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The Effect of Perceived Salesperson Transparency, as Enabled by Technology, on Unethical Salesperson Behavior

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THE EFFECT OF SALESPERSON PERCEIVED TRANSPARENCY, AS ENABLED
BY TECHNOLOGY, ON UNETHICAL SALESPERSON BEHAVIOR

by

John Edmond Cicala

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Major: Business Administration

The University of Memphis

August 2011

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Karen, without
whom I could not have realized this dream - I love you;
and to all who believe it's never too late to try.

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This dissertation would have been neither attempted nor achieved without the support, encouragement, instruction, understanding, and friendship of many people to whom I am deeply and forever indebted. First, my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Alan Bush, my committee chairperson and doctoral Sherpa whose support, direction, and tolerance guided me through this into a world I once only imagined being a part of. My sincere appreciation is also extended to the other members of my dissertation committee for their invaluable assistance, instruction, and reinforcement: Dr. George Deitz for his help, reassurance and his above-and-beyond the call assistance with the data analysis; Dr. Coy Jones, for his knowledge, ideas, good cheer, and the Einstein quote that motivated me for years; Dr. Dan Sherrell - what every doctoral student, teacher, professor, and Ph.D. holder should strive to be. If I can provide to my students even half of what you have given to yours, I will consider myself successful. I must also express my appreciation to Drs. O.C. and Linda Ferrell, Dr. Scott J. Vitell, and Dr. Patrick E. Murphy for their counsel and inspiration.

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ABSTRACT

Cicala, John Edmond. Ph.D. The University of Memphis. August 2011. The Effect of Perceived Salesperson Transparency, as Enabled by Technology, on Unethical Salesperson Behavior. Major Professor: Alan J. Bush, Ph.D.

This research study introduces the concept of perceived salesperson transparency to the existing literature of Sales and Marketing. It addresses how recent technological developments impact traditional concerns of agency theory such as moral hazard and adverse selection. Providing empirically-based insight into the use of technology to decrease salesperson unethical behavior can help both organizations on a macro-level and sales managers on a micro level better understand how to use such technology to develop a more productive sales force.

This research created a conceptual definition of perceived transparency for application on an individual level; as opposed to a broad, general definition for application to companies, organizations, and government agencies. It conceptualized, proposed, developed, and examined relationships between multiple dimensions of perceived transparency and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. It provides empirical support for the idea that salesperson perceptions regarding sales managers' use of information accessed through technological means has a mediating effect on the relationship between the accessing of behavioral-related information and the likelihood of unethical behavior. It further addresses the moderating effect of salesperson job performance and salesperson beliefs regarding their ability to control their behavior. In other words, what impacts salesperson behavior is not whether they perceive

management can obtain information about their actions and behaviors, but, rather how, or perhaps, if, they perceive management will use that information.

Hypotheses were tested using data obtained from a broad cross section of professional business-to-business salespeople from a variety of industries. Measurement scales established in prior research studies were adapted for use in this dissertation. All were examined for dimensionality, convergent, and discriminant validity using confirmatory factor analysis. Direct and indirect effects were investigated using structural equation modeling. Support for all three proposed hypotheses in the mediation model was found.

Technology is decreasing managers/principles historical inability to know how their salespeople/agents behave during the selling process and, subsequently influence salesperson behavior. However, this study suggests that it is management's behavior that will influence salesperson behavior.

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Introduction

A salesperson working out of his home in the northeastern United States, away from direct managerial supervision, for a large international corporation was charged in 2010 with six counts of federal wire fraud charges for defrauding his employer of more than $150,000. He is accused of filing false expense reports, including altered airline and hotel receipts, to his corporate office. Examples of his alleged counterfeit claims include $915 in airfare between Philadelphia and Richmond to meet with clients (while actually vacationing in Arizona), $700 for baseball equipment for his son's Little League team (an advertising expense), and $907 for clothing for his wife (listed as presents for clients) (www.commercialappeal.com).

Controlling the behavior of their sales force is an ongoing issue for sales managers. One especially difficult aspect of the supervisory duties of sales managers is that salespeople often work unmonitored by their supervisors. Many of the core duties of salespeople occur away from the office where supervisors or managers have historically been unable to observe their actions and behaviors with clients, either prospective or established ones. This unique work condition all too often provides salespeople with the opportunity to engage in unethical behaviors (Zey-Ferrell and Ferrell 1982; Ferrell and Gresham 1985).

Salespeople serve as an organization's boundary spanners with buying companies and individual customers (Singh 1998). They are vital to the long-term success of any organization involved in either transactional- or relationship-oriented selling (Leigh and Marshall 2001). They generate revenue, maintain current knowledge of perpetually

changing markets, competitors, and products, moving inventory, manage a multitude of internal and external relationships, provide industry and market intelligence, and do their best to keep themselves and their co-workers employed (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008). At the same time, in order to help obtain these goals, salespeople are vested with benefits, privileges, and allowances typically not provided to other employees within an organization. These perquisites often include the authority to spend company funds (or reimbursement for spending their own money on work-related expenses), travel paid for by the company, and the potential for higher than average compensation through a commission based on their sales (either according to volume or revenue-generated). The characteristic of field salespeople with the greatest potential for impact, though, is that they work without any immediate supervision; their behaviors and activities during the selling process are invisible to their managers (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008). Such covert working conditions can easily lead to illegal and unethical selling practices (Ferrell, Fraedrich, and Ferrell 2008).

