

LEVELS OF SALES LEADERSHIP SUPPORT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Leadership of the sales force is important since it has a substantial effect on both sales force performance and organizational outcomes. This paper provides an analysis of results of an exploratory Australian study regarding levels of leadership support received by business-to-business salespeople. Responses from 144 salespeople in three firms identified major gaps in both general leadership support and sales leadership support. Further research is recommended to establish whether these initial findings reflect the general situation within Australia and other countries, and to investigate relationships between underlying factors. Given the importance of the sales function, confirmation of the findings would warrant attention from human resource and marketing management.

Background

Increasing complexity facing sales forces (Jones, Dixon, Chonko, and Cannon, 2005) requires additional leadership support from sales managers (Ingram, LaForge, Locander, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff, 2005). Given the importance of selling within many firms (Atuahene-Gima and Micheal, 1998; Cravens, Grant, Ingram, LaForge, and Young, 1992; Farrell and Hakstian, 2001), one might expect sales managers to provide high levels of leadership support. Certainly, there is ample evidence that management support has positive effects on salespeople and their performance (Ingram, LaForge and Schwepker, 2007; Jaramillo and Mulki, 2008; Martin and Bush, 2006).

However, anecdotal evidence obtained during the past decade from mature, part-time students with experience as salespeople, and from participants of sales training workshops delivered by the writer, suggested that some Australian sales managers were providing low levels of leadership support.

Those suggestions seemed completely plausible. Many sales managers are appointed to their first sales management position due to

their success as salespeople rather than their potential leadership capabilities (Miller, 2000). They usually receive inadequate management training (Anderson, Mehta and Strong, 1997; Shepherd and Ridnour, 1995), despite (1) the job requirements of personal selling and sales management being very different (Miller, 2000), (2) many salespeople having difficulties making the transition from salesperson to sales manager (Anderson *et al.*, 1997; Kelly, 1992), and (3) recognition by “newly recruited sales managers ... that sales management training is necessary for them to perform effectively” (Mehta, Dubinsky and Anderson, 2002, p. 437). Clearly, some sales managers are likely to lack the management expertise to provide adequate leadership support.

The current study was undertaken to assess whether the anecdotal evidence about levels of leadership support reflects the situation within Australian firms, an extensive literature review having failed to identify any studies directly addressing this issue.

The lack of such research is not surprising given observations such as the following: “Despite the acknowledgment that leadership is important, treatment of the topic within the marketing and sales management literatures is

limited” (Flaherty, Mowen, Brown and Marshall, 2009, p. 43). However, findings from two studies regarding the relationship of leadership support and several other factors are consistent with the suggestion that some sales managers provide only low or moderate levels of leadership support. While the reports of those studies do not include discussion regarding levels of leadership support *per se* and do not cover a comprehensive set of sales leadership activities, summary statistics are provided relating to responses to questionnaire items on aspects of sales leadership support.

Firstly, based on responses to four questions within a ‘supportive leadership’ scale (each item incorporating a Likert-style scale anchored by ‘Not at all’ = 1 and ‘To a great extent’ = 7), Jaramillo and Mulki (2008, p. 43) report the overall mean and standard deviation to be 5.54 and 1.39, respectively. Unless the distribution of responses is skewed, those summary statistics indicate that nearly one-sixth of responses would be 4 or lower on the 1-7 scale. Secondly, Amyx and Alford (2005, p. 352) report means and variations for 14 items comprising a ‘positive leader reward behavior’ scale, each item again incorporating a seven-point Likert scale (with ‘Strongly disagree’ = 1 and ‘Strongly agree’ = 7). The overall mean for the scale is 5.24 and the mean of the (derived) standard deviations for all items is 1.56. Again assuming a reasonably normal distribution, more than one-sixth of responses would be 4 or lower on the 1-7 scale.

The focus of the current study was the leadership support received by salespeople within three business-to-business sales organizations, all being leaders in their respective industries. Business-to-business sales organizations were selected since personal selling is particularly important to such organizations (Jackson, Keith and Burdick, 1987) and, therefore, leadership support should be a major management issue within such organizations.

