .05$).

Although none of the moderation tests produced a significant result, marginal significance was found for the relationship between the consultant type of sales position and both HistSum (.064) and TESum (.068). The results of the moderation tests for the holdout sample are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Results of Moderation Tests for Holdout Sample (Seller's #2)

Variable Name	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp (B)
FTF	.021	.044	.228	1	.633	1.021
HistSum	-.037	.039	.905	1	.341	.963
TESum	.052	.032	2.546	1	.111	1.053
DumTrade	-.238	.706	.114	1	.736	.788
DumConsult	.109	.620	.031	1	.861	1.115
FTFxDumTrade	-.055	.225	.060	1	.807	.946
FTFxDumConsult	.0328	.150	.034	1	.854	1.028
HistSumxDumTrade	.024	.051	.222	1	.637	1.024
HistSumxDumConsult	-.594	.320	3.441	1	.064	.552
TExDumTrade	.027	.090	.088	1	.766	1.027
TExDumConsult	.295	.162	3.321	1	.068	1.343
Constant	-.220	.273	.648	1	.421	.803

Discussion and Implications

Analysis Sample

Lack of support for H1 is not surprising given the cost and time involved in contacting buyers in person. As the responsibilities of buyers and sellers alike continue to mount, the ability to take the time to visit buyers face-to-face for sales calls is likely to diminish. Likewise as the Internet and other communication technologies continue to evolve, the justification for time consuming, cost prohibitive face-to-face sales calls may decline as well.

Lack of support for H2 is also not surprising given the decline in the use of historical sales tools as represented in this model as telephone, fax, and delivery services. The speed of electronic messaging using the Internet or smart phones is far superior to the traditional delivery services especially when it involves written materials or information. Sellers who take advantage of the Internet and other electronic communication tools improve their efficiency with regards to time and expenses.

The only variable in the analysis sample that had a significant odds ratio was the technologically enhanced sales call variable supporting H3. Based on this significant result, the odds of success will increase on average by 11.38% for each additional technologically enhanced sales call used by the seller. This result could be due to the speed with which technology changes and seller's rapid response to the changes. As new and improved electronic and virtual platforms are introduced, sellers are among the first to adopt and apply them in the sales process.

The type of sales position occupied by the seller was hypothesized to moderate the relationship between the type of sales call and the seller's attribution of sales success. The moderation effects of the type of sales position on the seller's attribution of sales success (H4a, H4b, H4c, H4d, H4e, H4f) were not supported. One possible explanation of this lack of support could be that sellers in all sales roles are continuously adapting their sales communication in response to the technological advancements.

Holdout Sample

The results of the holdout sample confirm the results of the analysis model. Lack of support for H1 also indicates a departure from the exclusive use of face-to-face sales calls. Sellers did not attribute sales success to the use of more in-person sales communication.

Lack of support for H2 was in alignment with the analysis sample as well. Historical sales call tools like telephone, fax, and delivery services are rapidly being replaced by electronic equivalents due the speed and efficiency. Sellers react quickly to improvements in communication efficiency to improve their sales success.

Support was found for H3, technologically enhanced sales calls. This was the only predictor variable to have a significant odds ratio of 1.046. The odds of success will increase by 4.6% for each additional technologically enhanced sales call used by the seller. Sellers embrace innovations in communication and are typically early adopters of new technological advancement in sales communication with buyers.

Limitations

All studies have limitations and so does this study. First, a wide cross-section of respondents was used for the sample in order to ensure sufficient sample size. Purchasing data from B2B sellers is reasonably priced and easily accessible so a more narrow industry sample may respond differently to the type of sales calls items depending on their specific industry.

Second, sellers with more experience may respond different than new seller would to the same question regarding types of sales calls. Experts vs. novices may approach sales calls in diverse ways. Experts may rely on techniques that have resulted in success in the past while novices have fewer reference points. Third, this study did not consider generational differences. Older sellers may be reluctant to experiment with different types of technologically enhanced sales calls while younger sellers embrace them enthusiastically.