This unsupervised attribute of selling, along with the highly publicized business ethics scandals of the past decade, is quite possibly why transparency has gained such importance in business relationships today (Murphy, Laczniak, and Wood 2007). Early research, such as Saxe and Weitz's landmark SOCO scale (1982) - which measures a salesperson's orientation toward his or her clients - does not include, directly or indirectly, salesperson transparency among the seven characteristics of customer-oriented selling. However, they did include salesperson characteristics such as accurately describing products and avoiding deceptive, manipulative, or high-pressure tactics into their study.

Recent advances in technology now allow firms to increase the transparency of salesperson behavior by increasing sales management's ability to monitor various aspects of the selling process (Bush et al.. 2007). Historically, sales managers relied on trusting that the information contained in the various reports submitted to them by their salespeople (i.e., the number of calls made, expense reports, status reports, prospect qualifying, etc.) was honest and accurate. However, technology has now enabled sales managers in the twenty-first century with the ability to verify whether such trust is justifiable. Whether this ability will lead to more honest and ethical sales force behavior has not been the focus of any major empirical academic study.

A gap clearly exists in the current personal selling research concerning the relationship, if there is one, between salesperson perceptions of the transparency of their behaviors to management, as brought about by recent technological creations, and the ethicality of their behavior. In other words, do their perceptions regarding how much of their behavior and actions management is monitoring influence their behavior; does how they sell matter more than how much they sell?

A recent study shows that ethical decision-making by salespeople positively correlates with higher sales performance (Schwepker and Ingram 1996). Although this study did not account for technological determinants of the decision-making, it provides strong empirical support for sales managers to encourage and develop the level of ethicality of their salespeople. Therefore, finding empirical support for using technology to increase salesperson transparency, and subsequently salesperson ethicality, would provide sales managers with crucial information for performing their duties better. It

could also result in improved sales performance, increased trust of salespeople, and stronger customer relationships.

Thus, this research study advances existing knowledge in the fields of Personal Selling, Sales Management, and Sales Ethics research by investigating the effect of salesperson perceptions regarding the transparency of their behaviors to management, as enabled by technology, on the ethicality of their behaviors. Its findings provide useful information to academic researchers regarding the interaction of sales, technology, and ethics and its application to problems associated with agency theory. Invaluable guidance for sales management practitioners regarding the use of technology to monitor salesperson behaviors is also a direct result of this study.

Rationale for the Study

A substantial amount of published research is available on the delicate relationship between sales and ethics and the increased susceptibility salespeople have to the temptation of engaging in less than ethical manners (Wotruba 1990; Schwepker 1999; Ferrell, Johnston, and Ferrell 2008). Others have investigated how technology has the potential to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of a sales force, were it not for various issues surrounding the adoption of technology by salespeople (Erffmeyer and Johnson 2001; Ahearne, Srinivasan, and Weinstein 2004; Hunter and Perreault 2007). Still other academics have looked into what role ethics should play concerning advances in technology; issues such as privacy and access to information have been common themes in research articles (Kallman and Grillo 1996; Ryssel, Ritter, and Gemünden 2004; Turilli and Floridi 2009). However, the amount of research that exists on the influence and impact of technology on salesperson ethicality is quite a bit smaller. Bush

et al.. (2007) produced a dyadic qualitative study regarding sales technology and ethics among salespeople and sales managers. It suggests two major categories to describe the eight separate themes found: exploitation (salespeople) and control (sales managers). Salespeople claim the ability to use technology to engage in unethical behaviors in their dealings with their clients and their employer. Sales managers, on the other hand, boast that they, in turn, can use technology to monitor activities during the selling process and hold salespeople more accountable for accuracy in their communications (Bush et al.. 2007).

Subsequent research (Bush, Bush, and Orr 2010) provides insight into organizational use of internal codes to control unethical behavior of salespeople, especially the ethicality of their use of technology. It concludes that it may very well be in the best interest of organizations to monitor exactly how their sales forces use technology. The research study proposed here, however, focuses not on the monitoring of the ethical or unethical use of technology by salespeople, but rather uniquely on the use of technology to monitor the ethical or unethical behavior of salespeople. Specifically, it concentrates on salespersons' perceptions of how transparent their behaviors are to management due to management's use of technology and what, if any, influence these perceptions have on the ethicality of their behavior.

