

# CHAPTER 1

## SELLING TO ALL INVOLVED: A CONTINGENT MODEL LINKING INTERNAL SELLING BEHAVIOR TO SALESPERSON ROLE STRESS AND SALES PERFORMANCE

Yongmei Liu

### ABSTRACT

*Integrating relationship marketing and management research, the author explores internal selling (i.e., a salesperson's internally focused efforts intended to identify, solicit, and use internal sales resources to support external selling activities) as a unique source of salespeople role stress and examine its contingent outcomes. The conceptual model suggests that internal selling as a job demand and stressor leads to increased salespeople role stress. However, a number of situational (i.e., selling organization market orientation, service climate, and seller-buyer relationship) and individual factors (i.e., networking ability and psychological capital of the salespeople) serve as job and personal resources to moderate the internal selling-outcome relationships, such that when such resources are adequate, internal selling will reduce role stress and increase sales performance. The author also examines situational (i.e., customer solutions offering and formalization of the selling organization) and individual (i.e., salespeople power and social status) antecedents of internal selling. The model provides useful insights and practical guidance for selling organizations to recognize mechanisms associated with internal selling in their organizations, and to*

*intentionally design within organization support systems to enhance salespeople well being and enable them to participate effectively in the relational process of selling. The chapter stresses the need to develop context-specific stress models for different occupations and job roles.*

**Keywords:** Internal selling of salespeople; role stress; sales performance; job demands-resources theory; stressor; business-to-business salespeople

The work of industrial salespeople is inherently stressful (Chaker, Schumann, Zablah, & Flint, 2016; Jones, Brown, Zoltners, & Weitz, 2005), and salespeople burnout and turnover continue to be a concern for industrial marketing organizations (Katsikea, Theodosiou, & Morgan, 2015; Lewin & Sager, 2009). Not only sales jobs involve high competition and constant performance pressure, the boundary-spanning roles of salespeople make it uniquely challenging (Jones et al., 2005; Sager & Wilson, 1995). With customers' expectations shifting from buying products and service to buying business solutions, many salespeople today not only have to identify prospective customers, develop and maintain customer relations, and satisfy customer needs (i.e., the external side of selling), but also have to coordinate internal resources to support their selling efforts (i.e., the internal side of selling).

Today, salespeople frequently find themselves involved in procuring and coordinating resources from various functions within the selling organization (e.g., finance, marketing, engineering, and R&D) to meet the increasingly complex customer demands (Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Üstüner & Godes, 2006). They also have to balance the tension between fulfilling customer needs and ensuring profitability of a business deal to the selling organization (Nonis & Sager, 2003; Sager & Wilson, 1995), all the while being expected to create value for both firms (Sleep, Bharadwaj, & Lam, 2015; Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Weitz & Bradford, 1999). These aspects of the sales job represent significant demands on salespeople.

Prior research has devoted remarkable effort into understanding salespeople stress, focusing primarily on how role stressors (i.e., role overload, role ambiguity, and role conflict) contribute to salesperson outcomes (e.g., Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, & Moncrief, 1999; Johnson & Sohi, 2014; Lewin & Sager, 2009; Low, Cravens, Grant, & Moncrief, 2001; Singh, 1998). This research has also identified factors associated with role stressors, such as organizational values (e.g., Flaherty, Dahlstrom, & Skinner, 1999) and leadership (e.g., Schwepker & Good, 2017; Schwepker & Ingram, 2016). Lately, more attention has been paid to factors associated with specific factors associated with the sales job that contribute to salespeople stress, such as ethical climate (e.g., Jaramillo, Mulki, & Solomon, 2006), polychronicity (i.e., preference for switching tasks – Fournier, Weeks, Blocker, & Chonko, 2013), and psychological insecurity (e.g., Chaker et al., 2016).

Indeed, sales jobs have many unique aspects that make unique demands on the salespeople, to which they respond with their unique set of job and personal

resources. Thus, it is necessary to investigate job-specific stressors of salespeople and ways they cope with these stressors. In this chapter, I focus on an important job role and a potential stressor of salespeople, internal selling. Internal selling refers to a salesperson's internally focused efforts intended to identify, solicit, and use internal sales resources to support external selling activities (Liu, Bradford, & Weitz, 2018). Based on the transactional stress theory (Lazarus, 1966, 1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), job demands-resources (JD-R) theory (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), and the political view of organizations, I examine the contingent relationships between internal selling and salespeople outcomes (i.e., role stress and sales performance). I further examine situational (i.e., customer solutions offering and formalization of the selling organization) and individual (i.e., power and social status of salespeople) factors that lead to internal selling.

This chapter makes important contributions to the stress and personal selling literature. First, I focus on a job-specific stressor of salespeople (i.e., internal selling) and examine its potential influence on salespeople role stress based on the JD-R theory. While a broad examination of salespeople stress and performance based solely on role theory helps understand salespeople stress, it does not offer insights into job and organizational design issues specific to the sales context. By focusing on internal selling and the related stress process, I identify conditions under which this specific job role causes role stress. Discussions on the boundary conditions of internal selling offer useful practical guidance to sales management.

Second, this chapter contributes to the emerging literature on intra-organizational processes of selling. Recent research has revealed that salespeople who are effective in coordinating intra-organizational resources to assist their selling efforts outperform others (e.g., Bolander, Satornino, Hughes, & Ferris, 2015; Steward, Walker, Hutt, & Kumar, 2010). However, the potential impact of this internally oriented job role on work stress has yet to be understood. To understand that internal selling represents a potential job stressor that has performance implications will help selling organizations better support the salesforce by equipping them with competencies development and by fostering organizational and inter-organizational conditions facilitative of intra-organization resources coordination.

Finally, I also examine organizational and individual characteristics that give rise to salespeople's need and motivation to engage in internal selling. To date, discussions on antecedents of internal selling have been limited (see Plouffe, Sridharan, & Barclay, 2010 for an exception). Salespeople's active engagement in internal selling can both be a reflection of proactivity of salespeople, and a reflection of organizational conditions, either healthy or unhealthy, that promote this kind of interpersonal influence behaviors (Bradford, Liu, Shi, Weitz, & Xu, in press). Understanding factors that increase the tendency of salespeople to engage in internal selling will help selling organizations better understand organizational conditions needed to facilitate value-generating internal selling and monitor whether internal selling is facilitative of a healthy work environment for all involved.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *The Sales Job in the Contemporary Business World*

The job role of salespeople in the contemporary business world is becoming increasingly relational (Bolander et al., 2015; Steward et al., 2010; Weitz & Bradford, 1999). While transactional, product-focused buyer–seller relationships require salespeople to primarily focus on broadening customer bases and closing deals, today’s relational buyer–seller relationships has shifted salespeople’s effort toward building and maintaining long-term customer relationships that generate values for both parties (Jones et al., 2005). This transformation of the business-to-business (B2B) relationship has dramatically changed the job role and daily activities of many B2B salespeople.

Today, business customers expect salespeople not only to serve as key point of contact, but also to act as “surrogate managers” on their behalf, essentially managing the part of the business the customers chose to outsource (Stevens & Kinni, 2007, p. 8). As surrogate managers they are expected to provide solutions for the customers’ specific needs and generating results at the same time. Today, developing and delivering customized solutions tailored to specific customer needs has become the primary path to a selling organization’s competitive advantage (Tuli, Kohli, & Bharadwaj, 2007; Ulaga & Reinartz, 2011). Salespeople, as the linking pin for such solutions, have thereby become the foundation of this competitive advantage (Stevens & Kinni, 2007).

To meet buyers’ expectations for customized solutions and results, salespeople have to effectively identify, procure, and mobilize the intra-organizational resources so as to develop and deliver solutions to customer problems (Stevens & Kinni, 2007). The increasing complexity of customer needs means that an individual salesperson can rarely handle them alone. Rather, salespeople frequently have to assemble a post hoc, cross-functional support team to meet specific customer needs (Steward et al., 2010; Üstüner & Godes, 2006). For example, a salesperson of enterprise technology may frequently need to use expertise of the organization’s software engineers to add client-specific features, and depend on them to give such tasks proper priorities. A salesperson of airplanes may have to work with the coworkers in finance and logistics to figure out likely complicated financing and delivery options.