Aim of Study

The aim of this exploratory study was to identify the degree to which sales managers provide leadership support and whether substantial gaps exist in the levels of leadership support provided to salespeople. It was believed that results could identify an area warranting further research, with findings being useful to human resource managers and senior marketing managers when making decisions about sales management appointments, training and development.

Personal Selling and Sales Leadership

Leadership is closely aligned to designing a vision and providing guidance toward the attainment of that vision (Gueldenberg and Hoffmann, 2000), and often has the goal of lifting employees’ vision to a higher level and raising employee performance to a higher standard (Drucker, 1977; Pettinger, 2000). Leadership involves the direction, support, evaluation and control of employees, and requires a balance between achieving the task, building and developing the team, and being concerned for the individual (Szilagyi and Wallace, 1990).

Effective leadership requires role clarity, performance orientation (positive and timely feedback about performance, and access to required resources), action orientation (making necessary decisions instead of leaving issues unresolved, even if appropriate decisions are unpalatable), and responsiveness to the concerns of staff so that work-related uncertainty is reduced (Viljoen and Dann, 2003). Motivation can comprise both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, and both financial and

non-financial rewards, some of which can differentiate between job incumbents in ways that respond to their emotional involvement in their jobs (Patrickson, 2001).

Consistent with the above definitions, *sales leadership* includes three interrelated activities: (1) formulation, (2) implementation, and (3) evaluation and control (Churchill, Ford, Walker, Johnston, and Tanner, 2000). It includes clarification of the strategic role of the sales force, development and direction of salespeople, and evaluation of salespeople's effectiveness and performance (Ingram, LaForge, and Schwenker, 1997). With respect to evaluation and control, emphasis on behavior- *and* outcome-based sales performance factors is recommended by various writers (Brown and Peterson, 1996; Grant and Cravens, 1999; Piercy, Cravens, and Morgan, 1998). Since professional selling requires a range of skills, sales managers must develop their salespeople to ensure they have those skills (Holmes and Srivastava, 2002). *Sales leadership* has additional challenges since "a significant number of salespeople operate in social, psychological, and physical isolation from other company employees" (Ingram *et al.*, 2005, p. 138).

Research Methods

Development of measurement scales and questionnaire items was assisted by the use of an existing catalogue of leadership activities and two frameworks of personal selling and sales management (Wilkinson, 2004, 2009) during semi-structured interviews with four management and marketing academics and nine sales practitioners.

The catalogue of leadership activities is provided in Table 1. While not an exhaustive catalogue, it provided sufficient detail — along with the two frameworks — to initiate discussion during the semi-structured interviews and to assist within the cross-referencing phase during the development of draft questionnaire items (discussed below).

The frameworks of the personal selling and sales management processes are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. While perhaps more comprehensive, these are consistent with other frameworks, such as those of Baldauf, Cravens and Grant (2002), Futrell (2006), Ingram, LaForge, Avila, Schwenker and Williams (2006a; 2006b), Jackson and Hisrich (1996), and Manning and Reece (2004).

Input from the academics led to development of two scales, relating to 'general leadership support' and 'sales leadership support'. Draft questionnaire items within each scale were developed from a review of scales used by prior researchers in related studies, and through cross-referencing of the leadership and selling activities identified in the above-mentioned catalogue and frameworks. The items were modified following analysis of feedback from sales practitioners during the semi-structured interviews.

The practitioners were three sales managers and six salespeople working in business-to-business sales organizations. Each had successfully completed an undergraduate or postgraduate marketing program at University of South Australia and had undertaken a course in personal selling or sales management