Research focused on predicting an individual's intent to perform (or not perform) a particular behavior traditionally utilizes the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen 1988). This very well respected approach suggests that a person's intention to perform (or not perform) a particular behavior can be predicted (and thereby controlled) through the composite measurement of three types of beliefs: (1) behavioral beliefs, (2) normative

beliefs, and (3) control beliefs. TPB has successfully predicted a range of social

behaviors, including those involving dishonesty among college students (Beck and Ajzen

1991), information technology (IT) behavior (Leonard, Cronan, and Kreie 2004), ethical

decision-making in the healthcare industry (Randall and Gibson 1991), smoking

cessation (Norman, Conner, and Bell 1999), and rule adherence among British youths

(Broadhead-Fearn and White 2006). Yet, no previous study found uses TPB to conduct a

self-reported investigation of salesperson performance of ethical behavior.

        Neither will this study. It does not focus on predicting individual salesperson

performance of a specific behavior or their use of a particular sales technology. Instead,

it is concerned, generally, with the relationship between sales managers and salespeople

and, more specifically, the effect of managerial monitoring via technology, as perceived

by salespeople on the ethicality of their behavior. As such, agency theory provides the

theoretical foundation for this work that proposes the existence of a negative correlation

between perceived salesperson transparency and the likelihood of unethical salesperson

behavior performance. Agency theory has been used successfully to explain how sales

managers can control salesperson activities (Damon 1998), as well as salesperson

behaviors related to their perceived usefulness of, and adoption of, sales force automation

tools (sales technologies) (Mallin and DelVecchio 2007). Agency control plays a critical

role in reducing opportunistic behaviors, according to Fong and Tosi (2007).

Additionally, agency theory supplies the theoretical basis for the expected negative

moderating influences of salesperson job performance and salesperson beliefs on the

relationship between perceived salesperson transparency, as enabled by technology, and

ethical salesperson behavior.

Salesperson Susceptibility. Salespeople are required to interact with customers, co-workers, competitors, vendors, and others in socially interactive environments if they are to be successful in performing their duties to generate revenue, increase market share, and help management gain valuable knowledge related to the industry, the market, and competitors that is incorporated into the organization's overall strategy (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008). They continually find themselves under a variety of pressures to perform well and have this performance measured on a regular basis (Schwepker and Ingram 2006). The level of competitiveness within Sales is typically higher than most other professions (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008). This constant intensity of competitiveness usually adds to the temptation of unethical behavior among salespeople (Hegarty and Sims 1970).

Not surprisingly then, salespeople are often more at risk to deviate from desired ethical behaviors than are other organizational employees (Osborn and Hunt 1974; Ferrell and Gresham 1985). Schwepker and Ingram (1996) openly acknowledge that, "personal selling is an area of marketing that is particularly susceptible to ethical dilemmas," (pp. 1151-1152). Salespeople are part of a small fraction of employees authorized to spend company funds, have an expense account, and to spend a significant portion of their workday away from the direct observation of company management. This lack of direct supervision puts sales agents in a position to engage in behaviors that may not be considered very ethical; which is why it has been suggested that, "deceptive practices are often found in many areas of sales," (Carson 2001, p. 275).

Some areas considered susceptible to unethical salesperson behavior include the reporting of salesperson activities, use of company property, giving or accepting bribes to

obtain special favors, and customer invoicing (Kaptein 2008; Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008).

Ethical problems are not limited to internal issues involving co-workers or management. Research shows salespeople experience ethical conflicts regularly in the performance of their duties (Dubinsky, Berkowitz, and Rudelius 1980). Such struggles can lead to lower job performance, increases in turnover, customer dissatisfaction, and negative word-of-mouth about the selling organization (Walker, Churchill, and Ford 1977). More crippling is the negative impact that unethical behaviors of salespeople can have on a firm's revenue, reputation, and success, both short-term and long-term. Ethical salesperson behaviors, on the other hand, can increase trust (Romàn 2003; Ferrell, Fraedrich, and Ferrell 2008) and thus, improve and strengthen relationships with clients and customers. Hawes et al. (1989) advise salespeople to be honest if nothing else in order to cultivate trust among their customers.

Therefore, organizations benefit by having more control over the selling process. Management has applied a barrage of tools to aid salespeople, improve performance, increase productivity, decrease turnover, expand their knowledge, make them more efficient, effective, better presenters, stronger closers, etc. It is clear that management has a great deal at stake in ensuring that all of its employees (especially salespeople given their level of empowerment and responsibility) behave as ethically as possible.

Codes of Conduct. Corporations develop and implement codes of ethical conduct for their employees through a formal process that includes formal training and usually issue printed versions, as well as making behavioral standards accessible by employees through the company website. This is done to regulate employees' conduct (Adam and

Moore 1994). The most common form of managerial control of employee behavior is an organization's code of ethics or conduct. They serve as a prime example of persuasive communications designed to influence the behavior of an organization's employees, including its sales force. A great deal of investigation was conducted on these guidelines that spell out what is expected of employees concerning their behavior; what will and/or will not be tolerated (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008). Schwartz (2001) identified five possible reasons why employees do not comply with codes of ethics. Among them are self-interest (greed or competition), company interest, and environment (i.e., opportunity).

