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Sales Managers' Motivation to Coach Salespeople: an exploration using expectancy theory

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Abstract

Sales managers can supervise and help salespeople achieve their performance goals by using two types of behaviours: 'coaching' or 'directive' behaviour. As companies can be interested in promoting coaching in order to develop their human resources, they can find useful to understand which factors affect sales managers' motivation to coach rather than to "direct". Building on Vroom's Expectancy Theory, we develop a theoretical model exploring sales managers' motivation to show a coaching behaviour. Organizational implications are drawn from the model.

Keywords: Sales coaching, Sales Managers, Motivation, Expectancy Theory

Introduction

In a time when organizations face increasing global competition and they struggle to maintain their market positions, the use of managerial tools that can help their sales representatives increase performance has become extremely important. Coaching, in particular, has been identified as a critical managerial role that every sales manager should employ in order to develop the sales representatives and increase their performance (Deeter-Schmelz *et al*, 2002; Deeter-Schmelz *et al*, 2008). However, sales managers do not coach all the time: they also conduct people through the use of directive behaviours, such as establishing goals, controlling, evaluating and rewarding salespeople (Honeycutt, 2002; Ingram *et al*, 2005).

As organizations are interested in promoting coaching behaviour in order to develop their sales forces and increase their long-term performance, they also need to be interested in understanding sales managers' motivation to coach and which variables affect coaching behaviour. The goal of this paper is to explore sales managers' motivation to coach, and to identify what organizations can do to increase this motivation.

Scholars agree that managers vary in their motivation to coach employees (Heslin *et al*, 2006), but little scientific research has explored this subject. Heslin *et al* (2006) conducted one of the few studies about managers' motivation to coach based on individual differences. They speculated that managers' implicit person theories (IPT) about the malleability of employee's personal attributes, affect their motivation to coach. They showed that managers believing that human attributes are innate and unalterable are less motivated to provide developmental coaching; on the contrary, managers believing that personal attributes can be developed showed more motivation to coach their employees.

In addition, the literature base on coaching and managerial coaching has been criticized for being predominantly practice-driven and guru-led, and lacking solid theoretical basis (Ellinger *et al*, 2008; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004). In order to address our goal and, at the same time, make a contribution to the development of coaching theory, we build on Expectancy Theory (Oliver 1974) and propose a theoretical model that helps understand sales managers' motivation.

Coaching has been largely associated with a one-to-one process of helping others to improve, to grow and to get to a higher level of performance, by providing focused feedback, encouragement and raising awareness (Corcoran *et al*, 1995; Hargrove, 1995; Orth *et al*, 1987; Richardson, 1996; Whitmore, 1985). Coaching enables and empowers people, and it opens new opportunities for learning through which improved performance is attained (Ellinger and Bostrom, 1999; Ellinger *et al*, 2003; Evered and Selman, 1989).

Furthermore, scholars have suggested that coaching should be used by sales managers as a primary development tool focused on the individual development of salespersons (Ingram *et al*, 2002) and that they should spend more time identifying skill deficiencies and coaching subordinates to improve their effectiveness (Ingram *et al*, 2005). In recent scientific studies, coaching skills have been identified by sales managers and sales representatives as one of the most important attributes that effective sales managers must have (Deeter-Schmelz *et al*, 2002; Deeter-Schmelz *et al*, 2008). According to these exploratory studies, sales coaching would impact sales representative development, which would ultimately impact sales representative job performance and customer relationships development.

By contrast, early research on sales management has identified supervisory feedback as a useful mechanism for controlling salespeople's performance (Jaworski and Kohli, 1991). Through the use of negative feedback the sales manager can help clarify salesperson's role; through positive feedback he can impact salespersons' satisfaction and performance (Jaworski and Kohli, 1991).

For the purpose of this paper it is useful to understand what the sales manager normally does when he or she "gives feedback". As an example, we have extracted the following two items from Jaworski and Kohli's (1991: 200) measurement instrument: 1) "I find my manager's feedback *on how to improve sales* very useful"; and 2) "I disregard *my manager's suggestions on how to improve sales*". From these two items we can deduce that, when giving feedback, the sales manager: 1) tells the sales person what is wrong; and 2) tells him what to do to remedy the situation. We call this type of behaviour "directive behaviour", as the sales manager identifies both the problem and the solution, with the salesperson performing only a passive role in this process.