Although most selling organizations have some formal sales support systems granting salespeople certain level of authority or leverage when working with the service and support personnel, it can quickly become unclear who are to support which salespeople, when, for what specific needs, and with what level of urgency. In these situations, instead of relying on formal authority and following standard procedures to get things accomplished, salespeople have to depend on personal work relationships with potential team members to access the expertise and specific solution knowledge these members may offer. Thus, salespeople are not only relationship managers (Weitz & Bradford, 1999) in the sense that they have to develop, maintain, and grow *customer* relationships, but they also have to be relationship managers within their own organization, and “sell” their selling needs and build their expert consultancy internally (Steward et al., 2010).

Indeed, researchers have used terms, such as “orchestrators of organizational resources” (Jones et al., 2005, p. 107) and boundary spanners (e.g., Sleep et al., 2015), to describe the job role of salespeople. That is, to generate value for the customer, effective salespeople have to interrelate with multiple stakeholders and to pull resources from a diverse set of groups and individuals (Steward et al., 2010; Sleep et al., 2015). Thus, to serve customers well, salespeople have to develop diverse intra-organizational networks, to ensure access to the needed information and resources, to get them to the right people, and to coordinate efforts of groups and individuals with diverse interests (Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Steward et al., 2010; Üstüner & Godes, 2006). These internally oriented activities are what is referred to as internal selling.

### *Internal Selling as a Job Demand*

Providing customized solutions represents significant opportunities for organizations and salespeople (Stevens & Kinni, 2007). Selling organizations who are able to provide integrated customer solutions gain significant competitive advantage via their access to intimate customer information and goodwill generated from close customer relations (Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Worm, Bharadwaj, Ulaga, & Reinartz, 2017; Ulaga & Reinartz, 2011). Worm et al. (2017) reported that providing customer solutions is associated with increased return on sales comparing to other service offerings. Providing customer solutions makes it necessary for salespeople to serve as the customer’s surrogate managers to develop and deliver these solutions, that is, to engage in internal selling.

Internal selling, as an internally oriented job role of salespeople, represents a significant job demand (Sleep et al., 2015). Indeed, salespeople devote significant time and effort garnering internal support. For example, while it is estimated that face-to-face selling time accounts for only 5% of salespeople’s time (Stevens & Kinni, 2007), it has been reported that salespeople spend approximately 30–50% of their time coordinating activities with internal support staff (Homburg, Workman, Jensen, 2002; Liu et al., 2018).

Being able to obtain resources and support from within the selling organization and provide creative, integrated solutions for customers’ specific needs on a timely fashion gives salespeople tremendous advantage over competitions (Stevens & Kinni, 2007). However, frequently with no formal authority over those with whom they need to coordinate resources (e.g., personnel from engineering, R&D, finance, and logistics), successful internal selling may not be easy. With the stake of successful internal selling high and the likelihood of success in such endeavor uncertain, internal selling may represent a stress-inducing job demand.

Over the past decade, increasingly attention has been paid to the impact of internal selling on customer relationships and sales performance (e.g., Bolander et al., 2015; Bradford et al., in press; Plouffe et al., 2010; Plouffe, Bolander, Cote, & Hochstein, 2016; Steward et al., 2010). In their study, Bolander et al. (2015) report that salesperson’s intra-organizational network centrality accounts for 26.6% of the variance in objective sales performance. This echoes earlier research that contends relationship building within the selling organization may be as

important for determining performance as relationship building with customers (Workman, Homburg, & Jensen, 2003).

Despite of the performance-enhancing impact of internal selling, it is important to understand its role as a job stressor in salespeople's work life and its impact on salespeople's well being. Given that salespeople are considered a high turnover risk group (Katsikea et al., 2015), and job stress is directly related to turnover (Rubenstein, Eberly, Lee, & Mitchell, 2018), it is important to understand the relationship between internal selling and salespeople stress.

*Internal Selling: A Challenge Stressor or a Hindrance Stressor?*

The transactional stress theory (Lazarus, 1966, 1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) proposes that when encountering a stressor, individuals appraise the implications of the stressor in terms of whether it represents a threat or a challenge. Based on the transactional stress theory, prior research differentiates hindrance and challenge stressors (e.g., Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000; LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004; LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005). Hindrance stressors are job demands, such as role ambiguity, role conflict, hassles, and red tapes, considered by the incumbent as unnecessarily thwarting personal growth and goal attainment. Challenge stressors are job demands, such as high workload, time pressure, job scope, and high responsibility, considered to be obstacles to be overcome in order to learn and achieve (Cavanaugh et al., 2000).

It is suggested that individuals appraise work stressors as either hindrance or challenge stressors, and these appraisals further influence how individuals react to the stressors, which lead to different work-related outcomes (Boswell, Olson-Buchanan, & LePine, 2004; Cavanaugh et al., 2000; LePine et al., 2005). Based on the expectancy theory of motivation, LePine et al. (2005) suggest that challenge stressors are associated with high motivation because individuals perceive a high likelihood that efforts in coping will be effective in meeting demands. Conversely, hindrance stressors are associated with low motivation, because individuals perceive a low likelihood that efforts in coping will be effective in meeting demands. Similar argument was made in Meurs and Perrewé's (2011) cognition activation model of stress, in which they argued that anticipated personal gain may lead to positive appraisal of the stressor.

Although prior research typically categorizes a stressor either as a challenge or a hindrance stressor, I suggest that the same stressor may be experienced differently in different circumstances. Specifically, drawing on the JD-R theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker, Demerouti, de Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001), I suggest that whether salespeople may perceive internal selling as a hindrance, or a challenge, stressor, depends on the level of resources they have available to cope with this stressor.

According to the JD-R theory, stress is a response to imbalance between demands on individuals and the resources they have to deal with the demands, and job and personal resources serve as important buffers to the potential negative impact of job demands on job stress (Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2003).

Specifically, it is argued that job demands tend to exhaust employees' mental and physical resources, and lead to depletion of energy, poor health and decreased performance. However, when there are abundant job and personal resources, a motivational process is enacted at the presence of high job demands, where individuals' expectation of resource gains leads to greater motivation and work engagement, which further leads to reduced stress and improved performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

In what follows, I draw on the transactional stress theory, the JD-R theory and the concepts of hindrance and challenge stressors to develop the conceptual model. I argue that when salespeople perceive adequate job and personal resources, they will appraise their coping capacity positively, perceive internal selling as a challenge stressor, which in turn decreases role stress and enhances sales performance. In contrast, when salespeople perceive inadequate job and personal resources, they will appraise their coping capacity negatively, perceive internal selling as a hindrance stressor, which in turn increases role stress and hinders sales performance.

## THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

I present the conceptual model in Fig. 1. The model examines a number of situational (i.e., selling organization customer solutions offering, and formalization) and individual (i.e., salespeople power and social status) factors that may increase the tendency of salespeople to engage in internal selling. These factors are identified based on internal selling as an internally oriented, boundary-spanning activity of salespeople intended to address resource gaps in the selling process.

I further suggest that internal selling is a job demand and a stressor that leads to salespeople's stress reactions. However, the internal selling role stress relationship will depend on how salespeople view internal selling, which is a function of the job and personal resources available to cope with the demands of internal selling. I examine situational factors (i.e., market orientation and service climate of the selling organization, buyer–seller relationship quality) and individual factors (i.e., salespeople's networking ability and psychological capital – PsyCap) as job and personal resources, respectively, that moderate the internal selling outcome relationships.

### *Antecedents of Internal Selling*

*Selling organization's customer solutions offering.* Contemporary buyer–seller relationships increasingly require the selling organization to provide customers solutions, instead of products and services in a piecemeal fashion (Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Weitz & Bradford 1999). Worm et al. (2017, p. 491) define customer solutions as business solutions that:

- (1) are built on understanding customer requirements, (2) are customized to implement customer activities and/or processes, (3) take the form of an output-based performance contract that delivers on customer-specified metrics, and (4) provide post-deployment support.

