

Zachary R. Hall

C.V.

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SHORT BIO

Zachary Hall is Doctoral Candidate in Marketing at the University of Houston. He holds a MS in Finance and MBA from Texas Tech University and BBA in Marketing with honors from Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. For each degree, he graduated top of his class with a 4.0 GPA.

Zachary successfully defended his dissertation proposal in December of 2012. His dissertation proposal, “Salesperson Intuition: Its Critical Role and Possible Antecedents”, has won two awards, the 2013 AMA Sales SIG Dissertation Proposal Competition and the University Sales Education Foundation Research Grant. Essay 1 of his dissertation investigates how the accuracy of salespeople’s first impressions of customers affects the sales process and, importantly, customer outcomes. Subsequently, Essay 2 examines the underlying factors that influence salespeople’s ability to make accurate first impressions of customers.

Zachary’s research examines factors that the performance of salespeople, sales teams, and sales organizations. Presently, his research focuses on investigating these performance issues from a dyadic perspective in both salesperson-customer exchanges (B2B and B2C) and manager-employee relationships. He has research is currently under review at Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Marketing, Marketing Science, and Management Science. Based on his experience working with companies and his expertise in gathering field data, he has been invited as a panelist for Winter AMA 2013 and a speaker at the 2013 AMA Faculty Consortium: New Horizons in Selling and Sales Management.

At the University of Houston, Zachary is very active at the Sales Excellence Institute in both teaching and working with corporate partners. He is an instructor for two courses, Advance Professional Selling and Sales Research Practicum. Zachary has been commended for his teaching excellence and is currently a finalist for the University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award. Also, he assists in managing relationships and presenting research findings to the Sales Excellence Institute’s corporate partners.

Before entering academia, Zachary accumulated almost 10 years of experience in sales, financial analysis, pricing analysis, consulting, and marketing. As a sales manager for a marketing research firm, he was successful in selling customized research projects to Fortune 2000 firms including Dell, Continental Airlines, and Lenovo. As a pricing/financial analyst for a regional grocery chain, he was responsible for competitive benchmarking as well as optimizing prices for over 50 product categories representing 35,000⁺ SKUs for 5 different sales territories.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Business Administration (Proposal defended on December 2012)

University of Houston

Major: Marketing

Minor: Econometrics

Committee Chair: Michael Ahearne

- AMA Sales SIG Dissertation Proposal Competition Winner
- Recipient of University Sales Education Foundation Research Grant
- University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award – Finalist
- Presidential Graduate Fellowship
- Larry R. Furman Scholarship
- Robert and Ruth Scholarship

M.S. in Finance (2007)

Texas Tech University

- William W. Wagley Graduate Finance Scholarship – Awarded to the most outstanding finance graduate student

M.B.A. (2007)

Texas Tech University

- Jones-Hewitt Graduate Fellowship - Awarded to 4 graduates students across all programs and disciplines
- SBC Graduate Fellowship
- Texas Tech Rawls Scholar

B.B.A. in Marketing (2005)

Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi

- Summa Cum Laude
- Recognized as the “Most Outstanding Graduating Business Student” by Beta Gamma Sigma
- Kennedy Foundation Scholarship – Awarded to the most outstanding student of the College of Business

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Business-to-Business Marketing, Buyer-Seller Relationships, Marketing Strategy, Sales Force Effectiveness, and Sales Management

PAPERS UNDER REVIEW

“The Critical Role of Salesperson Intuition in the Sales Process: Improving Salespeople’s Effectiveness and Efficiency,” with Michael Ahearne, Harish Sujana, and Willy Bolander. (Invited for resubmission to Journal of Marketing Research).

- See Dissertation Essay 1 for abstract.