Giving feedback was also identified as one of the constructs of coaching (Rich, 1998). However, practitioners and scholars also proposed that, in a coaching intervention, it is more effective to ask questions to assist sales people to think through the problems, raise awareness of their own flaws, and propose solutions and changes, than to tell them what to do (Richardson, 1996; Whitmore, 1985; Yukl and Lapsinger, 2004). Accordingly, recent research has defined the coaching construct as conformed by eight different behaviours, including *providing feedback*, *soliciting feedback from employees* and *questioning to encourage employees to think through issues themselves* as distinctive behaviours (Ellinger *et al*, 2003). Therefore, providing coaching proposes an active role to the salespeople as they are also responsible for identifying the problem and the corresponding solutions.

As suggested above, giving feedback is one of the behaviours that sales managers show when providing coaching; but, to be considered as *coaching* they must show other complementary behaviours. So, every time that they provide coaching, they also provide feedback; the reciprocal, however, is not true. Not every time that they give feedback, they provide coaching. Thus, when the sales manager has to interact with the salesperson to correct a situation, he can choose to either 1) act with a "directive behaviour", telling the salesperson what the problem is and what to do about that; or 2) act with a "coaching behaviour", asking questions and helping the salesperson to think through the issues and come up with a solution.

This dichotomy has been recently explored in a cross national study; findings show that managers using authoritarian, directive, autocratic or dictatorial behaviours will inhibit themselves to conduct effective coaching processes (Ellinger *et al*, 2008; Hamlin *et al*, 2006). Although effective and ineffective behaviours have been claimed to be an integral part within any personal relationship, they can not be performed simultaneously in any intervention; face with any situation with an employee, managers should set aside their "directive" behaviours in order to coach, or they must set aside their willingness to coach in order to assume a directive behaviour.

Thus, when faced with problematic situations, sales managers can act using a "directive" or a "coaching" behaviour towards the salespeople.

In this paper, we explore sales managers' motivation towards using a 'coaching' or a 'directive' behaviour. We present and explain a mathematical formulation to explore managers' motivation, according to personal and organizational variables. Through analysis, we try to determine the elements that affect their motivation, and the mechanisms that an organization can implement in order to increase their managers' motivation to coach. Finally, we illustrate our proposition using two brief cases and discuss the implications and limitations of the mathematical model.

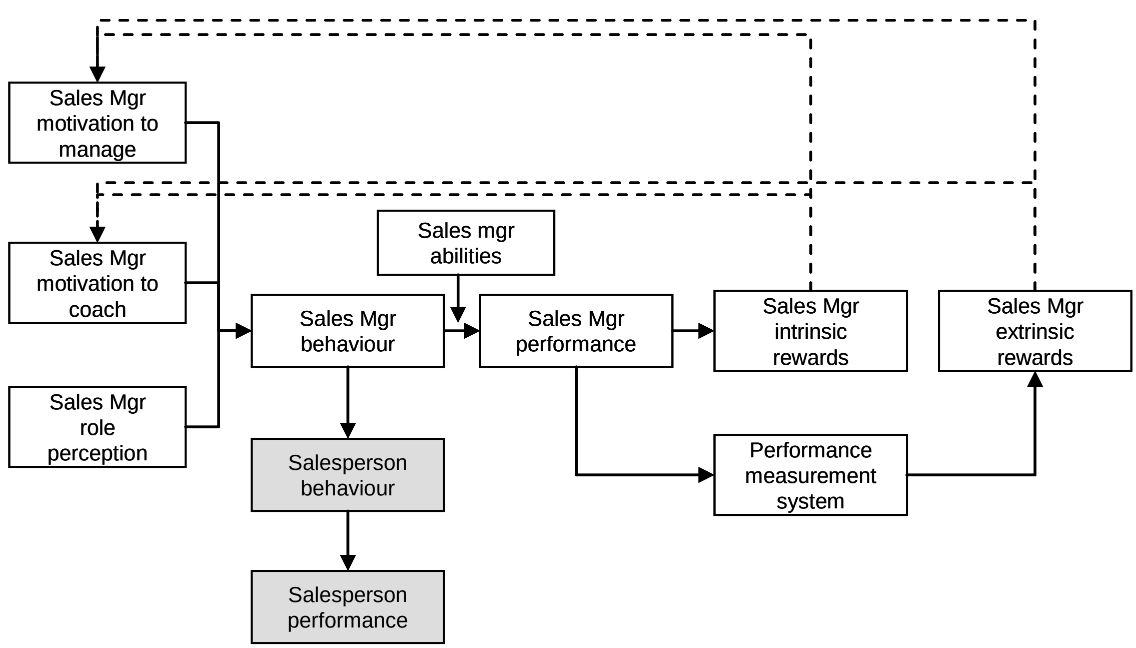
In the next section, we build on Vroom's Expectancy Theory to develop a model that can explain differences in sales managers' motivation to coach versus their motivation to direct.

