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More than money: establishing the importance of a sense of purpose for salespeople

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Much of the current research on salesperson motivation focuses on extrinsic reward expectancy related to compensation, contests, incentives, and quotas. We find that while salespeople want to make money, they also want to make a difference and contribute to society through their work. In Study 1, the qualitative findings reveal that a sense of purpose – the belief that one is making a contribution to a cause greater and more enduring than oneself – is a significant motivator for salespeople. Hence, in Study 2 we develop a measure for sense of purpose and distinguish it from related constructs. Finally, in Study 3 we use a dynamic modeling approach with longitudinal salesperson data to empirically demonstrate that sense of purpose is an antecedent to intrinsic motivation. We also discover that intrinsic motivation is more positively associated with increased salesperson effort, adaptivity, and performance than is a desire for money on average over time, particularly for younger salespeople. These findings not only contribute to theory but also have important ramifications for the effective management of modern sales organizations.

"He was successful as he chased quotas and sales goals alongside colleagues, and was quickly making good money and all the trappings of young affluent professional life. But when he looked around, he saw people sinking into misery, as they hit higher and higher targets and felt less and less satisfaction. His long-term intuition that he was motivated by something other than external rewards got too loud to ignore…" ~ Debevoise (2019)

Actively engaged salespeople are undeniably important to firms. As salespeople span the boundary between customers and the firm, they assume multiple roles such as knowledge broker, customer-consultant, problem solver, demand generator, and value co-creator in a service-dominant ecosystem (Hartmann, Wieland, and Vargo 2018). Challenges from rapidly improving technology, changing economic conditions, competitor market (re)actions, and even internal new product innovations can create tension for salespeople as they choose where to focus their attention, time, and effort. Hence, firms often deploy controls to redirect or focus a salesperson's behavior with the ultimate goal of improving his or her performance (Katsikeas et al. 2018).

Historically, these controls have been either outcome-based (where salespeople are compensated in direct proportion to their sales, i.e., commissions) or behavior-based (with incentives centered on the salesperson's activities or strategies that are expected to generate future results) (e.g., Oliver and Anderson 1994; Kim and Tiwana 2016; Malek, Sarin, and Jaworski 2018). A vast majority of research on salesperson motivation for the last five years has focused on monetary controls to direct salesperson behavior toward improved performance. For example, studies have examined the impacts of financial incentives (Viswanathan et al. 2018; Patil and Syam 2018; Bommaraju and Hohenberg 2018), compensation structure (Chung and Narayandas 2017; Daljord, Misra, and Nair 2016; Rubel and Prasad 2016), and sales contests (Hossain, Shi and Waiser 2019; Chen and Lim 2017). Likewise, practitioners tend to rely heavily on sales quotas and salesperson incentives to meet goals (McLeod 2020).

However, as the opening vignette suggests, even when successful, unintended side effects exist from this type of motivation. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) suggests that "when externally regulated, individuals perceive their behavior as being directly controlled by others, often through contingent

rewards and threats" (Deci, Olafsen, and Ryan 2017, p. 21). Indeed, extrinsic motivation has been defined as doing an activity to attain separable consequences (Deci and Ryan 1985). Salespeople thus are compelled to think, feel, or behave in particular ways by external prods and pressures. While such regulation can motivate specific behaviors at least temporarily, related costs to the firm are significant—both in providing financial resources for rewards and in putting systems in place to monitor behavior.

On the other hand, with autonomous motivation, rather than an external source constantly being required to feed behavior, the draw to act is self-determined based on intrinsic reasons. Specifically, intrinsic motivation means that actions stem from the task itself being inherently interesting or satisfying (Deci and Ryan 2008). According to SDT, intrinsic motivation results from having a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan 1985). Within the context of sales, autonomy has been described as allowing salespeople to determine the nature of the sales task or problem and to arrive at a course of action (Wang and Netemeyer 2002; Rapp et al. 2015). Competence or self-efficacy includes having the skills, know-how, and ability to perform a job (Fu et al. 2010). Finally, a sense of belonging, relatedness, or connection is the notion that even when work is not fascinating on its own, many times individuals are willing to do the job because they are valued by significant others to whom they feel (or would like to feel) connected (Deci et al. 2001).

Importantly, recent research suggests that a dramatic change in the demographic makeup of the sales workforce is currently taking place (Khusainova et al. 2018). Specifically, as older generations continue to retire, new salespeople are increasingly being recruited from the ranks of the millennial generation. In fact, millennials (approximated to be 75 million+ in the U.S. alone) now make up the largest generation in the American workforce and will continue to be at the top for some time (Goleman 2020). Past research has shown that millennials and Generation Z "Zoomers" are likely motivated significantly differently from earlier generations such as Baby Boomers and Generation X, and successful

organizations will need to have a better understanding of what motivates these younger generations and adapt accordingly (Khusainova et al. 2018). Several popular press articles have suggested that younger salespeople are seeking jobs where they can make a difference (e.g., Debevoise 2019; Goleman 2020). However, with a continued assumption that salespeople are motivated primarily by money, significantly fewer studies have examined intrinsic sources of motivation in sales, particularly recently, and unfortunately have neglected generational differences in salesperson motivation.

(Insert Table 1 about here.)

To address this important gap, we conducted three separate studies. Following a theories-in-use approach (Zeithaml et al. 2020), in the first study we conducted qualitative interviews in which we asked salespeople what motivated them in general at work, what motivated them to go the extra mile on a Friday afternoon, and what motivated them when times were tough. The findings from this initial study reveal a missing construct in the literature, which is the idea of a sense of purpose. We define *sense of purpose* as "the belief that one is making a contribution to a cause greater and more enduring than oneself," and this belief may be particularly motivating to a generation of salespeople who have never experienced poverty and may have a different worldview from those who preceded them (Pink 2011). Hence, in the second study we developed a measure for the construct *sense of purpose* and demonstrated its reliability and validity using a sample of 199 salespeople recruited from an online panel company from a variety of industries. Finally, in the third study, to test the importance of *sense of purpose* as an antecedent to intrinsic motivation and salesperson performance, we partnered with a U.S.-based sales firm in the financial services industry to gather both salesperson survey responses and objective longitudinal effort and performance data from company records (n=114 salespeople, t=4 sales cycles, total=456 observations). Using time-varying covariate analysis, our results reveal that sense of purpose is another driver of intrinsic motivation beyond the other three established antecedents, and that intrinsic motivation

is more positively associated with both working hard (effort) and working smart (adaptive selling) than extrinsic motivation on average over time. The effect is even more pronounced for younger salespeople.

Research on salesperson motivation over the past five years has primarily focused on monetary incentives as controls, as we show in Table 1. Even though recent literature has clearly emphasized the importance of financial incentives, our study reveals that intrinsic motivation is more positively related to salesperson effort and adaptivity than a desire for financial rewards, even in this modern era. This has important implications for the effective management of a new generation of salespeople. Moreover, not only is the sales force demographic changing, the sales role itself has been shifting toward service-oriented, helping, and customer-focused approaches (Hughes and Ogilvie 2020) alongside a shift in the U.S. toward more meaningful work (Barrick, Mount, and Li 2013). A key contribution of our study lies in developing a measure to examine a salesperson's sense of purpose and explicating how it leads to increased intrinsic motivation, effort, adaptivity, and performance. This construct is not just important for managing millennials but also impacts the new sales world that will continue to exist in the foreseeable future.[1]

While some have argued that intrinsic motivation is an inalterable trait, like personality, there is evidence that contextual aspects of motivation can be altered by job design and managerial practices that make work more inherently enjoyable and satisfying (Barrick et al. 2015). Thus, studying intrinsic motivation—both its antecedents and outcomes—remains important for both researchers and practitioners. The rest of this paper is organized as follows. First, we detail the qualitative study that serves as the foundation for the second study (construct development) and third study (impact on objective salesperson performance over time). We finish by discussing the findings of the research and, given the importance of our findings, we offer suggestions for future research.

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

Study 1: Qualitative study

Although recent research on salesperson motivation has primarily focused on monetary incentives as controls, both management and psychology literatures—including studies on sense-giving and sensemaking (e.g., Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld 2005; Maitlis 2005; Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991)—offer a hint that a sense of purpose may be an important motivator to employees. However, this construct is currently missing from academic marketing literature.

Importantly, salespeople are frontline employees who are the conduit for translating organizational promises into reality. In being the face of the organization, salespeople have a role in translating organizational vision into action—where the rubber meets the road—that may not inherently exist in other organizational roles. Thus, while management and psychology offer strong theoretical perspectives on motivation, the sales role may require a different lens specific to the marketing discipline that addresses the notion of being customer-facing and impacting constituents external to the firm (i.e., society). Hence, to better understand the nuances of salesperson motivation, we adopted a theories-in-use approach, which blends the use of in-depth interviews with extant literature as a means to develop conceptual themes prior to the construction of the proposed conceptual model (Zeithaml et al. 2020; Challagalla, Murtha, and Jaworski 2014).

Methodology

The lead author conducted a total of 18 interviews using an iterative process with salespeople from a variety of industries, both B2B and direct to consumer. Previous literature has recommended the use of purposive sampling for obtaining a knowledgeable sample that can provide rich insights into an emerging construct (Challagalla, Murtha, and Jaworski 2014). In this regard, we connected with salespeople from companies affiliated with a sales center of a well-known university. The purpose of the interviews was to uncover what motivates salespeople at work. Interviews, which ranged from 25 to 55

minutes long, were conducted in person, by phone, or via video conference. The interview protocol (c.f., St. Clair et al. 2018) and sample characteristics are available in Web Appendix A. Each interview started in a grand tour manner with general questions about the salesperson's current industry and sales responsibilities (including product/service line). Thereafter, participants were asked specifically about what motivates them at work in general, what motivates them to "go the extra mile" on a Friday afternoon, and what motivates them when they are experiencing challenges. We allowed each salesperson to talk freely and asked them to expand on or clarify their answers as needed, being careful not to introduce interviewer bias (Zeithaml et al. 2020).

We then conducted a qualitative content analysis on responses, using deductive and inductive reasoning, and constructing coding families based on our literature review and the participants' responses (Kassarjian 1977; Krippendorff 2019). This approach allowed us to both build upon current literature and discover new themes. We stopped interviews when we sensed theoretical saturation had been achieved (i.e., themes were being repeated) (Zeithaml et al. 2020). We used these results as part of a mixed methods approach (Davis, Golicic, and Boerstler 2011) to inform our sense of purpose scale items in Study 2 and develop the quantitative model in Study 3.

Results and discussion

Our final coding schema included the constructs from SDT—autonomy, self-efficacy, and connection—along with extrinsic motivation, job meaningfulness, customer orientation, and a new construct, *sense of purpose*. In fact, sense of purpose emerged as an unexpectedly strong and frequently mentioned motivator that is deserving of more exploration. We find many people long to be part of a greater good, contribute to society through their work, and leave behind a legacy. We also find many salespeople choose the profession because they want to help others and make a difference in the lives of customers. In an interview conducted with the top salesman for a wheel manufacturer, he conveyed,

> Every morning I go into my home office and get right on the phone because I know how important my sales are not just to my buyers but to society. When tractor trailers travel at high rates of speed and hit a pot hole, for example, an inferior wheel will bend and even crack, causing the truck driver to lose control… and people in the other vehicles they collide with don't walk away from those types of accidents. I work hard because I know that moms and dads are returning safely home to their families when I make sales.

This salesman was not only the top salesman in his firm, he literally outsold the production capabilities of the firm within the first three months of that year. Another respondent noted that she was motivated to keep working on a Friday afternoon by realizing she was making a "lasting impact" while another explained, "What makes me successful is when... I realize I'm doing something bigger than myself."

Another respondent who had received the "salesperson of the year" award at her firm noted how important it was to her that she was helping small businesses through her sales:

> I always wanted to help people… Now, I get to help businesses when they are struggling with their taxes and accounting. Nothing motivates me more than hearing a customer call me and say, "you saved my [small] business."

