EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP ON SALES FORCE PERFORMANCE

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Much has been written about the importance of focusing on customers to drive organizational success. In this paper, aspects of manager–salesperson relationships are examined as drivers of deeper customer focus in salesperson–customer interactions. In particular, managers’ servant leadership, a leadership style emphasizing genuine concern for subordinate welfare, is examined as a catalyst of parallel concern by salespeople for their customers. Salesperson perceptions of managers’ servant leadership empirically relate to salesperson customer orientation, in turn driving adaptive selling behaviors, customer-directed extra-role behaviors, and sales performance outcomes. Other results and implications for management and sales leadership research are presented.

Many organizations are discovering the value of heightened focus on the customer and are moving to act like customer-centric organizations. In such organizations, ideally, all employees understand the importance of their roles in focusing on and serving customers. However, customer-centricity is particularly important for boundary-spanning employees such as salespeople. Salespeople need to adopt a strategic pro-customer vision because they directly interact with and serve customers. Salespersons’ underlying motivation for adopting such a customer-centric mind-set also likely affects customer responses. Is a salesperson’s apparent customer-centricity merely a self-focused means to success (e.g., I’ll say whatever customers want to hear just so that they buy my products), or is it borne out of sincere concern for the welfare of others (e.g., I truly care about meeting the wants and needs of my customers in ways that create value for them)? Perhaps customers can discern these underlying motivations. If so, will the customer-centric efforts of salespeople be well-received and effective in building strong long-term relationships that pay off for the company?

A critical question arises for companies that have adopted customer centricity as a strategy for achieving success. How can organizations build a culture where the core mind-set and motivation of employees, especially boundary spanners, are a genuine concern for and focus on customers? In addition to careful hiring decisions, logically it will be organizational leaders who intentionally build this customer-centric orientation into the very fabric of the organization. Regarding sales organizations specifically, the role of sales leaders should be especially critical in instilling customer focus among salespeople. Sales leadership styles that teach and model genuine care for others should be particularly effective in developing a sincere focus on customer wants and needs.

Servant leadership (Greenleaf 2002) is a style of leadership that uniquely relates to a core focus on the welfare of others, driven out of a sincere, even selfless underlying motivation. Thus, servant leadership may be a particularly effective style of sales leadership to instill in and model for the sales force a genuine motivation to serve customers. Yet, to date, empirical research examining the impact of servant leadership on sales force customer orientation is still lacking. Thus, this study posits and tests the impact of servant leadership on the nature and quality of salesperson interactions with the customer, also examining how such an effect may spark additional effects that help the sales force achieve higher levels of performance. These associations represent a special case of the well-accepted general notion that sales leadership styles and actions influence sales performance.

LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE

Sales leadership has been defined as activities undertaken by those in a sales organization that motivate others to pursue common goals for the collective good of the organization (Ingram et al. 2005). Leadership meta-analyses have shown...
that a sales manager’s actions can significantly affect sales force performance (e.g., Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander 2005). Leadership researchers have been particularly interested in identifying factors that may explain how sales leaders can influence the performance of their followers (Ingram et al. 2005). To that end, numerous studies have shown that sales leadership can affect sales performance both directly and indirectly (e.g., MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). The indirect effect of sales leadership can be explained by its relationship with many factors, including job satisfaction (e.g., Shoemaker 1999), organizational commitment (e.g., Dubinsky, Yammarino, and Jolson 1994), role stress (e.g., Dubinsky et al. 1995), self-esteem (e.g., Kohli 1985), motivation (e.g., Weitz, Sujan, and Sujan 1986), and effort (e.g., Jaramillo and Mulki 2008). Such indirect mechanisms are especially relevant for the current study. Our central proposition is that the servant style of leadership leads to heightened degrees of customer orientation. Subsequently, this heightened customer orientation should spark a set of indirect effects leading to higher levels of performance. Thus, mediated through customer orientation, servant leadership may activate a chain of effects that lead to higher performance. These proposed notions are consistent with the prevailing rationale behind the leadership–performance relationship.

Effective leaders get things done in organizations. They help create a positive work environment in which employees have clearer job expectations, are happier with their jobs, become more committed to the organization, gain greater confidence in their capabilities, and ultimately respond with additional motivation to work harder and smarter (e.g., Ingram et al. 2005; Jaramillo and Mulki 2008; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). Studies based on this rationale have enhanced our understanding of the leadership–performance process. However, such studies tend to present only part of the story because they are mostly grounded in what happens inside the organization and thus disregard the effect that the leader may have on what occurs outside the boundaries of the organization, in the market. Specifically, the actions of the leader should also affect salesperson’s interactions with the customer. As Chebat and Kollias state, “if managers treat their employees well, the employees will then reciprocate by treating customers well” (2000, p. 68). We propose a specific instance of this connection between sales leadership and sales force performance: servant leaders help the firm create a culture in which serving the customer becomes the central organizational principle, which in turn produces desired performance outcomes.

Schein (1985) argues that organizational leaders are primarily responsible for creating and managing organizational culture, defined as the shared set of assumptions, values, and beliefs that employees hold. Company leaders therefore must be the focal point in implementing an organizational culture that focuses on responding to customer expectations (Bowen, Siehl, and Schneider 1989). Servant leadership should be especially helpful in implementing a market-oriented culture. As Greenleaf asserts, managers who possess servant leadership qualities believe that firms have a moral obligation to serve “those who produce and those who use” (2002, p. 155). This core premise is in line with Kirka, Jayachandran, and Bearden’s (2005) meta-analysis. They found that top management actions are critical in the development of a market-oriented culture in which employees follow the marketing concept. However, empirical research examining whether servant leader actions in specific impact the degree to which salespeople practice the marketing concept is still lacking.