Managers' Motivation and Expectancy Theory

Vroom's Expectancy Theory establishes that people will be motivated towards a certain behaviour based on three factors. First, the *expectancy* or subjective probability that this behaviour will result in the attainment of a certain level of performance; second, the *instrumentality* or perception that this level of performance will result in or block the attainment of a job related outcome; and third, the *valence* or degree of attractiveness of this job related outcome or reward (Oliver, 1974). Expectancy theory formulations have usually distinguished between extrinsic and intrinsic rewards and have considered that they have additive effects on motivation. The Porter-Lawler model, building on Vroom's theory, introduced the influence of "role perceptions" and "abilities and traits" on performance, and the existence of feedback loops after the performance and the rewards are attained (Miner, 2005).

Following the Expectancy Theory, we propose that the sales managers' motivation to coach or to direct salespeople will influence their behaviour ("Sales Mgr behaviour"); through this behaviour, they will reach a level of performance ("Sales Mgr performance"); and through this performance, they will receive the job related outcomes or rewards ("Sales Mgr intrinsic rewards" and "Sales Mgr extrinsic rewards") (Figure 1).

Figure 1: A model of Sales Manager's Motivation



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Sales managers' actions are mainly directed towards their salespeople, so their behaviour will influence salespeople's behaviour and ultimately, salespeople's performance (grey shaded boxes in Figure 1). As we are primarily concerned to study the sales managers' motivation, the salesperson's behaviour and performance are not further analyzed.

We have included in our model the sales managers' role perceptions as a direct influence to their behaviour; we speculate that, if they perceive that achieving short-term performance goals is much more/less important than developing salespeople, they will favor directive/coaching behaviour instead of coaching/directive behaviour. We have also included in the model the sales managers' abilities and traits, which moderate the relationship between their behaviour and their capacity to achieve a performance level. The scientific literature shows that managers who have received formal training in coaching are more effective and show increased ratings in specific coaching behaviours after the training (Graham *et al*, 1993).

An important role is played by the organization's performance measurement system, which measures salesperson's and sales managers' performance in order to give them the established rewards[1]. Usually, these systems measure the managers' performance through complementary measures of aggregated performance, comprising the achievement of sales goals, profits, market share, key accounts penetration and other financial ratios. In most cases, the sales managers' and the sales force's goals are aligned or, at least, partially aligned. For example, the sales managers are evaluated for achieving a global sales figure, which is the aggregate of the salesperson's individual goals. Usually, the sales managers are *also* evaluated for achieving other goals not so directly related to those of the salespeople, as for example financial ratios like ROA or ROI. Although it is less common, some systems include measures of behavioural performance for both the sales managers and the salespeople. Accordingly, through the evaluation made by the performance measurement system, the sales managers receive extrinsic rewards generated by the salespeople's performance achievements and by their own performance achievements.