For publically traded corporations, such documentation is required, because of the 2004 amendment to the 1991 Federal Sentencing Guidelines for Organizations (Braswell, Foster, and Poe 2004). Typically, these codes include a section informing employees that they should have no expectations of privacy when using company equipment or resources such as computers, telephones, cell phones, etc., so a firm's salespeople should recognize that anything they create on or transmit through company property is itself company property. Employees are to be in full compliance with, and will be held accountable – to both the company itself and any external bodies of applicable authority – for digressions from the organizational policies, practices, and procedures described in the codes. Yet, despite the existence of such corporate codes of conduct, breaches of ethics by employees continue to be an on-going problem for organizations (Vitell and Singhapakdi 2007). A clarifying analogy is how society's governing bodies set limitations on the rates of speed used while driving on public roads, yet the existence of these codes does not guarantee compliance by those they were designed and enacted for.

However, accountability for breaches of code-dictated policies can only occur after the activities have (or have not as the case may be) been done; one cannot be held accountable in advance. By informing workers in advance via the codes of behavioral expectations, companies are able to prevent employees from engaging in illegal or unethical behavior that could be detrimental to the firm's future and thus avoid accountability issues. The utilization of technology to monitor employee's actions in the form of their written or spoken internal and external communications, their accessing of company records, their submission of reports, their scheduled activities, etc. is simply another way for ensure compliance with stated behavioral expectations and to stave off the occurrence of legal and ethical problems.

Enabling Transparency by Applying Technology. When customers believe that a salesperson works for an ethical organization, they are likely to see the salesperson as ethical and credible (Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander 2006). One method of helping salespeople avoid the temptation of engaging in unethical behavior is to have their actions - and all seven steps that encompass the selling process (Moncrief and Marshall 2005) - made more transparent to their managers via technology. Technology, in the form of software that can track computer keyboard keystrokes, blind copy e-mails/attachments to management without the sending salesperson's knowledge, or GPS systems in smart phones and company vehicles that can pinpoint the device's location almost anywhere on the planet, enables management to have a more transparent sales force. Technology enables the ability to access salesperson records, files, activities, and other information relevant to salesperson activities and behavior. However, the salespeople must perceive that such abilities are actually used if they are to perceive their

behaviors as fully transparent. It is one thing if salespeople sense that their supervisors have the capability to monitor sales activities, but the influence is more powerful if they sense it actually occurs.

Conceptual Foundation

This section of chapter one will discuss the various concepts incorporated into this research study. The different constructs used in the conceptual framework (Figure 1.1 below) will be defined, clarified, and linked together. Constructs are abstract and latent variables or concepts that are more general than specific behaviors (Nunnally 1978). They may be defined in conceptual terms but cannot be measured directly or without error (Hair et al. 2006). A model depicting the conceptual framework is provided in Figure 1.1 at the end of this chapter.

Perceived Salesperson Transparency Enabled by Technology. The first construct, perceived salesperson transparency as enabled by technology, is a previously undefined variation of transparency. As no existing conceptual definition exists, it will be defined operationally; that is, its meaning will be explained by specifying the activities and operations necessary to measure and evaluate it (Kerlinger and Lee 2000). It is intended to represent an individual salesperson's perceptions of the level of transparency of his or her behavior to management. In order to measure a person's perception of his or her own level of transparency, transparency itself must be defined.

Transparency International defines transparency as, "a standard or principle that allows individuals affected by administrative decisions or business transactions to be aware of both the various policies and procedures of administrative decisions or business transactions that affect them and of the underlying determinants and expected

consequences of these actions," (www.transparency.org/news_room/faq). Turilli and

Floridi (2009) claim transparency is the, "possibility of accessing information, intentions,

or behaviors that have been intentionally revealed through a process of disclosure," (p.

105). Tapscott and Ticoll (2003) define transparency simply as, "the accessibility of

information," (p. 22). Eggert and Helm (2002) provide the only non-organizational

oriented definition by describing what they refer to as relationship transparency as, "a

person's subjective perception of being informed about the relevant actions and

properties of the other party in the interaction," (p. 103). Thus, perceived transparency

would appear to be a perception of how accessible information regarding interactions are

to those involved in the interactions. Likewise, perceived salesperson transparency can

be defined as how accessible a salesperson perceives information about his or her

interactions is to others; i.e., how much information is known by others about their work-

related activities (interactions). Technology enables sales managers to monitor the

activities and behaviors of their salespeople (Bush et al. 2007), as they never could

before.

Yet, none of these definitions addresses a very important element regarding

perceived transparency or visibility: how the information obtained because of

transparency through monitoring is going to be used, if at all. This study proposes that in

addition to perceived access to information, the perceived use of information represents a

second important dimension of perceived transparency; for if accessed information is

perceived as not being used by the other party, then any consequences (positive or

negative) of the accessibility of the information are nullified. Conversely, management

must have information in order to use it and accessing it is how they come to have it.

Therefore, without access there can be no use. This is a prime topic for future research and will be discussed as such in Chapter 5, but transparency's various possible dimensions are not the primary focus of this research study.