To address this gap in the literature, our study posits that salespeople who are supervised by servant leaders respond to the leader’s genuine concern for them with a parallel genuine concern for their customers. We test a model that (1) examines the direct effect of servant leadership on salespersons’ customer orientation (Saxe and Weitz 1982), (2) tests whether this proposed link is moderated by the role of sales experience, and (3) tests how the leader–customer orientation link sparks additional effects that lead to enhanced performance (e.g., through adaptive selling) (Weitz, Sujan, and Sujan 1986). As part of the latter, we also explore whether the servant leadership-to-performance link operates only through the proposed mediating effects, or if there is a direct servant leadership-to-performance link (i.e., full versus partial mediation). Figure 1 depicts our conceptualization. Rationale for each part of the model is built in the sections that follow.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Sales Leadership

Sales managers have always been called upon to be leaders in the sense that they serve in capacities such as articulating a vision; communicating that vision to salespeople; providing resources to salespeople in their ever more challenging quest to serve customers; and facilitating quick information gathering, processing, and decision making in order to sustain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. As leadership thought has grown and provided new insights, the role of the sales manager has adapted and must continue to adapt. We have seen sales managers’ roles change due to technology, automation, empowerment, team selling, and relationship selling (Cravens 1995). Sales managers must recognize that, in times of rapid change, innovation and knowledge are essential for success. The servant leadership paradigm may represent another impetus for change in the sales manager’s role.
Leadership Theories

In their search for common traits among successful sales leaders, researchers have examined a variety of leadership theories. The transactional/transformational leadership style framework is perhaps the most frequently used paradigm in sales research (e.g., Bass 1997; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). Transactional leaders consistently inform salespeople about their responsibilities, instruct them on how to perform job activities, and attain subordinates’ compliance by extensive use of rewards or punishment (Dubinsky et al. 1995). Transformational leaders obtain subordinates’ compliance by means of identification and internalization processes—they motivate employees to go beyond their own self-interests and to adopt the organization’s vision and mission as their own (Ingram et al. 2005; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). Thus, transformational leadership is not a substitute for transactional leadership but rather its complement (Dubinsky et al. 1995). As Bass asserts “transformational leadership, whatever its form, is likely to add to transactional leadership in motivating subordinates to make greater efforts to achieve better performance with more satisfaction” (1997, p. 23, emphasis added). MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich (2001) provide evidence of the augmenting effect of transformational leadership in sales. Their study found that transformational leader behaviors actually increase the impact of transactional leader behaviors on several business outcomes, including a salesperson’s in-role and extra-role performances.

Sales research has also relied on path goal theory (House 1971; 1996) to define the characteristics of successful sales leaders (e.g., Jaramillo and Mulki 2008; Kohli 1989). Path goal theory argues that managers can influence subordinate actions by setting and communicating organizational expectations, by explaining how goals can be achieved, and by using
the reward systems for motivating goal achievement (House 1971; 1996). Path goal theory also posits that a strategic function of the leader is to enhance the psychological well-being of employees to attain greater employee motivation to perform (House 1971; 1996). Path goal theory shows that leaders employ two styles to motivate employees, initiating structure and leadership consideration (Greene 1979; Kohli 1989). Initiating structure, which is also called instrumental leadership, characterizes leaders who employ a directive management style—they set what and how things should be done and use the reward system to achieve compliance (Greene 1979; Harris and Ogbonna 2001; House 1971). Leadership consideration depicts leaders who create an environment of psychological support and friendliness (House 1971). This is achieved when the leader employs a participative- and a supportive-leadership style (Greene 1979; Harris and Ogbonna 2001; House 1971). Participative leaders listen and respond to employee feedback by incorporating subordinate’s suggestions into the decision-making process. Supportive leaders help employees achieve higher performance by collaborating with them and by providing the resources that are needed for goal completion (Rafferty and Griffin 2006). Research has found that leadership consideration has a positive effect on salesperson’s attitudes and performance (e.g., Jaramillo and Mulki 2008; Kohli 1989).

The above discussion provides evidence that salespeople are responsive to the sales-leader influence, particularly when the leader helps the salesperson grow by performing activities that go beyond the mere administration of rewards and punishment. Salespeople are particularly willing to reciprocate actions of leaders who employ a transformational or considerate style, responding with positive job attitudes, greater effort, and ultimately higher performance (e.g., Jaramillo and Mulki 2008; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). Although transformational and considerate leadership depict sales leaders who care about their subordinates more so than instrumental leaders, the primary priority still is on “achieving organizational objectives.” Thus, even these “kinder” leadership styles share the same underlying principle with other leadership styles that appear less friendly to the subordinate—effectively motivating others to engage in actions that help the firm achieve its objectives. Following Yukl’s (2001) directive, servant leadership contrasts with transformational and considerate leadership in one very important way—the focus of transformational leadership is on the organization. Yet servant leadership is about a genuine focus on followers.

**Servant Leadership**

The servant leadership style has been discussed more frequently in the literature in recent years (e.g., Chonko 2007; Sauser 2005; Sendjaya, Sarros, and Sanatoria 2008). The servant leadership paradigm takes a different approach to the leader–follower relationship. Serving the needs of the follower becomes a leader’s priority and an end in itself rather than a means to achieve organizational objectives (Ehrhart 2004). Levering and Moskowitz (2000) assert that servant leadership has been practiced in some of America’s “best” firms. These “best” companies are characterized by how their employees are treated. Human resource practices in these companies are driven by the following principles: (1) openness and fairness, (2) camaraderie and friendliness, (3) providing employees with opportunities, (4) instilling pride in their work and their company, (5) giving adequate compensation, and (6) offering security.

As Greenleaf (2002) notes, leaders have responsibilities that transcend contributing to the economic success of organizations. A company leader is “not only responsible for the success of the organization but also to his or her subordinates, the organization’s customers, and other organizational stakeholders” (Ehrhart 2004, p. 68). The implication of this, as will be shown later, is that servant leadership values held by sales managers have a significant effect on salesperson values about customer interactions, ultimately affecting salesperson performance.