Table 1 Leadership activities

Source: Wilkinson, 2009, p. 81

Type of leadership activity	Related activities or specific elements of leadership activity	Identifying sources
Planning	Decision-making	Bartol and Martin (1991); Churchill <i>et al.</i> (2000); Szilagyi and Wallace (1987); Viljoen and Dann (2003)
Direction	Establishment of standards Goal-setting Instruction Role clarification Style of leadership behaviour	Brown and Barker (2001) Cummings and Worley (1993) Ingram <i>et al.</i> (1997) Slater and Olson (2000) Brown and Barker (2001)
Facilitation	Coordination or provision of infra-structure, information, procedures, and facilities or staff	Jackson and Hisrich (1996); Pettinger (2000); Viljoen and Dann (2003)
Support	Customer service support Team-building Joint selling	Szilagyi and Wallace (1987); Wood, Wallace, Zeffane, Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2001) Churchill <i>et al.</i> (2000)
Training	Coaching Mentoring	Holmes and Srivastava (2002) Ingram <i>et al.</i> (1997); Jackson and Hisrich (1996); Patrickson (2001); Szilagyi and Wallace (1987)
Delegation	Empowerment	Brown and Barker (2001); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2001)
Motivation	Challenge Compensation Recognition Vision	Churchill <i>et al.</i> (2000) Pettinger (2000) Drucker (in Jackson and Hisrich, 1996) Patrickson (2001); Pettinger (2000)
Supervision	See direction, advice and guidance, monitoring, and control	
Advice and Guidance	Feedback Mentoring Responsiveness to concerns	Szilagyi and Wallace (1987) Viljoen and Dann (2003) Bartol and Martin (1991)
Monitoring	Performance measurement	Churchill <i>et al.</i> (2000); Ingram <i>et al.</i> (1997); Slater and Olson (2000); Szilagyi and Wallace (1987)
Evaluation	Appraisal Review	Cummings and Worley (1993) Anderson and Oliver (1987); Szilagyi and Wallace (1987)
Control	Corrective action Punishment Reward	Bartol and Martin (1991) Churchill <i>et al.</i> (2000) Cummings and Worley (1993); Patrickson (2001); Szilagyi and Wallace (1987)

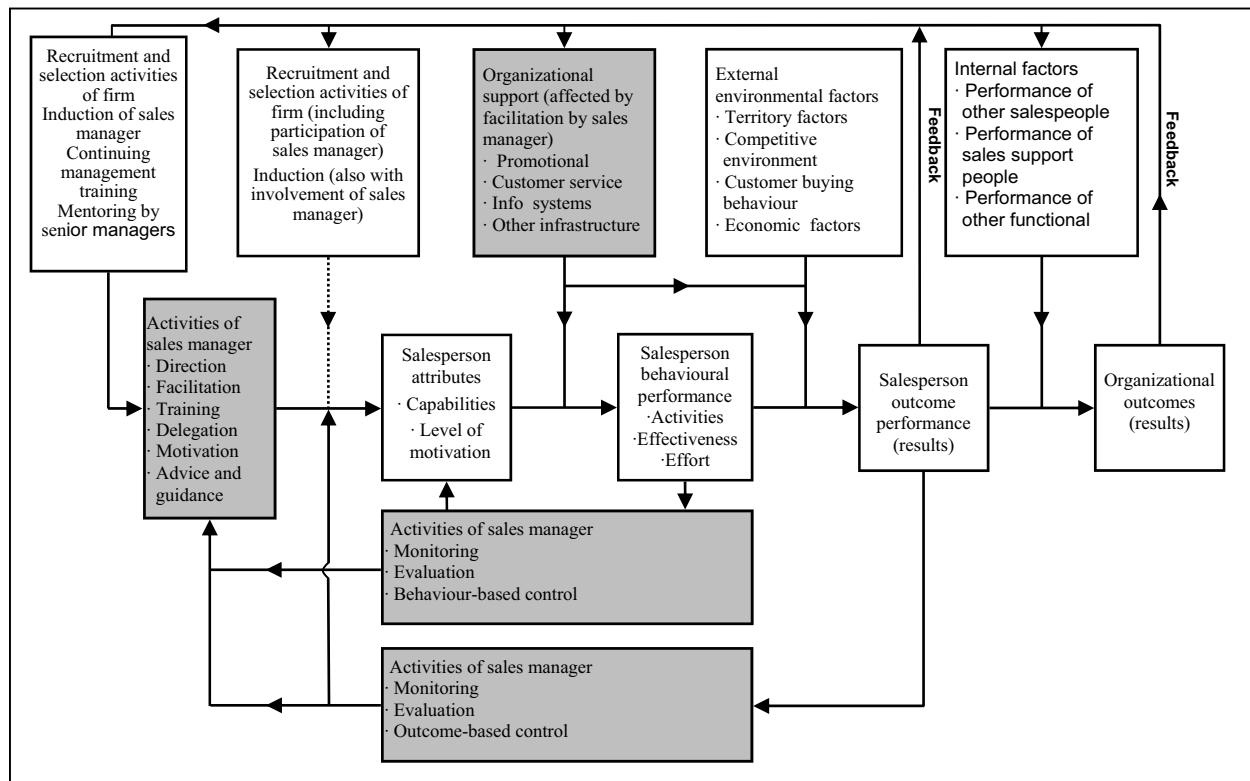
within that program. They were interviewed separately over a period of about six weeks, each interview being about an hour in duration. None were from the three firms that