The extrinsic rewards received by the sales managers will influence their motivation. If the measurement system emphasizes short term performance rewards, the managers will be more motivated to direct salespeople's behaviour towards the accomplishment of short term performance goals (greater "Sales mgr motivation to direct"). On the other side, if the measurement system emphasizes long term developmental goals, the managers will be more motivated to engage themselves in coaching processes (greater "Sales mgr motivation to coach"). These influences are shown in the upper side of the diagram (Figure 1), through the dotted lines, and are expressed by the following proposition:

> *P_1: The sales manager's motivation to coach/direct due to extrinsic rewards will be positively related to the expectancy of achieving a certain level of performance when showing a coaching/directive behaviour, the instrumentality of achieving a*

[1] In Figure 1, in order to simplify its presentation and to focus on sales managers' behaviour, only the sales managers' rewards are shown. The salesperson's rewards are omitted.

number of extrinsic rewards generated by a) the salespeople's performance achievements and b) by his/her own performance achievements, and the valence of each one of these extrinsic rewards.

In mathematical terms, the sales manager's motivation to coach due to extrinsic rewards is given by:

$$M_c^e = E_c^p \times I_c^{eo} \times V_c^{eo} + E_c^p \times I_c^{es} \times V_c^{es} \qquad \text{[Equation 1]}$$

M_c^e is the sales manager *Motivation* to *Coach*, due to *Extrinsic* rewards,

E_c^p is the *Expectancy* of achieving a level of *Performance* after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

I_c^{eo} is the *Instrumentality* of obtaining *Extrinsic* rewards due to his *Own* performance after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

V_c^{eo} is the *Valence* of the *Extrinsic* rewards obtained by his *Own* performance after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

I_c^{es} is the *Instrumentality* of obtaining *Extrinsic* rewards due to *Salespersons'* performance after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

V_c^{es} is the *Valence* of the *Extrinsic* rewards obtained due to the *Salespersons'* performance after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

And the sales manager's motivation to direct due to extrinsic rewards is given by:

$$M_d^e = E_d^p \times I_d^{eo} \times V_d^{eo} + E_d^p \times I_d^{es} \times V_d^{es} \qquad \text{[Equation 2]}$$

M_d^e is the sales manager *Motivation* to *Direct*, due to *Extrinsic* rewards,

E_d^p is the *Expectancy* of achieving a level of *Performance* after assuming a *Directive* behaviour,

I_d^{eo} is the *Instrumentality* of obtaining *Extrinsic* rewards due to his *Own* performance after assuming a *Directive* behaviour,

V_d^{eo} is the *Valence* of the *Extrinsic* rewards obtained by his *Own* performance after assuming a *Directive* behaviour,

I_d^{es} is the *Instrumentality* of obtaining *Extrinsic* rewards due to *Salespersons'* performance after assuming a *Directive* behaviour,

V_d^{es} is the *Valence* of the *Extrinsic* rewards obtained due to the *Salespersons'* performance after assuming a *Directive* behaviour, The sales managers' performance will also provide them with intrinsic rewards, which reflect their values and personal concerns. For example, a manager concerned with accomplishing short term performance goals, could find intrinsic satisfaction after having clearly indicated to the salespeople how to attack a difficult client (directive behaviour). Another manager, concerned with the development of his employees, could find intrinsic satisfaction after having maintained a coaching conversation with a salesperson in which the salesperson's self-awareness was increased. The nature and valence of these intrinsic rewards will influence sales managers' motivations. These influences are shown in the upper side of the diagram, through the dotted lines and are expressed by the following proposition:

> *P_2: The sales manager's motivation to coach/direct due to intrinsic rewards will be positively related to the expectancy of achieving a certain level of performance when showing a coaching/directive behaviour, the instrumentality of achieving a number of intrinsic rewards generated by his/her own performance achievements, and the valence of these intrinsic rewards.*

In mathematical terms, the sales manager's motivation to coach due to intrinsic rewards is given by:

$$M_c^i = E_c^p \times I_c^{io} \times V_c^{io} \qquad \text{[Equation 3]}$$

M_c^i is the sales manager *Motivation* to *Coach*, due to *Intrinsic* rewards,

E_c^p is the *Expectancy* of achieving a level of *Performance* after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

I_c^{io} is the *Instrumentality* of obtaining *Intrinsic* rewards due to his *Own* performance after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

V_c^{io} is the *Valence* of the *Intrinsic* rewards obtained by his *Own* performance after assuming a *Coaching* behaviour,