Servant leadership brings the core values of the leader to the forefront in a time when organizations seem to be moving to management by values (Dolan and Garcia 2002). Servant leadership has been discussed from the perspective of its viability as a leadership theory, as a subset of other theories such as transformational leadership, and as a conceptual idea (e.g., Ehrhart 2004, p. 68). The conceptual innovations of those who have studied servant leadership (e.g., Ehrhart 2004; Greenleaf 1970, 2002) have resulted in the specification of a broad domain for servant leadership as will be presented in this paper. Agreeing with Bass (2000), servant leadership requires substantial empirical investigation. There is intrinsic strength in the movement toward servant leadership as ideas such as follower learning, growth, and empowerment suggest that servant leadership has its basis in both tested and untested theory.

The servant leadership literature has its roots in Greenleaf’s (1970) seminal work in which he asserts that servant leaders must walk the walk of being servants first. Greenleaf characterized a servant leader this way:

> It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. Such a person is sharply different from one who is a leader first, perhaps because of the need to assure an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. (1998, p. 123, emphasis in original)

The servant leader takes great pains to ensure that others’ needs are a priority as depicted in Laub’s definition: “Servant
leadership is an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader” (1999, p. 25).

Servant leadership has also been described as a virtuous theory, a virtue being a qualitative characteristic that is part of one’s character (Yu 1998). Arjoon (2000) asserts that virtue theory has a place in leadership as it focuses on the common good rather than on results such as profit maximization. A key premise of servant leadership is that any leader has the power to create an environment conducive to such ends. But it takes courage on the part of a leader to do so, as servant leaders emphasize power distribution rather than power consolidation. Thus, sales managers as servant leaders are in sync with and seek to assess, understand, and grow the skill sets, passions, gifts, and well-being of salespeople, and to blend these attributes with job requirements and the management of performance.

Several core principles of servant leadership are evident from the servant leadership literature—the belief that all people have dignity and worth, that people are all interconnected, and that there exists a real purpose of human affairs (Fiedler and Chemers 1984). This dovetails with current thought about the root of success in organizations—people (Collins 2001). Leadership in light of those ideas is a way of thinking, acting, and leading that takes others into account, sometimes even at the expense of the leader’s own needs, as evidenced in the previous statements about servant leadership.

**Sales Leadership and Customer Orientation**

Kirka, Jayachandran, and Bearden’s (2005) meta-analysis offered evidence that managerial actions define the success of organizational strategies aimed at creating a market-oriented culture. For instance, Harris and Ogbonna (2001) found that employees are more likely to judge their firm as market-orientated when top management engages in supportive and participative leadership behaviors. **Supportive leadership** includes managerial actions “directed toward the satisfaction of subordinates’ needs and preferences,” whereas participative leadership involves behaviors “directed toward encouragement of subordinate influence on decision making” (House 1996, pp. 326–327). Harris and Ogbonna (2001) also found that instrumental leadership is negatively related to market orientation. Instrumental leadership reflects a directive style in which the manager sets job expectations and establishes procedures that define what and how things are done (Harris and Ogbonna 2001). Similarly, Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry (2006) found that transactional leadership is a major impediment on a firm’s journey toward becoming market oriented. Transactional leadership involves an exchange relationship in which the follower receives explicit rewards for complying with the leader’s wishes (Rafferty and Griffin 2004). This suggests that the development of a market-oriented culture requires managers who listen to employee feedback, are committed to the well-being of their subordinates, and are willing to collaborate with them to facilitate their actions.

Market orientation is a central concept of marketing and ultimately reflects a firm’s concern for its customers (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006). The practice of the marketing concept can also be conceptualized at the salesperson level as customer-oriented selling, the extent to which salespeople “help their customers make purchase decisions that will satisfy customer needs” (Saxe and Weitz 1982, p. 344). Thus, just as various leadership styles relate to firm-level market orientation, we assert in this paper that servant leadership as a leadership style relates to salesperson-level customer orientation. And if, indeed, servant leader values can be transferred in a manner that positively influences the way salespeople treat their customers, the logical result should be higher sales performance.

The notion that the values and the goals of senior company leaders have a fundamental impact on the behavior of other employees is well supported (e.g., Kennedy, Goolsby, and Arnould 2003). Schneider (1987) claims that the person or persons who establish the organization define its imperatives and have a significant effect on its goals, structures, and processes. This ultimately defines organizational behavior and determines “the kinds of people who are attracted to, and selected by, and stay with a particular organization” (Schneider 1987, p. 445). Thus, over time, the employees who remain in the organization make the place and become similar to each other (Schneider 1987). The cascading notion also suggests that leadership cascades from higher to lower levels of the organizational hierarchy (Bass et al. 1987). Servant leadership from senior leaders is thus likely to be emulated by sales force management and ultimately by salespeople.

At the salesperson’s level, the servant leader’s concern for others is likely manifested in a higher desire to serve customers. We believe that a higher desire to serve customer needs is evidenced in higher levels of both customer orientation and customer-directed extra-role performance. Netemeyer, Maxham, and Pullig define customer-directed extra-role performance as the degree to which an employee “goes the extra mile in serving customers during the employee–customer interface” (2005, p. 132). Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) report that subordinates’ extra-role behavior increases as they perceive their supervisors to be supportive, also a characteristic of servant leaders. This has been described as a trickle-down effect by authors such as Masterson (2001) and Tepper and Taylor (2003). Employees increase their efforts as they perceive that the organization and its leaders are willing to reciprocate with resources and support (Aselage and Eisenberger 2003). Also, as Kennedy, Goolsby, and Arnould (2003) assert, employees are more willing to embrace the marketing concept when
they believe that senior leadership is genuinely interested in the well-being of others and thus “willing to walk the walk.”
Together, these notions lead to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The more the salesperson views his or her sales manager as a servant leader, the greater the salesperson’s customer orientation.

Hypothesis 2: The more the salesperson views his or her sales manager as a servant leader, the greater the salesperson’s customer-directed extra-role performance.