participated in the final study. Questionnaire items were reviewed by several senior sales managers from the three firms that participated in the final study. Only very

Figure 1 Framework of personal selling and sales management

Source: Adapted from Wilkinson, 2009, p. 90.

(Shaded components are directly relevant to this study. Other components provide context.)



minor changes were made following those reviews. Finally, the questionnaire was pre-tested by several salespeople from the two larger participating firms (those participants being excluded from the final study). No changes appeared necessary based on feedback obtained from those participants.

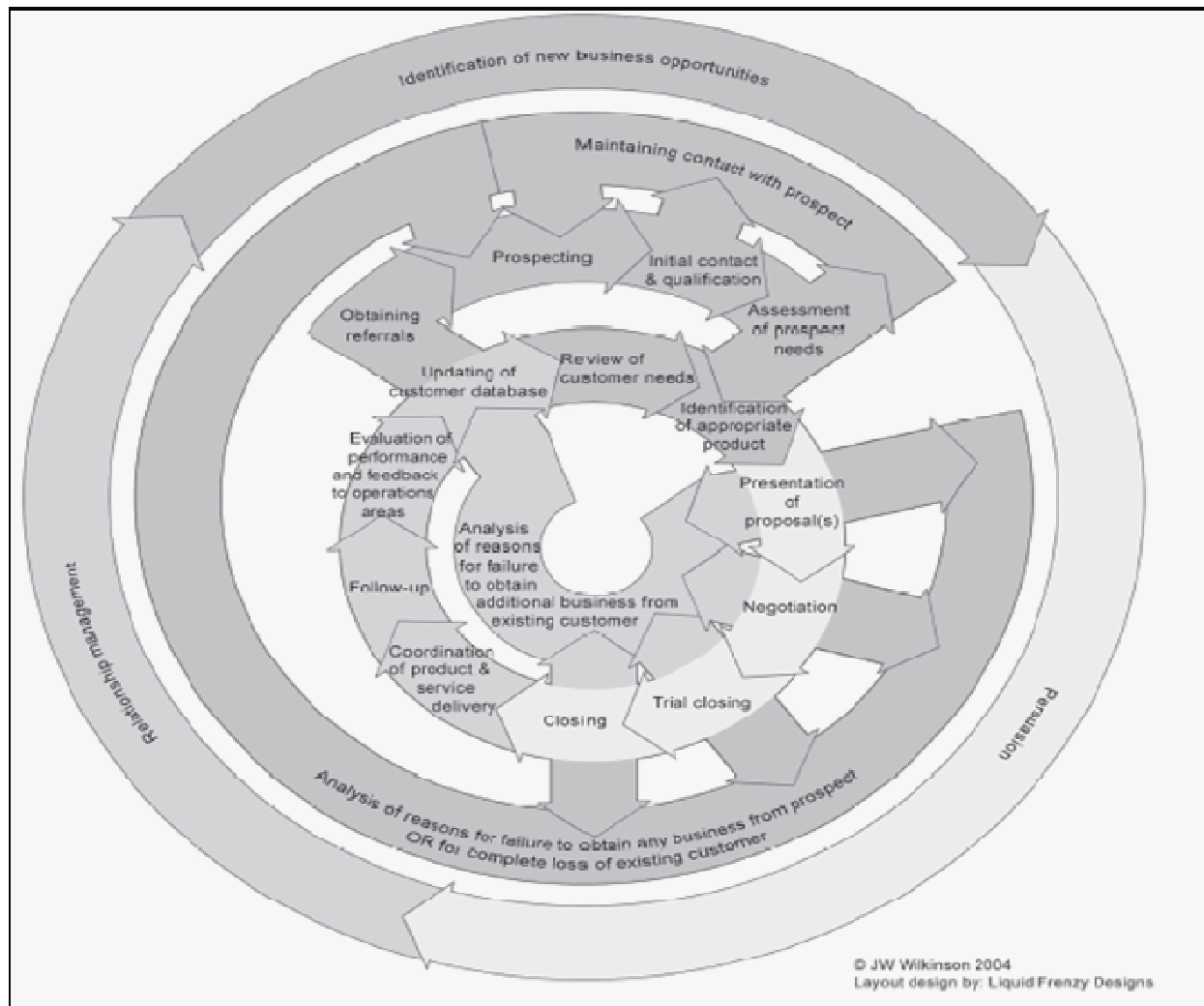
Constructs relating to the two components of leadership support were measured using multiple-item scales (McQuitty, 2004; Peter, 1979; Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 2000). All questionnaire items (besides those relating to respondent identification) were based on Likert-style scales. All items were based on a five-point (1–5) scaling format, anchored with end-points of “No—Disagree strongly” (‘1’) and