And the sales manager's motivation to direct due to intrinsic rewards is given by:

$$M_d^i = E_d^p \times I_d^{io} \times V_d^{io} \qquad \text{[Equation 4]}$$

M_d^i is the sales manager *Motivation* to *Direct*, due to *Intrinsic* rewards,

E_d^p is the *Expectancy* of achieving a level of *Performance* after assuming a *Directive* behaviour,

I_d^{io} is the *Instrumentality* of obtaining *Intrinsic* rewards due to his *Own* performance after assuming a *Directive* behaviour,

V_d^{io} is the *Valence* of the *Intrinsic* rewards obtained by his *Own* performance after assuming a *Directive* behaviour, If we add equations 1 and 3, we will obtain the sales managers' motivation towards a coaching behaviour as a function of the extrinsic rewards received due to their own performance, the ones received due to the salespeople's performance, and the intrinsic rewards (Equation 5).

$$M_c = E_c^p \times I_c^{eo} \times V_c^{eo} + E_c^p \times I_c^{es} \times V_c^{es} + E_c^p \times I_c^{io} \times V_c^{io} \qquad \text{[Equation 5]}$$

Similarly, if we add equations 2 and 4, we will obtain the sales managers' motivation towards a directive behaviour as a function of the extrinsic rewards received due to their own performance, the ones received due to the salespeople's performance, and the intrinsic rewards (Equation 6).

$$M_d = E_d^p \times I_d^{eo} \times V_d^{eo} + E_d^p \times I_d^{es} \times V_d^{es} + E_d^p \times I_d^{io} \times V_d^{io} \qquad \text{[Equation 6]}$$

In the introduction we said that sales managers are called to coach and to direct their sales people in order to achieve increasing levels of performance. We proposed that they will differ in their motivation to coach or to direct and that this motivation will be affected by different factors. As organizations can be interested in promoting sales managers' coaching behaviour, it would be useful to study the differential motivation between both behaviours and the factors that affect them. In order to continue the analysis, we subtract equations 5 and 6 term by term, to obtain equation 7:

$$M_c - M_d = E_c^p \times I_c^{eo} \times V_c^{eo} - E_d^p \times I_d^{eo} \times V_d^{eo} + E_c^p \times I_c^{es} \times V_c^{es} - E_d^p \times I_d^{es} \times V_d^{es} + E_c^p \times I_c^{io} \times V_c^{io} - E_d^p \times I_d^{io} \times V_d^{io}$$

[Equation 7]

In equation 7 we have grouped the terms that address to similar concepts. The first subtraction ($M_c - M_d$) represents the difference of the sales manager's motivation. If the result is positive (negative) that would mean that the manager is more motivated to show a coaching (directive) behaviour than a directive (coaching) behaviour towards the salespeople.

The second subtraction ($E_c^p \times I_c^{eo} \times V_c^{eo} - E_d^p \times I_d^{eo} \times V_d^{eo}$) represents the difference in the sales manager's motivation obtained through the extrinsic rewards generated by his/her own performance. If this term is positive (negative), it means that the extrinsic rewards generated by his/her own performance after a coaching behaviour are more (less) important than those obtained after a directive behaviour, and thus he/she will be more (less) prone to a coaching behaviour than to a directive one.

The third subtraction ($E_c^p \times I_c^{es} \times V_c^{es} - E_d^p \times I_d^{es} \times V_d^{es}$) represents the difference in the sales manager's motivation obtained through the extrinsic rewards generated by the salespeople's performance. If this term is positive (negative), it means that the extrinsic rewards generated by

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the salespeople's performance after a coaching behaviour are more (less) important than those obtained after a directive behaviour, and thus he/she will be more (less) prone to a coaching behaviour than to a directive one.

The last term $(E_c^p \times I_c^{io} \times V_c^{io} - E_d^p \times I_d^{io} \times V_d^{io})$ represents the difference in the sales manager's motivation obtained through the intrinsic rewards generated by his/her own performance. If this term is positive (negative), it means that the intrinsic rewards generated by his/her own performance after a coaching behaviour are more (less) important than those obtained after a directing behaviour, and thus he/she will be more (less) prone to a coaching behaviour than to a directive one.