Researchers have also hypothesized that sales management leadership can affect salesperson’s performance directly. For instance, researchers have argued that transformational leadership has a positive effect on performance because transformational leaders inspire salespeople to perform beyond the minimum organizational expectations (e.g., Dubinsky et al. 1995; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). In their study of employees of a production and distribution company, Liden et al. (2008) found that servant leadership explains a significant amount of variance of subordinates’ in-role performance beyond that explained by transformational leadership and leader–member exchange. Earlier we stated that servant leaders are highly concerned about the well-being and growth of their subordinates. Salespeople may reciprocate by engaging in actions that benefit the leader and the organization. Therefore,

Hypothesis 3: The more the salesperson views his or her sales manager as a servant leader, the greater the salesperson’s outcome performance.

Moderating Role of Sales Experience

Researchers have long noted that experience plays a central role in how salespeople view their jobs and work environment (Slocum and Cron 1985). For instance, Jones (1986) argues that the accumulated knowledge acquired through experience affects employee’s expectations about future success. Experience thus enhances salespersons’ confidence in their ability to understand customer problems and propose solutions to them (Franke and Park 2006). In various contexts (e.g., Giacobbe et al. 2006; Rapp et al. 2006), experienced salespeople have been shown to operate differently than inexperienced salespeople from the perspective of simply giving more consideration to more behavioral options, and the like. This may explain meta-analytic findings that show that sales experience has a positive effect on customer orientation (Franke and Park 2006). Experienced salespeople learn what customer goals are important. With their growth in experience, they learn more ways to identify and react to customer goals, also learning additional ways to accomplish these goals. Therefore, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 4: More experienced salespeople will exhibit higher levels of customer orientation.

Research also shows that the response of the salesperson to supervisor’s actions is contingent on the salesperson’s experience. Allen (2006) asserts that new employees entering organizations often feel disoriented and are prone to experiencing a reality shock. Thus, they have a high need to obtain information to understand the new environment. Supervisors play a fundamental role in newcomers learning about the organization, job tasks, and their work roles (Ostroff and Kozlowski 1992). However, as employees gain experience, additional knowledge is more efficiently acquired through other sources, such as observing others and by means of trial and experimentation (Ostroff and Kozlowski 1992). This supports the long-held notion that less-experienced salespeople are more receptive and responsive to managerial actions (Kohli 1989). Rapp et al. (2006) found that sales managers have a smaller impact on motivating salespeople to put forth higher effort as salespeople become more experienced. In view of this, it is also likely that experience moderates the effect of servant leadership on customer orientation. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Salesperson’s experience moderates the impact of servant leadership on customer orientation. The impact of servant leadership on customer orientation gains importance when the salesperson is inexperienced.

Customer Orientation and Adaptive Selling

Customer orientation and adaptive selling have received considerable research attention and are deemed important predictors of salesperson’s performance (Franke and Park 2006). This seems particularly true in sales situations in which long-term customer satisfaction is critical (Saxe and Weitz 1982). Salespeople with higher levels of customer orientation truly care about customers, and thus engage in actions that customers value, such as listening to customer feedback and solving customer problems (Saxe and Weitz 1982). Salespeople who demonstrate higher levels of adaptive selling adjust their sales strategies in ways that better fit customers’ needs and preferences (Spiro and Weitz 1990). Together then, customer orientation and adaptive selling lead to win-win outcomes because customers are served in better, more individually relevant ways, producing higher levels of success for the sales force and the organization. Therefore, we hypothesize that both customer orientation and adaptive selling have a direct effect on performance.

Hypothesis 6: The greater a salesperson’s customer orientation, the higher his or her outcome performance.

Hypothesis 7: The greater a salesperson’s adaptive selling, the higher his or her outcome performance.
Researchers have also hypothesized that customer orientation may affect performance indirectly, via adaptive selling (Franke and Park 2006). Salespeople who are concerned about their customers are more likely to spend the necessary time and effort in assessing customer problems and responding to them with customized solutions. Thus, a positive effect of customer orientation on adaptive selling is expected.

Hypothesis 8: The greater a salesperson’s customer orientation, the more he or she will exhibit adaptive selling.

Borman et al. (2001) argue that the predictors of in-role performance and extra-role performance are different. Specifically, the antecedents of in-role performance are contextual and thus vary by occupation. For instance, adaptive behaviors are desirable traits in sales jobs but may be detrimental in some manufacturing jobs where quality is defined in terms of conformance with predefined standards. Borman et al. (2001) assert that extra-role behaviors such as cooperating and volunteering are the same for most jobs. Research has shown that employees with positive job attitudes reciprocate by putting forth a greater amount of effort into their jobs (e.g., Ehrhart 2004). Researchers have consistently found that organizational commitment is a significant driver of extra-role performance (e.g., MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Ahearne 1998). Organizational commitment is often defined as an attitude in the form of employee’s psychological identification and emotional attachment with the firm (e.g., Allen and Meyer 1990). However, this attitude can be specific to the various individuals or groups that compose the organization—foci of commitment. The focus of commitment includes “co-workers, superiors, subordinates, customers, and other groups and individuals that collectively comprise the organization” (Reichers 1985, p. 482). It is reasonable to expect that salespeople who are committed to their customers have higher levels of customer orientation. A higher level of customer orientation is thus likely to result in customer-directed extra-role behaviors. Researchers have long claimed that customer-oriented salespeople provide exceptional personal service to their customers (e.g., Beatty et al. 1996) and are willing to spend additional effort in serving them (e.g., Harich and LeBahn 1998). One would anticipate that these salespeople are also willing to “go the extra mile” in serving the customer and would ultimately sell more. In view of this:

Hypothesis 9: The greater a salesperson’s customer orientation, the more likely he or she will exhibit customer-directed extra-role performance.

Hypothesis 10: The greater a salesperson’s customer-directed extra-role performance, the higher his or her outcome performance.