“Yes—Agree strongly” (‘5’).

Data collection involved completion of questionnaires by salespeople in three firms regarding the leadership support they were receiving. This approach was taken since managers are not considered to be good at evaluating themselves relative to objective criteria (Atwater, Ostroff, Yammarino, and Fleenor, 1993). In addition, subordinates’ perceptions of a manager’s leadership style are considered likely to be more accurate than self-perception or the perceptions of colleagues or senior managers (Zigarmi and Zigarmi, cited in Avery, 2001). Similar approaches have been used in prior studies assessing the leadership behaviour of managers (Tirmizi, 2002).

Figure 2 Framework of the business-to-business selling process

Source: Wilkinson, 2004, p4.



After management approval was obtained, questionnaires were mailed to 215 salespeople in the three participating firms. Management and participating salespeople were offered summary reports of the findings, but no other inducements were offered. Salespeople were advised that management would not be provided details of individual responses or of which salespeople had (or had not) participated in the study. Completed survey forms were returned directly to the researcher. Following initial data analysis, semi-structured interviews

were conducted with a sample of sales managers from participating firms to assist with the interpretation of findings.

The research methods are consistent with those of prior related studies. The response rate (of 67%) is favorably placed within the range of response rates achieved in those prior studies, such as Atuahene-Gima and Micheal (1998), with a response rate of 14%; Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, and Moncrief (1999), with a response rate of 58%; and Rich (1997), with a response rate of 75%.

Discussion of Results

Following initial mailings and up to two reminder letters, 144 usable responses to questionnaires about leadership support were received from salespeople, providing a response rate of 67% (varying from 57% to 83% for the three firms). These responses related to 30 sales managers within the three firms. Comparisons of early and late responses indicated an absence of respondent bias (Saunders, 1980). Gender comparisons between the population and respondent sample for all participating firms indicated an absence of gender bias.

General Leadership Support

Exploratory factor analysis, using the principal axis factoring method of extraction, was undertaken on data relating to a battery of 21 items regarding general leadership support received by responding salespeople, to assess whether or not the measurement scale was one-dimensional. Initial eigenvalues (10.4, accounting for 51.5% of variance; 1.1 and 1.1) indicated the existence of three factors, with the first factor being much more 'meaningful' than the others. The scree plot suggested the existence of just one factor. The factor matrix indicated that all 21 items loaded meaningfully on only the first factor. Only one communality value was lower than 0.45. All bivariate correlations were found to be significant at the 99% confidence level, with all but one correlation being above 0.30 and most being above 0.55. A value of 0.95 was found for Cronbach's alpha. Based on these results, the scale was considered to be internally reliable (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Field, 2005).

