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Understanding and Motivating Salesperson Resilience

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KEYWORDS: Resilience, Perseverance, Intrinsic Motivation, Personal Selling, Sales

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Abstract:

Prior research has shown that approximately half of salespeople fail to achieve their targets each year. Not only is the role difficult but also sales jobs are often marked by high levels of stress, rejection and burnout. Thus, salesperson resilience is critical. However, a gap remains in our understanding of how resilience influences performance and how managers can motivate salespeople to be more resilient. To answer these questions, we collected survey data from 110 salespeople from a large firm based in the Midwest, along with objective effort and performance data provided by the company prior to and following a poor performance review. Our analyses reveal that intrinsically motivated salespeople are more resilient than salespeople driven by a desire for financial compensation. In addition, resilience leads to sales performance through increasing two types of effort – both initiating more calls with customers and achieving longer average call duration. Hence, our findings demonstrate that resilient salespeople not only persevere but also become better at selling in the process.

KEYWORDS: Resilience, Perseverance, Intrinsic Motivation, Personal Selling, Sales Management

Understanding and Motivating Salesperson Resilience

Past research has lamented that insufficient research examines how to motivate underperforming salespeople (Boichuk et al. 2019). While studies have investigated the effect of financial incentives to motivate sales force effectiveness (e.g., Bommaraju and Hohenberg 2018; Chung and Narayandas 2017), scant literature has examined how firms can motivate their sales force to not give up, but rather try harder, when salespeople experience failure. Given that past research has identified that nearly half of salespeople do not achieve their annual sales targets, this issue is important to both academics and sales managers (Lussier and Hartmann 2017).

Scholars could argue that failure to reach goals may be by design[1]. According to goal setting theory, difficult goals lead to greater performance than easy, vague, or no goals at all (Lock and Latham 2002). Likewise, studies have shown that when faced with easy goals, salespeople tend to be overly confident they can fulfill the goals without investing a lot of effort; whereas by contrast, when goals are perceived to be too difficult, salespeople tend to have a low expectancy, which results in reduced motivation and less effort (e.g., Fang, Palmatier, and Evans 2004). Hence, managers tend to try and set 'stretch' yet attainable goals with the expectation that salespeople will achieve at least a certain level of performance. However, how should managers deal with those salespeople who fail to meet at least a minimum threshold of their assigned quotas?

Recent research conveys that frontline managers hesitate to fire underperformers because finding replacements can be difficult, training new hires can be time-intensive, and territories often remain vacant in the interim (Boichuk et al. 2019). For companies, turnover and subsequent salesperson replacement costs are extremely expensive (e.g., Hale Jr., Ployhart and Shepherd 2016). Also, when a sales representative exits the firm, a crucial link with customers becomes severed (Shi et

[1] We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for making this observation.

al. 2017). So rather than forcing (or allowing) salespeople to leave, studying predictors of effort and performance after the salesperson has experienced difficulty remains extremely important.

Boichuk et al. (2019) suggested that companies should employ both financial incentives as well as a "deep sales bench" to threaten replacement of underperformers. However, while offering valuable insights, their study did not examine salesperson characteristics that may influence how salespeople react to such carrots and sticks for motivating performance. Hence, the primary focus of this study is salesperson resilience, which we formally define as "the capacity to overcome or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or other events that induce high levels of stress or pressure" (Lussier and Hartmann 2017, p. 161). Recent calls for future research confirm that studying the ability of salespeople to recover from setbacks is critical due to the high rates of adversity and failure in personal selling positions as well as the dynamic job profile of salespeople and challenges posed by the sales role (Krush et al. 2013; Friend et al. 2016). Moreover, resilience has become extremely relevant recently due to the pandemic and accompanying economic stressors that are currently being felt in the marketplace. Unfortunately, salesperson resilience is understudied and not well understood.

To address this gap, we partnered with a nationally recognized U.S. sales firm based in the Midwest. As a rule of thumb, the organization sends performance review warning letters to all salespeople who fail to reach 70% of their goal for the month, threatening repercussions. We gathered survey data on both salesperson motivation and resilience from salespeople who had received such a warning letter from one division of the company. The firm provided us with objective effort measures (both the number of calls initiated by the salesperson and average call duration) and subsequent performance-to-goal measures, as well as the salesperson's quotas, for both the month preceding and following receipt of the warning.