Agency Theory. Agency theory (AT) provides the theoretical support for the belief that salesperson perceptions regarding the transparency of their actions to management, as enabled by technology, will influence the ethicality of their actions. Bergen, Dutta, and White (1992) state that, "the relationship between a sales manager and salesperson is an agency relationship," (p. 8). AT poses that the type of contractual relationship (outcome or behavior-based) that exists between an agent (salesperson) and a principal (employing firm) will determine whose interests are greater (Eisenhardt 1989; Kurland 1996). It is believed that a behavior-based relationship, such as that enabled by technological transparency of the agents by the principals, will result in less unethical behavior by the agents.

The visibility of salespeople that sales technology creates has important implications on the transparency of salesperson behavior. One of the main themes of sales managers, according to Bush et al. (2007), is the ability of technology to help them, "monitor and manage the sales process, thereby achieving better control of ethical issues," (p. 1202). Combining these elements then defines perceived salesperson transparency enabled by technology as a salesperson's perception of management's ability to monitor and influence relevant behaviors using sales technology information.

Salesperson perceptions of management's ability to use technology to monitor and influence behavior will be measured by determining salesperson perceptions concerning management's ability to monitor a variety of work related behaviors. These

will include activities conducted externally towards customers, as well as those conducted internally towards administration and management. The greater the number of activities and behaviors that salespeople perceive management monitors for the sake of influencing salesperson behavior, the greater their perceived transparency is. Additional measures will be taken to determine how much, if any, influence such perceptions have over ethical salesperson behavior.

Ethical Salesperson Behavior. The dependent variable construct of this study's model is conceptually defined as, "that set of actions on the part of the salesperson which may be perceived as right, just, or morally correct," (Lagrace, Ingram, and Boroom 1994, p. 119). There are many examples of unethical behavior by and among employees, such as personal use of office equipment, falsely calling out sick, doctoring company records, or taking credit for another's accomplishment (Newstrom and Ruch 1975; O'Clock and Okleshen 1993). It is suggested that the successful development of trust-based relationships requires that a salesperson exhibit, "at least one form of ethical sales behavior - being honest," (Hawes et al. 1989, p. 1153). Thus, this construct will be operationalized by the performance of dishonest actions. These will be measured using Lagrace, Ingram, and Boorom's (1994) uni-dimensional scale designed to measure three categories of unethical salesperson behavior - lying, withholding information, and overlooking customer interests (Bearden and Netemeyer 1999).

Reasoned Action Approach. According to Ajzen's (1988) Theory of Planned Behavior, as well as Fishbein and Ajzen's (2010) Reasoned Action Approach (RAA), a person's intention to perform or not perform a specific behavior can be predicted. This approach works by measuring three related individual beliefs. The first is the person's

belief regarding the consequences of performing or not performing the behavior in question, which in turn drives their attitude towards the behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010). The second is their beliefs of what they believe others, whose opinions are important to them, will think of them for performing the behavior, along with how they believe those same others would behave if they were in a similar situation. The third component is how much control they believe they personally have regarding their ability to perform the behavior in question (i.e., do they believe there are personal or environmental factors that would facilitate or impede their ability to behave) (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010, p. 22). Therefore, if a salesperson met al.l of the TPB/RAA criteria, their intention to perform an unethical behavior, for example misrepresenting information to a client in order to make a sale, could be predicted. It should be noted that the term "performance" is used to represent actual and successful engaging in a particular behavior, as opposed to simply attempting to engage in it (Beck and Ajzen 1991). The theory's authors stress that, "the presence of environmental constraints can prevent people from acting on their intentions," (p. 21). This study focuses on salesperson perceptions of the monitoring of their behaviors by management via sales technology. Therefore, it is felt that the integration of this theory that involves the impact of environmental factors on a person's behavioral intent is quite applicable. It is expected that salespeople with high intentions to perform dishonest behavior (either internally or externally) will moderate the relationship between perceived salesperson transparency and ethical salesperson behavior.

      Salesperson Job Performance. It is thought that a salesperson's job performance could have a moderating effect on the relationship between the perceived level of

transparency and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. Schwepker and

Ingram (1996) found a positive correlation between an individual salesperson's moral

judgment and its association with a high level of salesperson performance. Salespeople

with the behavior desired by management have nothing to be concerned about regarding

increased levels of behavioral transparency to management due to technology.

However, not all high performance is the result of ethically upstanding behavior;

some high performance may result from unethical salesperson behavior. For example, a

salesperson may have a strong sales record due to either to misrepresentation or making

promises to clients that cannot be filled than blaming others for their not being realized.

This type of salesperson has the most to fear from transparency. If a salesperson is a high

performer due to the latter approach, they may feel somewhat insulated from any

potential negative consequences (reprimand, punishment, or termination) should their

disreputable tactics become known to management as a direct result of increased

transparency due to technology.

Research Contributions

This research furthers the existing knowledge of both practitioners and academic

researchers in the areas of Sales, Marketing, and Sales Ethics. This section of Chapter 1

will discuss the contributions of this research to academia and application in more detail.