However, having a sense of purpose is not just about pleasing customers or being customer-oriented (Brown et al. 2002; Saxe and Weitz 1982). Being customer-oriented means trying to please customers whereas having a sense of purpose may make a salesperson advocate for something that may be less pleasing to the customer in the short-term but truly beneficial to customers or society in the longer-term. One salesman selling adhesives explained that he sold high-quality chemical bonding in a B2B environment. While the purchasing agents would have been happy to get a cheaper adhesive, he advocated for what he believed to be important for the safety of customers downstream. He said,

> To give you a prime example, one time a person had his windshield replaced and within half an hour was in an accident that totaled his car. Isn't that crazy?! But, the windshield adhesive held, and he walked away from the crash because of it. So, I sell to customers who will either use the product or re-sell it downstream and tell them that they are getting not only glue but security and peace of mind. It's important to me that even though I'm not selling something like medical devices, I really am making an impact on others.

Moreover, sense of purpose is not just the overarching vision of the company or mission statement but rather an internal sense of contributing to customer or societal well-being. As

another respondent explained, "For me, while I'm passionate about our company's mission statement and what we do, I care more about how I'm personally making a difference."

Figure 1 demonstrates each coding theme, providing several quotes for each construct. Overall and importantly for this research, evidence from respondents provides support for the differential impact of sense of purpose beyond constructs currently available in the literature. The findings of this initial study also demonstrate that there is a need to better understand how particularly motivating a sense of purpose can be for salespeople.

(Insert Figure 1 about here.)

Study 2: Item development and pretesting

Given the perceived importance of sense of purpose demonstrated in the qualitative study, we moved forward to a second study with the objective of developing a reliable and valid measure for sense of purpose, following generally recommended scale development procedures (e.g., Raykov and Marcoulides 2011; Churchill 1979; Hinkin 1995). We first conducted an extensive search of the literature using databases such as Business Source Complete (EBSCO) and ProQuest PsycTESTS, which produced no existing scales for the construct. Thus, we wrote a total of 18 items relating to the conceptual definition of sense of purpose, which is "the belief that one is making a contribution to a cause greater and more enduring than oneself." We chose a 7-point response format for items, anchored by "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree," (Hinkin 1995). Reverse-coded items were excluded based on published recommendations that such items can be untrustworthy as they incite respondent confusion, systematic error, and artificial response factors (e.g., DeVellis 2003; Hinkin 1995; Edwards 2001).

Thereafter, we sought feedback from subject matter experts, including faculty and doctoral students with interest or experience in the area, on the items (DeVellis 2003; Rossiter 2002). Based on the recommendations provided, we adapted the test battery, deleting inferior items and improving item

wording as necessary. This process resulted in a reduced set of eight items to tap the construct domain for sense of purpose, which is available in Appendix A. The scale includes items such as "my work allows me to make a contribution to society," "the work I do on my job impacts the lives of others," and "I give back to society through the work I do on my job."

Construct validation hypotheses

In a theories-in-use approach, distinctiveness is critical. Hence, in this study we test whether or not sense of purpose is "indeed novel and not simply a reflection of some other variable" (Churchill 1979, p. 70). Research on employee engagement within management and psychology literature has highlighted how work design can enrich employees' job meaningfulness to increase their motivation (Humphrey, Nahrgang, and Morgeson 2007; Barrick, Mount, and Li 2013; Carton 2018). For example, Barrick et al. (2015) asserts that "the primary link between motivating work design and key outcomes such as employee motivation and performance is experienced meaningfulness" (p. 116).

However, job meaningfulness is largely influenced by employees' task and role characteristics and work interactions (Barrick et al. 2015). Indeed, by definition, job meaningfulness results from doing an identifiable piece of work, feeling responsible for it, feeling like the tasks have company impact, and getting supervisor feedback (Hackman and Oldham 1976; Barrick et al. 2015). While prior research shows that job meaningfulness is based on the salesperson's work having significance to co-workers or the company itself (Hackman and Oldham 1976; George 1992)—or "the extent to which the person feels the job makes a meaningful contribution and is important *to the organization*," (Tyagi 1985, p. 77, emphasis added)—sense of purpose relates to benefitting society, or making a contribution that is greater and more enduring than oneself.

Moreover, while job meaningfulness is focused on the task itself, the focus of sense of purpose is on the outcomes of performing the task, or the contribution to society. Sense of purpose highlights that

people want to feel like what they do matters, that their work has significance beyond themselves, their paycheck, or their company. Hence, we maintain that sense of purpose is fundamentally different than job meaningfulness and that the two are independent constructs.

The following hypotheses help test the predictive or criterion-related validity by examining the degree to which our measure for sense of purpose correlates with specified established measures in anticipated directions. Predictable correlations provide discriminant validity evidence. Generally speaking, if Construct A and Construct C are related significantly differently than Construct B and Construct C, then Constructs A and B are not the same.

Because meaningfulness is related to work design and job tasks (having significant variety and responsibility), we conclude that meaningfulness will be correlated to performance orientation, which has been shown to be focused on task performance. On the other hand, because sense of purpose relates to making a contribution to a cause greater and more enduring than oneself, we conclude that this construct will be positively correlated with customer orientation rather than task or performance orientation. Thus, we formally hypothesize,

H1: Meaningfulness is positively associated with performance orientation.

H2: Sense of purpose is positively associated with customer orientation.

H3: The positive association between meaningfulness and performance orientation is significantly stronger than the positive association between sense of purpose and performance orientation.

H4: The positive association between sense of purpose and customer orientation is significantly stronger than the positive association between meaningfulness and customer orientation.

In addition, based on the definition of meaningfulness being inferred based on job design and feedback, we predict that meaningfulness will be positively correlated with a sense of belonging or connection with others within the company. Reasonably, if a salesperson feels connected with co-workers, the job itself may feel more meaningful overall. On the other hand, with sense of purpose

relating to making a contribution to a "greater cause," there is no reason to speculate that this construct would necessarily be strongly positively correlated to a connection with co-workers.

H5: The positive association between meaningfulness and connection is significantly stronger than the positive association between sense of purpose and connection.

Methodology

Sample To demonstrate construct reliability and validity, the test battery was shared with a sample of 199 salespeople recruited from a reputable panel data provider via an online survey. Approximately 61% of these salespeople work in a business-to-business context with the other 39% working in a business-to-consumer setting such as insurance, financial services, or real estate. The mean age for respondents was 30 years old, with the oldest respondent being just shy of 70. Overall, the average experience in sales was 5.5 years with these salespeople reporting the average tenure at their current job being closer to three years. Approximately 36% of this sample was female. These "target raters" are representative of the population to which findings based on the scale are expected to generalize (Rossiter 2002).

Measures For Study 2, all measures are self-report and measured on a Likert Scale with anchors 1_strongly disagree to 7_strongly agree. In addition, except for the new measure of *sense of purpos*e, all measures have been published in reputable scholarly research journals. Scales are listed in Appendix B. We measured *connection* with an eight-item scale from Deci et al. (2001). One item was dropped from the analysis due to poor loading, which was "I pretty much keep to myself at work." The composite reliability for this measure with seven items is .897. We measured *customer orientation* using five items from the Saxe and Weitz (1982) scale. The composite reliability for this measure is .877. We measured *extrinsic motivation* with a three-item scale from Oliver and Anderson (1994), including items such as "I sell because I get paid to sell." The composite reliability for this measure is .821. We measured *job meaningfulness* with a seven-item scale from Thakor and Joshi (2005), which includes items such as "my

job lets me make full use of my abilities" and "my job gives me a feeling of accomplishment." The composite reliability for this measure is .895. Finally, we measured *performance orientation* with a six-item scale from Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994). The composite reliability for this measure is .868.

Analysis First, we performed a point and interval estimate of composite reliability to ensure it surpassed the suggested threshold of .70 (Bagozzi and Yi 2012; Raykov and Marcoulides 2011). Next, we used factor analysis for our test construction and development, as this technique renders the underlying dimensionality of a considered test of measures. We performed a split sample exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis using MPLUS to verify if the scale created for sense of purpose can be considered unidimensional. Both model fit statistics and eigen values greater than one substantiate the number of factors in the data. Likewise, factor loading coefficients provide evidence for both the nature of the latent construct and its relationship with other constructs in our model. Items that load significantly on the same factor—for example, questions specifically related to sense of purpose—are indicators of the same latent construct, providing convergent validity evidence. Items that load on different factors—for example, test items related to performance orientation and connection—can be viewed as indicators of different latent constructs, providing discriminant validity evidence. Importantly, as we conducted the factor analysis, we followed the suggested guidelines that oblique rotation is "more meaningful" than orthogonal rotation, since latent constructs or factors in behavioral sciences tend to be related to one another (Raykov and Marcoulides 2011). We also tested rival models and compared fit statistics using the chi-square difference test for the paired nested models to provide further evidence for the solution proposed (Anderson and Gerbing 1988).

To establish the discriminant validity of our measures, we computed 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 and Larcker 1981). We likewise examined the Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio—which is the calculation of a ratio of the average correlations between constructs to the geometric mean of the average correlations within items of the same constructs (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2015)—to see if any measures breached the suggested cutoff of .85 (Voorhees et al. 2016). Our hypothesis testing also provides evidence of predictive or criterion-related validity by examining the degree to which our measure for sense of purpose correlates with our hypothesized constructs in the anticipated direction.

Results and discussion

In this data, composite reliability for the sense of purpose measure is estimated at .879, with a standard error of .014. The 95%-confidence interval for this reliability coefficient is (.851, .903). Next, using just the items for sense of purpose, we ran a split-sample EFA and CFA in MPLUS (principal component analysis, oblique rotation), which showed only one eigen value greater than one. Likewise, the fit statistics for this unidimensional model show a reasonable fit to the data (χ^2=187.461, $6_{d.f.}$; CFI =1.00; RMSEA = 0.000; SRMR = .009). In addition, the loadings for each factor are significant and above the suggested .70 cutoff. Thus, the scale created for sense of purpose can be considered congeneric (Raykov and Marcoulides 2011).

Thereafter, we performed confirmatory factor analysis using the scale items for sense of purpose and job meaningfulness, testing rival models to provide evidence for discriminant validity. Results show that a two-factor solution is preferred (two eigen values greater than one), and the model fit statistics for the two-factor solution show a reasonable fit to the data (χ^2= 46.193, $34_{d.f.}$; CFI = .986; SRMR = .025; RMSEA = 0.043). All items loaded on intended constructs, and there were no significant cross-loadings. Next, we constrained the model to a single-factor solution and ran a chi-square difference test on the paired nested models. Model fit statistics for the single-factor model were not acceptable (χ^2 = 250.356,

$44_{d.f.}$; CFI = .759; RMSEA = .155; SRMR = .107), and a chi-square difference test revealed that the hypothesized two-factor model fit the data significantly better than the alternative single-factor model ($\chi^2_{diff} = 204.163$, $p < .05$). Thus, we provide empirical support that sense of purpose is indeed "novel" and distinct from job meaningfulness.

Next, we added the rest of the constructs to our model to test our hypotheses. The average variances extracted for the constructs were once again all greater than the recommended threshold of .50 (Bagozzi and Yi 2012), indicating that our measures are reliable and that the latent constructs account for more than 50% of variance in the items. In Table 2a, the diagonal values represent the square roots of AVE values, which are greater than all the off-diagonal correlation values, meaning items created to measure sense of purpose share more variance with this latent construct than with other latent variables (Fornell and Larcker 1981). In addition, none of the HTMT ratios breached the suggested cutoff of .85 (Voorhees et al. 2016), and no significant cross-loadings were found (see Table 2b).

(Insert Tables 2a and 2b about here.)