Future Research

Future research using specific industries may generate more variance in the responses. For example, pharmaceutical salespeople may have definite preferences about the type of sales calls they use while sellers of manufacturing goods might prefer very different types. Comparisons of the experience levels of respondents could also provide interesting results. Sellers with many years of experience may have “tried and true” methods of communication with buyers while sellers new to the field may be more adventurous regarding technology use, for example. Similarly, comparing the responses of members of different generations could provide valuable insight for researchers and practitioners alike.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the seller’s attribution of the sales call success and failure to the frequency of sales call tools used to communicate with buyers. The results indicate that sellers do not attribute sales call success or failure to the number of face-to-face or historical types of sales calls. However, sellers did attribute sales success to the use of technologically enhanced sales calls. The Internet and related technologies will continue to revolutionize the sales field (Marshall, et al., 2012), thereby driving the need to continuously study the types of sales call communication tools as they relentlessly evolve.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
(Final Buyer's Survey)

Final Buyer's Survey

Q1. You are invited to participate in a research project. Please answer as truthfully as you can knowing that there are no right or wrong answers. As you respond to the series of questions, please think about your current buyer's position. Your responses are confidential and when the data are analyzed they will not be connected to you individually in any way. Your opinion is important to the success of this research so please be sure to answer every question. The purpose of the study is to determine how buyers evaluate sellers regarding their use of different types of sales calls. Thoughtful answers will enable salespeople to better understand the use of different types of sales calls. The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and participants must be 18 years old or older to participate. In order to ensure your anonymity, no names, personal information, or IP addresses will be collected. By checking the consent box below, you are agreeing to participate in the research project. Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #0112, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591. If you have any questions concerning this survey, please contact me, Judi Billups, at mbillup1@students.kennesaw.edu or by phone at 540-392-4178.

- I confirm that I am 18+ years old and give consent to use the information provided for this research.
- I do not confirm that I am 18+ years old and give consent to use the information provided for this research.

Q2. Do you and your firm meet the following two requirements: 1) Your firm procures products or services from selling firms, and 2) A salesperson makes sales calls on you?

- Yes
- No

Q3. Do you make purchasing decisions for your firm?

- Yes
- No

Q4. Thinking of your buying job duties, focus on a specific salesperson that you have recently interacted with. What company does that salesperson work for?

Q5. Thinking of the same specific salesperson, how often has this salesperson used the following to communicate with you over the last four weeks? Indicate the number in the boxes provided. If none, indicate "0" for that specific item.

- Face-to-face sales calls
- Personal phone calls or conference calls
- Text messaging
- Social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- Skype or WebEx
- Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange
- Sending or receiving a Fax
- Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Sending or receiving something through email
- Links to websites
- Other: please specify

Q6. Thinking of the same specific salesperson, what is the ideal number of times you would have preferred the salesperson to have used the following over the last four weeks? Indicate the number in the boxes provided. If none, indicate "0" for that specific item.

- Face-to-face sales calls
- Personal phone calls or conference calls
- Text messaging
- Social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- Skype or WebEx
- Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange
- Sending or receiving a Fax
- Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Sending or receiving something through email
- Links to websites
- Other: please specify

Q7. Thinking about the same salesperson, please rate the salesperson along the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Bad:Good	<input type="radio"/>						

Q8. Thinking about the same salesperson, please rate the salesperson along the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ineffective:Effective	<input type="radio"/>						

Q9. Thinking about the same salesperson, please rate the salesperson along the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not useful:Useful	<input type="radio"/>						

Q10. Thinking about the same salesperson, please select the option closest to strongly disagree for the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree:Agree	<input type="radio"/>						
	<input type="radio"/>						

Q11. Thinking about the same salesperson, please rate the salesperson along the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unlikeable:Likeable	<input type="radio"/>						

Q12. Thinking about the same salesperson, please rate the salesperson along the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unhelpful:Helpful	<input type="radio"/>						

Q13. Typically, buyers and sellers progress through different relationship phases as they initiate, build, and develop interdependence on one another. Briefly describe your current relationship with this specific salesperson.

Q14. Which of the following categories best describes your current relationship with this salesperson.

- You are just becoming aware of this salesperson.
- You are discussing and negotiating the potential opportunities of working with this salesperson.
- You are increasing your reliance and dependence on this salesperson for more and more products and/or services.
- You have an exclusive relationship with this salesperson and are not purchasing comparable products/services from a competitor.
- You are considering not continuing the relationship with the salesperson.
- Other: please specify _____

Q15. What is your current job title?

Q16. How many years have you been in your current position? Please round to the nearest whole year.

Q17. How many years have you been working in purchasing? Please round to the nearest whole year.

Q18. In what industry do you purchase?

Q19. Thinking of the purchases you make, estimate what percentage of are for products and services.

_____ Products

_____ Services

Q20. How many hours do you work at your current purchasing job in a typical week?

Q21. What is your total annual compensation for purchasing job in US dollars?

Q22. In a typical year, estimate your total volume in US dollars that you purchase?