Based on responses to the 21 questions regarding general leadership support, no items were found to have modes with scores above 4 (on a 1–5 scale, with sample size varying from 142 to 144). Five items were found to have a mode of just 3. Overall, 18% of scores were found to be below 3, compared with 44% above 3. These results indicate that there were gaps in the general leadership support being received by some salespeople. Cluster analysis was undertaken to assess whether the gaps were being experienced generally or by just a small proportion of salespeople. Given the range of items within the scale, cluster analysis was considered superior to simple categorization, such as that based on overall mean scores. Various other researchers have used cluster analysis (Barker, 1999, 2001; Cannon and Perreault, 1999; Homburg, Workman, and Jensen, 2002), some in areas related to sales (Anderson *et al.*, 1997; Kelly, 1992).

Based on exploratory hierarchical cluster analysis, two-step cluster analysis and K-means cluster analysis, a three-cluster solution appeared most appropriate. Each cluster comprised respondents from all three firms. Results are summarised in Table 2. Nearly 20% of responding salespeople were receiving low levels of general leadership support, the overall cluster mean (2.2) being only marginally above the *second lowest* possible score. Almost 40% of respondents were receiving moderate levels of support, the overall cluster mean (3.2) being only marginally above the mid-range score of 3. Finally, less than half of the respondents were receiving high levels of support. These results

Table 2 Levels of general leadership support

Questionnaire item	ClusterG1 (n=24)	ClusterG2 (n=52)	ClusterG3 (n=60)
Do you believe you know exactly what your job comprises and what performance levels your manager expects of you?	3.2	4.0	4.5
Does your manager explain relevant corporate or divisional goals when negotiating/setting your performance criteria?	2.3	3.3	4.2
Does your manager ensure that you obtain adequate commitment/support from a 'selling support team'?	2.0	3.0	3.9
Does your manager assist you to obtain necessary resources and/or Support from within your company (such as head office marketing, other sales offices, logistics, manufacturing, and information technology)?	2.2	3.3	4.0
Generally, does your manager provide you with, or facilitate your access to, required information and other resources?	2.4	3.7	4.3
Generally, do you receive adequate personal communication, facilitation and support from your manager?	2.5	3.4	4.2
Does your manager set a positive example through his/her own behaviour and serve as an appropriate role model to staff?	2.2	3.3	4.3
When performance standards are not met, does your manager appear to take appropriate/corrective action within the salesforce, or to influence other parts of the company to take appropriate/corrective action?	2.4	3.2	3.7
Generally, does your manager make necessary decisions — even if unpalatable — instead of leaving issues unresolved?	2.6	3.5	4.2
Generally, is your manager responsive to your concerns, so that your work-related uncertainty is minimised?	2.7	3.2	4.4
Does your manager provide guidance?	2.0	3.0	4.2
Does your manager delegate authority to you?	2.8	3.5	4.4
Does your manager monitor your performance?	2.3	3.4	4.3
Does your manager monitor your day-to-day <i>effort</i> (as distinct from your sales results)?	1.7	2.7	3.6
Does your manager appear to recognise your <i>individual</i> attributes and assess your <i>individual</i> performance rather than stereotyping?	2.3	3.6	4.5
Does your manager review or critique your performance with you and provide adequate feedback?	1.8	3.0	4.3
Generally, does your manager provide constructive and timely feedback about your performance?	1.8	3.0	4.2
Does your manager provide useful feedback about your sales activities?	2.0	2.9	4.0
Does your manager provide useful feedback about your sales outcomes/results?	1.9	3.1	4.2
Do you receive adequate/appropriate <i>financial</i> rewards in recognition of your performance?	1.7	2.6	3.5
Do you receive adequate/appropriate <i>non-financial</i> rewards in recognition of your performance?	1.8	2.6	3.4
Overall cluster mean	2.2	3.2	4.1

Scale: 1 = 'Disagree strongly' to 5 = 'Agree strongly'.