In examining criterion validity, our predictions were confirmed. In the first hypothesis, we predicted that meaningfulness is positively associated with performance orientation. This hypothesis was supported (r=.455, $p<.01$). In the second hypothesis, we predicted that sense of purpose is positively associated with customer orientation, which was also confirmed (r=.327, $p<.01$). In the third hypothesis, we predicted that the positive association between meaningfulness and performance orientation is significantly stronger than the positive association between sense of purpose and performance orientation. To test this hypothesis, we used a Fisher transformation of the correlation and z-test statistic, a procedure available on the quantpsy.org web utility (Preacher 2002). In support of H3, our analyses show that the correlation between job meaningfulness and performance orientation (r=.455, $p<.01$) and the correlation between sense of purpose and performance orientation (r =.198, $p<.01$) are significantly different

(z=2.874, *p<.01*), with the correlation being significantly more positive for job meaningfulness. In the fourth hypothesis, we predicted that the positive association between sense of purpose and customer orientation is significantly stronger than the positive association between meaningfulness and customer orientation. This hypothesis remains unsupported (z=.565, *n.s.*). In retrospect, an inclination toward pleasing customers can provide a sense of meaningfulness for salespeople. So this finding that a salesperson's customer orientation is positively associated with both a sense of purpose and job meaningfulness is not necessarily shocking or cause for alarm.

In the fifth hypothesis, we predicted that the positive association between meaningfulness and connection is significantly stronger than the positive association between sense of purpose and connection. This hypothesis was confirmed. Results show that the correlation between job meaningfulness and connection (r=.429, *p<.01*) and the correlation between sense of purpose and connection (r =.254, *p<.01*) are significantly different (z=1.97, *p<.05*), with the relationship being significantly more positive for job meaningfulness.

The results of the factor analysis suggest that the measure developed for sense of purpose is both unidimensional and reliable. Likewise, we provide evidence supporting both convergent and discriminant validity. Altogether, the results of this study provide us with a useful tool to measure the belief that one is making a contribution to a cause greater and enduring than oneself.

Study 3: Quantitative study

With the measure for sense of purpose developed in Study 2, the goal for Study 3 is to test its importance to the sales profession by demonstrating its impact on intrinsic motivation, salesperson behavior, and objective performance. We developed our conceptual model based on both the findings of our qualitative study and SDT (Deci and Ryan 1985, 2008; Rockmann and Ballinger 2017).

(Insert Figure 2 about here)

While SDT draws intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on opposite ends of a continuum, Rockmann and Ballinger (2017) advocate that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are independent, each with unique antecedents and outcomes: "in organizations, because financial incentives exist alongside interesting tasks, individuals can simultaneously experience extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for doing their work" (p. 11). A sales context especially offers unique opportunities to gain financial rewards while also helping others (i.e., the more businesses the salesperson helps, the more rewards earned) so this is an especially interesting context to examine the effects of both types of motivation.

When intrinsically motivated, individual find themselves naturally drawn to tasks (Grant 2007) and look at the completion of the work as the goal in and of itself (Rockmann and Ballinger 2017). Beyond the three known antecedents (autonomy, self-efficacy, and connection) from SDT, sense of purpose ought to be positively associated with intrinsic motivation because it means performing tasks because they are inherently interesting (cognitively) or internally satisfying (affectively). Contributing to something greater and more enduring than oneself can bring immense internal satisfaction and add a dimension of interest to the job. Yet, this notion has not been empirically tested. Thus, we formally hypothesize:

> **H6:** Sense of purpose is positively associated with intrinsic motivation, net the effects of autonomy, self-efficacy, and connection.

Working hard Katsikeas et al. (2018) highlight that although cognitive and attitudinal change can lead to performance change, without change in action, the change may be "modest or short lived at best" (p. 6). According to Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994), working hard is equivalent to the overall effort salespeople devote to their work. Effort is one of the ultimate predictors of salesperson performance and one of the best ways to infer that a salesperson was motivated to act (Hughes and Ahearne 2010). In other words, effort demonstrates that salespeople were motivated to spend their time at work making calls, advancing leads, problem solving, and developing strategic customer solutions.

Effort has been operationalized a number of ways in past research, including anticipated effort, intensity of effort, and hours spent working (e.g., Brown and Peterson 1994; Hughes 2013). Looking at each driver of intrinsic motivation—autonomy, self-efficacy, connection, and sense of purpose—helps build the case for the importance of intrinsic motivation to predict effort. Studies have demonstrated—albeit separately—that autonomy (Christen, Iyer, and Soberman 2006; Wang and Netemeyer 2002; Rapp et al. 2015), self-efficacy (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Ahearne, Mathieu, and Rapp 2005; Fu et al. 2010), and intrafirm relationships (Bolander et al. 2015; Nowlin, Walker, and Anaza 2018) increase salesperson effort and performance. Beyond these constructs, having a sense of purpose should motivate salespeople to work harder. If the salesperson recognizes the positive impact a sale will have on customers' lives and/or on society at large, that sense of importance should drive effort to make more sales. Moreover, if the customer initially objects to the purchase, trying again no longer feels like selfish ambition with a true sense of purpose for the work. As the tractor-trailer wheel salesman conveyed in the qualitative study, he immediately starts contacting customers and expending effort at work each morning because he recognizes the importance of his sales to society. Thus, we predict:

H7a: Intrinsic motivation is positively associated with working hard on average over time.

Extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Deci and Ryan 2008). Although some scholars have broken down extrinsic motivation into a cognitive orientation called "compensation seeking," and affective orientation called "recognition seeking," (e.g., Miao, Evans and Shaoming 2007), the latter has been questioned as partially belonging to intrinsic motivation (Deci 1972). Truly, recognition and esteem are higher level needs that lie *within* a person. According to Deci (1972), "verbal rewards may not be phenomenologically distinguishable from the feelings of satisfaction which the person gets for doing the activity. Hence, the verbal reinforcements strengthen his intrinsic motivation because they provide additional positive value which becomes associated with the activity…by strengthening the person's sense of competence and self-determination" (p. 224). Thus,

depending on how the salesperson receives feedback and interprets it, the draw could be due to the source and desire to please others (extrinsic) or from the perception of how good he or she is at the task and feelings of esteem (intrinsic). For these reasons, in this study we focus on the compensation-seeking aspect of extrinsic motivation.

Katsikeas et al. (2018) highlight that prior research has attempted to show "the performance impact of sales control indirectly through changes in job engagement (e.g., adaptive selling and sales effort)" with "limited success" (p. 7). Are financial rewards more important for salesperson effort over time, or would intrinsic motivation—including having a sense of purpose—lead to working harder? We predict the latter. Although extant literature shows a strong relationship between extrinsic (controlled) motivation and performance, we predict that those who sell for more noble reasons will overtime outperform those focused on meeting quotas and making money (c.f., McLeod 2020). If salespeople feel that they are competent in their job, connected with their coworkers, have great freedom in their position, and a sense of purpose that what they do really matters to society, we predict that they will strive to make sales even during difficult situations when others may give up. This theme emerged during our qualitative interviews. Moreover, SDT predicts that while external regulation can powerfully motivate specific behaviors, it often comes with "collateral damage" in the form of long-term detriment to autonomous motivation (Deci, Ryan, and Olafsen 2017, p. 21). Hence, though this notion runs somewhat counter to current literature in salesperson motivation, we formally hypothesize:

> **H7b:** Intrinsic motivation is more positively associated with working hard than extrinsic motivation on average over time.

Working smart While working hard has been described as effort, working smart concerns the strategic direction of effort (Sujan 1986). In his seminal paper, Sujan (1986) indicated that those who were intrinsically motivated attributed failure to not working smart enough while those who were extrinsically motivated attributed failure to not working hard enough—but perhaps in the wrong direction. While

working hard is often discussed as effort intensity, working smart most often signifies effort direction. Ogilvie et al. (2017) describes working smart as "the use of knowledge to direct effort" (p. 101).

Working smart has been conceptualized in marketing literature as adaptive selling behavior, or using sales knowledge to adjust the approach to fit customer needs within various customer interactions (Spiro and Weitz 1990; Fang, Palmatier, and Evans 2004; Alavi, Habel, and Linsemeyer 2019). Adaptive selling is defined as "engaging in planning to determine the suitability of sales behaviors and activities that will be undertaken, the capacity to engage in a wide range of selling behaviors and activities, and the alteration of sales behaviors and activities in keeping with situational considerations" (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994, p. 40). Previous studies have demonstrated that intrinsically motivated salespeople are more likely to practice adaptive selling, which leads to enhanced performance (Jaramillo et al. 2007; Román and Iacobucci 2010; Miao and Evans 2012).

From its earliest inception, theories on motivation were based on need fulfilment. People behave to solve problems such as hunger, loneliness, self-esteem, and so forth. Maslow (1943), arguably the most widely cited and misunderstood motivational theorist, asserted that once basic, lower-level needs were at least partially filled (i.e., there was at least something in a man's belly), higher level needs would emerge as strong motivators, such as the need for routine, human connection, and doing what one was fitted for, or self-actualization. McGregor (1960) similarly described lower-level and higher-level needs of workers with his *Theory X* (focused on micro-management with punishments and rewards, or "carrots and sticks") and *Theory Y* (driven by limited supervision and greater emphasis on worker engagement and motivation). Importantly, within the context of employment, pay and working conditions have been equated to "hygiene factors," which are expected by present-day employees, while true motivators are based on *higher level* needs like achievement, recognition and growth (Herzberg 1968).

Extrinsic motivation has been regarded as meeting lower level needs of workers (i.e., compensation) while intrinsic motivation has been viewed as meeting higher level needs. Monetary rewards may not be truly motivating to people who have never experienced genuine hunger or poverty (Herzberg 1968). Present-day workers have a sense of entitlement to fair wages and decent working conditions, and thus they are only really noticed if they are missing or fall beyond an expected distribution (on either side—far greater or far less than expectations). Consequently, intrinsic motivation should be more positively associated with working not only harder but also smarter than extrinsic motivation. Hence, we hypothesize,

> **H8:** Intrinsic motivation is more positively associated with working smart than extrinsic motivation on average over time.

The moderating effect of age Recent research highlights that a dramatic change in the demographic makeup of the sales workforce is taking place as older salespeople are retiring and younger salespeople are being heavily recruited (Khusainova et al. 2018). Younger salespeople are predicted to be motivated differently than their predecessors yet little empirical research has investigated this notion (Khusainova et al. 2018). Miao, Lund, and Evans (2009) found decreases in the challenge-seeking aspect of intrinsic motivation as salespeople had more job experience, which may be correlated with age but is not equivalent. A more recent study suggests the desire to learn new tasks declines as workers age, as does their self-rated task enjoyment motivation (Calo, Patterson, and Decker 2014).

In addition, recent popular press articles have suggested that younger salespeople are seeking jobs where they can make a difference (e.g., Debevoise 2019; Goleman 2020). Over 60% of millennials say businesses should be "improving society" instead of "generating profit" (Goleman 2020). In another national poll of young adults, 79% of 18-29-year-olds agreed that "it is more important to enjoy my job than to make a lot of money" (Pratt-Kielley 2020). With less experience in the real world, young adults are filled with dreams and aspirations and are still searching for how they personally can make a

difference in the world. As they are making sense of their jobs and their role in society, intrinsic sources of motivation like self-efficacy, belongingness, autonomy, and sense of purpose may be more important to them as such information helps shape their worldview. Hence, we formally predict,

> **H9a:** Age moderates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and working hard such that the impact is strengthened when salespeople are younger.
>
> **H9b:** Age moderates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and working smart such that the impact is strengthened when salespeople are younger.

Sales performance Our conceptual model is displayed in Figure 2. Ultimately, what most companies are concerned with is salesperson performance. We do not formally hypothesize for a relationship between working hard and working smart and salesperson performance because these relationships have been well-documented in the literature (Fang, Palmatier, and Evans 2004; Jaramillo and Mulki 2008; Ogilvie et al. 2017). However, we do include objective performance in our model as we test our hypothesized relationships to show their overall importance.

Methodology

Sample A U.S.-based sales firm in the financial services industry provided us with the contact information for 522 salespeople within its main office. All sales are done over the phone (with no in-person meetings); while the company does not consider itself to be a call center, it operates very similarly. Salespeople have individual goals and sell individually, and their compensation is a mix of base pay plus commission based on the percentage of their quota that they attain. The company provided objective longitudinal effort and performance data for each salesperson in the sample both prior to and after the survey (four points in time, representing four consecutive sales cycles). Before the voluntary surveys were sent to the sales force, a company Vice President's secretary communicated with all employees via email, encouraging each salesperson to take the anonymous survey.