Q23. What is the scope of your organization?

- International only
- Domestic only
- Domestic and International

Q24. Please indicate your gender.

- Male
- Female

Q25. What is your age?

Q26. Please indicate your highest level of education.

- Some high school (no diploma)
- High school (diploma)
- Some college (no degree)
- College (undergraduate degree)
- Some graduate school (no degree)
- Graduate school (graduate degree)
- Other, please specify _____

Q27. What is your race?

- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- White, non-Hispanic
- Two or more races
- Other (specify) _____

Q28. Do you reside in the United States?

- Yes
- No

APPENDIX B

(Seller's Survey #1 and Seller's Survey #2)

Seller's Survey #1

Q1. You are invited to participate in a research project. Please answer the following questions as truthfully as you can knowing that there are no right or wrong answers. As you respond to the series of questions, please think about your current sales position. Your opinion is important to the success of this research so please be sure to answer every question. The purpose of the study is to examine how sellers use different types of sales calls to interact with buyers. Candid and thoughtful answers will enable salespeople to better understand the use of different types of sales calls on sales success or failure.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and participants must be 18 years old or older to participate. In order to ensure your anonymity, no names, personal information, or IP addresses will be collected. Your responses are confidential and, when the data are analyzed, they will not be connected to you personally in any way. By checking the consent box below, you are agreeing to participate in the research project.

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #0112, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591. If you have any questions concerning this survey, please contact me, Judi Billups, at mbillup1@students.kennesaw.edu or by phone at 540-392-4178.

- I confirm that I am 18+ years old and give consent to use the information provided for this research.
- I do not confirm that I am 18+ years old and give consent to use the information provided for this research.

Q2. Which best describes the type of sales position you have?

- Business-to-business – outside sales
- Business-to-business – inside sales
- Retail or business-to-consumer
- Other: please specify _____

Q3. Do you interact directly with buyers in a face-to-face setting?

- Yes
- No

Q4. Salespeople typically set specific goals for sales interactions they have with buyers. For example, the goal of an initial sales interaction might be to simply establish rapport while the goal for a later interaction could be to close the sale. If the goal is achieved, salespeople consider the sales interaction successful. For the next series of questions, please recall a recent successful sales interaction with a specific buyer.

Q5. Focusing on a specific buyer that you have successfully interacted with in the last four weeks, what company does this buyer work for?

Q6. Why do you consider this interaction successful?

Q7. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have successfully interacted with in the last four weeks, indicate how many times you met, in person: In person meetings (including face-to-face and meeting at trade shows)

Q8. During these successful face-to-face meetings, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q9. How many times did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer over the last four weeks?

Q10. During these successful face-to-face meetings, did you provide samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q11. How many times did you provide samples and/or trial offers to this buyer over the last four weeks?

Q12. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have successfully interacted with in the last four weeks, have you used any of the following non-face-to-face communication tools to communicate with them over the last four weeks?

Personal phone calls or conference calls

Text messaging

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)

Skype or WebEx

Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange

Sending or receiving a Fax

Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail

Sending or receiving something through email

Links to websites

Yes

No

Q13. Indicate how many times you used the following non-face-to-face communications within the last four weeks to communicate with them:

Personal phone calls or conference calls

Text messaging

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)

Skype or WebEx

Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange

Sending or receiving a Fax

Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail

Sending or receiving something through email

Links to websites

Other 1, please explain

Other 2, please explain

Q14. During these successful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q15. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written material through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to websites
- Other, please explain

Q16. During these successful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any samples and/or trial offers to this buyer over the last four weeks?

- Yes
- No

Q17. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide samples and/or trial offers through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to websites
- Other, please explain

Q18. Salespeople typically set specific goals for sales interactions they have with buyers. For example, the goal of an initial sales interaction might be to simply establish rapport while the goal for a later interaction could be to close the sale. If the goal is not achieved, salespeople consider the sales interaction unsuccessful. For the next series of questions, please recall a recent unsuccessful sales interaction with a specific buyer.

Q19. Focusing on a specific buyer that you have unsuccessfully interacted with in the last four weeks, what company does this buyer work for?

Q20. Why do you consider this interaction as unsuccessful?

Q21. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have unsuccessfully interacted within the last four weeks, indicate how many times you met, in person:

Q22. During these unsuccessful meetings, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q23. How many times did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written material to this buyer over the last four weeks?

Q24. During these unsuccessful meetings, did you provide samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q25. How many times did you provide samples or trial offers to this buyer over the last four weeks?