Our findings reveal that intrinsically motivated salespeople are more resilient than those who are driven by a desire for extrinsic financial compensation. In addition, resilience leads to greater salesperson performance through partial mediation of two types of effort following a warning. Hence, salesperson resilience when activated by the firm threat had a significant impact on actions and performance.

This study makes the following contributions to the sales and marketing literature. First, we identify resilience as an overlooked construct in the salesperson literature. A key contribution of this research is linking resilience to actions that salespeople engage in that, in turn, impact performance. We also demonstrate the importance of considering a salesperson's resilience before warning underperformers. Underperformers who were high in resilience responded to the warning letter by increasing effort and improving overall performance, unlike those who were low in resilience. These findings also add to our understanding of resilience as a construct, as it extends beyond persevering to evolving and becoming better in the process. Next, while financial compensation has historically been thought of as extremely important for motivating salespeople, our findings show that in contexts where salespeople are experiencing failure, intrinsic motivation is more positively associated with greater resilience, leading to greater effort and performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Research on resilience within the context of personal selling has been somewhat limited, though interest in the construct is rising. In our web appendix, we demonstrate how resilience is distinct from related constructs like grit, persistence and perseverance. Bande et al. (2015) note that resilience is extremely important for a sales position, given the nature of the job and the necessity for salespeople to be more self-reliant to manage challenges compared to other organizational positions. Studies have shown that individuals high in resilience are better suited to cope with stress and are more likely to

"bend than break" in the face of difficulty (Lussier and Hartmann 2017, p. 162). Resilience helps salespeople adopt a more pragmatic approach to dealing with adversity, adapt despite difficulties and use setbacks as opportunities for growth and development (Lussier and Hartmann 2017). In fact, past research also conveys that those higher in resilience recover to become equal to or better than what they were before the adverse event (Friend et al. 2016). Hence, in an unfavorable context when a salesperson has been underperforming and receives a performance review warning letter, we predict,

H1: Resilience is positively associated with improved salesperson performance.

Based on the definition of resilience, which includes perseverance and trying again after a negative event, we predict that resilience is positively associated with a salesperson's subsequent effort. Resilience also includes learning and evolving in the process and bouncing back stronger than before by definition (Friend et al. 2016; Bande et al. 2015). While perseverance and persistence are undoubtedly an important aspect of resilience, they alone do not capture the full essence of the construct because they miss the notion of emerging stronger than before. According to Hills (2016), "Perseverance can be an important part of being resilient but a person with good resilience knows when to try something different." Importantly, resilience entails trying again – but perhaps using better methods and learning from past mistakes. Accordingly, Krush et al. (2013) demonstrated a significantly positive relationship between resilience and selling adaptivity. In addition, Agnihotri et al. (2014) note, "resilient employees are likely to develop *new ways* of doing things when facing difficulties, failures, and opportunities" (p. 58, emphasis ours).

Thus, whereas we use the change in the number of calls that the salesperson initiates as one measure of effort, we also use the change in average call duration with customers as another measure of effort to capture this idea of learning in the process. To keep the customer engaged on the phone, the salesperson will need to strategically uncover needs and match product benefits to meet those needs

and gain commitment. To uncover needs, salespeople need to spend time asking questions and gathering as much customer information as possible to offer a suitable solution to customers (e.g., Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter 2012). If the customer objects, the salesperson will need to spend time understanding those concerns, overcoming those objections and closing the deal. The longer the salesperson engages with the customer, the more strategy the salesperson will need and the more likely the buyer is to actually buy. Thus, average call duration becomes one way to gauge the salesperson's strategic effort. We predict that the more resilient the salesperson is, the more he will be able to adapt his presentation to the buyer, learn from past mistakes, try again to engage customers in new ways, and become more successful in the process. Hence, taken together we predict,

H2: The change in number of calls (H2a) and average call duration (H2b) mediate the positive relationship between resilience and improved salesperson performance following a warning letter.