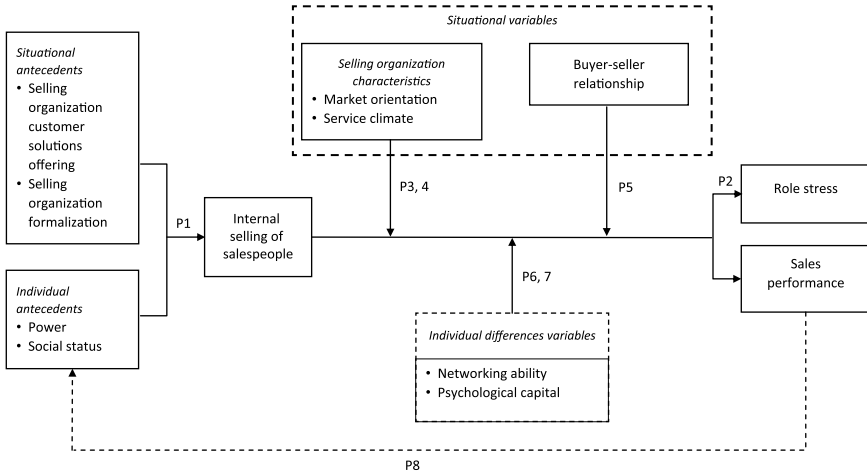


Fig. 1. The Conceptual Model.

Buyers are motivated to offer such solutions because it gives them a competitive edge (Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Worm et al., 2017). When dealing with powerful buyers who have a wide variety of choices, selling organizations that provide customer solutions are at a vantage point when they compete with other vendors. The selling organizations must leverage unique resources or capabilities to effectively offer customer solutions, the ability to offer customer solutions represents a valuable, rare, and not easily imitable resource that gives the selling organization a sustainable competitive advantage (Stevens & Kinni, 2007; Worm et al., 2017).

However, providing customer solutions may be costly for selling organizations. The need for integrated customer solutions demands the salesforce to be involved in a set of buyer–seller relational processes that involve highly customer-specific investments, which increases transaction costs (Worm et al., 2017). Furthermore, solution generation and delivery is a collaborative process that requires participation of the customer (Blocker, Cannon, Panagopolos, & Sager, 2012; Tuli et al., 2007). This collaborative process may thus be jeopardized by customer factors uncontrollable by the buyer, and thereby increases risks of the selling organization (Worm et al., 2017).

Out of these considerations, not all firms proactively explore a solutions strategy (Worm et al., 2017). For example, for certain products and services, such as those that are technology intensive, selling organizations may not need customer solutions to compete or have difficulty in providing customized solutions, and therefore opt not to provide such solutions. Indeed, Worm et al. (2017) found that factors such as buyer power and technology intensity of the industry may influence the likelihood of buyers gaining a financial return on providing solutions.

When selling organizations do provide customer business solutions, the need for salespeople to coordinate intra-organizational resources increases. From trying to understand customer requirements and to customize products or services for the customer, to monitoring customer-specified performance metrics and



post-deployment support, salespeople working to deliver customer solutions have to frequently be working with multiple within-organization expert groups to close any gap between resources and customers need and those they have on hand. Because providing customer solutions requires salespeople to navigate their own organizations to gather the resources needed to meet the customer demands, the higher the need for customer solutions, the more frequent salespeople have to engage in internal selling. Thus,

*P1a.* Selling organization's customer solutions offering is positively related to internal selling.

*Selling organization's formalization.* Formalization is the extent to which organizations regulate behaviors of its members through formal rules, procedures, plans, and policies (Hall, 1999). Formalized organizational structure consists of hierarchical, top down reporting and decision-making structures. Formalized organizations use explicit, codified standards and procedures to regulate and guide employee behaviors. Formalization may influence internal selling in at least two ways. On the one hand, formalization helps reduce ambiguity in the work environment through standardized work processes (Michaels, Cron, Dubinsky, & Joachimsthaler, 1988). Increased clarity over roles and responsibilities help both the salespeople and the service and support personnel clearly know what they need (or not) to do in their work relationships with each other, leaving little room for favor doing or rule bending, which are frequently part of the internal selling process (cf., Plouffe & Barclay, 2007). Formalization may also facilitate information flow in the formal organization (Baum & Wally, 2003), which helps the selling organization to quickly address resource gaps encountered by salespeople, and thereby, reduce the need of internal selling.

On the other hand, formalization reduces employee's discretionary behaviors by enforcing rules and regulations and clear behavioral protocols (Hall, 1999). In highly formalized organizations, excessive codification of routines inhibits exploratory behaviors, and leaves little flexibility as to who may decide or act on a given issue (Levinthal & March, 1993). Internal selling frequently involves salespeople and the service and support personnel finding new ways to work together and pooling resources from multiple parts of the organization (Plouffe & Barclay, 2007). This sort of creative orchestration and usage of organizational resources will be something discouraged by a highly formalized organizational structure. Thus,

*P1b.* Selling organization's formalization is negatively related to internal selling.

The political view of organizations posits that organizations are a social system of goal-driven political actors (Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981), individuals attempt to maximize one's likelihood of achieving personal or organizational goals through interpersonal influence attempts, or, political behavior (Ferris et al., 2005). Liu et al. (2018) argue that internal selling is in essence a political behavior in the sales context, behaviors through which salespeople attempt to achieve goals (such as enhancing sales performance and serving customers well)

through interpersonal influence. Taking the political view of organizations, we thus examine salespeople power and social status, two individual factors considered to be the most significant determinants of interpersonal influence (Magee & Frasier, 2014), as antecedents of internal selling.

*Salespeople's power.* Power refers to the ability to influence others (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012). In organizations, power is often a function of control over resources (Magee & Frasier, 2014; Pfeffer, 1992). Whereas power is embedded in formal hierarchical structures (Simon, 1946), it is more directly associated with one's access to, or possession of, valued information and resources, and the level of discretion one has over the distribution of these information and resources (Emerson, 1962).

Power influences individuals' attitudes and behaviors. It gives individuals a greater sense of agency, resoluteness in their attitudes, and confidence that they will achieve their goals (Magee & Frasier, 2014; Magee et al., 2007). Prior research indicates that high-power individuals are more likely to take actions to address a situation deemed as problematic (Galinsky et al., 2003). In negotiation context, those higher in power are more likely to initiate a negotiation and to make the first offer (Magee et al., 2007). Greater power is also associated with the anticipation of positive outcomes (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Anderson & Galinsky, 2006).

As a political behavior, internal selling involves salespeople taking the initiative to try and influence thoughts and actions of the service and support personnel to address a resource gap, the outcomes of which depend on whether the target will grant them the desired influence. With a stronger action-orientation, salespeople of higher power will be more likely to engage in this discretionary behavior to address customer needs. Further, having a greater expectancy that such actions will result in desired outcomes serves to motivate internal selling as well. Plouffe et al. (2010) suggest that salespeople are particularly inclined to leverage their expert, referent, and legitimate power in internal selling activities. Thus,

*P1c.* Power is positively related to internal selling.

*Salespeople's social status.* Besides power, salespeople also frequently leverage their social status in the selling organization to obtain what they need to meet customer needs (cf., Bolander et al., 2015). Social status refers to the relative standing of an individual in a social system, as reflected in the respect, competence, and deference afforded to that individual (Anderson, Hildreth, & Howland, 2015; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Thye, 2000). Those with higher social status are well liked and respected by others, and their contributions to their teams and the organization are well recognized (Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006). These individuals benefit from a "halo effect" (Magee & Frasier, 2014) and tend to be viewed by others as altruistic and cooperative (Cheng, Tracy, & Henrich, 2010). Prior research indicates that others are more likely to listen to (Ridgeway & Walker 1995), offer help (Van der Vegt, Bunderson, & Oosterhof, 2006), and accord influence (Bruins, Ellemers, & de Gilder, 1999; Ridgeway & Walker, 1995) to high-status individuals. Higher-status individuals are also preferred exchange partners (Thye, 2000), and more likely to reach an agreement that is mutually satisfying with their counterparts (Blader & Chen, 2012).