After receiving the survey responses, an outlier analysis revealed that 20 responders served the company in other capacities than strictly a salesperson during at least one sales cycle of the investigation period, such as being promoted to leadership or participating in an initial onboarding time rather than the typical selling role. Thus, our final sample size was 114 salespeople (n=456 total observations), which was a 21.84% response rate. On average, respondents were 29 years old, worked at the company 2.5 years, and had an average work experience in sales of six years. Approximately 78% of the sample was male, which aligns with the company's workforce make-up.

Measures All scales used in this study are contained in Appendix A. We measured *sense of purpose* using the new tool developed in the second study. The composite reliability for this measure in the current data is .922. We measured *autonomy* using a three-item scale from Zhang and Bartol (2010), including items such as "I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work." The composite reliability for this measure is .944. We measured *competence*, which is synonymous for self-efficacy, with a seven-item scale from Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994). The composite reliability for this measure is .935. We measured *connection* with the eight-item scale for sense of belonging from Deci et al. (2001). A confirmatory factory analysis on this data revealed that four items loaded on a single factor, which is considered ideal for survey research (c.f. Raykov and Mercoulides 2011), so we chose to maintain just those items. (We recognize it is quite possible that salespeople working in this call-center type of environment like their co-workers and yet still keep to themselves for the most part at work.) The composite reliability for this measure is .905. We measured *extrinsic motivation* with a three-item scale from Oliver and Anderson (1994) that included items focused on the desire for monetary compensation. The composite reliability for this scale is .898. We measured *intrinsic motivation* using a five-item scale from Oliver and Anderson (1994). The composite reliability for this measure is .868.

Salesperson performance is an objective measure obtained from company archival data as "percentage of goal." Using percentage of goal or quota, i.e., total sales divided by the 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, Mathieu, and Rapp 2005). We measured *working smart* with a seven-item scale for selling adaptivity from Spiro and Weitz (1990). The composite reliability for this measure is .922. *Working hard,* or effort, is an objective measure the company provided from archival data on the exact number of calls per month made by the salesperson, which we log-transformed.

Analysis While a recent trend has been to model longitudinal data with linear growth curve models, this type of approach would not be appropriate given this data and our research questions (Xu, DeShon, and Dishop 2020). When researchers estimate a growth curve and argue for a positive linear trend, they are mathematically implying that the trajectory continues to increase, even if this is not their intended argument. It seems unreasonable to expect unbounded growth for performance, and prior research has shown that performance converges to stability after either an initial spike (Thoresen et al. 2004) or among newcomers once volatile socializing experiences have settled (Boswell, Boudreau, and Tichy 2005). We would expect general stability of performance across time for employees not experiencing drastic external changes (i.e., not newcomers or employees going through a large organizational change). Based on the mathematics of dynamic systems, we expect performance to be stable across time, and in the current paper we define stable as meaning that the statistical characteristics of the variable (e.g., mean and variance) do not demonstrate vast changes at successive time points (Jebb and Tay 2017). Salesperson performance may fluctuate month to month, and it may even increase steadily when an individual first

starts working in a sales role or for a new company, but it is unlikely that it will continue to consistently increase or decrease after the person has gained experience in the role.

Since the company provided multiple time points of data for each salesperson on effort and performance ($n > 1$, $t \geq 3$), we employed a dynamic modeling approach—specifically, time varying covariate analysis—to account for the non-independence of observations over time within salespeople (Bollen and Brand 2010). To infer meaning from this type of data requires assessing how constructs such as effort and performance move through time as functions of themselves and each other, noting how the past constrains the future. Dynamics is a specific branch of mechanics/mathematics, but in organizational literature it refers to an approach that describes how the variables in a system move from a given state at time *t* to another state at time *t + 1* as governed by the transition rules and external inputs (Xu, DeShon, and Dishop 2020; Wang, Zhou, and Zhang 2016). Instead of a growth curve model, the time varying covariate analysis allows us to answer if a salesperson's motivation is associated with his or her effort over time and if changes in effort relate to changes in the salesperson's subsequent performance. Using a dynamic model with reciprocal influence and constraints allows for boundaries within the dynamic system. In other words, rather than assessing a general trend pattern, this lens emphasizes how states update from one moment to the next, fluctuating across time but bounded by where the state was at the immediately prior time point.

Dynamic modeling offers a more accurate inference than other approaches on whether a construct like individual effort displays a similar pattern with an individual's performance over time—i.e., they "dance" together—if effort goes down, subsequent performance goes down; if effort rises in the next month, performance will subsequently rise, and so on. Statistically, we specific the following dynamic model as the following equation:

$$y_{it} = \rho y_{it-1} + \boldsymbol{B}_{yzt}\boldsymbol{Z}_i + \eta_i + \lambda_i + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

where y_{it} is the value of the dependent variable for the *i*th salesperson at time *t*; ρ is the autoregressive coefficient of the effect of y_{it-1} on y_{it}. $\boldsymbol{Z}_i$ is a vector of independent variables and control variable for the *i*th salesperson; $\boldsymbol{B}_{yzt}$ is a vector of coefficients at time t that give the impact of the vector $\boldsymbol{Z}_i$ on the dependent variable y_{it}; η_i represents the unobserved heterogeneity that has a coefficient of 1 to the dependent variable, and it is allowed to correlate with exogenous variables and the dependent variable at the initial time point; λ_i is the inverse Mills ratio of the *i*th salesperson from the equation (A2); ε_{it} is the random disturbance of the *i*th salesperson at time *t*. While we describe the general model specification in equation 1, we also provide additional details about our dynamic modeling approach in Web Appendix B_1.

Correcting endogeneity, selection bias, and unobserved heterogeneity Prior to testing our hypotheses, we corrected for potential self-selection bias in the non-random sample. Before we statistically control for possible sample induced endogeneity, we conducted T-tests on mean scores of demographic variables for early and late responders, which were not significantly different, indicating that nonresponse bias was not a problem. Next, we used Heckman's (1979) two-step control function approach to account for sample-induced endogeneity. We first fit a probit regression model that estimates the probability of a salesperson answering the survey using information from company records. The independent variables used in the first stage equation are related to the selection but not included in the second stage model. The first stage model generates the inverse Mills ratios. We then included ratios in the hypothesis testing models to control for potential sample induced endogeneity. We report the full selection equations and the first-stage model results in Web Appendix B_2.

Also, in estimating dynamic panel models, researchers commonly use the generalized method of moments using instrumental variables (GMM-IV) approach to control potential bias and Type I error rates. However, we intentionally selected Bollen and Brand (2010)'s dynamic modeling approach over

the GMM-IV approach because the GMM-IV approach requires a larger sample size (Ahn and Schmidt 1995) and tends to yield greater bias in small samples, particularly when the autoregressive effect is large (Kiviet and Phillips 2014).

Within dynamic modeling, unobserved heterogeneity represents unmeasured variables in aggregate that are stable over time within units (i.e., time-invariant for each unit) but vary across units (Xu, DeShon, and Dishop 2020). If unobserved heterogeneity is ignored, then serial correlation will be introduced into the errors. We controlled for unobserved heterogeneity because if it is modeled as independent but in fact correlates with other predictors in the model, then omitted variables bias is introduced into the parameter estimates (Wooldridge 2010). The modeling technique we chose (a) conditions on the first observation of the outcome variable(s) to mitigate the initial condition problem, (b) explicitly incorporates unobserved heterogeneity and contains the freedom to model it in a fixed or random effects approach, and (c) is amenable to a variety of lag structures (Bollen and Brand 2010). Xu, DeShon, and Dishop (2020) report that Bollen and Brand (2010)'s dynamic modeling approach yields less biased estimates than the GMM-IV approach. Therefore, we treated the time-invariant, between-individual unobserved heterogeneity as a latent variable and allowed it to correlate with the lagged dependent variable and time-varying covariates.

Common method variance and multicollinearity Common method variance (CMV) could be a potential source of bias in survey-based results. To minimize the potential impact of CMV, we combined data from different sources (i.e., we relied on key informants for the independent variables and archival sources for the performance criterion) and reduced survey length. Next, we assessed the presence of CMV using partial correlation procedures. We also conducted confirmatory factor analyses to examine the factor structure of the survey measures. Finally, we estimated an alternative model to rule out the

possibility that common method effects account for the variance in responses. While prior studies have used participant's age as the marker variable (e.g., Griffith and Lusch 2007), age is not appropriate in the current research context since age is included in our research framework. Thus, we selected participant's gender as the marker variable. Gender is an appropriate marker variable because it fits the standard procedure—i.e., it is not theoretically or statistically related to a least one other variable in the study (Lindell and Whitney 2001). The results suggest that CMV may not be an important issue in this study. The adjusted correlations demonstrate a similar significance structure of the original correlations. In addition, multicollinearity is not detected since the variance inflation factors are all in the range of 1.5 to 2.1.

Results

Prior to testing our hypotheses, we ran a CFA in MPLUS 8.3 on the measurement model, for which results show reasonable model fit (χ^2= 462.395, $165_{d.f.}$; CFI = .95; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .02). Correlation and descriptive statistics are available in Table 3, and results are listed in Table 4. In the sixth hypothesis, we predicted that sense of purpose is significantly related to intrinsic motivation, net the effects of autonomy, self-efficacy, and connection, or the three known antecedents of SDT. This hypothesis was supported (β=.154, $p<.05$). In the seventh set of hypotheses, we predicted that intrinsic motivation is not only positively associated with working hard but also more positively associated with working hard than extrinsic motivation on average over time. These hypotheses were supported. The relationship between intrinsic motivation and the number of calls made was significantly positive (β=.018, $p<.05$) while the relationship between extrinsic motivation and number of calls made was not significant (β=-.001, *n.s.*). The two are significantly different, with the relationship between intrinsic motivation and working hard being significantly more positive.

[Insert Table 3 about here.]

In the eighth hypothesis, we predicted that intrinsic motivation is more positively associated with working smart than is extrinsic motivation, which was supported. The relationship between intrinsic motivation and adaptive selling was significantly positive (β=.619, $p<.01$) while the relationship between extrinsic motivation and adaptive selling was not significant (β=.074, *n.s.*). The two are significantly different, with the relationship between intrinsic motivation and working smart being significantly more positive.

In the ninth set of hypotheses, we predicted that age moderates the impact between intrinsic motivation and working hard (9a) and working smart (9b) such that relationships are stronger when salespeople are younger. These hypotheses were supported: (β=-.006, $p<.05$) and (β=-.001, $p<.05$), respectively. The interactions are shown in Figures 3a and 3b.

[Insert Figures 3a and 3b about here.]

Finally, by modeling the relationship dynamically over time, our analysis shows that effort and subsequent performance follow the same pattern over time (β=.381, $p<.05$). On the other hand, the relationship between working smart and performance did not reach statistical significance (β=.023, *n.s.*).

[Insert Table 4 about here.]

We also separately tested the direct effect of sense of purpose on salesperson performance since this is a new construct we introduce to the literature. We find that sense of purpose has a significantly positive direct effect on salesperson performance (β=.037, $p<.05$), whereas the other known antecedents of SDT did not reach statistical significance. Results from these additional analyses are shown in Web Appendix C.

Robustness checks We examined rival models to gauge if our model was correctly specified. For example, salespeople may monitor their performance and respond to discrepancies between it and their expectations, so we added a path between performance at time t to effort at time $t+1$. Results show that

the coefficient was not significant nor were model fit statistics improved. Hence, the more parsimonious model was retained. We find that a significant predictor of effort at time *t+1* was effort at time *t*, which is in line with behavioral consistency theory that suggests one of the best predictors of what someone will do in a given circumstance is what he or she did under similar circumstances in the past (Funder and Colvin 1991). Likewise, the psychological inertia theorem (Walters 2018) proposes that individuals often demonstrate behavioral continuity or the expression of similar behavior across time due to recurrent cognitions. Hence, we have some evidence that the model we tested should be retained.