Motivating Resilience

What causes someone to choose resilience when faced with difficulty? By definition, resilience requires a negative event, failure or obstacles. Friend et al. (2016) confirm that resilience enables individuals to bounce back quickly and effectively *from adverse events* while resilience *in the face of failure* was discussed by Credé, Tynan and Harms (2017) (emphasis ours). Prior research shows that within the sales process, failure can lead to lower expectations of subsequent success – called 'negative anticipatory emotions' – which then affects a salesperson's motivation and subsequent choices (Brown, Cron and Slocum 1997). Hence, failure on its own may simply lead to more failure through lowered expectancy if a manager does not intervene to raise expectations. Indeed, prior research has demonstrated that the threat of punishment can have an immediate and sustained impact on the performance of underperformers (Boichuk et al. 2019). However, while a threat may open the

salesperson's eyes to the magnitude of the problem and repercussions, what leads to greater resilience to bounce back and become better in the process?

Intrinsic motivation has been described as a "*pull* from the task versus the *push* of management" (Thomas and Velthouse 1990, p. 667). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), intrinsic motivation is based on meeting the internal needs of salespeople and results when people feel that they have control over the activities they perform, feel competent in performing them, and feel a sense of belonging as they perform them (Deci and Ryan 1985). In an extensive synthesis of literature on resilience, Connor and Davidson (2003) revealed characteristics associated with resilient people that were discovered in various studies. Among others, these characteristics included a realistic sense of control/having choices (*autonomy*), self-efficacy (*competence*), and a close secure attachment to others (*relatedness*) (Connor and Davidson 2003). Despite this literature base residing in the domain of psychology rather than the personal selling context, these enumerated characteristics match the components of SDT; thus, some evidence exists that intrinsic motivation should be positively related to resilience. Thus, we hypothesize,

H3a: Intrinsic motivation is positively associated with resilience.

Frequently, managers look to financial incentives to motivate salespeople. Dangling the carrot of an increased payout may seem intuitive; however, prior literature highlights that motivating 'laggards' with sales contests and quota-bonus plans can be difficult (Boichuk et al. 2019). When salespeople have been experiencing failure, they may assume that all contest prizes will go to the 'rainmakers' in the company, and thus the very programs designed to entice salespeople can actually be demotivating. If salespeople have failed to meet past targets and missed achieving incentives, such extrinsic rewards may not be as enticing. Hence, while financial incentives may typically drive performance, we hypothesize that the compensation-seeking aspect of extrinsic motivation (e.g., Miao,

Evans and Zou 2007) will be negatively associated with resilience in overcoming obstacles. We predict that instead of compensation, what would be more motivating in these difficult times is building self-efficacy that sales are achievable and building connection within the sales team and organization (relatedness) to help lift the spirits of the salesperson who has experienced adversity. Thus, we formally hypothesize,

H3b: The compensation-seeking aspect of extrinsic motivation is negatively associated with resilience.

METHOD

Sample

We gathered survey data from a single division of a U.S.-based firm, with upper management encouraging participation. This organization operates as a call center, essentially, in that all sales happen over the phone with no in-person meetings. At this firm, salespeople are expected to hit a minimum threshold of their quota or they receive a review warning letter. A total of 114 salespeople provided usable responses to our survey, which equates to an acceptable 23% response rate (c.f., Olson et al. 2018; Thorpe and Morgan 2007). Of these responses, four had not received a warning letter from the firm, so they were dropped from the analysis (hence, n=110, t=2, for a total of 220 observations).

Given an interest in how salespeople respond to warning letter interventions, the company provided us with archival data for the salespeople who had completed the survey. For each salesperson, we were given two periods of data surrounding the salesperson's initial warning letter (i.e., the month before and the month after). Tracked by the firm's internal software, this information included overall sales performance, quota, effort, and salesperson characteristics (such as job tenure).

Measures

All latent variable scales appear in Web Appendix B.

Extrinsic Motivation was measured with a three-item scale from Oliver and Anderson (1994) that specifically examines compensation-seeking with items such as "I sell because I get paid to sell."

Intrinsic Motivation was measured using five of the six items from the Oliver and Anderson (1994) scale, as shown in the web appendix.

Resilience was measured using a four-item scale adapted from a 10-item scale from Campbell-Sills and Stein (2007). Items included "I tend to bounce back after hardships" and "I can deal with whatever comes."

Effort measures were obtained from company archival data, including number of calls initiated by the salesperson and average call duration in minutes for the salesperson. We natural log transformed both measures.