Internal selling frequently involves social exchanges between the salespeople and the service and support personnel. Salespeople with higher social status will have an easier time identifying willing exchange partners in the selling organization. The liking, trust, and respect by others, along with the tendency of others to cooperate and accord influence to them will help smoothen the interpersonal exchange and influence process, increasing the likelihood of effective internal selling. High-status salespeople will thus find internal selling as a rewarding activity that help satisfying their selling needs, and thereby, be more inclined to participate in internal selling. Thus,

*P1d.* Social status is positively related to internal selling.

### *Internal Selling and Role Stress*

As an important part of the sales job, internal selling places significant demand on salespeople. I suggest that internal selling serves as a work stressor of salespeople, regardless whether they perceive it as a challenge or a threat.

First, internal selling may lead to role overload. Internal selling is time consuming. B2B salespeople spend a significant portion of their time working to obtain internal support (Homburg et al., 2002). Any time spent on internal selling takes away time that may be used on identifying prospects, interacting with customers, etc. Moreover, internal selling also involves activities different from externally oriented selling efforts, and therefore, may require a new layer of skill sets that are not well-developed from previous selling experiences.

Second, internal selling may cause role ambiguity. Most salespeople spend the most amount of time on identifying and interfacing with customers and consider that as their primary task (an external focus) (Marshall, Moncrief, & Lassk, 1999). Some salespeople may not see generating internal support as an integral part of their jobs. Salespeople may see participating in internal selling in a negative light, considering it time lost from generating selling opportunities, or a roadblock to serving customers effectively. Salespeople who perceive internal selling as something extra they have to do may find the time and effort spent on internal relationship building unfair or frustrating. They may believe that the need of internal selling is caused by a lack of formal organizational support. When salespeople consider themselves wasting time on matters that do not generate sufficient value, they are prone to become dissatisfied and emotionally exhausted (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Locander, 2005).

Third, internal selling may also induce role conflict. Salespeople's immediate criteria for job performance are their ability to generate sales and maintain customer satisfaction. If salespeople cannot effectively coordinate internal sales resources to support their customers, they may not be able to maintain high levels of sales performance. However, if a great percentage of salespeople's time and energy has to be focused on internal selling, they may not have adequate resources to interact with and serve customers. Furthermore, when acting as surrogate managers on behalf of customers, salespeople may feel the tension between securing interests of their own organization and satisfying customer needs (Nonis & Sager, 2003). Not all customer demands are reasonable, and meeting customer

demands does not always pay off for the selling organization (Worm et al., 2017). Thus, salespeople's role conflict may increase when they engage in internal selling. Based on the above discussion, I propose the following:

P2. Internal selling represents a job stressor for salespeople; the greater the level of internal selling, the more likely a salesperson is to experience role stress.

### *The Moderators in the Internal Selling–Salespeople Outcome Relationships*

Although internal selling tends to be stress-inducing, based on the JD-R theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), I argue that the impact of internal selling on salespeople role stress and sales performance depends critically on the level of resources available to the salespeople. Specifically, I propose that the impact of internal selling on salesperson outcomes depends on a set of job and personal resource variables closely related to the sales job, which include characteristics of the selling organization (i.e., market orientation and service climate), buyer–seller relationship quality, and salesperson characteristics (i.e., networking ability and PsyCap).

*Market orientation.* Market orientation is defined as “the organization-wide generation of market intelligence pertaining to current and future customer needs, dissemination of the intelligence across departments, and organization-wide responsiveness to it” (Kohli & Jaworski, 1993, p. 6). According to Kohli and Jaworski (1993) and Jaworski and Kohli (1993), market-oriented selling organizations have an extensive focus on understanding market conditions, as well as the current and future needs and preferences of customers. These selling organizations collect industry information and ensure that they are in touch with customer responses to their products and offerings. Furthermore, they develop formal and informal channels for market and customer information to be disseminated among both customer-contact and non-customer-contact functions within the organization. There is a close inter-functional coordination in these organizations to ensure that when issues arise with major customers or market, various functional units are quickly informed. Perhaps more importantly, they foster timely responses to changing customer needs and issues through seamless inter-functional coordination.

Market-oriented selling organizations appear to offer a number of job resources for salespeople to rely on when engaging in internal selling. First, when salespeople present a specific customer needs, up-to-date and well-disseminated market intelligence will enable the support and service personnel to quickly understand these needs. Having a good understanding of salespeople's requests, the level of strategic importance of these requests and their own role in achieving customer satisfaction, the support and service personnel will be more willing and able to help the salespeople. Willing cooperation of the support and service personnel will elevate the pressure of salespeople to leverage personal power to convince or persuade, and thereby reduce the perceived demand of internal selling of salespeople. Informed and being able to help, the support and service personnel will also be more likely to appropriately prioritize and furnish needed resources for the salespeople, which enhance sales performance.

Second, market-oriented selling organizations tend to have strong inter-functional coordination. Internal selling success depends, in part, on whether

salespeople can have open communication and make broad inquiries with various units within the selling organization (Plouffe & Barclay, 2007). When there are effective coordination mechanisms already in place in their organizations, salespeople do not need to draw upon their personal connections and support systems each time they need expert support. This helps smoothen the resource coordination process, lowers the amount of time and energy that salespeople have to spend on interpersonal influence to make things happen. This also helps salespeople direct their attention more on the customers and potentially helps enhance sales performance.

Third, market-oriented selling organizations are responsive to both short-term and long-term customer needs (Kohli & Jaworski, 1993; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). This enables salespeople to focus not on short-term sales but on long-term customer relationships, and thereby elevate salespeople from the constant pressure of having to simultaneously meet the demand of performance and profitability and ensuring customer satisfaction on a short-term basis (cf., Sleep et al., 2015).

Thus, in a market-oriented selling organization, internal selling is met with willing support and is accommodated by its reward systems. Market orientation thus serves as a job resource for salespeople. It increases salespeople's expectations and likelihood that their internal selling efforts are going to be successful and worthwhile. Salespeople are thus more likely to approach internal selling as a challenging part of their job, which, when successfully overcome, helps achieve greater customer satisfaction and loyalty. Such positive appraisal and expectation will lead to lower level of role stress. Also, such positive outlook will help improve sales performance via increased effort and persistence.

In contrast, when market orientation is low in the selling organization, salespeople will have to spend considerably more time educating and mobilizing the support and service personnel of their customers' needs and their strategic importance. Even when they get coworkers in one functional unit on board with their needs, they may not get the unit to coordinate resources with another functional unit in a timely fashion. Thus, when market orientation is low, salespeople will appraise their coping potential to be low, and internal selling will more likely to be experienced as a hindrance stressor, which leads to increased role stress and decreased performance.

*P3a.* Market orientation of the selling organization moderates the relationship between internal selling and role stress, such that the relationship is negative when market orientation is high, and positive when market orientation is low.

*P3b.* Market orientation of the selling organization moderates the relationship between internal selling and sales performance, such that the relationship is positive when market orientation is high, and negative when market orientation is low.

*Service climate.* Service climate refers to organization-based employee perceptions of the practices, procedures, and behaviors that are expected, supported, and rewarded with regard to customer service quality (Schneider, Gunnarson, & Niles-Jolly, 1994; Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). Selling organizations with a strong service climate have a strong concern for both customers and employees. Besides service

excellence when dealing with customers, they encourage employees to view each other as customers and emphasize internal service throughout the entire organization (Schneider & Bowen, 1993). These organizations focus on removing roadblocks and facilitating conditions for excellent customer service through leadership, organization design, and human resources practices (Burke, Borucki, & Hurley, 1992; Schneider et al., 1998). Because of such service orientation, these organizations are characterized with open communication among units, interpersonal warmth and friendliness, pro-social behaviors targeting at the common good of the organization, and a sense of community among employees (Ostroff, 1993; Schneider et al., 1994).

Within a service climate, employees tend to identify with its strong orientation toward customer service (Peccei & Rosenthal, 2000; Schneider et al., 1998). The opportunity to work with salespeople to generate ideas and provide consultative help may be seen as an opportunity to participate, build competencies, and contribute (cf., Yagil & Gal, 2002). Further, because they are treated as internal customers, salespeople who engage in internal selling are more likely to be listened to and be received with respect. Because of the pursuit of service excellence within the organization, it will be the goal of the support and service personnel to satisfy the needs of salespeople.