“Antecedents and Consequences of Salesperson Perceptual (In)Accuracy in Customer Relationships,” with Michael Ahearne, Ryan Mullins, Son Lam, and Jeffrey Boichuk. (Under review at Marketing Science)

Salesperson judgment often dictates whether customer relationships in B2B relationships are managed effectively. However, the causes and effects of salesperson judgments have yet to be fully understood. To resolve this shortcoming, the authors introduce the salesperson judgment (in)accuracy framework to model accurate and inaccurate salesperson judgments. Using survey and performance data from salesperson-customer dyads within a global industrial supplier, the authors demonstrate antecedents and consequences of judgment (in)accuracy.

“Managers and Expert Peers: The Generation and Dissemination of Public Goods in Organizational Teams,” with Michael Ahearne, Ed Blair, Jeffrey Boichuk, and Niladri Syam. (Under review at Management Science).

In organizational teams, knowledge is a valuable public good. Many teams are composed of expert peers, whom are sought after by their teammates as sources of knowledge. Some team members withhold their knowledge, while others share it through the advice network. We describe an economic model that examines how the degree to which managers and expert peers share their knowledge impacts managers’ and expert peers’ endogenously determined knowledge generation efforts, respectively. This research innovatively conducts an empirical test of the Nash Equilibrium pattern of efforts predicted by theoretical work on public goods in networks and advances organizational research on knowledge processes in teams.

“Internal Marketing as OI Building: A Dyadic Approach,” with Michael Ahearne, Till Haumann, Florian Kraus, and Jan Wieseke. (Invited for resubmission to Journal of Marketing Research).

Internal marketing literature emphasizes the importance of organizational identification (OI) in the sales force. However, empirical research has so far treated the relationship between sales managers’ and salespeople’s OI as a top-down process wherein the manager’s OI positively influences salespeople’s OI, largely ignoring their joint effects. This study addresses this research void by exploring the phenomena of OI agreement and OI tension in the sales manager–salesperson dyad within a sales organization for a large global industrial firm. The study additionally explores how sales managers’ leadership styles (charismatic vs. transactional), combined with the appropriate control system (behavioral vs. outcome control), can be effective in avoiding OI tension.

“(Mis)Managing New Salesperson Performance Failure,” with Michael Ahearne and Willy Bolander. (Under review at Journal of Marketing).

Despite wide acknowledgement that salesperson performance failure is a prevalent and detrimental issue for sales organizations, researchers do not fully understand the consequences of repetitive failure on salesperson behaviors or the effects of managerial interventions intended to curb the likely negative outcomes of such failure. In a field study using unique longitudinal, multilevel data, the authors reveal that cumulative salesperson failure increases coercive selling behaviors. Surprisingly, while beneficial in reducing coercive behaviors during initial periods of failure, the sales manager’s transformational leadership exacerbates salespeople’s coercive selling behaviors as failures accumulate. A lab experiment reveals that salespeople are more likely to attribute repetitive failure to external forces. We further find that the sales manager’s transformational leadership facilitates these coercive selling behaviors through external attribution.

WORKING PAPERS

“Salesperson Intuition: Investigation of Possible Antecedents,” with Michael Ahearne and Harish Sujjan. (Targeting Journal of Marketing)

“Conflicting Sales Approaches: Investigation When to Shape Versus Adapt to Customers’ Needs,” with Michael Ahearne and Harish Sujjan. (Targeting Journal of Consumer Research).

“The Role of Information Asymmetry in Negotiation Outcomes,” with Michael Ahearne and Florian Zettelmeyer. (Completed third round of data collection, Targeting American Economic Review).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Invited Speaker, “Natural Experiments, Field Experiments, and Experimental Simulations in Sales.” 2013 AMA Faculty Consortium: New Horizons in Selling & Sales Management, Fort Worth, TX, June 2013.

Invited Panelist, “Methodological Issues and Challenges in Sales Research: Research Design, Data Collection, and Data Analysis.” AMA Winter 2013 – Sales SIG Special Session, Las Vegas, NV, February 2013.

“Antecedents and Consequences of Salesperson Perceptual (In)Accuracy in Customer Relationships,” with Michael Ahearne, Ryan Mullins, Son Lam, and Jeffrey Boichuk, AMA Winter 2013 – Sales and CRM Track, Las Vegas, NV, February 2013.