Salesperson Performance was an objective measure obtained from company archival data as "percentage of goal." Using percentage of goal, or total sales divided by expected sales target, has been deemed a "strong indicator of salesperson performance" and is common practice in sales research because it controls for potential contaminating factors such as territory size (Ahearne et al. 2013).

Goal was an assigned quota that we controlled for (in case lower performance would lead to lower assigned goals from the company itself).

Analysis

Prior to testing our hypotheses, we performed a confirmatory factory analysis in MPLUS on all latent variables from the salesperson questionnaire to ensure all items loaded on their intended constructs and no cross-loadings on unintended constructs were present. Model fit statistics show a reasonable fit to the data (χ^2 = 124.78, 25 d.f.; CFI = .95; RMSEA = .09; SRMR = .02). Construct correlations and descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1.

[Insert Table 1 about here.]

To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, we started with the following equation:

$$PctGoal_{it} = \alpha_0 + \beta_0 Review_t + \alpha_1 Resilience_i + \beta_1 Review{:}\, Resilience_{it} + \beta_2 \ln(Calls)_{it} + \beta_3 \ln(Avg.Duration)_{it} + \beta_4 Goal_{it} + \gamma_t + \delta_i + u_{it}, t = 1, 2$$

where $PctGoal_{it}$ is the performance of salesperson *i* at time *t,* and $Review_t$ is a dummy variable indicating whether the period is pre- or post-warning letter. $Resilience_i$ is the resilience of salesperson *i* and $Review{:}Resilience_{it}$ is the interaction term. In the equation, $\ln(Calls)_{it}$ is the natural logarithm of the calls made by salesperson *i* in time period *t*, while $\ln(Avg.\ Duration)_{it}$ is the natural logarithm of the average call duration. Finally, γ_t represents month fixed effects, δ_i represent unobserved time-invariant salesperson characteristics, and u_{it} is the error term. As unobserved individual factors could potentially be correlated with our focal variables, estimating the previous equation could produce potentially biased estimates. Given that each person in our dataset was given a warning, we can use first differencing to remove these individual factors (δ_i). This produces the following equation:

$$\Delta PctGoal_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta Review{:}\, Resilience_i + \beta_2 \Delta\ln(Calls)_{it} + \beta_3 \Delta\ln(Avg.Duration)_{it} + \beta_4 \Delta Goal_{it} + \Delta\gamma_t + \Delta u_i$$

With the review warning letter being dummy coded as present (1) in this differencing equation, that means that what we have 1 x resilience (or resilience itself). To test the third set of hypotheses, we regressed resilience on intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. We then used a Fisher transformation of the coefficients and z-test statistic to test the significance of the difference, a procedure available on the quantpsy.org web utility (Preacher 2002).

RESULTS

Table 2 and Figure 1 visually display the results of our analyses. In our first hypothesis, we predicted that, in the presence of a warning letter, there will be a positive relationship between

resilience and salesperson performance. As shown in Model 3, we find that following a warning letter, resilience is associated with a positive change in overall performance ($\beta = .133, p < .01$).

[Insert Figure 1 about here.]

In the second set of hypotheses, we predicted that the change in the number of calls (H2a) and average call duration (H2b) mediate the positive relationship between resilience and improved salesperson performance following a warning letter. We find resilience is positively associated with change in the number of calls made (Model 1; $\beta = .047, p < .05$) as well as change in the average duration of those calls (Model 2; $\beta = .060, p < .01$). Consistent with our theorizing, both the change number of calls made ($\beta = .419, p < .01$) and change in average call duration ($\beta = .633, p < .01$) are positively associated with improved performance.

We used the mediation package (Tingley et al. 2014) in R to further assess the mediating role of salesperson effort, using 10,000 bootstrapped samples to compute bias-corrected confidence intervals. As shown in Table 2, the indirect effect of resilience on the change in salesperson performance via the change in number of calls is positive and significant following a warning letter (0.020, 95% CI: [0.003, 0.052]). Likewise, the indirect effects of resilience on the change in salesperson performance via the change in average call duration is positive and significant following a warning letter (0.038, 95% CI: [0.013, 0.073]). Thus, we find support for our hypotheses. However, we still observe a positive and significant direct effect of resilience on the change in performance in the full model; it appears that the two effort measures partially mediate this effect.

[Insert Table 2 about here.]