Based on K-means cluster analysis and listwise case exclusion for missing values.

confirm that substantial proportions of responding salespeople were experiencing sizable gaps across the full range of items comprising general leadership support.

Sales Leadership Support

Exploratory factor analysis was undertaken on data relating to a battery of 18 items regarding sales leadership support to assess whether or not the measurement scale was one-dimensional. Initial eigenvalues (7.5, accounting for 41.8% of variance; 1.7; 1.5 and 1.1) indicated the existence of four factors, but with the first factor being much more 'meaningful' than the others. The scree plot suggested the existence of up to four factors. The factor matrix indicated that 14 items loaded meaningfully on only the first factor, while four other items loaded on two different factors. The latter four items all related to aspects of *organizational* support and, therefore, could be considered outside of the sales leadership support domain (as suggested by the factor analysis). These four items therefore were deleted. For the modified scale, all communality values were found to be at least 0.3, with most above 0.5. All bivariate correlations were found to be significant at the 99% confidence level, with most above 0.3. A value of 0.91 was found for Cronbach's alpha. Based on these results, the modified scale was considered to be internally reliable.

Based on responses to the modified scale of 14 questions about sales leadership support, five items were found to have modes with scores of 1-3 and no items were found to have modes with scores above 4. Overall, 31% of scores were found to be below 3, compared with 43% above 3.

These results indicate that major gaps existed in the sales leadership support being received by some responding salespeople. Again, cluster analysis was undertaken to assess whether the gaps were being experienced generally or by just a small proportion of salespeople. A three-cluster solution was found to be most appropriate. Results are summarised in Table 3, indicating that about 20% of salespeople were receiving low levels of sales leadership support, nearly half were receiving moderate levels, and less than one-third were receiving high levels. Clearly, substantial proportions of salespeople were experiencing sizable gaps across the full range of items comprising sales leadership support.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on responses from 144 business-to-business salespeople from three leading Australian firms in distinctly different industries, sizable proportions of respondent salespeople were receiving low or moderate levels of general leadership support and/or sales leadership support. Gaps in the levels of sales leadership support being received by responding salespeople appear even greater than those in the levels of general leadership support.

Confirmation of these exploratory results in subsequent studies would be concerning for management, since adequate and effective leadership support by sales managers can have a major effect on the performance of their salespeople (Anderson, Dubinsky, and Mehta, 1999; Barker, 1997; Grossman and Cotton, 2004; Martin and Bush, 2003; Yammarino, 1997).

Table 3 Levels of sales leadership support

Questionnaire item	ClusterS1 (n=26)	ClusterS2 (n=60)	ClusterS3 (n=40)
Does your manager provide support if/when you find prospecting 'tough'?	2.3	3.0	3.9
Does your manager help to obtain initial appointments with prospects if/when you find this difficult?	1.3	2.6	3.3
Does your manager make regular joint sales calls with you?	1.3	2.4	3.3
Does/Do your manager and/or other company managers/specialists assist in your account management activities at your larger customers/prospects?	2.3	3.3	4.0
Does your firm have effective internal communication, enabling coordination of sales-related activities or collaboration with customers (helping establish/maintain customer relationships)?	2.6	3.1	4.3
Does your manager or any technical specialist help you to assess needs of prospects or <i>additional</i> needs of existing customers, if/when necessary?	2.2	3.0	3.8
Does your manager or any technical specialist help you identify the most appropriate 'solutions' for customers or prospects, if/when necessary?	2.0	3.5	4.0
Does your manager or any technical specialist help you in analyzing reasons for failure to obtain business from prospects or for the loss of customers, if necessary?	1.6	3.0	3.6
Do(es) your manager, other management staff or technical specialists assist you in sales presentations, if necessary?	1.9	3.7	4.2
Does your manager or other management staff assist you in negotiations, if necessary?	2.0	3.7	3.9
Does your manager or other management staff assist you in closing, if necessary?	1.5	3.2	3.9
Do(es) your manager, other management staff, or specialists from technical or production areas of your firm assist you to undertake follow-up and relationship-building activities, if/when necessary?	2.2	3.1	4.1
Do your manager, other management staff, or specialists from technical or production areas of your firm assist you to evaluate your firm's supply performance and to provide feedback to operations areas if necessary?	2.1	2.8	4.0
Do your manager or technical specialists help you to analyze reasons for failure to obtain <i>additional</i> business from existing customers, if/when necessary?	2.0	2.9	3.9
Overall cluster mean	1.9	3.1	3.9

Scale: 1 = 'Disagree strongly' to 5 = 'Agree strongly'.