"Managers & Expert Peers: Public Goods in Organizational Teams," with Michael Ahearne, Niladri Syam, Jeffrey Boichuk, and Ed Blair, AMA Winter 2013 – Sales and CRM Track, Las Vegas, NV, February 2013.

"Expert Peers in Team Product: A Social Network Perspective," with Michael Ahearne, Niladri Syam, and Jeffrey Boichuk, Marketing Science Conference, Boston, MA, June 2012.

“Decomposing Customer Need Knowledge: The Role of Salesperson Intuition,” with Michael Ahearne and Willy Bolander, AMA Winter 2012 – Sales and CRM Track, St. Petersburg, FL, February 2012.

DISSERTATION

Committee: Michael Ahearne (Chair)
Harish Sujana (Outside Committee Member)
Niladri Syam (Committee Member)
Jim Phillips (Committee Member)

Title: Salesperson Intuition: Its Critical Role in the Sales Process and Antecedents

- Recipient of 2013 AMA Sales SIG Dissertation Proposal Competition (\$1,000)

Essay 1: “The Critical Role of Salesperson Intuition in the Sales Process: Improving Salespeople’s Effectiveness and Efficiency”

- Recipient of University Sales Education Foundation Research Grant (\$5,000)
- Presented at Winter AMA 2012
- Invited for resubmission to Journal of Marketing Research

Salespeople’s ability to assess customer needs accurately is important for successful salesperson–customer interactions. Although adaptive selling is a popular sales approach for assessing customer needs, the foundations of adaptive selling are incomplete. In accordance with research on “thin slices of behavior” from social psychology, a critical missing component is the salesperson’s ability to intuit customers’ shopping intentions. Analysis of 356 salesperson–customer dyads, with customer shopping intentions, salesperson perceptions of customers’ intentions, and objective transactional data captured before and after the sales interaction, confirms the power of these intuitions. First, in general, salespeople demonstrate accurate intuition about prospective customers; however, the level of accuracy varies in salesperson–customer interactions. Intuition accuracy is critical for success in interactions, and inaccuracies in this initial perception are difficult to overcome. Second, salespeople’s intuitions about customers’ product needs are critical and improve the probability of making a sale and selling a larger dollar amount. Finally, when salespeople’s intuitions and knowledge about customer product needs are accurate, salespeople complete sales in less time, thus improving efficiency.

Essay 2: “Salesperson Intuition: Investigation of Possible Antecedents”

- Currently in data analysis
- Targeting Journal of Marketing

The critical role of intuition in decision-making and employee performance is echoed throughout the social psychology and management literature. In marketing, a salesperson’s ability to intuit a customer’s expected value and product-related needs are key drivers for successful salesperson-customer interactions. Despite this, no research to date has investigated the antecedents of a salesperson’s intuitions about potential customers. By harnessing the foundations of social perception, we investigate three aspects that influence intuition accuracy: (1) salesperson traits and competencies, (2) customer characteristics, and (3) the similarity of the customer and salesperson. To accomplish this, we drew on the methodology of thin slices of behavior research. Specifically, we gathered customer’s stated shopping intentions and video recorded real customers as they entered a retail store of a large, publically traded retailer. Subsequently, we implemented an online experiment where over 800 salespeople predicted the shopping intentions of 4 randomly selected prospective customers based on these video clips, which resulted in over 3,200 salesperson-customer dyads. Results will provide sales managers insight on drivers of salesperson intuition, which will assist in hiring and training models.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE & INTEREST

Courses Taught:

MARK 4373 - Advanced Professional Selling

- Spring 2013 (in progress)
- Fall 2012 (teaching rating 4.84/5.00, 92.2 percentile for overall college)
- Spring 2012 (teaching rating 5.00/5.00, 99.9 percentile for overall college)

MARK 4397 - Selected Topics in Marketing: Sales Research Practicum, co-taught with Michael Ahearne