In the third set of hypotheses, we predicted that intrinsic motivation is positively associated with resilience (3a) and extrinsic motivation is negatively associated with resilience (3b). These hypotheses were supported. Intrinsic motivation was positively associated with resilience (β=.800, p

<*.01*) while the relationship between extrinsic motivation – specifically the compensation-seeking aspect – and resilience was significantly negative (β=-.076, *p* <*.05*). The two are significantly different, (*z*=5.691, *p* <*.01*), with intrinsic motivation being significantly more positive.

Finally, we visually demonstrate the importance of resilience in overcoming adversity by showing its relationship with both types of effort and performance for salespeople pre- and post-review letters. Figure 2 provides evidence that those higher in resilience exerted more effort (both calls and average call duration) and had better overall performance than those lower in resilience.

[Insert Figure 2 about here.]

DISCUSSION

Just like the saying "without fear, there cannot be courage" resilience is really only vital when adversity exists, as highlighted in the web appendix. Hence, in this study we examined salespeople after receiving a warning letter from their company for failing to reach a minimum threshold of their assigned goals. In so doing, we demonstrate the importance of considering a salesperson's resilience, as resilience had a significant impact on change in effort and performance following a review warning letter. Those who were high in resilience responded to the warning by exerting more effort in both initiating more calls and having a longer average call duration (i.e., spending more time with customers). By contrast, Figure 2 visually shows that salespeople who were low in resilience did not exhibit these positive behavioral or performance changes.

Examining two types of effort also extends our understanding of resilience as a construct. Resilience extends beyond just persistence or persevering – it is related to evolving and becoming better in the process. Resilient salespeople not only initiated more calls but also had a longer average call duration with their customers. While the content of those calls was inaccessible, the trend of longer call duration was positively associated with higher performance. Hence, the data are suggestive of and

consistent with the possibility that resilient salespeople not only persevered and expended more effort in initiating more calls but also made progress in getting better at engaging customers in conversations after receiving a warning. While number of calls initiated and call duration are naturally negatively correlated due to the tension between the two and the sheer time they take, resilient salespeople improved in both constructs after the warning letter, showing that they were willing to go the extra mile and spend more time overall working on improving. Their effort obviously paid off, as their performance likewise improved.

Next, our analyses reveal that intrinsically motivated salespeople are more resilient than extrinsically motivated salespeople. Thus, meeting the internal needs of salespeople should positively influence the salesperson's resilience to bounce back when facing challenges, stress and adversity in the selling process. Importantly, while past research has suggested using financial incentives to encourage underperformers to meet their targets (c.f., Boichuk et al. 2019), our analysis shows that extrinsic motivation is actually negatively related to salesperson resilience. Thus, although financial compensation is a commonly deployed tactic for motivating salespeople, our findings suggest that in contexts where salespeople are experiencing high stress or adversity, intrinsic motivation is more associated with greater resilience, leading to increased effort and improved performance.

Managerial Implications

As the nature of the sales force role is evolving, motiving salespeople to be more resilient is critical for managers. Yet, motivating those who have been experiencing failure presents unique challenges. Findings from this study demonstrate that intrinsic motivation is positively related to resilience while extrinsic motivation is negatively related, which may seem counterintuitive to managers. Thus, managers may want to focus less on extrinsic incentives and rather consider implementing training to increase self-efficacy, promoting a corporate culture that includes teamwork

and a sense of belonging, and providing greater autonomy rather than exerting more managerial control. Likewise, according to Achor and Gielan (2016), resilience requires "recharging" rather than just endurance. Thus, managers can try to determine what obstacles and challenges salespeople are facing and how to enable them to overcome them in a strategic way.

While managers may hesitate to broach the subject of underperforming with their employees, our study reveals that a warning when combined with salesperson resilience made salespeople exert more effort, which equates to more time spent with customers in this context. Hence, managers may want to screen for resilience in hiring or when getting to know the salesperson during coaching. If the salesperson seems resilient, a warning makes sense. On the other hand, if the salesperson is more likely to break than bend, such a warning may defeat the purpose and other methods of motivation and training may be more fruitful.