Thus, when the selling organization has a strong service climate, internal selling is more likely to be received with support and not resistance. The collaborative atmosphere between salespeople and the support and service personnel, along with positive emotional experiences typical in such organizations (cf., Liu & Yang, 2006), likely results in explorations of resources and creative solutions to problems. Thus, service climate represents a job resource for salespeople when engaging in internal selling. With readily available help from the support and service personnel, salespeople are more likely to experience internal selling as a challenge stressor, which reduces role stress and enhances sales performance.

In contrast, when the selling organization lacks a service climate, support and service personnel are less likely to focus on salespeople's and customers' needs, resulting in a lack of motivation and effort to get on board with the salespeople's selling efforts. Failed attempts at influencing the support and service personnel likely result in frustration over less clearly defined job roles and time wasted on trying. Thus, when service climate is low, internal selling effort is more likely to be experienced as a hindrance stressor, which increases role stress and reduces sales performance. Thus,

*P4a.* Selling organization's service climate moderates the relationship between salespeople's internal selling and role stress, such that the relationship is negative when selling organization's service climate is high, and positive when selling organization's service climate is low.

*P4b.* Selling organization's service climate moderates the relationship between salespeople's internal selling and sales performance, such that the relationship is positive when selling organization's service climate is high, and negative when selling organization's service climate is low.

*Buyer-seller relationship.* Providing customer solutions requires close involvement of the buyer (Worm et al., 2017). Solution selling involves identifying not only customers' expressed needs, but also their latent and emerging needs

(Blocker et al., 2012). The ability to generate value for customers depends critically on identifying what issues or topics are important to a customer (Tuli et al., 2007; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Frequently, however, selling organizations are not good at identifying the core needs of their customers (Tuli et al., 2007), probably due to the lack of intimate relationships with customers.

Indeed, developing customized solutions often is a relational process, in which salespeople attempt to understand the customers' world and interpret their complex needs (Blocker et al., 2012; Tuli et al., 2007). Buyer–seller relationships are developed in a series of exchanges, in which both parties assess the mutually beneficial nature of the exchange, and explore and expand the arena of exchanges through bargaining, establishing norms, and adjusting expectations (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). A history of value-generating exchanges helps establish a committed buyer–seller relationship, in which both parties devote resources in maintaining the relationship (Dwyer et al., 1987; Wilson, 1995).

When buyer–seller relationship quality is high, buyer and seller develop stronger structural bonds and higher level of cooperation with each other (Powers & Reagan, 2007). In this kind of relationship, salespeople will thus have more opportunities to meet with key personnel in the buyer's organization, develop implicit knowledge of the buyer organization, and be able to better identify customer requirements (cf., Tuli et al., 2007). In their internal selling efforts, they will then be able to focus on areas of real customer needs, present more compelling value propositions, and get the support team within their own organizations onboard with their selling needs.

Further, generating customer solutions is a co-creation process that requires the participation of multiple individuals and groups from both organizations (Blocker et al., 2012). Good buyer–seller relationship helps establish the horizontal and vertical ties within and across the organizations. Having such multiplex ties facilitates the value co-creation process (Tuli et al., 2007; Tuli, Bharadwaj, & Kohli, 2010). A close buyer–seller relationship ensures open communication of information. Having multiple contact points between buyer and seller enhances resources availability, and facilitates product deployment and post-deployment support. It also allows support and service personnel to build a sense of rapport with the customer, which motivates them to give priority to the customer's needs. Thus, when buyer–seller relationship is good, salespeople have greater potential to effectively target buyer needs and successfully negotiate resources and support and generate value for both firms. Internal selling is thus more likely to be seen as opportunities to be captured, that is, a challenge stressor.

In contrast, when the buyer–seller relationship is poor, communication channels may not be readily available, which gives salespeople the additional burden of trying to identify and connect the right people within and between the two organizations. Support and service personnel may also not be willing to bend rules or give priorities to customers that they are not familiar with or do not consider strategically important. Thus, internal selling in the context of poor buyer–seller relationship represents a job demand that is not supported with adequate job resource. It will, therefore, be experienced as a hindrance stressor, leading to role stress and reduced sales performance.

*P5a.* Buyer–seller relationship moderates the relationship between internal selling and role stress, such that the relationship is negative when the buyer–seller relationship is strong, and positive when the buyer–seller relationship is weak.

*P5b.* Buyer–seller relationship moderates the relationship between internal selling and sales performance, such that the relationship is positive when the buyer–seller relationship is strong, and negative when the buyer–seller relationship is weak.

Although prior research has primarily focused on the buffering role of job resources, personal resources have also been suggested to play a similar role (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Bakker and Demerouti (2017) define personal resources as “beliefs people hold regarding how much control they have over their environment.” I extend this definition to argue that personal resources include any personal traits or competencies that influence people’s beliefs regarding the level of control over their environment. In this chapter, I examine two personal resource variables closely related to the sales job, networking ability and PsyCap.

*Networking ability.* Networking ability refers to the ability to build networks and stay well-connected with important key players at work (Ferris et al., 2005). Networking ability is a key interpersonal competency that helps individuals understand others, build relationships, and effectively navigate the social environment at work to achieve personal and organizational goals (Ferris et al., 2005). Employees with high networking ability spend time identifying important people and resources around the organization, and building and maintaining diverse networks at work (Ferris et al., 2005). As a result, they occupy central, advantageous locations in such networks (Bolander et al., 2015).

When salespeople have high-centrality network positions within the selling organization, they are well-informed of where key information and resources are. They also enjoy greater social capital (Bolander et al., 2015), which grants them greater ability to influence others. Equipped with access to resources and the ability to influence, salespeople high in networking ability are more likely to feel confident that their internal selling efforts will generate desired outcomes, and therefore experience internal selling as a challenge stressor, which reduces role stress. Meanwhile, building an effective internal network, in which salespeople enjoy greater positional and relational centrality, helps them gain access to unique and timely information that allow them to formulate effective sales strategies, and grants them higher organizational status, which translates to interpersonal influence; these facilitative mechanisms, in turn, enhance sales performance (Bolander et al., 2015).

In contrast, when a salesperson has a low networking ability, they will not be well connected with key players within the selling organization. They may even focus their time on building relationships that cannot be capitalized for performance gain (cf., Claro & Ramos, 2018). As a result, their internal selling efforts may be less effective in generating the kind of cooperation and support they need to satisfy customers. When this happens, internal selling is more likely to be a waste of the salespeople’s time. It will, thus, be experienced as a hindrance stressor, which leads to role stress and reduced performance. Thus,



*P6a.* Networking ability moderates the relationship between internal selling and role stress, such that the relationship is negative when networking ability is strong, and positive when networking ability is weak.

*P6b.* Networking ability moderates the relationship between internal selling and sales performance, such that the relationship is positive when networking ability is strong, and negative when networking ability is weak.

*PsyCap.* PsyCap is defined as a

positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks, (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future, (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed, and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success. (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007, p. 3)

PsyCap is widely recognized as a valuable personal resource (Friend, Johnson, Luthans, & Sohi, 2016; Luthans et al., 2007). PsyCap entails four individual components (i.e., self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience) that interact synergistically and PsyCap represents a second-order construct that is more than its individual components (Luthans et al., 2007).

Internal selling involves salespeople trying to influence how things are done in the selling organization through interpersonal influence, often without much formal authority. Such efforts may face considerable resistance, especially when it requires others to put forth extra effort, reconsider their priorities, bend rules, or stretch their resources. When faced with resistance, salespeople with high PsyCap are equipped with a higher level of psychological resources to deal with the obstacles. They will have high expectations that they will eventually figure out a solution, because of their high self-efficacy; they remain hopeful and attempt to find alternative paths to get goals accomplished; and even when things do not go smoothly, they will maintain a positive outlook of circumstances and keep trying till they find solutions to their problems (cf., Luthans et al., 2007). As a result, salespeople high in PsyCap will experience internal selling as a challenge stressor, which helps reduce role stress and enhance sales performance.