Existing Literature. No known published empirical research was found to have

ever been undertaken, nor any theory developed, to address whether the use of

technology to monitor the behavior of salespeople influences their level of ethical

behavior, either internally with co-workers and management or externally with

customers. Although esteemed works exist in sales ethics, this research is differentiated

by its focus on obtaining the salesperson's perspective (as opposed to management's) regarding the use of technology to increase transparency. It has been recommended that research from the salesperson's perspective be conducted in order to learn more about their perceptions regarding both ethics and the application of technology (Bush, et al. 2007); this study clearly answers that call.

It extends previous research concerning the impact of variables such as commission-based compensation (Kurland 1996), sociological factors (Dubinsky and Ingram 1984), and ethical climate (Schwepker 2003) on salesperson ethics. It will continue research on the ethicality of salesperson behavior with respect to ethical decision-making determinants (Ferrell and Gresham, 1985; Hunt and Vitell, 1986; Schwepker 1999; Weeks et al. 2004; Valentine et al. 2010), as well as environmental and managerial influences (Ingram, LaForge, and Schwepker 2007; Valentine and Barnett 2007).

Lastly, this study is in keeping with Robertson's (1993) call for more empirical research into business ethics, with behavior serving as the key dependent variable, instead of attitude.

Theoretical Contributions. This research advances the application of two different theories that have provided the conceptual foundation for much research: agency theory (Eisenhardt 1989) and to a lesser extent, the theory of planned behavior/reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen 1977, 1980, and 2010). Agency theory addresses several issues related to the struggle between cooperation and self-interest in the relationship that exists when one party (the principal or management in this setting) hires another party (the agent or salesperson) to perform some task in exchange for a

level of compensation agreed upon in advance. The most relevant issue is the problem known as adverse selection, defined by Kurland (1996) as occurring when one party to a transaction knows relevant things but does not share them with the other. Investigating how the use of technology by the principal to increase the transparency of the agent influences the behavior of the agent clearly expands academia's knowledge of agency theory. A second advancement of agency theory brought out in this study concerns assumptions of moral hazard or risk sharing (Eisenhardt 1989). Agency theory traditionally assumes individuals/agents as being fairly risk averse due to their having only one source of income (Wright et al. 2001), while companies are more willing to take on risk as they have multiple sources of revenue generations (more than one salesperson, for example). Salespeople, unlike the individuals more commonly incorporated into agency theory examples, are also seen as being risk takers, especially those on straight commission compensation plans (Eisenhardt 1985). However, the type of risk a salesperson may be willing to incur may not be the type their organization desires be taken. A relevant example of this would be lying to a potential customer in order to make a sale, hoping that the falsehood is not found out. Therefore, there is a concern over both the level of risk adversity (how) and the conditions under which those risks are to be taken (when).

Finally, the control beliefs portion of the Theory of Planned Behavior/Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein and Ajzen 1977, 1980, 2010) addresses the moderating effect that individual salesperson beliefs regarding their ability to control their own behavior has on the relationship between their perceived transparency and the likelihood of their engaging in unethical behavior. This has clear application for sales managers desiring to

alter the potentially damaging unethical behavior of salespeople. This study will increase

the number of situations in which this theory has been applied, although in this setting it

will be used to support individual belief as a moderating variable of the relationship

between salesperson perceived transparency and their level of ethical behavior. It is

expected that a salesperson's beliefs could negate the proposed positive correlation

between perceived transparency and ethical behavior; i.e., that the salesperson believes to

such a high degree that there is nothing unethical in being dishonest with a manager or a

client that it would not be deterred by a high perception of being monitored by

management. Although technology could be seen as a form of control belief (one of

TPB's three determining belief), planned behavior is individual- oriented whereas agency

theory is relationship-oriented.

　　　Managerial Contributions. It has been shown that marketers, such as salespeople,

by the very nature of their duties, are put into situations that must be judged as being

ethical or unethical (Ferrell and Gresham 1985). Additionally, the opportunities to make

unethical decisions have been shown to be less prevalent in non-marketing areas (Ferrell

and Gresham 1985). Furthermore, as salespeople are the primary boundary spanners of

an organization (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008), they have more direct contact

with individuals outside of the organization than other employees. This increased

exposure to the environment places them under more pressure to deviate from desired

ethical behavior (Osborn and Hunt 1974). Examples of deviant behavior include

misrepresentation of product information or ability, puffery, lack of full disclosure,

manipulation, offers of kickbacks, bribes, offers to share of confidential information

regarding either the selling company or competitors (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008).

A great deal of research has been conducted in sales ethics in an attempt to better identify and understand the various determinants and consequences of employee decision-making (McClaren 2000). The results of these studies have provided guidance to countless numbers of sales managers and frontline salespeople alike regarding how to avoid conduct that either is, or has the potential to become, unethical and detrimental to both themselves individually as well as to their organization collectively.