Q26. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have unsuccessfully interacted with in the last four weeks, have you used any of the following non-face-to-face communication tools within the last four weeks to communicate with them:

Personal phone calls or conference calls

Text messaging

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)

Skype or WebEx

Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange

Sending or receiving a Fax

Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail

Sending or receiving something through email

Links to websites

- Yes
- No

Q27. Indicate how many times you used the following non-face-to-face communications within the last four weeks to communicate with them?

Personal phone call or conference call

Text messaging

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)

Skype or WebEx

Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange

Sending or receiving a Fax

Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail

Links to websites

Other 1, please explain

Other 2, please explain

Q28. During these unsuccessful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q29. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written materials through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to Websites
- Other, please explain

Q30. During these unsuccessful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q31. If yes, how many times over the last four weeks did you provide samples and/or trial offers through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to Websites
- Other, please explain

Q36. What is the likelihood that you would repeat a sales attempt with this potential buyer in the future?

	Extremely Unlikely						Extremely Likely
	<input type="radio"/>						

Q37. Approximately what percent of your sales calls result in failure?

Q38. Compared to the industry, my sales call failure is: _____ %

Q39. Compared to others in my company, my sales call failure is: _____ %

Q40. Which category below best describes your sales duties? Select all that apply.

- Prospecting and developing new business.
- Visit buyers directly and often leave product samples.
- Concentrate on checking inventory, writing orders, and stocking shelves.
- Nurture existing relationships, demonstrating products, and providing support.
- Providing support to the sales staff while selling and managing.
- Product support for key accounts.
- Manage other salespeople while also selling.
- List all other duties _____

Q41. What is your current job title?

Q42. How many years have you been in your current position? Please round to the nearest whole year.

Q43. How many years have you been working in sales? Please round to the nearest whole year.

Q44. In what industry do you sell?

Q45. Thinking of the sales you make to buyers, estimate what percentage of your sales are products and services.

_____ Products

_____ Services

Q46. How many hours do you work at your current sales job in a typical week?

Q47. What is your total annual compensation in US dollars?

Q48. In a typical year, estimate your total sales volume in US dollars?

Q49. What is the scope of your sales organization?

- International only
- Domestic only
- Domestic and International

Q50. Please indicate your gender.

- Male
- Female

Q51. Please indicate your highest level of education.

- Some high school (no diploma)
- High school (diploma)
- Some college (no degree)
- College (undergraduate degree)
- Some graduate school (no degree)
- Graduate school (graduate degree)
- Other, please specify _____

Q52. What is your age?

Q53. What is your race?

- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- White, non-Hispanic
- Two or more races
- Other (specify) _____

Q54. Do you reside in the United States?

- Yes
- No

Seller's Survey #2

Q1. You are invited to participate in a research project. Please answer the following questions as truthfully as you can knowing that there are no right or wrong answers. As you respond to the series of questions, please think about your current sales position. Your opinion is important to the success of this research so please be sure to answer every question. The purpose of the study is to examine how sellers use different types of sales calls to interact with buyers. Candid and thoughtful answers will enable salespeople to better understand the use of different types of sales calls on sales success or failure.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and participants must be 18 years old or older to participate. In order to ensure your anonymity, no names, personal information, or IP addresses will be collected. Your responses are confidential and, when the data are analyzed, they will not be connected to you personally in any way. By checking the consent box below, you are agreeing to participate in the research project.

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- I confirm that I am 18+ years old and give consent to use the information provided for this research.
- I do not confirm that I am 18+ years old and give consent to use the information provided for this research.

Q2. Which best describes the type of sales position you have?

- Business-to-business – outside sales
- Business-to-business – inside sales
- Retail or business-to-consumer
- Other- please specify: _____

Q3. Do you interact directly with buyers in a face-to-face setting?

- Yes
- No

Q4. Salespeople typically set specific goals for sales interactions they have with buyers. For example, the goal of an initial sales interaction might be to simply establish rapport while the goal for a later interaction could be to close the sale. If the goal is not achieved, salespeople consider the sales interaction unsuccessful. For the next series of questions, please recall a recent unsuccessful sales interaction with a specific buyer.

Q5. Focusing on a specific buyer that you have unsuccessfully interacted with in the last four weeks, what company does this buyer work for?

Q6. Why do you consider this interaction as unsuccessful?