To simplify the formulation and continue with the analysis, we will express the above mentioned differences as follows:

$$\Delta M_{c-d} = \Delta M_{c-d}^{extrinsic\_own} + \Delta M_{c-d}^{extrinsic\_salespeople} + \Delta M_{c-d}^{intrinsic} \qquad \text{[Equation 8]}$$

In equation 8 the difference in the sales manager's motivation to show a coaching rather than a directive behaviour, is expressed by the differences in his/her motivation due to the extrinsic rewards generated by his/her own performance, plus those generated by the salespeople's performance, plus the intrinsic ones.

Managerial and Organizational Implications

In the Introduction, we established two goals for this paper: 1) to explore sales managers' motivation to coach and 2) to identify what organizations can do to increase this motivation. To tackle our goals, we selected a largely accepted and institutionalized theory (Miner, 2005) and presented a model explaining sales managers' differential motivation towards a coaching or a directive behaviour. Then, we developed a mathematical formulation and arrived at equation 8, which explains the sales managers' differential motivation based on three factors: the extrinsic rewards that the manager receives due to the salespeople's performance, those due to his/her own performance, and the intrinsic rewards. In this section, we will use each of the three terms of equation 8 to identify what organizations can do to increase sales managers' motivation towards one behaviour or the other:

Extrinsic rewards due to salespeople's performance ($\Delta M_{c-d}^{extrinsic\_salespeople}$*)*

Most companies focus their performance measurement systems in outcome measures, as the achievement of sales quota, sales goals, or profits (Fang *et al*, 2004), and tie to them the sales managers' and salespeople's contingent (extrinsic) rewards. For our analysis, it is useful to further distinguish whether the organization's focus is on short or long term rewards for their sales managers.

When organizations focus on short term rewards we have identified two scenarios: 1) part of the sales managers' monthly remuneration is tied to the salespeople's sales results or 2) the sales managers' monthly remuneration is fixed, but there is a strong organizational pressure for achieving monthly sales quota. According to the theory, the individual will be motivated to behave in a way that will result in the attainment of a desirable outcome (monthly variable remuneration) or block undesirable outcomes (organization's disapproval for underperformance). In consequence, in any of these scenarios the sales managers will be strongly motivated to achieve the monthly sales quota, rather than developing their representatives. Thus, when organizations focus on short term rewards, sales managers will be more motivated towards a directive behaviour, as this behaviour has the most direct impact on short term performance achievement.

In mathematical terms, when organizations focus on short term rewards, this term in equation 8 is strongly negative, thus indicating that the manager's differential motivation towards a coaching or a directive behaviour is strongly biased to the second one.

On the contrary, if the organization focus is on long term results, there is not such immediate pressure for achieving monthly sales quota; as long as the annual goals are achieved, sales managers have a greater latitude of behaviour towards coaching or directing. The manager's differential motivation is not biased by these external rewards, the mathematical term is neither negative nor positive, and thus it does not affect his/her behaviour.

Extrinsic rewards due to sales manager's own performance ($\Delta M_{c-d}^{extrinsic\_own}$ ***)***

As we have seen in the previous section, when the organization is focused on short term results, the achievement of monthly goals by the sales force is used as a proxy for evaluating and rewarding the manager's performance. In consequence, the extrinsic rewards due to his/her own performance will correlate with those generated by the salespeople's performance; thus, when organizations are strongly focus on the short term, the salespeople's performance will have a *double effect* and it will increase sales managers' motivation towards a directive behaviour.

However, when the focus is on the long term, organizations usually establish additional measures to evaluate the managers' performance. These measures can comprise 1) global sales activity figures (including quota achievement, market share, profits, margins, client retention and satisfaction, financial ratios and others), and 2) manager behavioural measures.

In the first case, the measures try to evaluate the sales manager's ability, good judgment and criteria when conducting the sales force towards a complex goal. However, the particular behaviours that the manager has adopted in the goal pursuit are not reflected by these measures. In the case of organizations using only these types of measures, the mathematical term will neither be positive nor negative, and thus it does not affect the manager's motivation towards one behaviour or the other.

In the second case, the behavioural measures can explicitly evaluate specific behaviours, as for example, coaching and developmental behaviours. When these behaviours are explicitly addressed, for example in the annual performance appraisal, the mathematical term will be positive, thus motivating the managers towards a coaching behaviour.