As with all studies, our research has some limitations that could provide direction for future research. First, we did not have access to the content of calls to claim that longer call duration was a form of "working smart" rather than "working hard" (Sujan 1986). Hence, we propose investigating the role of resilience in "working smart" may be a fruitful avenue for future research. Second, we acknowledge that our response rate is somewhat low. When salespeople are working with any type of commission structure, they typically want to focus their time on customers or potential leads; hence, getting salespeople to respond to surveys is challenging, even with upper management support. We also acknowledge our data come from a single division of a single company and thus may have limited generalizability. As such, we suggest future studies may want to investigate if motivating resilience changes for different types of industries (such as B2B vs. B2C). Likewise, examining the impact of resilience on performance over a longer timeframe may be helpful. While previous research has suggested a threat of punishment can have an immediate and sustained impact on the performance of

laggards (Boichuk et al. 2019), the findings of our study reveal the importance of salesperson resilience. Hence, investigating the use of different types of threats, rewards and resilience may be an interesting avenue for future research. Furthermore, future research could investigate how to motivate salespeople who are underperforming – what specific antecedents may inspire resilience? Future research in this area would be beneficial.

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FIGURE 1 Standardized Results Model

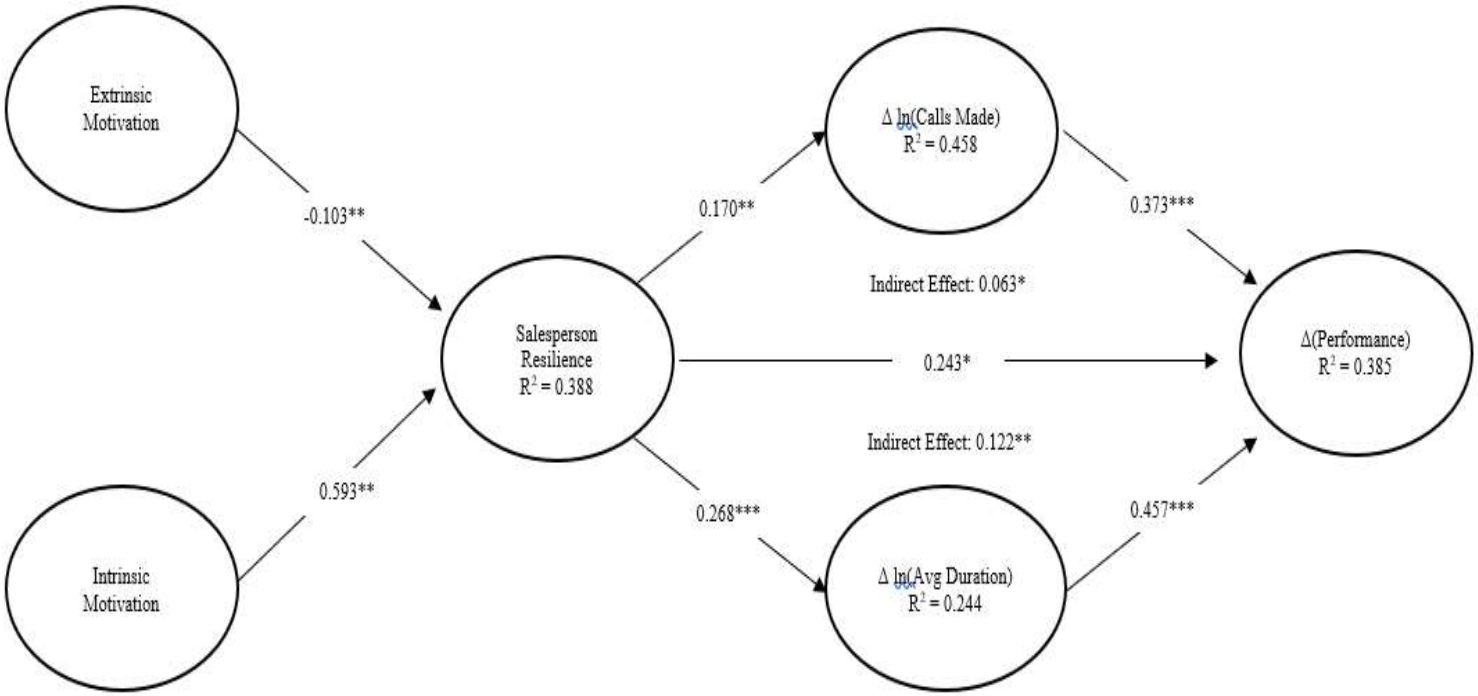
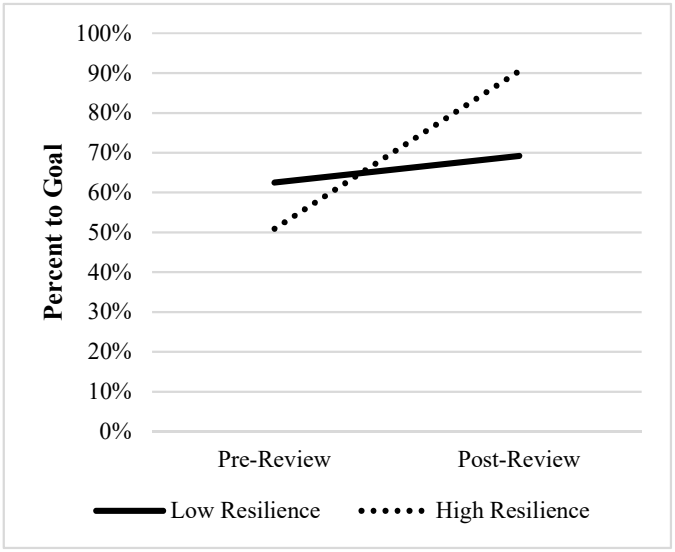
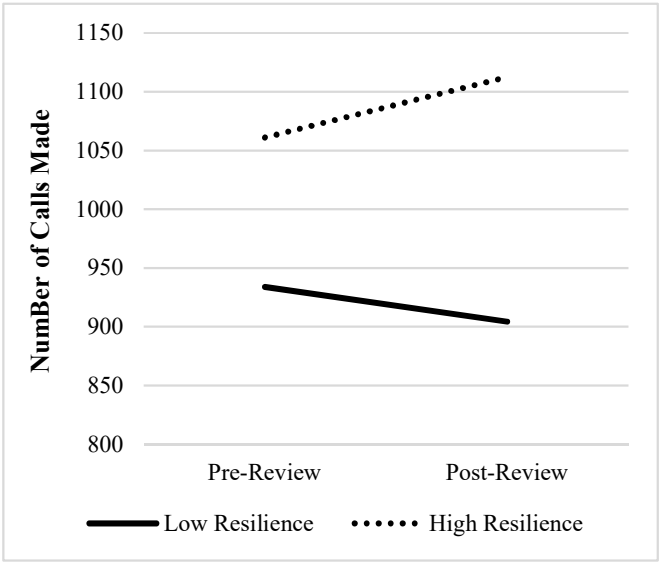