Q7. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have unsuccessfully interacted with in the last four weeks, have you used any of the following non-face-to-face communication tools within the last four weeks to communicate with them:

Personal phone calls or conference calls

Text messaging

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)

Skype or WebEx

Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange

Sending or receiving a Fax

Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail

Sending or receiving something through email

Links to websites

Yes

No

Q8. Indicate how many times you used the following non-face-to-face communications within the last four weeks to communicate with them?

- Personal phone call or conference call
- Text messaging
- Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- Skype or WebEx
- Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange
- Sending or receiving a Fax
- Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Links to websites
- Other 1, please explain
- Other 2, please explain

Q9. During these unsuccessful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q10. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written materials through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to Websites
- Other, please explain

Q11. During these unsuccessful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q18. Approximately what percent of your sales calls result in failure?

Q19. Compared to the industry, my sales call failure is: _____ %

Q20. Compared to others in my company, my sales call failure is: _____ %

Q21. Salespeople typically set specific goals for sales interactions they have with buyers. For example, the goal of an initial sales interaction might be to simply establish rapport while the goal for a later interaction could be to close the sale. If the goal is achieved, salespeople consider the sales interaction successful. For the next series of questions, please recall a recent successful sales interaction with a specific buyer.

Q22. Focusing on a specific buyer that you have successfully interacted with in the last four weeks, what company does this buyer work for?

Q23. Why do you consider this interaction successful?

Q24. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have successfully interacted with in the last four weeks, have you used any of the following non-face-to-face communication tools within the last four weeks to communicate with them:

Personal phone calls or conference calls

Text messaging

Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)

Skype or WebEx

Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange

Sending or receiving a Fax

Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail

Sending or receiving something through email

Links to websites

Yes

No

Q25. Indicate how many times you used the following non-face-to-face communications within the last four weeks to communicate with them:

- Personal phone calls or conference calls
- Text messaging
- Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- Skype or WebEx
- Desktop Sharing or Doc Exchange
- Sending or receiving a Fax
- Sending something through UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Sending or receiving something through email
- Links to websites
- Other 1, please explain
- Other 2, please explain

Q26. During these successful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q27. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written material through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to websites
- Other, please explain

Q28. During these successful non-face-to-face communications, did you provide any samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q29. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide samples and/or trial offers through:

- UPS, FedEx, or US Mail
- Text messaging
- Email
- Faxes
- Links to websites
- Other, please explain

Q30. Which category below best describes your sales duties? Select all that apply.

- Prospecting and developing new business.
- Visit buyers directly and often leave product samples.
- Concentrate on checking inventory, writing orders, and stocking shelves.
- Nurture existing relationships, demonstrating products, and providing support.
- Providing support to the sales staff while selling and managing.
- Product support for key accounts.
- Manage other salespeople while also selling.
- List all other duties _____

Q31. What is your current job title?

Q32. How many years have you been in your current position? Please round to the nearest whole year.

Q33. How many years have you been working in sales? Please round to the nearest whole year.

Q34. In what industry do you sell?

Q35. Thinking of the sales you make to buyers, estimate what percentage of your sales are products and services.

_____ Products

_____ Services

Q36. How many hours do you work at your current sales job in a typical week?

Q37. What is your total annual compensation in US dollars?

Q38. In a typical year, estimate your total sales volume in US dollars?

Q39. Please indicate your gender.

- Male
- Female

Q40. What is your age?

Q41. Please indicate your highest level of education.

- Some high school (no diploma)
- High school (diploma)
- Some college (no degree)
- College (undergraduate degree)
- Some graduate school (no degree)
- Graduate school (graduate degree)
- Other, please specify _____

Q42. What is your race?

- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- White, non-Hispanic
- Two or more races
- Other (specify) _____

Q43. What is the scope of your sales organization?

- International only
- Domestic only
- Domestic and International

Q44. Do you reside in the United States?

- Yes
- No

Q45. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have unsuccessfully interacted within the last four weeks, indicate how many times you met, in person:

Q46. During these unsuccessful meetings, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q47. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written material to this buyer?

Q48. During these unsuccessful meetings, did you provide samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q49. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide samples or trial offers to this buyer?

Q50. Thinking of this specific buyer that you have successfully interacted with in the last four weeks, indicate how many times you met, in person: In person meetings (including face-to-face and meeting at trade shows)

Q51. During these successful face-to-face meetings, did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers or other written information to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q52. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide any brochures, pamphlets, white papers, or other written information to this buyer?

Q53. During these successful face-to-face meetings, did you provide samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?

- Yes
- No

Q54. How many times over the last four weeks did you provide samples and/or trial offers to this buyer?