In contrast, when salespeople are low in PsyCap, they are easily deterred and lose hope because of failed internal selling attempts. They will thus see much difficulty in getting what they need from the support and service personnel. Having to sell internally thus becomes a frustrating part of their job. As a result, salespeople low in PsyCap will experience internal selling as a hindrance stressor, which increases role stress and decreases sales performance. Thus,

*P7a.* PsyCap moderates the relationship between internal selling and role stress, such that the relationship is negative when PsyCap is high, and positive when PsyCap is low.

*P7b.* PsyCap moderates the relationship between internal selling and sales performance, such that the relationship is positive when PsyCap is high, and negative when PsyCap is low.

### *The Feedback Loop*

I further propose that there should be a feedback loop linking sales performance to internal selling. This is because improved sales performance gained via effective internal selling should further increase salespeople's power and status, which, in turn, increases their tendency to engage in more internal selling. Power is a function of dependence (Emerson, 1962). It is reasonable to expect that high-performing salespeople will, over time, be granted more power as their teams increasingly depend on their contributions to the organization (cf., Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Consistent high performance gives salespeople greater visibility and makes them less substitutable, which enhances their power base (cf., Emerson, 1962).

Meanwhile, high-performing salespeople also likely enjoy greater social status. At its core, social status is about whether a member of a social system is seen as possessing comparatively more or less social value (Anderson et al., 2015; Leary, Jongman-Sereno, & Diebels, 2014). In the organizational context, people who perform better than others should be seen as being more valuable. Others are thus more likely to accord liking, trust, and respect to high-performing salespeople. As discussed earlier, greater power and social status increase the tendency of internal selling because of the increased likelihood of success. Thus, high-performing salespeople should be more inclined to engage in more internal selling. Thus,

*P8.* Sales performance will, over time, increase salespeople's power and social status, which in turn, increase the tendency of salespeople to engage in internal selling.

## **DISCUSSION**

Integrating relationship marketing and management research, I explore a unique source of salesperson stress, internal selling, as well as its antecedents and contingent outcomes. The conceptual model posits that, driven by various situational and individual factors that push salespeople to use personal leverage to close resource gap in the selling process, internal selling can be stressful. It adds to the already demanding tasks of developing and maintaining customer relationships (role overload), it challenges the traditional understanding of a sales job (role ambiguity), and it is not always easy to balance multiple interests (e.g., the long-term and short-term interests of the buyer, buyer interests vs seller interests – role conflict).

However, the internal selling salespeople outcome relationships are contingent on both situational and individual factors. The conceptual model presented in this chapter examines contingencies that influence whether internal selling will be a detrimental or a beneficial experience for salespeople. I suggest that when salespeople can tap into adequate job (i.e., strong market orientation, strong service climate, and good buyer–seller relationship) and personal resources (i.e., networking ability and PsyCap) to support their internal selling effort, internal selling serves as a challenge stressor that will reduce role stress and increase sales performance. In contrast, when internal selling as a job demand is not coupled with these adequate resources, it serves as a hindrance stress that increases role stress and decreases sales performance. The model offers useful practical guidance

for selling organizations to intentionally design their within-organization support systems and human resources programs to enhance salesperson ability to effectively engage in internal selling in ways that enhance their well being.

### *Theoretical Contributions*

*Stress research.* Drawing on prior stress theories and research, I propose that internal selling can serve both as a challenge stressor and a hindrance stressor and discuss contingencies that influence the differential stress experience. Prior research tends to categorize stressors into one of the two categories (e.g., LePine et al., 2004, 2005). I suggest that the same stressor may be experienced differently depending on the level of resources individuals have for coping and the expected outcomes.

Further, although prior research has devoted much attention on salespeople stress, job-specific factors that offer unique insights into the work life of salespeople have not been fully understood. This chapter focuses on the unique boundary-spanning role of salespeople, as well as organizational and individual characteristics closely related to the act of selling. This model serves as a starting point in building a stress model specifically developed for today's salesforce.

*Internal selling research.* Although the intra-organizational coordination of resources has been discussed since the early 1990s (e.g., Cespedes, 1992; Moon & Armstrong, 1994), recent literature has witnessed an interesting shift from organizational coordination mechanisms to salespeople's proactive efforts in procuring and deploying intra-organizational resources (e.g., Plouffe & Barclay, 2007; Steward et al., 2010). The performance-enhancing potential of internal selling has led many researchers to explore how internal selling and its associated abilities relate to sales performance (e.g., Bolander et al., 2015; Bradford et al., in press). However, the potential dark side of internal selling has yet to be explored. In particular, the stress-related outcomes of internal selling and its boundary conditions have not yet been investigated. This chapter identifies internal selling as an antecedent of salespeople role stress, and explores factors that may turn the stress-inducing internal selling experiences into something value generating for the selling organization.

Furthermore, I propose a number of situational and individual factors as antecedents of internal selling. Prior research has paid limited attention to factors leading to internal selling. The current research suggests that internal selling may be driven both by organizational elements, such as the business models that the selling organizations pursue or the organizational structural features, and individual factors, such as power, status, and interpersonal influence. Future research needs to continue to identify antecedents of internal selling to better understand industrial, organizational, and individual features that induce internal selling behaviors.

### *Managerial Implications*

Most B2B companies strive to build high-quality relationships with their customers. A great deal of organizational resources are spent on educating their sales professionals to build customer relationships (Stevens & Kinni, 2007). I suggest that an area most in need of sales training is the intra-organizational aspect of relationship building. As customers increasingly demand solution offerings,

salespeople have to learn to successfully navigate the internal organization and serve as surrogate managers for the customer. Thus, sales management practices should recognize the importance of such efforts and equip the salesforce with required competencies to do so. Among other, networking and PsyCap are important competencies that salespeople need to develop to better serve their customers. Meanwhile, selling organizations also need to pay attention to alignment between their strategic orientation and structural design of the organization to ensure that organizational structure supports strategies being pursued.

If market orientation and service climate of the selling organization help salespeople cope with the demand of internal selling and facilitate effective solution selling, then it is important that selling organizations foster these organizational attributes. To build a strong market orientation, managers need to pay close attention to acquiring market intelligence, and communicating marketing strategies and organizational objectives to the entire organization, so that employees stay market-oriented and sales minded (cf., Kohli & Jaworski, 1993; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). Similarly, to assist internal selling efforts, the selling organization should strive to establish a strong service climate, where employees identify strongly with the value of both external, and internal, service (cf., Schneider & Bowen, 1993). Meanwhile, cultivating strong buyer–seller relationships not only will build relationship capital for the selling organization in general, but will also help build a facilitative micro-environment that enables salespeople to engage in internal selling more effectively.

Managers can play an active role in helping salespeople bring internal selling to success. First, they need to empower the salesforce, and allow them a higher degree of discretion in terms of how they allocate their time on intra-organizational relationship building and customer relationship building. Managers also need to find a balance between demanding results and rewarding salespeople efforts toward long-term customer relationship building efforts.

Lastly, given that power and social status are important drivers of internal selling, and that there is a positive feedback loop from sales performance enhanced by internal selling and these interpersonal influence variables, selling organizations need to be mindful about the “Matthew Effect” (Merton, 1968), where salespeople with greater power and social status increasingly gain more advantage in resources allocation and ability to performance. Perhaps selling organizations can develop mentoring and coaching programs that help rookie salespeople learn and build their capacity of internal selling over time.

## LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

I acknowledge a number of limitations of the conceptual model and offer suggestions for future research. First, internal selling is both more necessary and more likely in complex sales, which typically involves larger selling opportunities, decision-making process in which customers are highly involved, multiple decision maker groups, and long sales cycles (Thull, 2010). Standardized or routinized sales processes put less of a demand on salespeople to orchestrate

intra-organizational resources, and therefore, reduce the need or complexity of internal selling, making the performance-relevant factors identified in the model less consequential.

Second, this is not intended to be comprehensive model of salespeople stress or internal selling, and therefore, does not include all potential antecedents and outcomes of internal selling and associated boundary conditions. Besides the selling organization and salespeople characteristics included in the model, other situational (e.g., size of selling opportunity, technological complexity of products and services, etc.) and individual factors (e.g., political knowledge, etc.) may also influence the tendency of salespeople to engage in internal selling, which can be further examined.

