

Flow among Salesperson: What it is and Why it is significant for salesperson's performance¹

Abstract

Determinants of Salesperson performance been of primary interest for sales practioners and researchers over the last century. There has been a wide endeavour to recognised and understand salesperson's performance and the drivers that effects it (Churchill et al., 1985; Verbeke et al., 2011). Despite significant progress in research, the ability to predict salesperson performance is still limited and explains very less variation in salesperson performance; (Evans et al., 2012; Rollins et al., 2014). Research in psychology has suggested that positive mind-set in individuals improves performance like; productivity, creativity, engagement (Achor, 2012). Even more, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) influential Flow theory provide support for the opinion that individuals who experience Flow during their work contexts will perform much better at their activities than their peers who don't. We propose that Flow among salesperson will trigger behavioural and performance outcomes thereby influencing salesperson performance. Familiarising and applying the concept of Flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1975) to the personal selling context may improve salesperson performance, as well as provide sales practioners and researchers with a better understanding of how focusing and nurturing on positive states among salesperson can impact their behaviours.

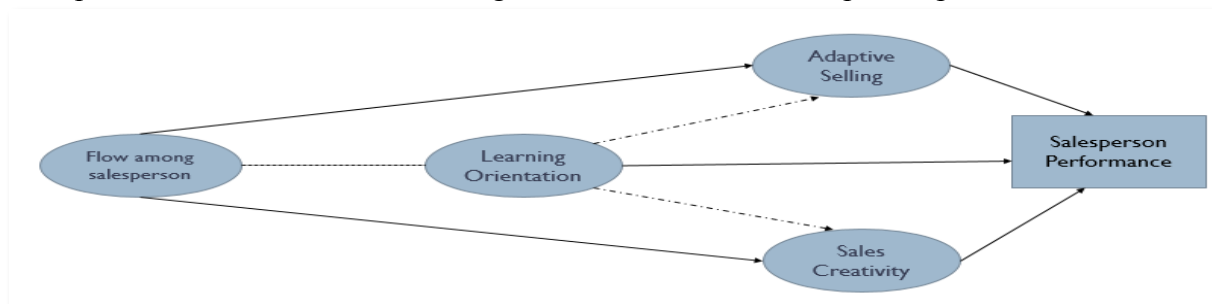
Flow- Conceptualisation and Dimension.

Based on the theoretical foundations of Flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi 1975), we adapt Bakker (2005) conceptualisation and define Flow among salespersons as a state of consciousness or peak experience that is characterized by absorption, work enjoyment and intrinsic motivation. The three dimensions of Flow among salesperson are;

- 1) *Absorption* “the absolute concentration and involvement in the activity.
- 2) *Work enjoyment*: “the experience of delight in the activity.
- 3) *Intrinsic motivation*: “the need to perform a certain activity because of the fascination of the activity”

Conceptual Framework

In line with Flow theory and consistent with our discussion on the benefits of Flow, our conceptual framework discusses the significance of Flow on salesperson performance.



Propositions

P1: *Salesperson in a state of Flow will exhibit higher learning orientation*

P2: *Salesperson in a state of Flow will exhibit higher levels of adaptive selling*

P3: *Salesperson in a state of Flow will exhibit higher levels of sales creativity*

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P4: *Salesperson who exhibits higher degrees of learning orientation, adaptive selling behaviour and sales creativity will be related with higher levels of salesperson performance.*