A key concept in obtaining this desirable behavior is the principle of transparency, which is grounded in the belief that employee decision-making should not be based on an agent's personal agenda (as opposed to that of the principal) and that every employee should conduct business in a truthful and open manner (Paine et al. 2005; Stanwick and Stanwick 2008). So, if transparency helps to drive desired intentions in business relationships, can it also serve as a determinant of ethical decision-making in such situations?

If the use of technology to monitor a salesperson's activities can be shown to lead to more ethical decisions and behavior, then sales managers should adopt such an approach across the board. If certain modes of monitoring should prove more impactful than others, for example, if monitoring e-mails has more influence over salespeople's ethical decision-making than monitoring their location during the course of a workday via global positioning systems within company issued smart or cell phones, than the one should be adopted over the other or perhaps GPS-tracking should be abandoned altogether.

Outline of the Study

This work is organized into five distinct chapters. Chapter 2 reviews existing applicable literature concerning the interplay of sales, ethics, and sales technology. The hypotheses to be tested will be developed and presented. Chapter 3 provides details regarding the study's methodology. It discusses the measures employed in the research and identifies the scales selected for measuring salesperson perceived levels of transparency, sales technology, salesperson beliefs, and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. Chapter 4 presents the results and relevance of the data analysis. Chapter 5 discusses the theoretical implications and managerial applications of the study's results as well as recognized limitations of the research and recommendations for future research. Figure 1.1 below provides a conceptual framework of the study.
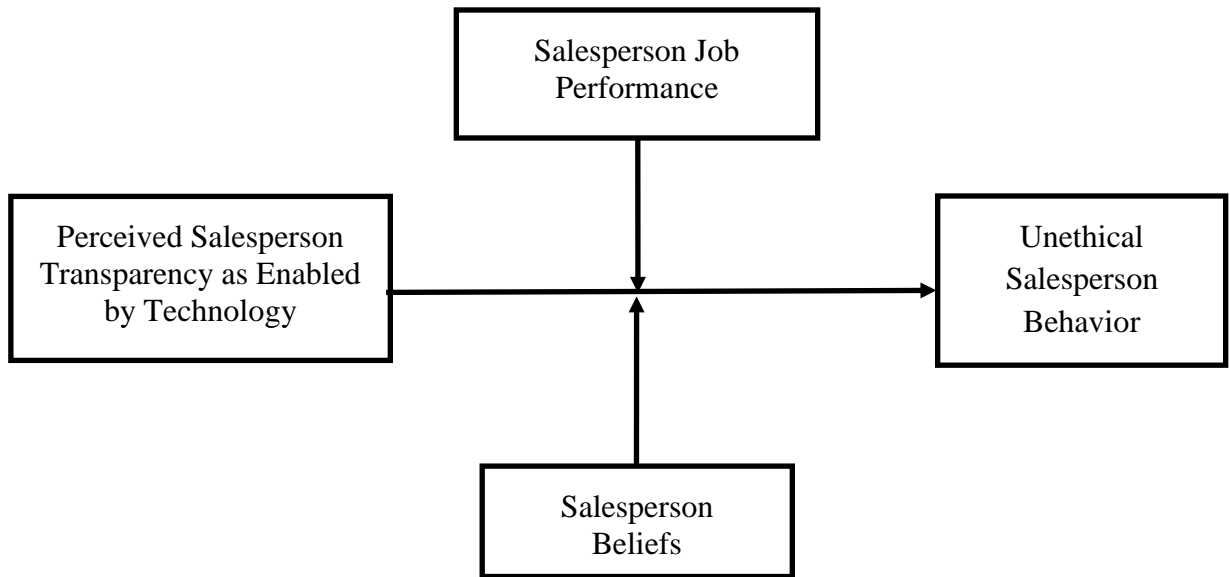
FIGURE 1.1
Conceptual Framework of the Effect of Perceived Salesperson Transparency,
as Enabled by Technology, on Unethical Salesperson Behavior

Chapter 2

Theoretical Foundations

This chapter assesses existing literature pertinent to the development and research of salesperson ethicality, including its relationship to salesperson job performance, as well as the application and growing influence of various sales technologies. It provides an in-depth description of agency theory, the theoretical foundation for the proposed research. It also supplies an overview of the Theory of Planned Behavior, the theory used to explain the inclusion of salesperson beliefs as a possible moderating variable. A set of testable hypotheses is presented and defined, in accordance with the applicable literature and theoretical foundations. A framework is presented at the end of the chapter that graphically portrays the hypothesized relationships between perceived salesperson transparency as enabled by technology, ethical salesperson behavior, salesperson job performance, and salesperson beliefs.

Perceived Transparency

Transparency has become the buzzword of the twenty-first century to represent accuracy, truth, and the full(but-not-too-full) disclosure of relevant information (Murphy, Laczniak, and Wood 2007); serving as a means of preventing deception (Paine et al. 2005) by allowing for better decisions, furthering knowledge, promoting cooperation, encouraging economic efficiency and effectiveness, and improving societal functioning (Paine et al. 2005).