FIGURE 2 A Visual Display of Low/High Resilience Pre- and Post-Review





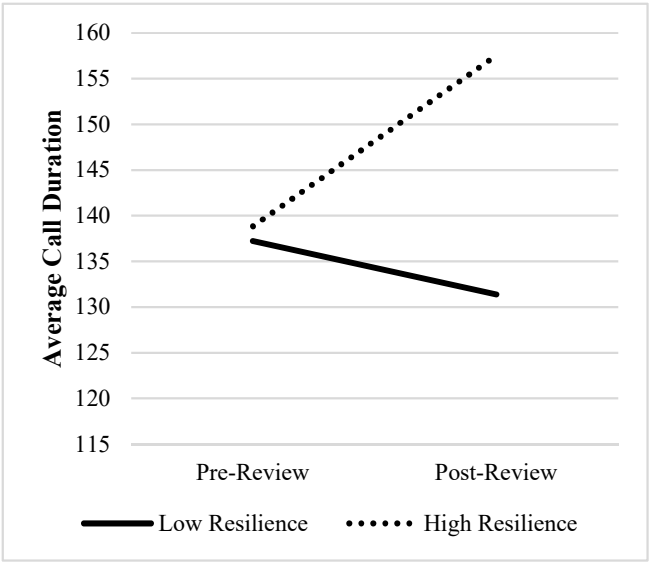


TABLE 1 Latent Variable Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Intrinsic Motivation	*0.78*						
2. Extrinsic Motivation	-0.21**	*0.86*					
3. Resilience	0.54***	-0.17*	*0.91*				
4. Δln(Calls Made)	0.07	0.06	0.20**	–			
5. Δln(Avg. Duration)	0.17**	0.02	0.32***	-0.28***	–		
6. ΔGoal	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.36***	0.00	–	
7. Δ% to Goal	0.21**	0.05	0.42***	0.16*	0.38***	-0.12***	–
Mean	5.36	4.89	6.10	0.03	0.05	-0.03	0.25
SD	1.12	1.33	0.97	0.27	0.22	2.05	0.30