Control Variables
Research indicates that one primary way sales leaders are able to stimulate salespeople to achieve higher performance is by helping to create an employee-friendly work environment (e.g., Martin and Bush 2006). The underlying principle is that salespeople reciprocate managerial actions that positively affect their well-being with higher performance. This should be especially true under an extremely other-focused leadership style such as servant leadership. To capture this, our study uses two attitudinal variables (job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and an overall measure of job stress. Because these outcomes of leadership are known to influence job performance, we use them as control variables on performance itself, and as partial mediators of the servant leadership and outcome performance relationship (Figure 1). Prior models examining the impact of sales leadership on performance have used job stressors (e.g., MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001; Netemeyer et al. 1997) and job attitudes (e.g., Hampton, Dubinsky, and Skinner 1986; Piercy et al. 2006) as mediators or partial mediators. Because sales experience affects job attitudes and stress perceptions (e.g., Behrman and Perreault 1984), sales experience is also used as a control variable.

METHODS
Data Collection Procedure and Sample
The sample for our study was drawn with the help of a market research supplier company specializing in the fielding of online quantitative studies and the execution of online focus groups. This company maintains a large online consumer panel, initially started in 1997, now composed of approximately 1.5 million people. When members are recruited for the panel, information is collected, including an e-mail address for contact with survey invitations, a valid postal address for sending incentive checks, birth month and year, and other descriptors such as gender and employment information. This confidential information is protected in a secure database and is used to match respondent characteristics with survey sponsor specifications. For example, in the current study, we extracted a sample frame composed only of people whose full-time professional occupation is sales.

Respondents are given incentives for participation and amounts are in keeping with the nature of any particular survey. Incentives take the form of a mailed check or, if preferred by the respondent, donation to a charity of his or her choosing. The company adheres to professional codes of ethics outlined by the American Marketing Association and the Marketing Research Association, and panel members are free to opt out of membership at any time for any reason. Data quality assurance processes included separate e-mail
invitations for each study, security measures to ensure only prerecruited members participate, one answer per e-mail address, and no reentry to the survey system if not passing screening qualifications. The proprietary survey administration system also checks for “straight-line” answers and embeds “attention questions” in every survey to make sure respondents are not just “speeding through” a survey. Those bases for disqualification help to ensure data integrity in the final respondent data set.

Our respondents were 501 salespeople from this database with an average of 10.3 years of sales experience (standard deviation [SD] = 5.3). The sample included a well-balanced group of females (53.1 percent) and males (46.9 percent) from diverse ethnic backgrounds—Caucasian (87.2 percent), African American (5.2 percent), Asian (3.0 percent), and Hispanic (2.8 percent). Respondent ages were 18–24 (4.4 percent), 25–34 (21.2 percent), 35–49 (46.5 percent), 50–54 (14.6 percent), and 55 and older (13.4 percent). Education levels were completed high school (14.0 percent), some college or post–high school education (42.7 percent), college graduate (36.7 percent), and postgraduate education (6.6 percent). Household incomes were less than $25,000 (9.4 percent), $25,000 to less than $50,000 (29.1 percent), $50,000 to less than $75,000 (27.3 percent), $75,000 to $100,000 (21.0 percent), more than $100,000 (13.21 percent).

Regarding their sales jobs specifically, our respondents worked in a variety of industries, including insurance, health care, manufacturing, financial services, technology, consumer products, business services, and others. Participants report spending over 66 percent of their work time in direct contact with customers, performing diverse selling jobs, including retail selling (37.9 percent), consultative or relationship selling (25.5 percent), new business selling (12.4 percent), and key account selling (9.2 percent). Commissions as a percent of income for this sample ranged from 0 percent to 100 percent, averaging approximately 26 percent of total compensation (SD = 36.2).

We compared various demographic groups for differences with respect to the construct measures in our model. Summative scale values were computed on the constructs (Hair et al. 2006), and these values were compared in one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) models to test for potential demographic differences. No significant differences were observed on any of the model constructs for gender, education, or ethnicity. With respect to age, a significant ANOVA was observed for one model variable—customer-directed extra-role behaviors (F(4,496) = 4.66, p < 0.01). Post hoc tests indicate that those 18 to 24 years old show significantly lower mean extra-role performance (mean [M] = 5.27) than each of the over-25 age groups (means range from 5.88 to 6.33). Thus, among some 32 demographic comparisons, 31 were nonsignificant.

### Measures and Measure Assessment

Appendix Table A1 describes the constructs used in this study. **Servant leadership** was measured with 14 items from Ehrhart (2004). As Ehrhart asserts, this scale captures seven key characteristics of servant leaders:1 (1) forming relationships with subordinates, (2) empowering subordinates, (3) helping subordinates grow and succeed, (4) behaving ethically, (5) having conceptual skills, (6) putting subordinates first, and (7) creating value for those outside the organization. **Customer orientation** was measured with four items from Saxe and Weitz’s (1982) scale. The four items selected were those with the highest factor loadings reported in Martin and Bush’s (2006) study. Using all items from the original instrument was deemed unnecessary because the customer-orientation construct is unidimensional (Bergkvist and Rossiter 2007). **Customer-directed extra-role performance** was assessed with four items from Netemeyer, Maxham, and Pulig’s (2005) scale that were slightly adapted for study context. Robinson et al.’s (2002) five-item scale was used to measure adaptive selling. Evans et al.’s (2007) instrument was used to measure outcome performance. **Job satisfaction** (three items) and **job stress** (four items) were measured with scales found in Netemeyer, Brashear-Alejandro, and Boles (2004). **Organizational commitment** was measured with three items from Speier and Venkatessh (2002). Finally, sales experience was measured with a single item: “How many total years have you been in sales?” Table 1 shows the correlation structure of the measures.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to examine the properties of the latent variables (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). The parameters of the eight latent construct CFA model were estimated using the maximum likelihood method, CALIS-Procedural SAS 9.1.3. Results suggest a good fit ($\chi^2 = 2.174$, degrees of freedom [df] = 829; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.057, CI$\alpha$ = 0.054 to 0.060; comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.94; normed fit index [NFI] = 0.91; Bollen’s nonnormed index [NNI] = 0.94). Results also showed that all indicator loadings were significant at $\alpha = 0.01$, thus providing validity evidence in favor of the items used to represent the constructs. Reliability was assessed with Cronbach’s $\alpha$ and the composite reliability ($\rho_c$). As shown in Appendix Table A1, both statistics are above 0.7, which provides evidence of adequate reliability (Gerbing and Anderson 1988). In addition, average variance extracted statistics ($\rho_v$) were above the desirable 0.6 level (Diamantopoulos and Sigauw 2000).

Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) approach was used to assess discriminant validity. A test of confidence intervals of factor correlations showed that none of the 95 percent confidence intervals of the factor correlations included one. Also, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the factors is greater than squared correlations for all pairs of factors.
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<th>CDERP</th>
<th>OP</th>
<th>JS</th>
<th>OC</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership (SL)</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Orientation (CO)</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive Selling (AS)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.61**</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer-Directed Extra-Role Performance (CDERP)</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.62**</td>
<td>0.52**</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Performance (OP)</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td>0.57**</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction (JS)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.52**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment (OC)</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.67**</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.70**</td>
<td>0.93</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (ST)</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-0.18**</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.39**</td>
<td>-0.22**</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Experience (SE)</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>-0.16**</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (female = 2, male = 1)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Cronbach alphas are shown on the matrix diagonal. Two-tailed, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01.
Structural Model

The maximum likelihood method, CALIS-Procedure of SAS 9.1.3 was used to test the relationships shown in Figure 1. The moderating effect of sales experience on the relationship between servant leadership (SL) and experience (E) was assessed by forming an interaction term from the corresponding variables (SL * E). This procedure is preferred to the alternative group comparison method because the moderator is not arbitrarily partitioned (Rigdon, Schumacker, and Wothke 1998). This method is also preferred to regression-based tests because the measurement error from the latent variables is taken into consideration (Rigdon, Schumacker, and Wothke 1998). Ultimately, this method renders fewer Type 1 errors (Rigdon, Schumacker, and Wothke 1998). The SL and E predictors were standardized in computing the interaction term to avoid multicollinearity (Wood and Erickson 1998).

Common Method Bias

Researchers have long shown that part of the shared variance of construct relationships can be explained by the use of the same method (Cote and Buckley 1987). Common method bias threatens the validity of study findings because it can either inflate or attenuate correlations among constructs, thus leading to significant findings in the absence of true relationships or insignificant findings when true relationships exist (Williams and Brown 1994). To address this issue, we allowed all indicators to load on their theoretical construct as well as on a latent common methods factor (Podsakoff et al. 2003). This procedure allows researchers to control for method bias because the response variance of the responses is partitioned into its three components—trait, method, and random error (Podsakoff et al. 2003). This method has been used in previous studies using self-reported measures (e.g., Carson 2007; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001).

Model Fit

Results of the structural model shown in Figure 1 (Model 1) indicate a good fit with the data ($\chi^2 = 1,789$, df = 874; RMSEA = 0.046, CI$_{90\%}$ 0.043 to 0.049; CFI = 0.96; NFI = 0.93; Bollen’s NNI = 0.96). For comparison purposes, we also estimated a structural model without the common method factor (see Table 2, Model 2). Results also indicate a good fit with the data ($\chi^2 = 2,177$, df = 917, $p < 0.01$; RMSEA = 0.052, CI$_{90\%}$ 0.050 to 0.055; CFI = 0.95; NFI = 0.91; Bollen’s NNI = 0.95). A comparison of the two models indicates that adding the common method factor results in a statistically significant reduction in $\chi^2$ ($\Delta \chi^2 = 388$, $\Delta$df = 43, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that there was a significant improvement in model fit when the model controls for the common method factor.

Hypotheses Testing

The $t$-values and signs of the standardized coefficients of the model represented in Figure 1 were used for hypothesis testing. Table 2 summarizes the hypothesized relationships, structural path coefficients, and the corresponding $t$-values. As shown in Table 2, common method bias changed the magnitude of the observed relationships—either attenuating or inflating the standardized paths (Williams and Brown 1994), ultimately altering the proportions of variance explained by the model. However, this impact did not alter the outcome of our hypotheses tests.

We anticipated a direct impact of servant leadership on customer orientation, customer-directed extra-role performance, and outcome performance. Results indicate that servant leadership positively affected customer orientation (H1: $\beta$ = 0.13, $p < 0.05$). This effect is stronger when the salesperson is inexperienced (H5: $\beta_{SL*E} = –0.14$, $p < 0.05$). Contrary to our expectations, we found that the effects of servant leadership on outcome performance (H3: $\beta$ = 0.05, $p > 0.1$) and customer-directed extra-role performance (H2: $\beta$ = 0.03, $p > 0.1$) were nonsignificant. However, as will be shown later, servant leadership affects these constructs indirectly through its significant influence on customer orientation.

Experienced salespeople have higher levels of customer orientation (H4: $\beta$ = 0.10, $p < 0.05$). As expected, customer orientation had a direct effect on adaptive selling (H8: $\beta$ = 0.65, $p < 0.01$) and customer-directed extra-role performance (H9: $\beta$ = 0.44, $p < 0.01$). Customer-directed extra-role performance had a positive effect on outcome performance (H10: $\beta$ = 0.31, $p < 0.01$). Our hypothesis about the direct effect of customer orientation on outcome performance did not hold (H6: $\beta$ = –0.06, $p > 0.1$). Yet adaptive selling had a significant impact on outcome performance (H7: $\beta$ = 0.41, $p < 0.1$). Taken together, our findings show that customer orientation affects performance indirectly through adaptive selling and customer-directed extra-role performance. This is in line with Franke and Park (2006), who found that adaptive selling fully mediates the impact of customer orientation on performance.