Intrinsic rewards ($\Delta M_{c-d}^{\mathrm{int}\,rinsic}$ ***)***

The last term in equation 8 considers the intrinsic rewards, which reflects the sales managers' personal values and concerns. This term seems more personal, and out of the organization influence capabilities. However, it was proposed that in a hierarchical structure imbued by a coaching culture, middle managers will provide and receive coaching at the same time, thus modifying their behaviour through social behaviour modeling (Agarwal *et al*, 2006).

Additionally, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) posits that the sales manager's social self will reflect the characteristics of the groups to which he/she belongs. Accordingly, if the organizational culture promotes and values coaching behaviour, sales managers might align their values and concerns with this culture, thus looking for intrinsic rewards when acting as coaches. In that case, the last term in equation 8 will be positive, promoting sales manager's motivation to coach.

On the contrary, if the organizational culture uses coaching, but puts a stronger emphasis on the achievement of short term performance outcomes, sales managers will find greater intrinsic rewards when showing directive behaviour and acting "as a boss". In this later case, the last term in the equation will become negative, thus reinforcing the sales manager's motivation to direct.

Case Studies

In order to illustrate the previous development, we would like to briefly present the cases of two organizations, and their differences regarding managerial rewards and behaviours.

Company A is the branch of an American pharmaceutical company, located at one of the key countries in South America. Within the company, one of the newly-created divisions implemented an internal coaching program and kept it running for several years. The company has an important focus on sales, and measures each division's achievements compared to a previously established sales budget, but accepts monthly variations as long as the annual figures are achieved. Salespeople are paid with a mixed (fixed+variable) remuneration system, where the fixed part is a substantially important percentage of the total remuneration, and the variable part is calculated as a percent of the total division's monthly sales. Divisional sales managers are compelled to be "on budget", and they are evaluated annually through a performance appraisal led by the local CEO.

When the division was created, the manager recruited technicians for the salesperson positions; these people had a strong technical background but little sales experience, and the manager committed himself to use coaching as a developmental human resource strategy.

For five years this division kept the coaching program running. During those years, they consistently made their annual sales figures; the salespeople developed and later took over higher positions on other divisions. During the sixth year, the country suffered one of their periodic economic and political crises, the organization was severely downsized and the division dismantled.

If we use equation 8 to analyze this case, we can see that 1) the sales manager neither received a strong and constant pressure for achieving monthly quota nor was evaluated for these short term achievements (first and second terms neither positive nor negative); 2) he was convinced that coaching was the better behaviour that he could use to develop his team and achieve long term performance, and was happy for being allowed to use this behaviour (positive third term). As a result, the addition of the three terms gives a positive figure, thus reinforcing sales manager motivation to coach.

In the second case, company B is the branch of an American industrial company, located at the same country as company A. Company B uses coaching as a current managerial behaviour, and encourages and supports their managers to periodically coach their salespeople. However, company B has a strong sales culture, and there is a strong emphasis on achieving monthly sales goals. In this culture, even though sales managers use coaching as a current managerial activity, when they are urged to close sales they promptly abandon coaching and jump to directive behaviours or go out to sell with the salesperson. The company makes evaluations of sales managers coaching behaviours as part of their annual performance appraisals, but the effect is minimized by the strong cultural emphasis put into monthly results.

According to equation 8, we can see this time that: 1) sales managers receive a strong pressure for achieving monthly quota, which increases at the end of each month (first term strongly negative); 2) even though the managers' remuneration is fixed, they are motivated to avoid the negative consequences of not achieving the monthly results (second term strongly negative); 3) peer pressure influences managers values and intrinsic rewards through social modeling and influence (third term negative). As a result, the addition of the three terms gives a strongly negative figure that reinforces managers' motivation to jump to a directive behaviour when results count.

Conclusions and Limitations

Sales managers are under increasing pressure to lead their sales forces towards the achievement of performance results. Practitioners and scholars propose that sales managers should use coaching behaviours as well as other more traditional directive behaviours in order to pursue

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these results. As sales managers can vary in their motivation to coach, organizations are interested in identifying what they can do to increase this motivation.