*Notes: The diagonal values represent the square roots of the AVE values. The off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations. This is the AVE-SV comparison, in which the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than the correlation between constructs, meaning each latent variable shares greater variance with its indicators than with other latent variables (Fornell-Larcker 1981). ***p< .01; **p< .05; *p< .10*

TABLE 2 Results

Model	**M1**	**M2**	**Total Effect**	**Full Model**
Dependent Variable	**Δln(Calls Made)**	**Δln(Duration)**	**Δ% to Goal**	**Δ% to Goal**
Focal Variables				
Review	-.275**	-.304***	-.558***	-.250
	.121	*.110*	*.205*	*.214*
Resilience (Post- Review)	.047**	.060***	.133***	.076**
	.020	*.018*	*.033*	*.035*
Mediators				
Δln(Calls Made)				.419***
				.124
Δln(Avg. Duration)				.633***
				.122
Control Variables				
Month	Included	Included	Included	Included
ΔGoal	.037***	.003	-.032*	-.049**
	.009	*.008*	*.017*	*.016*
Model Summary				
R^2	.458	.244	.242	.386

*Notes: ***p< .01; **p< .05; *p< .10*

Web Appendix A: Resilience Definition Compared to Similar Constructs

Construct	*Definition*	*Literature Examples*	*Elements that are key to the construct by definition*			
			Steadfastness/ trying again	Long-term goal orientation	Learning/ evolving	Requires adversity
Resilience	"the psychological capacity to overcome or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or other events that induce high levels of stress or pressure"	Bande et al. (2015); Friend et al. (2016); Lussier and Hartmann (2017)	X		X	X
Perseverance	"steadfastness and continued effort despite difficulties"	Belschak, Verbeke and Bagozzi (2006)	X			
Grit	"perseverance and passion for long-term goals"	Duckworth et al. (2007); Credé, Tynan and Harms (2017); Dugan et al. (2018)	X	X		
Persistence	"a combination of salesperson influence tactics to shape customer responses"	Chaker, Zablah and Noble (2018)	X			

Web Appendix A References

Bande, B., Fernández-Ferrín, P., Varela, J. A., & Jaramillo, F. (2015). Emotions and salesperson propensity to leave: The effects of emotional intelligence and resilience. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 44, 142-153.

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Duckworth, Angela L., Christopher Peterson, Michael D. Matthews and Dennis R. Kelly (2007), "Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92(6), 1087.

Dugan, Riley, Bryan Hochstein, Maria Rouziou, and Benjamin Britton (2019), "Gritting Their Teeth to Close the Sale: the Positive Effect of Salesperson Grit on Job Satisfaction and Performance," *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 39(1), 81-101.

Web Appendix B: Scale Items

Resilience CR = .95 *(adapted from Campbell-Sills & Stein 2007)*
I can deal with whatever comes.
I tend to bounce back after hardships.
I can achieve goals despite obstacles.
I think of myself as a strong person.

Extrinsic Motivation CR = .82 *(Oliver and Anderson 1994)*
If it weren't for the money, I would not be in a selling job.
I sell because I get paid to sell.
After a long hard day, I realize that if it weren't for the money, I wouldn't put up with this job.

Intrinsic Motivation CR = .76 *(Oliver and Anderson 1994)*
When I perform well, I know it's because of my own desire to achieve.
I don't need a reason to sell; I sell because I want to.
Becoming successful is something I want to do for me.
If I were independently wealthy, I would still sell for the challenge of it.
I sell because I cherish the feeling of performing a useful service.
I wish I didn't have to retire someday so I could continue selling for the pleasure of it.*
**dropped due to poor loading*

Web Appendix B References

Campbell-Sills, L., & Stein, M. B. (2007). Psychometric analysis and refinement of the connor–davidson resilience scale (CD-RISC): Validation of a 10-item measure of resilience. *Journal of Traumatic Stress: Official Publication of The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies*, 20(6), 1019-1028.

Oliver, R. L., & Anderson, E. (1994). An empirical test of the consequences of behavior-and outcome-based sales control systems. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(4), 53-67.