Discussion

A better understanding of motivation—including its antecedents and outcomes—in the modern dynamic environment of personal selling and sales management has been much needed, particularly as a new, younger salesforce is being hired and trained to rise to sales management. We started our quest by interviewing salespeople and asking them what motivated them in general at work, what motivated them to go the extra mile on a Friday afternoon, and what motivated them when times were tough. The findings from our first study revealed that in addition to the constructs found in SDT, sense of purpose was an unexpectedly strong and frequently mentioned motivator deserving of more exploration. Hence, building on this first study, we moved to a second study with the objective of developing a construct to measure sense of purpose and demonstrated that it is distinct from job meaningfulness. Finally, using the tool developed in the second study, we moved forward to a third study to test the importance of this new construct in comparison to existing constructs in the literature by measuring its impact on salesperson outcomes such as objective effort and performance over time. We find that sense of purpose is another antecedent of intrinsic motivation. Moreover, intrinsic motivation was a significant predictor of effort, adaptive selling, and salesperson performance—even more so than extrinsic motivation, despite the latter's prominence in recent sales literature. Finally, we discovered that intrinsic motivation is even more important for younger salespeople, which has important theoretical and managerial implications.

Theoretical implications

Since young adults are beginning to occupy the sales workforce, understanding what motivates them remains extremely important. Hence, our first contribution is showing that intrinsic motivation leads to greater effort and adaptivity for younger salespeople. While some scholars and practitioners may think that young adults are less concerned with intrinsic motivation until they become more financially stable (i.e., Maslow's hierarchy of needs), this assumption disregards the fact that modern society has provided young salespeople with credit and a (perhaps false) sense of financial security that makes higher level needs emerge as more salient. Thus, as companies are hiring and training a younger salesforce, focusing on meeting their needs for autonomy, relatedness, competence, and a sense of purpose should be top of mind.

Our second contribution is in providing empirical evidence that intrinsic motivation is more positively associated with critical salesperson behaviors that ultimately lead to salesperson performance over time. While research on extrinsic motivation—including incentives, compensation, and contests—has dominated the literature in recent years, we show that intrinsic motivation is worthy of further attention and research, even in this modern era. Extrinsically motivating salespeople is costly to companies, and stimulating intrinsic motivation may be not only less expensive but also more effective. We acknowledge that hiring and training costs may not differ substantially for intrinsically- versus extrinsically-motivated salespeople; however, intrinsic motivation is "self-generating" as the pull to act comes from the inherent interest and satisfaction in performing the task rather than influenced by additional financial incentives (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan 2017).

Importantly, these findings do not negate the fact that compensation and financial incentives are necessary within the context of sales; rather, a key takeaway may be that financial compensation has become an expectation of salespeople—a hygiene factor. A desire for money may drive the decision to

accept a position within a company and it may drive short-term behaviors, but our findings reveal that compensation-based extrinsic motivation was not significantly related to effort in salespeople over time. While prior cross-sectional studies have shown a lift in performance from extrinsic sources of motivation such as incentives, the results of our qualitative study reveal that perhaps pursuing these rewards is not based on a desire for financial gain but rather fulfilling a need for achievement. Using longitudinal modeling, our empirical results show that the relationship between a desire for money and salesperson effort can diminish over time. As a Forbes article highlights, "Rewards of pay or time off may generate an immediate and short-term improvement in productivity but often backfire" (Debevoise 2019). Likewise, SDT explains that controlled motivation via extrinsic rewards can be determinantal to autonomous motivation and even salesperson well-being (Deci, Olafsen, and Ryan 2017). Perhaps this is burnout, as a desire for more and more money can never be fully satisfied. Conversely, intrinsic motivation was positively associated with effort, adaptivity, and sales performance.

Our third and main contribution is establishing sense of purpose as an important component of intrinsic motivation in salespeople. We also distinguish sense of purpose—the belief that one is contributing to a cause greater and more enduring than oneself (i.e., benefiting society)—from job meaningfulness, which is the extent to which the person feels the job makes a meaningful contribution to the organization. Recent research has highlighted how many employees struggle to connect their daily work to the overall vision of their company (Carton 2018; Barrick, Mount, and Li 2013). We propose this may be the result of both academic studies and sales managers emphasizing how salespeople are benefiting the company or themselves rather than connecting how the salesperson is making a positive impact on constituents external to the firm or society. This nuance is crucial for leaders; it means that telling a salesperson the company is counting on you to hit the numbers is not as effective as emphasizing how his or her sales have a positive and lasting impact on customers and society at large.

While literature has emphasized enhancing job meaningfulness through work design, recent research has lamented that "evidence on the effectiveness of using the organization's ultimate aspirations to impart meaningfulness to work is mixed" (Carton 2018, p. 324). Companies have become more adept at creating vision statements and related branding, and yet a disconnect remains between employees' feelings toward the ultimate aspirations of the company and their everyday work (Carton 2018). This disconnect can exist because the vision of the company and a salesperson's sense of purpose are not synonymous. As a recent Forbes article emphasizes, "organizations can painstakingly craft a compelling purpose statement and print it on every available surface of the organization, physical or virtual, but if employees aren't guided to connect to that purpose on an *individual* level, the disconnect between what's being said and felt by employees creates a sense of dissonance and ultimately skepticism and disengagement" (Debevoise 2019, emphasis ours). Hence, the disconnect between sense-giving (inspiring/influencing) from leaders and sense-making (understanding/ cognition) from individual salespeople (e.g., Maitlis 2004; Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991) continues to plague organizations.

Accordingly, Carton (2018) explains that while having a vision statement that is transcendent and timeless is important, it can make a firm's aspirations seem far removed from everyday work's short-term objectives; hence, managers frequently try to focus employee's attention on a near-term goal such as a sales quota (Carton 2018). However, this controlled motivation is not necessarily the answer to building engagement (Carton 2018). Instead, we advocate and empirically demonstrate that improving the sense-making of salespeople to understand how their daily activities make a contribution to a cause greater and more enduring than themselves should lead to greater intrinsic motivation to work harder and smarter and improve overall sales performance. While sense-making has historically been connected with "events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some other way violate expectations," (Maitlas and Chrisitanson

2014, p. 57), we adopt a broader perspective of salespeople "making sense" of their individual impact on society through their job (c.f., Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991).

Managerial implications

While intrinsic motivation has been likened to the 'heart and brains' of a person, management can influence or inspire it. Firms do not have to exclusively look to increasing incentives, contests, and compensation to motivate, thinking they cannot impact the inherent attractiveness of the sales task in the minds of their subordinates. With an enhanced understanding of the drivers and benefits of intrinsic motivation generated by this study, managers may want to think about each antecedent in trying to influence the salesperson's behavior.

Initially, sales managers should consider their conversations with salespeople. Often company meetings with salespeople focus on quotas, quarterly numbers, and projected forecasts. As McLeod (2020) asserts, "selling is not about numbers but about people – customers and salespeople working together to solve problems." Based on the results of this study, managers should give ample attention in conversations with salespeople as to how company products and services benefit customers and society as a whole, thereby stimulating a heightened sense of purpose. This notion is critical to the shifting dynamic of sales in customer-centric marketing. Likewise, sales managers can also examine their own sense of purpose in working for the company and lead by example in showing how their work leaves a greater impact on society. Debevoise (2019) articulates that purpose-driven branding can backfire when it is only focused on external, top-down messaging rather than developing an authentic internal purposeful mindset for all employees (i.e., sense-giving). A company's purpose journey may start at the top, but leaders should help close the gap between the organizational vision and the sense of purpose salespeople feel for making sales. Helping connect the dots between the tasks salespeople complete and how they contribute to a cause greater and more enduring than themselves is a worthy task for leaders. To do so,

sales managers should regularly show their subordinates how their work benefits others, help salespeople tie their everyday tasks to a bigger purpose worth committing to, and make contribution goals as or more important than achievement goals. As we show, such efforts should help sales performance and the effective management of a younger workforce, which is becoming increasingly important.

As managers recruit and train new, younger sales employees, focusing on meeting their needs for a sense of purpose, autonomy, relatedness, and competence should be a priority. While intrinsic motivation was more positively associated with effort and performance for salespeople in our sample in general, it was extra important for younger workers. Hence, in addition to the steps to build a sense of purpose mentioned above, managers should provide opportunities for autonomy, offer training and coaching to build a sense of competence, and strive to create a corporate culture conducive to salespeople connecting with their co-workers to influence a sense of belonging.

Limitations and future research

As with any study, there are some limitations that provide fruitful avenues for future research. First, we used a measure for extrinsic motivation that has been widely used in previous studies (c.f., Oliver and Anderson 1994; Noble 2008; Rockmann and Ballinger 2017). However, we did not examine actual increased financial incentives but simply controlled for compensation by surveying salespeople from the same company within the same role over the same period of time. A future study may wish to conduct a field experiment in which intrinsic motivation is measured in addition to financial offerings to see which has a greater effect or how the two combine and interact. We acknowledge the fact that people are likely motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to some degree, and thus teasing apart interactions across a response surface would be an interesting future study. Likely, a base level of extrinsic motivation is necessary, but after a certain point (i.e., the salesperson is making a sufficient income), intrinsic motivation would be required to maintain effort and attention, especially over time.

This premise warrants future exploration given the types of motivation are not necessarily mutually exclusive.[2] Along similar lines, we also leave exploring the impact of career stages on the relationship between different types of motivation and subsequent behavior and performance as an opportunity for future exploration.

In addition, we captured motivation as a trait. Future research may wish to employ an experience sampling methodology to see if motivation remains constant within salespeople or if it fluctuates over time. We also measured working smart as adaptive selling (following Fang, Palmatier, and Evans 2004; Román and Iacobucci 2010), which surprisingly was not statistically significantly related to salesperson performance. Perhaps this is an issue of statistical power, or perhaps studying working smart with other methods is warranted.

Next, we intentionally sampled salespeople from one company in one industry (which helped us control for compensation effects). However, doing so may limit generalizability. Future research may wish to examine other industries, or other countries, to determine if boundary conditions may exist. As the selling landscape continues to evolve and become more automated, how will motivation and subsequent effort and performance be affected? How important is a salesperson's sense of purpose in a post-pandemic world with the rise of digital selling and increased frequency of online sales meetings? These questions would also serve as interesting avenues for future research.

Sampling one company and industry also prohibited us from teasing apart variance from self-selecting into companies that align with a salesperson's own values; however, this issue deserves researchers' attention. If employees feel a greater sense of alignment between their values, goals, and objectives, and those of the organization, it is likely that a synergistic effect may result. Or, the opposite could be true. For example, if a salesperson is environmentally conscious and the company is not (or vice

[2] We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

versa), how does that impact the salesperson's sense of purpose, motivation, and subsequent behaviors? Such a study could provide useful insights.

Researchers also may want to investigate how much longer intrinsically motivated salespeople stay with their employer, how much more money they generate for the company, and how much they impact customer lifetime value. Future studies may want to explore how a sense of purpose can impact recruiting efforts as well.

Next, future research could examine how leadership behaviors and styles enhance or distract from having a sense of purpose. How does transformational leadership, empowering leadership, or supportive leadership interact with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation? We advocate exploring leadership styles and behaviors and their impact on the relationship between motivation and subsequent behaviors would be an interesting avenue for future research.