Regarding our control variables, results also confirm earlier findings that job attitudes, job stress, and sales experience mediate the effect of the leader on outcome performance (see Figure 2). This brings additional support to the notion that sales leaders get things done in organizations because they help to create a low-stress environment in which salespeople display positive job attitudes. Yet our findings also show that servant leadership may additionally affect what happens in the market, during salesperson’s interactions with the customers. Specifically, our findings show that servant leaders are also able to affect salesperson’s performance through complex chains-of-effects that involve customer orientation, customer-oriented extra-role performance, and adaptive selling.
A revised model was built by removing all nonsignificant paths from the model shown in Figure 1. The revised model (Model 3) has a close fit with the data ($p = 0.99$) — $\chi^2 = 1.791$, df = 874; RMSEA = 0.046, CI$_{90\%}$ = 0.043 to 0.049; CFI = 0.96; NFI = 0.93; Bollen’s NNI = 0.96). Although the elimination of four paths rendered similar fit indices ($\Delta\chi^2 = 2$, $\Delta$df = 4, $p > 0.10$), this model was retained in lieu of parsimony. The model shown in Figure 2 further supports the idea that servant leadership affects salesperson’s well-being, and also influences salesperson’s approach to customers. These factors ultimately lead to higher performance—as shown in Table 2, the model explains a sizable amount of variance in outcome performance ($R^2 = 0.39$).

**DISCUSSION**

This paper represents a first empirical examination of the relevance of servant leadership to sales force research. In trying to understand how sales leaders influence salespeople to succeed with customers, servant leadership was a logical construct to test. Servant leadership is a style that emphasizes genuine care and concern for others. In selling organizations, this concern involves multiple stakeholders, including investors, customers, and the growth and development of followers, in this case, the salesperson. Thus, not only does servant leadership logically foster the development and maintenance of positive relationships between manager and subordinate...
but also something of this concern for the welfare of others should be “taught and/or caught” by salespeople and carried over into concern for the welfare of their customers. Thus, we posited that other-focused care and concern in good relationships between salespeople and their customers is enhanced by the existence of other-focused care and concern in good relationships between those same salespeople and their servant leader managers. This brings further support and additional insight to the notion that employees who work for firms that provide a positive work climate subsequently provide superior service to customers (e.g., Guenzi, Pardo, and Georges 2007; Netemeyer, Maxham, and Pullig 2005).

Our moderation analysis reveals that the impact of servant leadership on customer orientation is greater for less-experienced salespeople. Less-experienced salespeople likely need more guidance, organizational socialization, and mentoring while “learning the ropes” early in their professional tenure. Servant leaders, with their genuine care and concern for the welfare of their salespeople, may tune in to these needs and serve and help in ways that substantially matter in early salesperson experience. Another reason this greater impact may occur earlier on is because “sales managers have more contact with inexperienced reps than experienced reps; so sales managers will play a bigger role in their professional lives” (Russ...
inexperienced salespeople are more likely to engage in selling-oriented practices that prioritize achievement of short-term sales gains even if customer relationships are compromised (e.g., Wachner, Plouffe, and Grégoire 2009). That is antithetical to the vital organizational goal of fostering strong durable customer relationships. Our results indicate servant leadership reinforces more appropriate organizational socialization and helps to internalize critical facets of initial sales training and orientation for new sales recruits. One reason this positive effect may occur is that younger salespeople may have heightened concern and motivation about their personal growth. Perhaps the perception that a servant leader genuinely desires to move them to self-actualization is evident. Experienced salespeople may be more focused on the importance of organizational success through long-term relationships with customers. Experienced salespeople may operate by the well-known heuristic that it is easier and more profitable to keep an existing customer than it is to have to gain a new customer, and thus already may have internalized the importance of customer orientation. These principles, being more ingrained, could diminish, but not eliminate, the impact of servant leadership on the customer focus of more experienced salespeople.

Regarding other findings, salespeople who are higher in adaptability perform at higher levels than their less-adaptable counterparts. However, no such relationship was found for customer orientation. Perhaps this is due to the fact that customer orientation is a more cerebral oriented concept. It represents an idea or an orientation but is much akin to strategy. It is a process that conceptually focuses on the well-being of the customer. Adaptability, on the other hand, suggests more actionable behavioral steps. Both are highly correlated with each other, but the behaviors of salespeople directly lead to improved performance. Salespeople who embrace a customer orientation but do not implement customer-focused actions are, perhaps, mired in the planning trap (Jaramillo et al. 2007). Effective plans must have effective implementation. Customers benefit more from the actions of salespeople rather than their thought process. We submit both are necessary, but the customer acts on what he or she can see. And, as demonstrated by their dependency in our model, it is also true that adaptive behaviors are more likely to result from a more customer-focused mind-set.

Customer-directed extra-role performance was also found to be related to increased sales performance. This is a further mechanism by which the servant leader—customer orientation link plays itself out. Servant leaders instill greater customer orientation, resulting in stronger customer-directed extra-role behaviors that ultimately produce higher performance. This finding also attests to the important power of leadership-driven enhancement of stronger relationships between salespeople and customers. Because servant leaders go “the extra mile” for the betterment of their followers, perhaps salespeople who benefit from this type of leadership feel compelled to reciprocate and act similarly toward their customers. They do so intelligently, by first attending to the importance of understanding, then meeting customer wants and needs—a mind-set augmented by the attitudes and actions of servant leaders. Subsequently, they go above and beyond the call of duty for their customers.

Finally, much prior research is supported in this study, which we merely note here. More experienced salespeople feel less job stress (e.g., Behrman and Perreault 1984), exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment (e.g., Siguaw and Honeycutt 1995), are more satisfied with their jobs (e.g., Oliver and Anderson 1994), and perform at higher levels (Franke and Park 2006). Servant leadership influences these relationships in that it was found to relate to lesser levels of job stress, higher levels of job satisfaction, and greater organizational commitment. No direct relationship was found between servant leadership and performance, but there were strong indirect relationships through these job attitudes and stress variables. In short, it seems that the well-being of the salesperson is conducive to a variety of positive job outcomes, and a servant leadership style can play a key role in enhancing the well-being of salespeople.

In sum, our study reveals that a leadership style new to sales research—servant leadership—conceptually and empirically relates to sales success in at least two ways: by creating genuine customer focus and a related chain of associated positive outcomes, and by contributing to higher levels of performance-enhancing salesperson well-being.