Moreover, I consider only two salespeople outcomes, role stress and sales performance, as the dependent variables. This model can certainly be broadened to include other performance- and career-related variables. Besides the moderating variables considered in this model, other situational and individual differences variables, such as organizational adaptive capability and salespeople's teamwork and leadership skills, can also be included in the model. It will be a fruitful endeavor to build such a comprehensive model to guide future empirical research on internal selling.

Second, this model focused on individual-level outcomes. Does internal selling of salespeople as a whole shape organizational processes, structure, and culture? Does the selling organization respond to internal selling of their salespeople by attempting to build a stronger sales support system? If so, will the level of internal selling among salespeople decrease when sales resources through formal sales support mechanisms become more readily available? Longitudinal studies that track changes in internal selling at the team or organizational level will help answer these questions.

## CONCLUSION

Internal selling is on the rise as selling organizations continue to seek a competitive edge through offering customer solutions. As a proactive work behavior, internal selling holds tremendous potential to increase sales performance. However, as a significant job demand, internal selling potentially causes salespeople stress, especially when they operate within-organizational contexts that offer little job resources for them to cope with this demand, and when they are not equipped with the right competencies to meet this challenge. To facilitate internal selling efforts, selling organizations need to develop strong market orientation and service climate, foster quality relationships with buyers, and develop a salesforce with strong networking ability and PsyCap. I hope this chapter generates more research interests in internal selling, and encourages future research to develop context-specific stress models for different occupations and job roles.

## REFERENCES

- Anderson, C., & Berdahl, J. (2002). The experience of power: Examining the effects of power on approach and inhibition tendencies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(6), 1362–1377.
- Anderson, C., & Galinsky, A. D. (2006). Power, optimism, and risk-taking. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36(4), 511–536.

- Anderson, C., Hildreth, J. & Howland, L. (2015). Is the desire for status a fundamental human motive? A review of the empirical literature. *Psychological Bulletin*, *141*(3), 574–601.
- Anderson, C., John, O. P., & Keltner, D. (2012). The personal sense of power. *Journal of Personality*, *80*(2), 313–344.
- Babakus, E., Cravens, D. W., Johnston, M., & Moncrief, W. C. (1999). The role of emotional exhaustion in salesforce attitude and behavior relationships. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *27*(1), 58–70.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resource model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *22*, 309–328.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands-resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *22*(3), 273–285.
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., de Boer, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2003). Job demands and job resources as predictors of absence duration and frequency. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *62*, 341–356.
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., Taris, T. W., Schaufeli, W. B., & Schreurs, P. J. G. (2003). A multigroup analysis of the job demands-resources model in four home care organizations. *International Journal of Stress Management*, *10*(1), 16–38.
- Baum, J. R., & Wally, S. (2003). Strategic decision speed and firm performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, *24*, 1107–1129.
- Blader, S. L., & Chen, Y.-R. (2012). Differentiating the effects of status and power: A justice perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *102*(5), 994–1014.
- Blocker, C. P., Cannon, J. P., Panagopoulos, N. G., & Sager, J. K. (2012). The role of the sales force in value creation and appropriation: New directions for research. *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, *32*(1), 15–28.
- Bolander, W., Satornino, C. B., Hughes, D. E., & Ferris, G. R. (2015). Social networks within sales organizations: Their development and importance for salesperson performance. *Journal of Marketing*, *79*(6), 1–16.
- Boswell, W. R., Olson-Buchanan, J. B., & LePine, M. A. (2004). The relationship between work-related stress and work outcomes: The role of felt-challenge and psychological strain. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *64*, 165–181.
- Bradford, K., Liu, Y., Shi, Y., Weitz, B., & Xu, J. (2019). Harnessing internal support to build customer relationships: The role of networking, helping, and allocentrism. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *27*(2), 140–158.
- Bruins, J., Ellemers, N., & de Gilder, D. (1999). Power use and differential competence as determinants of subordinates' evaluative and behavioral responses in simulated organizations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *29*(7), 843–870.
- Burke, M., Borucki, C., & Hurley, A. (1992). Reconceptualizing psychological climate in a retail service environment: A multiple stakeholder perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *77*, 717–729.
- Cavanaugh, M. A., Boswell, W. R., Roehling, M. V., & Boudreau, J. W. (2000). An empirical examination of self-reported work stress among U.S. managers. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *85*(1), 65–74.
- Cheng, J. T., Tracy, J. L., & Henrich, J. (2010). Pride, personality, and the evolutionary foundations of human social status. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, *31*(5), 334–347.
- Claro, D. P., & Ramos, C. (2018). Sales intrafirm networks and the performance impact of sales cross-functional collaboration with marketing and customer service. *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, *38*(2), 172–190.
- Cespedes, F. V. (1992). Sales coordination: An exploratory study. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *12*, 13–29.
- Chaker, N. N., Schumann, D. W., Zablach, A. R., & Flint, D. J. (2016). Exploring the state of salesperson insecurity: How it emerges and why it matters? *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, *24*(3), 344–364.
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *86*, 499–512.
- Dwyer, R. F., Schurr, P. H., & Oh, S. (1987). Developing buyer–seller relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, *51*(2), 11–27.
- Emerson, R. M. (1962). Power-dependence relations. *American Sociological Review*, *27*(1), 31–41.

- Ferris, G. R., & Kacmar, K. M. (1992). Perceptions of organizational politics. *Journal of Management*, 18(1), 93–116.
- Ferris, G. R., Treadway, D. C., Kolodinsky, R. W., Hochwarter, W. A., Kacmar, C. J., Douglas, C., & Frink, D. D. (2005). Development and validation of the political skill inventory. *Journal of Management*, 31(1), 126–152.
- Flaherty, T. B., Dahlstrom, R., & Skinner, S. J. (1999). Organizational values and role stress as determinants of customer-oriented selling performance. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 19(2), 1–18.
- Friend, S. B., Johnson, J. S., Luthans, F., & Sohi, R. S. (2016). Positive psychology in sales: Integrating psychological capital. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 24(3), 306–327.
- Fournier, C., Weeks, W. A., Blocker, C. P., & Chonko, L. B. (2013). Polychronicity and scheduling's role in reducing role stress and enhancing sales performance. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 33(2), 197–210.
- Galinsky, A. D., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Magee, J. C. (2003). From power to action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(3), 453–466.
- Hall, R. D. (1999). *Organizations: Structures, processes, and outcomes*. London: Prentice-Hall.
- Hardy, C., & Van Vugt, M. (2006). Nice guys finish first: The competitive altruism hypothesis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(10), 1402–1413.
- Homburg, C., Workman, J. P., Jr, Jensen, O. (2002). A configurational perspective on key account management. *Journal of Marketing*, 66(2), 38–60.
- Jaworski, B., & Kohli, A. K. (1993). Market orientation: Antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(3), 53–70.
- Jaramillo, F., Mulki, J. P., & Locander, W. B. (2005). The role of time wasted in sales force attitudes and intention to quit. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 24(1), 24–36.
- Jaramillo, F., Mulki, J. P., & Solomon, P. (2006). The role of ethical climate on salesperson's role stress, job attitudes, turnover intention, and job performance. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 26(3), 271–282.
- Johnson, J. S., & Sohi, R. S. (2014). The curvilinear and conditional effects of product line breadth on salesperson performance, role stress, and job satisfaction. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 42, 71–89.
- Jones, E., Brown, S. P., Zoltners, A. P., & Weitz, B. A. (2005). The changing environment of selling and sales management. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 25(2), 105–111.
- Katsikea, E., Theodosiou, M., & Morgan, R. E. (2015). Why people quit: Explaining employee turnover intentions among export sales managers. *International Business Review*, 24(3), 367–379.
- Kohli, A. K., Jaworski, B. J. (1993). Market orientation: The construct, research propositions, and managerial implications. *Journal of Marketing*, 54(2), 1–18.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1966). *Psychological stress and the coping process*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Progress on a cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion. *American Psychologist*, 4, 819–834.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Leary, M. R., Jongman-Sereno, K. P., & Diebels, K. J. (2014). The pursuit of status: A self-presentational perspective on the quest for social value. In J. T. Cheng, J. L. Tracy, & C. Anderson (Eds.), *The psychology of social status* (pp. 159–178). New York, NY: Springer.
- LePine, J. A., LePine, M. A., & Jackson, C. L. (2004). Challenge and hindrance stress: Relationships with exhaustion, motivation to learn and learning performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(5), 883–891.
- LePine, J. A., Podsakoff, N. P., & LePine, M. A. (2005). A meta-analytic test of the challenge stressor-hindrance stressor framework: An explanation for inconsistent relationships among stressors and performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(5), 764–775.
- Levinthal, D. A., & March, J. G. (1993). The myopia of learning. *Strategic Management Journal*, 14(8), 95–112.
- Lewin, J. E., & Sager, J. K. (2009). An investigation of the influence of coping resources in salespersons' emotional exhaustion. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38(7), 798–805.
- Liu, Y., Bradford, K., & Weitz, B. (2018). *Internal selling and salesperson effectiveness: The moderating role of networking abilities*. Presented at the annual conference meeting of Southern Management Association, Lexington, KY.