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Table 1: Literature review 2016–present

Authors (Date)	Journal	Extrinsic	Intrinsic	Construct(s)
Current Authors	*JAMS*	X	X	Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, autonomy, self-efficacy, connection, sense of purpose
Homburg et al. (2021)	*JPSSM*	X		Incentives
He et al. (2021)	*AMJ*	X		Pay for performance
Jerath and Long (2020)	*JMR*	X		Sales force incentive contracting
Magnotta et al. (2020)	*JMR*	X		Incentives (spiffs)
Li et al. (2019)	*MS*	X		Individual or revenue sharing incentives
Shin and Grant (2019)	*AMJ*	X	X	Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation
Boichuk et al. (2019)	*JMR*	X		Punishment threats and incentives
Homburg et al. (2019)	*JPIM*	X	X	Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation
Hossain et al. (2019)	*JMR*	X		Contests
Kim et al. (2019)	*JMR*	X		Multidimensional incentives
Kimura et al. (2019)	*IMM*		X	Intrinsic motivation
Bommaraju and Hohenberg (2018)	*JM*	X		Self-selected financial incentives
Fulmer and Shaw (2018)	*JAP*	X		Compensation
Katsikeas et al. (2018)	*JM*	X		Control (incentives)
Mayberry et al. (2018)	*JAMS*	X		Alignment of incentives
Patil and Syam (2018)	*JM*	X		Specialized personal incentives
Sleep et al. (2018)	*JPSSM*	X		Rewards
Van der Borgh and Schepers (2018)	*JAMS*	X		Financial rewards
Viswanathan et al. (2018)	*JMR*	X		Cash or merchandise incentive programs
Chen and Lim (2017)	*JMR*	X		Contests
Chung and Narayandas (2017)	*JMR*	X		Compensation (quotas or gifts)
Fu et al. (2017)	*JMTP*	X	X	Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation
Lee and Meyer-Doyle (2017)	*OS*	X		Incentives
Mallin et al. (2017)	*JMTP*	X	X	Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation
Miao et al. (2017)	*JPSSM*	X		Rewards
Nijssen et al. (2017)	*IMM*	X		Incentives
Ramarajan et al. (2017)	*AMJ*		X	Intrinsic motivation (role immersion)
Bonney et al. (2016)	*JAMS*	X		Incentive-based compensation plans
Daljord et al. (2016)	*JMR*	X		Compensation
DeCarlo and Lam (2016)	*JAMS*	X		Acquisition-based compensation plans
Gillespie, Noble, and Lam (2016)	*JAMS*	X	X	Quotas and brand identification
Gopalakrishna et al. (2016)	*ML*	X		Contests
Hohenberg and Homburg (2016)	*JM*	X	X	Steering instruments and autonomy
Johnson et al. (2016)	*JBR*	X		Compensation
Kim and Tiwana (2016)	*JAMS*	X		Control systems

Note: This table is organized by year then alphabetical order by author name. AMJ = Academy of Management Journal, IMM = Industrial Marketing Management, JAMS = Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, JAP = Journal of Applied Psychology, JBR = Journal of Business Research, JM = Journal of Marketing, JMR = Journal of Marketing Research, JMTP = Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, JPIM = Journal of Product Innovation Management, JPSSM = Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, ML = Marketing Letters, MS = Marketing Science, OS = Organization Science.

Table 2a: Latent variable correlations and AVE-SQ (Study 2)

	Sense of Purpose	Autonomy	Competence	Connect	Customer Orientation	Extrinsic Motivation	Working Hard	Intrinsic Motivation	Meaning	Perform. Orientation	Working Smart
Sense of Purpose	**.819**										
Autonomy	.343	**.924**									
Competence	.334	.330	**.762**								
Connection	.274	.174	.236	**.809**							
Customer Orientation	.311	.257	.361	.338	**.766**						
Extrinsic Motivation	-.439	-.234	-.313	-.285	-.213	**.838**					
Working Hard	.320	.183	.417	.265	.176	-.295	**.856**				
Intrinsic Motivation	.535	.345	.584	.343	.321	-.495	.418	**.746**			
Meaning	.590	.441	.462	.429	.383	-.512	.344	.694	**.771**		
Performance Orientation	.293	-.006	.204	.268	.260	-.132	.113	.254	.458	**.731**	
Working Smart	.399	.386	.655	.173	.317	-.298	.424	.496	.399	.113	**.738**

Note: n=199; The diagonal values represent the square roots of the AVE values. The off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations. All correlations with $|r| > .14$ significant at $p < .05$ (two-sided).

Table 2b: HTMT Ratios (Study 2)

	Sense of Purpose	Autonomy	Competence	Connection	Customer Orient.	Extrinsic Motivation	Working Hard	Intrinsic Motivation	Meaning	Perform. Orientation
Autonomy	.363									
Competence	.368	.363								
Connection	.298	.193	.272							
Customer Orientation	.336	.286	.417	.402						
Extrinsic Motivation	.493	.249	.337	.305	.221					
Working Hard	.365	.204	.489	.299	.196	.352				
Intrinsic Motivation	.621	.398	.678	.401	.372	.598	.515			
Meaning	.649	.482	.520	.484	.436	.632	.402	.825		
Performance Orientation	.249	.108	.299	.281	.375	.140	.168	.318	.528	
Working Smart	.448	.459	.743	.217	.431	.373	.491	.596	.478	.197

Notes: The HTMT test is the calculation of a ratio of the average correlations between constructs to the geometric mean of the average correlations within items of the same constructs. The suggested cutoff is .85 (Voorhees et al. 2016); no items breached this criterion.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics, CORRELATIONS and AVE-SQ (Study 3)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1)Performance (t-3)	1.12	.454	-															
2)Performance (t-2)	1.06	.417	.388	-														
3)Performance (t-1)	.855	.329	.417	.554	-													
4)Performance (t)	.906	.391	.224	.589	.634	-												
5)Efforts (t-3)	2.93	.211	.159	.128	.071	.036	-											
6) Efforts (t-2)	2.94	.166	.110	.016	.227	.123	.642	-										
7) Efforts (t-1)	2.89	.169	.056	.111	.081	.153	.563	.705	-									
8) Efforts (t)	2.98	.232	.120	.120	.118	.184	.372	.472	.570	-								
9) Work Smart	5.43	1.04	.126	.098	.196	-.034	-.08	.001	-.014	-.098	.816							
10) Sense of Purpose	6.08	1.15	.026	.094	.134	.108	.036	.059	.112	.020	.235	.865						
11) Connection	6.14	.82	-.012	-.084	.052	-.051	-.046	-.039	-.054	-.056	.397	.417	.811					
12) Self-efficacy	5.69	1.01	.099	.217	.283	.162	-.159	-.145	-.140	-.171	.673	.311	.333	.82				
12) Autonomy	5.02	1.43	.033	.152	.272	.141	-.053	-.007	-.088	-065	.332	.353	.426	.403	.921			
14) Extrinsic Motivation	4.77	1.32	-.133	-.013	-.089	-.091	-.285	-.171	-.184	-.025	.025	-.278	-.042	-.025	-.197	.863		
15) Intrinsic Motivation	5.04	1.13	.169	.104	.181	.038	-.023	.025	.064	-.031	.505	.422	.433	.496	.529	-.142	.828	
16) Age	29.56	5.94	-.074	-.021	-.065	-.036	-.127	-.127	-.086	-.157	-.026	-.080	-.005	-.009	-.097	-.019	-.158	-
17) Experience	5.94	5.43	.003	-.025	.030	-.081	-.152	-.159	-.049	-.151	.218	.039	.016	.229	.062	-.048	.274	.595

Note: The diagonal values represent the square roots of the AVE values. The off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations. All correlations with $|r| > .19$ significant at $p < .05$ (two-sided).

Table 4: Results (Study 3)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Dependent Variable	Intrinsic Motivation	Work Smart	Work Hard (t)	Work Smart (t)	Work Hard (t)	Sales Performance (t)
Sense of Purpose	.154** **H6**					
	(.079)					
Autonomy	.248**					
	(.067)					
Connection	.179					
	(.116)					
Self-Efficacy	.295**					
	(.093)					
Intrinsic Motivation		.447**	.004	.619***H8	.018** **H7a**	
		(.077)	(.007)	(.083)	(.008)	
Age		-.007	-.001	.021	.001	
		(.018)	(.002)	(.020)	(.002)	
Extrinsic Motivation		.076	-.001	.074	-.001 **H7b**	
		(.064)	(.006)	(.064)	(.006)	
Intrinsic Motivation*Age				-.006** **H9b**	-.0005**H9a**	
				(.003)	(.0003)	
Work Hard (t-1)			.589**		.587**	
			(.048)		(.048)	
Work Hard (t)						.381**
						(.086)
Work Smart (t)						.023
						(.017)
Sales Performance (t-1)						.022
						(.051)
Inverse Mills ratio	.078	-.148	.067	-.154	.066	-.133**
	(.447)	(.447)	(.042)	(.447)	(.042)	(.108)
Experience	.020	.030	-.000	-.032	-.000	-.001
	(.015)	(.020)	(.002)	(.021)	(.002)	(.003)

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

Figure 1: Constructs with representative quotes (Study 1)