Based on K-means cluster analysis and listwise case exclusion for missing values.

The results are understandable given the reported lack of management training of many sales managers (briefly discussed below), and the previously-mentioned findings of prior researchers that many salespeople have difficulties making the transition from salesperson to sales manager.

Regarding management training, a study by Adams in 1965 found that sales management training was provided by just one of 44 responding United States firms, while a study by Coppett and Staples in 1980 found that fewer than half of responding firms in 16 industries in the US provided any management training (Anderson *et al.*, 1997). More recently, based on responses from sales training executives, Shepherd and Ridnour (1995) identified the content of sales management training programs of 93 US firms, using three scales relating to training. With just one exception, for all items within each scale, at least half of the responses were for a 'slight level of training' or 'no training at all'. Similarly, based on responses from almost 300 US sales managers, Anderson *et al.* (1997) found that 57% of respondents had received no formal sales management training. With such low levels of management training, many sales managers probably lack the expertise to provide adequate leadership support.

Post-survey feedback from 3-4 sales managers within each participating firm confirmed that all were aware of the need to provide leadership support but had competing priorities that often resulted in less time being devoted to leadership activities than desirable. This feedback is consistent with suggestions by Miller (2000) about work pressures on sales

managers. Several sales managers also admitted that there were some leadership activities that they felt they were untrained to undertake in a competent manner. Several even admitted that there were some activities about which they had no prior knowledge.

Given the importance of personal selling in many firms, results from this study suggest that marketing management and human resource management should review their firms' sales management practices. It also would be appropriate to review levels of sales management training in case there is indeed a link between management training and the provision of leadership support.

In particular, business-to-business sales managers often are responsible for a key company resource, having the potential "to influence a variety of organizational outcomes" (Deeter-Schmelz, Kennedy and Goebel, 2002, p. 617). "Salesperson performance, satisfaction, and commitment" often constitute a "crucial" element of company performance (Yilmaz, 2002, p. 1389), especially in the areas of "sales volume, profits, and customer satisfaction" (Baldauf and Cravens, 2002, p. 1367). Given the findings from this exploratory study, senior management needs to ensure that salespeople are receiving adequate leadership support — or risk a decline in marketing competitiveness.

Current economic conditions and trends in other environmental factors add weight to that warning.

For example, an increasingly competitive environment and "escalating customer

demands for new and greater value” are likely to require “revolutionary changes” within the traditional sales force and its management (Lane and Piercy, 2004, p. 659). “High-performing sales managers” will be required to ensure that salespeople have the expertise to perform effectively and efficiently in a competitive environment (Deeter-Schmelz *et al.*, 2002, p. 617). They will need to be “effective day-to-day supervisors” and “strategy-driven leaders capable of influencing others” to ensure that sales force goals are achieved (Ingram, LaForge and Leigh, 2002, p 561).

From a research perspective, it appears warranted to verify the findings through a larger-scale study covering a wider range of industries, perhaps in several countries, and to investigate possible connections between the levels of (1) management training received by sales managers, (2) leadership expertise among sales managers, and (3) leadership support provided by sales managers. Future studies also could include analysis of the *quality* of sales leadership and how that is influenced by the level and type of sales management training and, perhaps, longer-term coaching or mentoring of sales managers by more senior managers. More ambitiously, future studies could investigate possible effects of different levels of leadership (in terms of breadth, depth and quality) on salesperson performance.

Findings from such studies would provide information to improve management decisions regarding levels of expenditure on sales management training and, perhaps, the selection of formal and informal training methods and topics. Findings also would enable senior sales management to advise first-level sales managers on salesperson leadership support priorities.

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