Based on Expectancy Theory, we presented a theoretical framework and proposed two propositions that led us to a mathematical formulation revealing three factors affecting sales managers' motivation (Equation 8). The main conclusions of our discussion are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Factors affecting sales managers' motivation

Organization focus	Extrinsic rewards due to managers' own performance ($\Delta M_{c-d}^{extrinsic\_own}$)	Extrinsic rewards due to salespeople's performance ($\Delta M_{c-d}^{extrinsic\_salespeople}$)	Intrinsic rewards ($\Delta M_{c-d}^{intrinsic}$)	Managers' differential motivation (ΔM_{c-d})
Short term	strongly negative (directive behaviour)	strongly negative (directive behaviour)	strongly negative (directive behaviour)	strongly negative (directive behaviour)
Long term - Outcomes	neutral	neutral	variable	variable
Long term - Behaviours	positive (coaching behaviour)	neutral	variable	positive (coaching behaviour)

As we have shown using two cases, equation 8 can be used to analyze and understand different scenarios and current situations at organizations. The equation proved to be useful also in the analysis of difficult situations, as it was the case of company B; in this case, the managers use coaching regularly but they drop it when pressure for results increases. Equation 8 helped to understand why.

Additionally, we believe that equation 8 can be also used as a diagnostic tool; any coach can easily pose a few questions to a prospective employer, and diagnose if his future intervention has a chance of being successful or not.

In order to develop our model and draw some conclusions, we made some assumptions that can potentially limit our proposal. The first assumption concerns the level of analysis that we have chosen. Yammarino (1997) identified four relevant levels of analysis models regarding sales management research: whole groups, group parts, whole dyads and individual differences. To develop our model, we assumed a "whole groups" level of analysis, meaning that we considered that the sales manager would display a homogeneous behaviour towards all members of his group. Sales managers' behaviours and motivation can also vary from group to group (differences between sales managers) as they can weight differently the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. As our goal was to understand what companies could do to promote either "coaching" or "directing", the "whole groups" level of analysis provides adequate answers. However, sales managers do develop different relationships with different salespeople, and they would be more prone to coach some people than others based on salesperson's individual responses to coaching, salesperson's potential or salesperson-sales manager closeness. As this pattern of managerial behaviour is likely to be the same among different sales managers, a "group parts" level of analysis can provide a complementary vision of the problem and additional and valuable answers to it (Yammarino, 1997).

A second assumption is that, based on their motivation towards coaching or directing, sales managers will choose a "preferred" behaviour, and use it in all type of situations. However, some situations are more suited to a coaching intervention while others demand a directive intervention. Managers can be very motivated to coach and can even perform coaching as a usual managerial activity, but when receiving external pressures for achieving challenging goals (as for example, in the days previous to their monthly sales quotas deadlines), they will tend to change their behaviour from coaching to directing, and start leading their sales groups using traditional managerial tools in order to reach the expected sales figures. In order to focus on what organizations can do to motivate sales managers we have not considered situational variations, even though they could potentially provide additional insights to the phenomenon.

Future directions for research

In this paper, we used a widely known and endorsed theory (Expectancy Theory) to address coaching in a rather narrow context: sales coaching. Accordingly, we presented two propositions and we developed a mathematical formulation to explain sales managers' motivation to coach salespeople; we finally used two case studies to illustrate how the formulation could apply to different organizational realities.

However, a question could be raised as to whether this formulation could be applied to general coaching situations. Could the motivation of managers (in general) to coach their subordinates (and not only salespeople) be explained by the same equation[2]? In these types of situations, are the three terms of equation 8 still valid?

An initial response could be that all the employees in an organization are expected to achieve certain results, and that they could be measured for their achievement. As managers are responsible for leading their subordinates towards the achievement of goals, they also could be measured for these achievements, as well as for their own achievements. As this speculation does not differ from the one in proposition P_1, we could safely speculate that, *a priori*, all three terms of equation 8 could still be valid in general coaching contexts.

[2] We thank an anonymous reviewer for his/her insightful comments on this issue

However, more cases need to be analyzed so that the model can be fully validated. It is possible that, in addition to the actual concepts included in the model, new variables could emerge from the analysis of distinct cases. These variables would have to be accounted for and would encourage researchers to develop more complete and complex models that, hopefully, would better account for the supervisor's motivation to endorse coaching or directing behaviours.

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