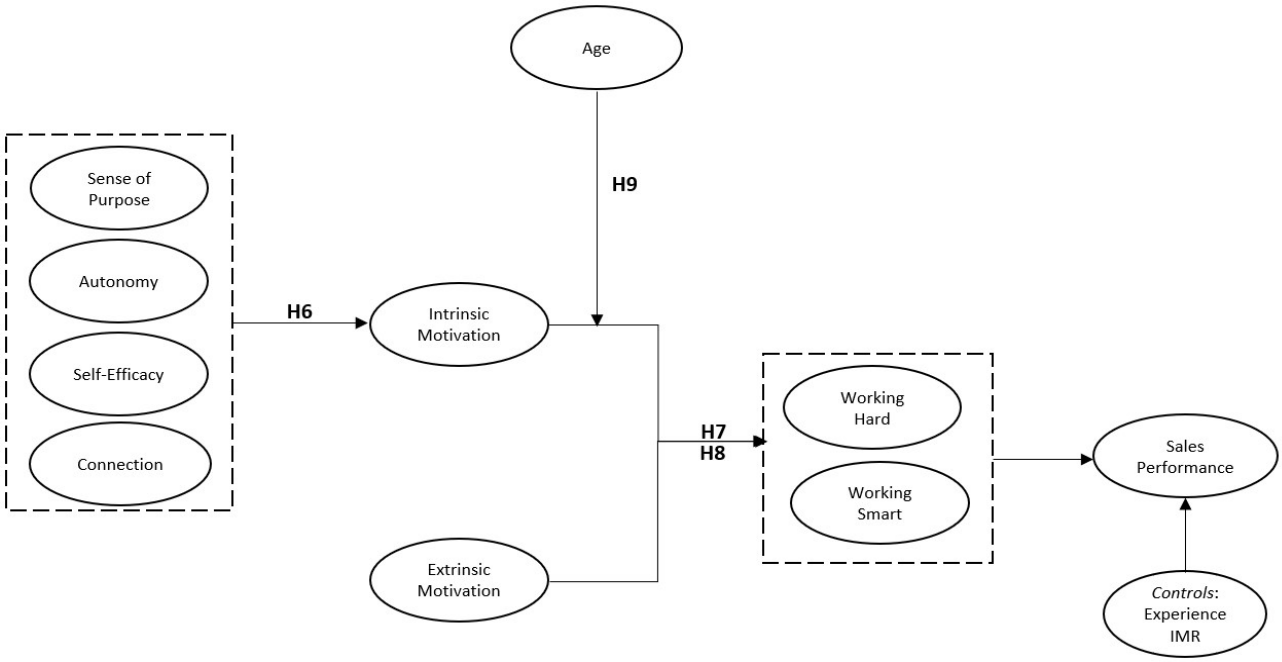
	Sense of Purpose	Autonomy	Competence (Self-Efficacy)	Relatedness (Connection)	Extrinsic Motivation
SDT	Autonomous Motivation →				Controlled Motivation
Definition	The belief that one is making a contribution to a cause greater and more enduring than oneself	A sense of having control over activities performed	A perception of having the skills, know-how and ability to perform a job	Feeling valued by significant others to whom they feel (or would like to feel) connected; a sense of belonging	The extent to which salespeople treat work as a means for obtaining external rewards.
Representative Quotes	*"I always wanted to help people. I thought I'd be a doctor, but I didn't have the grades for it. Now, I get to help businesses when they are struggling with their taxes and accounting. Nothing motivates me more than hearing a customer call me and say, 'you saved my small business.'"* *"Every morning I go into my home office and get right on the phone because I know how important my sales are not just to my buyers but to society. When tractor trailers travel at high rates of speed and hit a pot hole, for example, an inferior wheel will bend and even crack, causing the truck driver to lose control… and people in the other vehicles they collide with don't walk away from those types of accidents. I work hard because I know that moms and dads are returning safely home to their families when I make sales."* *"For me, while I'm passionate about our company's mission statement and what we do, I care more about how I'm personally making a difference."* *"What makes me successful is when I sell with noble purpose, I realize I'm doing something bigger than myself."* *"So, I sell chemical bonding – not something you'd typical see a young person selling. But, I am proud of what I do because I contribute to safety and have a long-term impact on society. To give you a prime example, one time a person had their windshield replaced and within half an hour was in an accident that totaled their car. Isn't that crazy?! But, the windshield adhesive held, and that person walked away from the crash because of it. So, I sell to customers who will either use the product or re-sell it downstream and tell them that they are getting not only glue but security and peace of mind. It's important to me that even though I'm not selling something like medical devices, I really am making an impact on others."* *"I'm lucky enough to be in a business to make deals that change people's lives whether starting a business or growing a business, we get to make an impact. I help people achieve their dreams and fuel prosperity"* *"One thing that's motivating to me is that what I'm doing is going to have an everlasting impact. I legitimately feel like I am shaping the lodging industry. For example, in New York City, I created a new contract with the hotel's catering to feature [company] products. Typically, trends starting in New York spread throughout the nation. So, I thought to myself, 'wow! I just changed society by creating this deal that was my idea!"*	*"I can't imagine sitting behind a desk from 9-5; it's great to have a flexible schedule and get to plan my own day. I like to be in total control of my own destiny and have flexibility to see what customers I want to and travel where I need to go."* *"I love the freedom my job gives me. It's one of the best parts about sales jobs. If I want to take my dog for a walk in the morning and work later that night, I can. If I want to take an early lunch, the schedule doesn't matter. It's the results that matter. So, I don't mind taking a call on the weekend to help a client, and my boss is not questioning me about my hours."* *"I can do things my way. If I have a new idea, I can try it and see if it works."*	*"What means a lot to me is hearing 'you're doing a good job and you're good at what you do.' I like being trusted by my customers and feeling like I am good at my job."* *"Not to toot my own horn, but I am in sales because I have exceptional people skills."* *"I was only with the company a year while many of my co-workers had been there over a decade. Yet, I was the one who was asked to give a presentation on our clients and what could be improved in our processes to the higher ups. It showed me that I was good at my job and really knew the ins and outs of the clients I work with."*	*"I love the people I work with. We get along great and it makes my job feel less like work."* *"I love that I have other people to ask when I encounter a customer problem. We all support each other, and I've even been invited to listen in on meetings to get an idea for how to handle these situations. Having a team is really important to me, and you don't find that just anywhere."* *"Sometimes if we have mundane tasks like cold-calling all day, we'll all go into a conference room and make a game of it. Being with others in the same position helps and makes it more fun."* *"We're a team, no matter where we work in the country, we have the same responsibilities."* *One of the best parts of my job is the people I work with. Not everyone has that, but we are truly a team who encourages one another and helps each other out. Having people around me to celebrate wins or encourage me when things aren't going well is really important to me."*	*"I am very money-motivated. I took a job in sales because it not only offered a solid base pay but also variable incentive pay, and I actively try to hit my numbers as a challenge to earn every dollar I can."* *"I work hard to hit my sales goal because I know that if I hit it, I make the attached bonus. That said, I love the challenge of hitting a hard goal."* *"It may not be the most important thing to me, but the money is nice and I still love the money."* *"I went into sales because there was 100% job placement and I knew I would need the money once I graduated"*

Additional Potentially Related Constructs

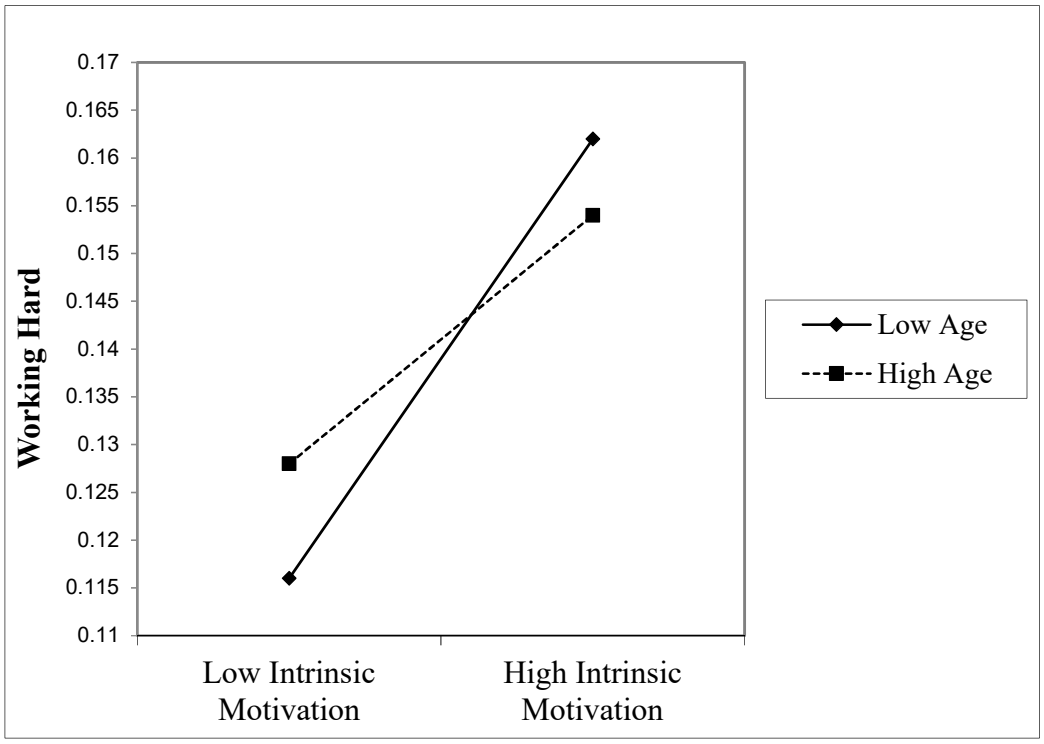
Job Meaningfulness Feeling like the job "counts" by doing an identifiable piece of work, feeling responsible for it, feeling like the tasks have company impact, and getting supervisor feedback	*"I created a podcast to share wins with others in the company. I got so much recognition for starting it! It was really meaningful to me that I could help our company by creating it."* *"I put in 11+ hour work days because I want to leave the impression to my boss and my boss' boss that I am working hard for the company. The recognition I receive from helping the company and the sense of accomplishment are meaningful to me."* *"I had an idea for promoting [product] a different way. My boss said 'go for it!' and I tried it out. In fact, sales went up that quarter by over 10% and I felt like my idea was directly tied to that number, which felt good."*

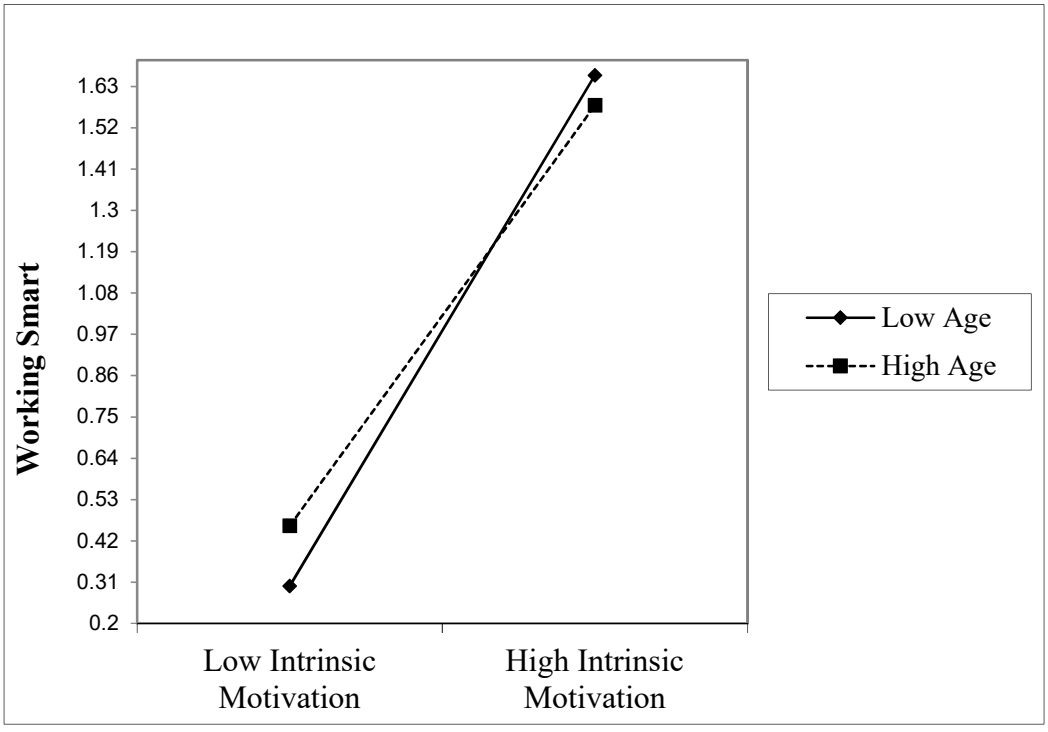
Customer Orientation An inherent inclination toward pleasing customers or others	*"In my job, I listen, I care, and I advocate for the customer."* *"I wanted a job where I was seeing people and helping customers daily."* *"My customers know that they can call me any time of the day or night"* *"I want to do a good job for my operators."* *"I put in the time to help my clients. We are truly partners."*

Figure 2: Conceptual model (Study 3)



Figures 3a and 3b: Interaction plots (Study 3)





Appendix A: Constructs and scale items

All scale items are based on a 7-point Likert scale with anchors 1_Strongly Disagree to 7_Strongly Agree.

Sense of Purpose *(Current Authors)*	**Standardized Loading**	**S.E.**
1. My work allows me to make a contribution to society.	.797	.036
2. The work I do on my job is part of the legacy I will leave on this earth after I am gone.	*	
3. The work I do on my job impacts the lives of others.	.819	.037
4. The work I do on my job is meaningful to others.	.888	.023
5. I give back to society through the work I do on my job.	.889	.018
6. My work allows me to be part of something bigger than just myself.	.865	.020
7. The better I perform at this job, the more I improve the lives of others.	.739	.027
8. I work for a cause greater than my own paycheck.	.846	.019
Autonomy *(Zhang and Bartol 2010)*		
1. I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.	.804	.030
2. I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.	.950	.012
3. I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.	.858	.019
Self-Efficacy *(Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994)*		
1. I am good at selling.	.865	.024
2. It is not hard for me to convince a customer to buy from me.	.780	.036
3. I know the right thing to do in selling situations.	.848	.019
4. I find it difficult to overcome a customer's objections. (R)	.830	.019
5. My temperament is well suited for selling.	.709	.031
6. I am good at finding out what customers want.	.815	.025
7. It is easy for me to get customers to see my point of view.	.828	.021
Sense of Belonging/Connection *(Deci et al. 2001)*		
1. I really like the people I work with.	.806	.031
2. I get along with people at work.	*	
3. I pretty much keep to myself when I am at work. (R)	*	
4. I consider the people I work with to be my friends.	.743	.033
5. People at work care about me.	.778	.035
6. There are not many people at work that I am close to. (R)	*	
7. The people I work with do not seem to like me much. (R)	*	
8. People at work are pretty friendly towards me.	.614	.045
Intrinsic Motivation *(Oliver and Anderson 1994)*		
1. When I perform well, I know it's because my own desire to achieve.	.652	.042
2. I don't need a reason to sell; I sell because I want to.	.618	.044
3. Becoming successful in sales is something that I want to do for me.	.684	.044
4. If I were independently wealthy, I would still sell for the challenge of it.	.602	.040
5. I wish I didn't have to retire someday so I could always continue selling for the pleasure of it.	*	
Extrinsic Motivation *(Oliver and Anderson 1994)*		
1. If it weren't for the money, I would not be in a selling job.	.821	.041
2. I sell because I get paid to sell.	.715	.043
3. After a long hard day, I realize that if it weren't for the money, I wouldn't put up with this job.	.767	.031
Adaptive Selling/Working Smart *(Spiro and Weitz 1990)*		
1. When I feel that my sales approach is not working, I can easily change to another approach.	.751	.046
2. I like to experiment with different sales approaches.	.661	.037
3. I am very flexible in the selling approach I use.	.868	.017
4. I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches.	.877	.020
5. I try to understand how one customer differs from another.	.645	.036
6. Each customer requires a unique approach.	.439	.070
7. I feel that most buyers can be dealt with in pretty much the same manner.	*	