Limitations and Future Research

This research is the first empirical study linking servant leadership to critical sales force outcomes. It is exploratory, and further research is needed to address its limitations. Study results rely on a single sample from a massive online panel. Although the sample was carefully selected by the provider and represents an array of industries, results may not be generalizable. Also, because the model constructs were assessed with self-reported measures, study findings may be partially driven by common method bias (Cote and Buckley 1987). Although we controlled for common method bias by allowing all scale items to load on their corresponding constructs and a common method factor (Podsakoff et al. 2003), future research with dyadic or triadic data is warranted. Certainly, what salespeople feel about themselves and their managers is important. However, it would...
be useful to integrate managers’ and customers’ responses to assess similarities and differences.

Our study did not compare the impact of servant leadership on organizational outcomes relative to other leadership styles such as transactional or transformational leadership. Future research is needed to assess which leadership style has a greater effect on the sales force. Even though there are overlapping components between the two leadership styles, the leadership styles do have distinguishing elements of uniqueness (Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmeko 2004). On those bases, Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmeko (2004) assert that servant leadership may be more effective than transformational leadership in nonprofit, volunteer, and religious organizations. In these organizations, people seek opportunities for personal growth, nurturing, and healing. In more dynamic environments in which people are empowered with greater responsibilities and encouraged to take risks, they assert that transformational leadership may be more effective.

In addition, because a goal of the study was to investigate the overall impact of servant leadership on the selling organization, servant leadership was treated as a unidimensional construct. This was statistically supported in our data. However, the servant leadership literature has identified important subdimensions of the construct; namely, showing concern for others, creating value for the community, possessing organizational knowledge, empowering employees, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates’ goals first, behaving ethically, putting emphasis on human relationships, and willingness to sacrifice one’s aspirations (e.g., Liden et al. 2008). Future research is needed to examine the effect of these individual components of servant leadership. This might represent a prudent focus of study given the seeming overlap of many of the leadership styles that have been proffered in the literature (Ingram et al. 2005).

Finally, servant leadership may also impact other sales force outcomes such as ethical climate and the quality of long-term relationships with customers. As Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander (2009) assert, sales leaders play a fundamental role in setting the tone for organizational climate. Deeter-Schmelz, Goebel, and Kennedy (2008) report that sales leaders have a significant effect on the process by which salespeople initiate, develop, and expand customer relationships. Thus, future research examining the impact of servant leadership on ethics and long-term customer relationship quality is warranted.

NOTE

1. We performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to assess the dimensionality of the servant leadership scale (Hair et al. 2006). EFA results indicate that one single factor captures a significant amount of common variance (over 75 percent). Also, a confirmatory factor analysis shows that a model where all items load on a single factor adequately explains the variance among the servant leadership components. In view of this, the scale was treated as unidimensional.

REFERENCES


## Appendix Table A1

### Measure Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Factor Loading ($\lambda^*$)</th>
<th>Reliability ($\alpha; \rho_c$)</th>
<th>Average Variance Extracted ($\rho_v$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership (Ehrhart 2004)</td>
<td>0.98; 0.97</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My department manager spends the time to form quality relationships with department employees.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager creates a sense of community among department employees.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager's decisions are influenced by department employees' input.</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager tries to reach consensus among department employees on important decisions.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager is sensitive to department employees' responsibilities outside the workplace.</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My department manager makes the personal development of department employees a priority.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager holds department employees to high ethical standards.</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager does what he or she promises to do.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager balances concern for day-to-day details with projections for the future.</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My department manager displays wide-ranging knowledge and interests in finding solutions to work problems.</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager makes me feel like I work with him or her, not for him or her.</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager works hard at finding ways to help others be the best they can be.</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager encourages department employees to be involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department manager emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Orientation (Saxe and Weitz 1982)</td>
<td>0.93; 0.93</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good salesperson has to have the customer’s best interests in mind.</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to achieve my goals by satisfying customers.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to find what kinds of products would be most helpful to a customer.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to give customers an accurate expectation of what the product will do for them.</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer-Directed Extra-Role Performance (Netemeyer, Maxham, and Pullig 2005)</td>
<td>0.95; 0.95</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I go above and beyond the “call of duty” when serving the customers.</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to go out of my way to make a customer satisfied.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I voluntarily assist customers even if it means going beyond job requirements.</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often help customers with problems beyond what is expected or required.</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive Selling (Robinson et al. 2002)</td>
<td>0.91; 0.92</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel that my sales approach is not working, I can easily change to another approach.</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to experiment with different sales approaches.</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am very flexible in the selling approach I use.</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches.</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to understand how one customer differs from another.</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Performance (Evans et al. 2007)</td>
<td>0.92; 0.92</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to your company’s acquiring a good market share.</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making sales of those products with the highest profit margins.</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating a high level of dollar sales.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quickly generating sales of new company products.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying major accounts in your territory and selling to them.</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding sales targets and objectives during the year.</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Factor Loading ($\lambda^*$)</td>
<td>Reliability ($\alpha; \rho_c$)</td>
<td>Average Variance Extracted ($\rho_v$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction (Netemeyer, Brashear-Alejandro, and Boles 2004)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.88; 0.88</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All in all, how satisfied are you with your present line of work?</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All things considered (i.e., paid promotions, supervisors, coworkers, etc.), how satisfied are you with your present line of work?</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a great sense of personal satisfaction from my line of work.</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (Netemeyer, Brashear-Alejandro, and Boles 2004)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.90; 0.90</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job tends to directly affect my health.</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the end of the day, my job leaves me “stressed out.”</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems associated with work have kept me awake at night.</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel fidgety or nervous because of my job.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment (Speier and Venkatesh 2002)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.93; 0.93</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization.</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a sense of ownership for this organization rather than just being an employee.</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Factor loadings from the measurement model ($\lambda$) are standardized and significant at $\alpha = 0.01$. 