- Liu, Y., & Yang, J. (2006). Server emotional experiences and affective service delivery. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 9, 127–150.
- Low, G. S., Cravens, D. W., Grant, K., & Moncrief, W. C. (2001). Antecedents and consequences of salesperson burnout. *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(5/6), 587–611.
- Luthans, F., Youssef, C. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2007). *Psychological capital: Developing the human competitive edge*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Magee, J. C., & Frasier, C. W. (2014). Status and power: The principal inputs to influence for public managers. *Public Administration Review*, 74(3), 307–317.
- Magee, J. C., & Galinsky, A. D. (2008). Social hierarchy: The self-reinforcing nature of power and status. *Academy of Management Annals*, 2(1), 351–398.
- Marshall, G. W., Moncrief, W. C., & Lassk, F. G. (1999). The current state of sales force activities. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 28, 87–98.
- Merton, R. K. (1968). The Matthew effect in science. *Science*, 159(3810), 56–63.
- Meurs, J. A., & Perrewé, P. L. (2011). Cognitive activation theory of stress: An integrative theoretical approach to work stress. *Journal of Management* 37(4), 1043–1068.
- Michaels, R. E., Cron, W. L., Dubinsky, A. J., & Joachimsthaler, E. A. (1988). Influence of formalization on the organizational commitment and work alienation of salespeople and industrial buyers. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25(4), 376–383.
- Mintzberg, H. (1983). *Power in and around organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Moon, M. A., & Armstrong, G. M. (1994). Selling teams: A conceptual framework and research agenda. *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 14(1), 17–30.
- Nonis, S. A., & Sager, J. K. (2003). Coping strategy profiles used by salespeople: Their relationships with personal characteristics and work outcomes. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 23(2), 139–150.
- Ostroff, C. (1993). The effects of climate and personal influences on individual behavior and attitudes in organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 56, 56–90.
- Peccei, R., & Rosenthal, P. (2000). Front-line responses to customer orientation programs: A theoretical and empirical analysis. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 11, 562–590.
- Pfeffer, J. (1981). *Power in organizations*. Boston, MA: Pitman.
- Pfeffer, J. (1992). *Managing with power: Politics and influence in organizations*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Pfeffer, J. and Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Plouffe, C. R., & Barclay, D. W. (2007). Salesperson navigation: The intraorganizational dimension of the sales role. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 36(4), 528–539
- Plouffe, C. R., Sridharan, S., & Barclay, D. W. (2010). Exploratory navigation and salesperson performance: Investigating selected antecedents and boundary conditions in high-technology and financial services contexts. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(4), 538–550.
- Plouffe, C. R., Bolander, W., Cote, J. A., & Hochstein, B. (2016). Does the customer matter most? Exploring strategic frontline employees' influence of customers, the internal business team, and external business partners. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(1), 106–123.
- Powers, T. L., & Reagan, W. R. (2007). Factors influencing successful buyer–seller relationships. *Journal of Business Research*, 60, 1234–1242.
- Ridgeway, C. L., & Walker, H. A. (1995). Status Structures. In K. S. Cook, G. A. Fine, & J. S. House (Eds.), *Sociological perspectives on social psychology* (pp. 281–310). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Rubenstein, A. L., Eberly, M. B., Lee, T. W., & Mitchell, T. R. (2018). Surveying the forest: A meta-analysis, moderator investigation, and future-oriented discussion of the antecedents of voluntary employee turnover. *Personnel Psychology*, 71(1), 23–65.
- Sager, J. K., & Wilson, P. H. (1995). Clarification of the meaning of job stress in the context of salesforce research. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 15(3), 51–53.
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25, 293–315.
- Schneider, B., & Bowen, D. E. (1993). The service organization: Human resources management is crucial. *Organizational Dynamics*, 21, 39–52.



- Schneider, B., Gunnarson, S. K., & Niles-Jolly, K. (1994). *Creating the climate and culture of success. Organizational Dynamics*, 23, 17–29.
- Schneider, B., White, S. S., & Paul, M. C. (1998). Linking service climate and customer perceptions of service quality: Test of a causal model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 150–163.
- Schweper, C. H., Jr, & Good, M. C. (2017). Reducing salesperson job stress and unethical intent: The influence of leader-member exchange relationship, socialization and ethical ambiguity. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 66, 205–218.
- Schweper, C. H., Jr., & Ingram, T. N. (2016). Ethical leadership in the salesforce: Effects on salesperson customer orientation, commitment to customer value and job stress. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 31(7), 914–927.
- Singh, J. (1998). Striking a balance in boundary-spanning positions: An investigation of some unconventional influences of role stressors and job characteristics on job outcomes of salespeople. *Journal of Marketing*, 62(3), 69–86.
- Sleep, S., Bharadwaj, S., & Lam, S. K. (2015). Walking a tightrope: The joint impact of customer and within-firm boundary spanning activities on perceived customer satisfaction and team performance. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(4), 472–489.
- Stevens, H., & Kinni, T. (2007). *Achieve sales excellence: The 7 customer rules for becoming the new sales professional*. Avon, MA: Platinum Press.
- Steward, M. D., Walker, B. A., Hutt, M. D., & Kumar, A. (2010). The coordination strategies of high-performing salespeople: Internal working relationships that drive success. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(5), 550–566.
- Thull, J. (2010). *Mastering the complex sale: How to compete and win when the stakes are high!*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Thye, S. (2000). A status value theory of power in exchange relations. *American Sociological Review*, 65, 407–432.
- Tuli, K. R., Bharadwaj, S. G., & Kohli, A. K. (2010). Ties that bind: The impact of multiple types of ties with a customer on sales growth and sales volatility. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 47(1), 36–50.
- Tuli, K. R., Kohli, A. K., & Bharadwaj, S. G. (2007). Rethinking customer solutions: From product bundles to relational processes. *Journal of Marketing*, 71, 1–17.
- Üstüner, T., & Godes, D. (2006). Better sales networks. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(7/8), 102–112.
- Ulaga, W., & Reinartz, W. J. (2011). Hybrid offerings: How manufacturing firms combine goods and services successfully. *Journal of Marketing*, 75, 5–23.
- Van der Vegt, G. S., Bunderson, J. S., & Oosterhof, A. (2006). Expertness diversity and interpersonal helping in teams: Why those who need the most help end up getting the least. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49, 877–893.
- Vargo, S., & Lusch, R. (2004). Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 68(1), 1–17.
- Weitz, B. A., & Bradford, K. D. (1999). Personal selling and sales management: A relationship marketing perspective. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 27(2), 241–254.
- Wilson, D. T. (1995). An integrated model of buyer–seller relationships. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 23(4), 335–345.
- Workman, J. P., Jr, Homburg, C., & Jensen, O. (2003). Intraorganizational determinants of key account management effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing Science*, 31(1), 3–21.
- Worm, S., Bharadwaj, S. G., Ulaga, W., & Reinartz, W. J. (2017). When and why do customer solutions pay off in business markets? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45, 490–512.
- Yagil, D., & Gal, I. (2002). The role of organizational service climate in generating control and empowerment among workers and customers. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 9, 215–226.