Appendix B: Additional constructs used in the scale validation study

Job Meaningfulness *(Thakor and Joshi 2005)*		
1. My job lets me have the chance to be somebody.	.798	.041
2. My job gives me a feeling of accomplishment.	.877	.023
3. My job lets me make full use of my abilities.	.838	.040
4. My job allows me to have control over my life.	.720	.048
5. My job is exciting and challenging.	.865	.023
6. My job allows me to grow and develop as a person.	.878	.021
7. My job is mostly comprised of selling (e.g., making sales presentations) rather than servicing customers.	*	
Customer Orientation *(Saxe and Weitz 1982; Brown et al. 2002)*		
1. I try to help customers achieve their goals.	.657	.081
2. A good salesperson has to have the customer's best interest in mind.	.653	.096
3. I offer the product of mine that is best suited to the customer's problem.	.811	.054
4. I try to find out what kind of product would be most helpful to a customer.	.797	.051
5. I try to get customers to discuss their needs with me.	.667	.070
Performance Orientation *(Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994)*		
1. It is very important to me that my supervisor sees me as a good salesperson.	.763	.121
2. I very much want my coworkers to consider me to be good at selling.	.839	.129
3. I feel very good when I know I have outperformed other salespeople in my company.	.714	.138
4. I always try to communicate my accomplishments to my manager.	.611	.148
5. I spend a lot of time thinking about how my performance compares with other salespeople's.	.666	.145
6. I evaluate myself using my supervisor's criteria.	.699	.136

WEB APPENDIX A_1: QUALITATIVE PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Industry	*B2B/B2C*	*Bachelors*	*Gender*	*Experience*	*Age Range*
Wheel Manufacturer	B2B	No	M	30	55+
Tax & Accounting Software	B2B	Yes	F	5	25-35
Financial Services Industry	B2C	No	M	10	35-45
Third Party Logistics	B2B	Yes	F	2	18-25
Chemical Solutions	B2B	Yes	M	3	25-35
B2B Food & Beverage	B2B	Yes	F	2	18-25
Advertising Sales	B2B	Yes	F	19	45-55
Research Solutions	B2B	Yes	M	1	18-25
Scrap (Raw) Material	B2B	Yes	F	3	45-55
Contracting	B2C	No	M	9	35-45
Insurance Sales	B2C	Yes	M	12	35-45
Financial Services Industry	B2C	No	F	9	45-55
Research Solutions	B2B	Yes	F	3	25-35
Tax & Accounting Software	B2B	Yes	F	5	25-35
Travel Industry	B2B	No	F	10	35-45
Raw Materials/Oil	B2B	Yes	M	25	55+
Software Sales	B2B	Yes	F	2	18-25
Digital Advertising Sales	B2B	Yes	M	4	18-25

WEB APPENDIX A_2: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction: "Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today!"

Purpose and Format for the Interview: "As an academic researcher, I am interested in developing a greater understanding of salespeople and their motivation. My plan is to ask you a series of open-ended questions related to your motivation, and I may ask you follow-up questions as you respond, all related to this topic. As I mentioned when I set up this meeting, I will try to make sure I take less than an hour of your time."

Confidentiality: "Everything you share in this interview will be kept in strictest confidence, and your comments will be transcribed anonymously–omitting your name and the name of your organization as well as anything identifiable. That said, with your permission, I may use some of the quotes you share in research I hope to publish with my colleagues in an academic journal. Your name will not be included next to the quote itself, though, as your anonymity is important to me."

Audio Taping: "If you are okay with it, I would like to record our conversation to help me remember the exact details of what you say. If, you are uncomfortable with this, please let me know, and I will stop recording."

Ensuring Understanding: "Any questions before we begin?"

Introductory Questions Asked:

1. "Where do you currently work?"
2. "What do you sell?"
3. "What are your typical responsibilities?"
4. "What motivated you to go into the field of sales?"
5. "How long have you been in sales?"

Core Questions

6. "What motivates you at work?"

7. “What motivates you to go the extra mile on a Friday afternoon when you could be out golfing or doing something else that interests you?”
8. “On your best day, what is really motivating to you?”
9. “What motivates you when you are experiencing challenges?”

Additional Probes:

“Can you explain what you mean by (____)?”

“Please elaborate.”

“Tell me more about (___).”

“Why is that important to you?”

“Can you provide more details?”

Wrap-up

1. “Anything else you would like to add?”
2. “May I contact you in the future if we have other follow-up questions?”

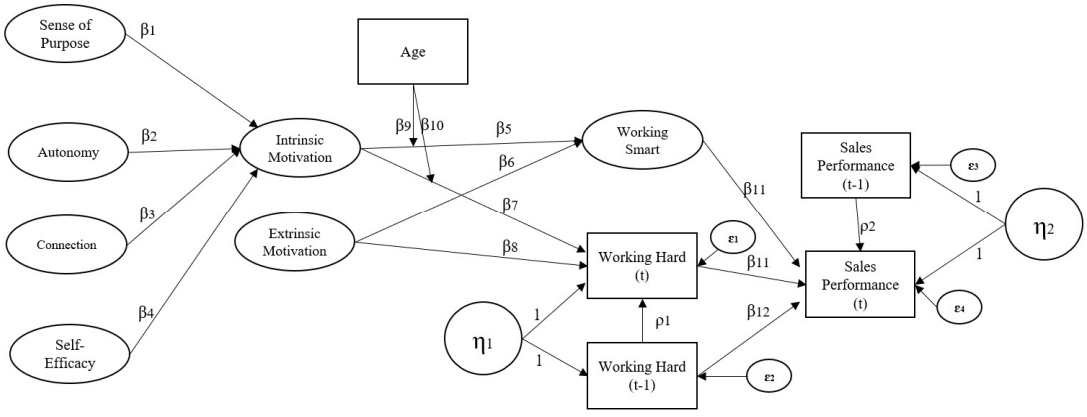
WEB APPENDIX B_1: DETAILS ON THE DYNAMIC MODELING APPROACH

Marketing researchers are becoming increasingly interested in modeling longitudinal data. While there are a variety of modeling approaches in dynamic panel estimation – such as the generalized method of moments using instrumental variables (GMM-IV approach; Arellano and Bond 1991) – we apply time varying covariate analysis in this study to estimate the panel model (Bollen and Brand 2010).

To empirically confirm that the time varying covariate analysis is the appropriate modeling technique versus HLM or growth curve modeling, we first assessed stationarity with a Dickey-Fuller test, in which the null hypothesis is that the time series contains a time-dependent error term. If the series is non-stationary, it will contain a time-invariant error term and thus the ADF significance test will be rejected (Dickey and Fuller 1979). To further explain stationarity, time-series data have a trajectory of performance, for example, for individual people over time. These individual trajectories have properties, i.e. a mean and a variance. If the mean is unstable then performance either grows or decreases unconditionally over time. If instead the mean is stable, then performance across time fluctuates but within the constraints of its memory and bounds on the system (Xu, DeShon, and Dishop 2020). Growth models assume no stationarity in the data they model, whereas dynamic models assume that the data are realizations of a stationary process, i.e. constructs in the model have properties at time *t* that are the same as the properties at time $t + 1$. In simple terms, a stationary process has stable properties across time whereas data that demonstrate trend, growth, or random walk behavior are almost certainly non-stationary (Xu, DeShon, and Dishop 2020). Previous research demonstrates that researchers are at risk of making spurious inferences when they use regression-based models with data that contain trends, random walks, or non-stationary variance across time – even if the series are independent/non-causal (Granger and Newbold 1974). If the data were non-stationary, a linear

growth curve model would be more appropriate. However, for this data, the statistical results for the Dickey-Fuller test for the salesperson performance DV, as well as for the number of calls made, reveal that the data are not consistent with a random walk and do not show evidence of trends or non-constant variance. Thus, the dynamic modeling approach chosen can be considered appropriate.

Xu, DeShon, and Dishop (2020) demonstrate that this dynamic modeling approach (Bollen and Brand 2010) yields better performance over the GMM-IV approach (Arellano and Bond 1991) when the sample size is relatively small with large effects of a lagged dependent variable (e.g., autoregressive effects). The authors use a Monte Carlo simulation to evaluate the performance (e.g., coefficient estimation accuracy) of Bollen and Brand (2010) as compared to a couple of modeling approaches such as the GMM-IV estimation. The results show that, in general, both the Bollen and Brand (2010) and Arellano and Bond (1991) approaches work well in estimations; however, the Arellano and Bond (1991) GMM-IV approach is less efficient and requires more information (i.e., sample size) to reach a certain degree of accuracy, particularly when a large autoregressive effect is present. While Equation 1 shows the generally modeling approach mathematically, we also visualize the equation 1 in the figure below.



WEB APPENDIX B_2: SELECTION MODEL

The probit selection model that we used (A1) estimates the probability of a salesperson answering the survey.

$$SPP_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ASP_{it-1} + \beta_2 AWT_{it-1} + v_i \quad \text{(A1)}$$

SPP_{it} represents the probability that salesperson (i) responded the survey at time t. ASP_{it-1} is salesperson i's previous average monthly sales performance. AWT_{it-1} refers the salesperson i's previous average monthly work time and v_i is the error term. As suggested by Heckman (1979), the first stage equation should have at least one variable that is not only related to the probability of responding to the survey but also not included in the second stage models. A salesperson's previous average work time is selected because it satisfies the exclusion restrictions. If a salesperson's average work time is long, he or she may be unlikely to respond to the survey because of time constraints. However, an average work time in the past may not be directly related to the sales performance in the next period. For each observation, the inverse Mills ratios (λ) were computed using the probit regression coefficients (Greene 2003). Specifically,

$$\lambda_i = \varphi(\alpha' \mathbf{w}_i)/\Phi(\alpha' \mathbf{w}_i) \quad \text{(A2)}$$

where $\varphi(\alpha' \mathbf{w}_i)$ is the standard normal density, $\Phi(\alpha' \mathbf{w}_i)$ is the cumulative distribution functions of the probit regression model.

The results of the first stage probit regression model

Variables	Estimate (Std. Error)	Z value
Average performance	.885***	3.551
	(.249)	
Average worktime	-.000003***	-3.265
	(.000001)	
Intercept	-1.253***	-5.014
	(.250)	

*Note: significance level: *** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05. The dependent variable is binary. It receives a value of 1 if the salesperson responded the survey, and 0 otherwise.*

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WEB APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

The direct effect of sense of purpose on sales performance.

	Model 1	Model 2
Dependent Variable	Sales Performance (t)	Sales Performance (t)
Sense of Purpose	.038* (.020)	.029* (.017)
Autonomy	.010 (.017)	.008 (.015)
Connection	-.036 (.030)	-.030 (.025)
Self-Efficacy	.030 (.023)	.038* (.020)
Work Hard	-	.411*** (.086)
Inverse Mills ratio	-1.222** (.123)	-1.310** (.109)
Sales Performance (t-1)	-.049 (0.051)	.001 (.050)
Age	.002 (.004)	.003 (.004)
Experience	-.004 (.005)	-.004 (.004)

*Note: significance level: * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001*