- Fall 2012 (teaching rating 5.00/5.00)
- Summer II 2012 (teaching rating 4.92/5.00)
- Summer I 2012 (teaching rating 5.00/5.00)
- Spring 2012 (teaching rating 5.00/5.00)
- Spring 2011 (teaching rating 4.48/5.00)

Awards

- Teaching Excellence Award – Finalist (Winners will be announced in late Spring 2013)
- Commended for teaching excellence by Bauer College of Business (Spring 2012 & Fall 2012)

Teaching Interests:

Business-to-Business Marketing, Pricing Strategy, Professional Selling (Advanced and Basic), and Sales Management

Course Development:

- Co-developed curriculum for MARK 4397, Sales Research Practicum, with Dr. Michael Ahearne. This was a specialty course offered to top sales students that combined innovative teaching curriculum with real world experience with Bauer College of Business’s corporate partners.
- Implemented changes to MARK 4373 curriculum in Spring 2012 and Fall 2012 to include more experiential learning. Based on student feedback, the Program in Excellence in Sales implemented my recommended changes in all sections of Advanced Professional Selling in Spring 2013.

PH.D. COURSEWORK

Marketing

- Research Methods Dr. Michael Ahearne
- Special Topics in Marketing: Research Methods Dr. Michael Ahearne
- Personal Selling & Sales Management Dr. Barton Weitz
- Social Networks in B2B Marketing Dr. Christophe Van den Bulte
- Consumer Behavior Dr. Vanessa Patrick
- Communication Skills for Scholars Dr. Betsy Gelb
- Marketing Models Dr. James Hess
- Marketing Strategy Dr. Michael Ahearne
Dr. Niladri Syam

Statistical Methods

- Quantitative Economic Analysis Dr. Carolina Villegas-Sanchez
- Econometrics I Dr. Bryan Brown
- Econometrics II Dr. Christian Murray
- Structural Equation Modeling Dr. Paras Mehta
- Multi-Level Statistical Analysis Dr. Paras Mehta
- Social Network Analysis Dr. Steve Borgatti
- SAS Programming Dr. Roberto Bertolusso

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Research Assistant
• <i>Dr. Michael Ahearne</i> | University of Houston | May 2011 - Present |
| Research Assistant
• <i>Dr. Niladri Syam</i> | University of Houston | August 2010 – May 2011 |
| Research Assistant
• <i>Dr. Tillmann Wagner</i>
• <i>Dr. Brad Carlson</i> | Texas Tech University | Aug 2005 – Dec 2007 |

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Financial/Pricing Analyst United Supermarkets April 2009 – May 2010
Optimized prices for 35,000⁺ products covering 50 categories for 5 different sales territories resulting in growth in revenue, unit sales, and profit. Also responsible for competitive benchmarking including the development of competitive price indices and the presentation of findings to senior management.

Sales & Marketing Manager Perceptive Sciences Corporation Dec 2007 – Mar 2009
Managed the sales and marketing efforts for a market research consulting firm whose clients typically were Fortune 2000 companies and average research project ranged from \$75,000-\$200,000. Established a new cold call sales campaign via social networking where I maintained a 20%⁺ response rate from target companies. Successfully targeted and closed research projects with many companies including Dell, Continental Airlines, and Lenovo. Developed trend analysis and metrics to monitor competitive position and sales pipeline.

Supervisor of Marketing & Intramurals Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi Aug 2002 – May 2005
Managed the marketing efforts for both the Recreational Sports and Intramural Sports programs. Managed and trained approximately 100 sports officials.

Market Research Intern LandLord Resources Jan 2004 – May 2004
Researched the feasibility of the development of a loft-style apartment in downtown Corpus Christi. Managed 20 research assistants for data collection. Analyzed survey data and presented findings to executive team.

Sales Representative Scroggins Pro Shop Aug 1999 – July 2002
Sold bowling equipment and bowling ball repair services.

REFERENCES

Michael Ahearne

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