Transparency International, an organization dedicated to fighting corruption, defines transparency as a principle allowing, "those affected by administrative decisions,

business transactions or charitable work to know not only the basic facts and figures but also the mechanisms and processes," (www.transparency.org/news_room/faq/html).

Transparency has also been referred to as a principle involving the accurate presenting of relevant information and of correcting any communicating of misinformation (Paine et al. 2005). Turilli and Floridi (2009) argue that transparency is a "pro-ethical condition" allowing for other ethical practices or conditions to be either enabled or impaired.

Transparency has been recognized as both a property of a system and as an element that can be built into a business relationship (Lamming et al. 2001). In the latter type of situation, managers in express associations can use transparency in a variety of forms for specific purposes, such as with pricing in supply relationships (Lamming et al. 2001). They subcategorize transparency into "cost transparency" (where costs and other operating details are entirely open to all parties involved) and "value transparency," which, they claim, reflects a level of transparency whereby parties go beyond sharing sensitive information to sharing risk as well (Lamming et al. 2001).

Other authors have subcategorized the concept as well. Corporate transparency has been characterized as, "the availability of firm-specific information to those outside publicly traded firms," (Bushman, Piotroski, and Smith 2003, p. 208), while others, however, believe the phrase to be "volatile and imprecise", instead preferring the term 'dynamic transparency' to reference two-way informational exchange between corporations and marketplaces (Vaccaro and Madsen 2009, p.113). Relationship transparency is, "a person's subjective perception of being informed about the relevant

actions and properties of the other party in the interaction" (Eggert and Helm 2002, p. 103).

Tapscott and Ticoll (2003) present transparency not as a principle, but more as a condition, defining it as, "the access of information to stakeholders of institutions regarding matters that affect their interest," (p. 22). Leigh and Marshall (2001) point out that a, "much greater amount of information will be transparent to the sales force," due to advances in CRM-oriented technology. Exploratory discussions with individuals directly involved in corporate information technology agree that accessibility is a key ingredient to achieving transparency. Various definitions are summarized in Table 2.1 below.

Some research suggests that technological developments in customer relationship management (CRM) have a direct impact on a firm's sales force. Bush et al. (2007) suggests that salespeople will no longer be alone in the spotlight as in the past, but rather will be very visible through the technology that enables sales force automation or "sales technology." This research does not refer to an individual's level of transparency, actual or perceived. The closest inference to the form of transparency found in the agency type of relationship between a salesperson and sales manager connection would be Eggert and Helms' (2003) relationship transparency. Sales managers and salespeople are clearly involved in a business relationship whose transparency to the other is based in part on their subjective perceptions of the accessibility of information regarding relevant actions and behaviors of the other party in the interaction (internally with management).

TABLE 2.1
A Summary Table of Transparency Definitions
from Existing Literature

Source	Definition
Transparency International (www.transparency.org/ news_room/faq)	A principle that allows those affected by administrative decisions, business transactions or charitable work to know not only the basic facts and figures but also the mechanisms and processes.
Eggert and Helm (2002, p. 103)	A person's subjective perception of being informed about the relevant actions and properties of the other party in the interaction. (*Relationship transparency*)
Bushman, Piotroski, and Smith 2003, p. 208)	The availability of firm-specific information to those outside publicly traded firms.
Tapscott and Ticoll (2003, p. 22)	The access of information to stakeholders of institutions regarding matters that affect their interest.
Paine et al. (2005, p. 131)	A principle involving the accurate presenting of relevant information and of correcting any communicating of misinformation.
Turilli and Floridi (2009, p. 105)	The possibility of accessing information, intentions, or behaviors that have been intentionally revealed through a process of disclosure.
Vaccaro and Madsen (2009, p. 113)	Two-way informational exchange between corporations and marketplace (*dynamic transparency*).

Salespeople are also in business relationships with their customers, wherein both salesperson and client have subjective perceptions of the accessibility of information regarding the other's actions and behaviors. Phrased differently, the lack of access to information represents a lack of transparency. Therefore, perceived access to information is a crucial element of perceived transparency. One way information is accessed is through monitoring, or direct observation. Recent developments in technology and

electronics have increased the ability to monitor activities and behaviors tremendously (Bush et al. 2007).

Nebeker and Tatum (1993) define electronic monitoring as using electronic devices to gather, analyze, and warehouse actions or performances by individuals or groups. Aiello and Douthitt (2001) state that, "electronic performance monitoring enables managers to gather performance related information about employees without physical observation," (p. 178). Electronic monitoring, then, is simply a way to obtain information and by such make those being monitored more transparent. Nevertheless, are simply having one's activities and behaviors enough to qualify them as being transparent? No. If salespeople perceive that the information being obtained by their managers through technologically enabled monitoring is not being used by management to influence their behaviors or activities, then, it would be as if the monitoring is non-existent – thus there is either no or a very low level of perceived transparency. However, if salespeople perceive that management is using information being obtained through the monitoring of their behavior, then at the very least, a higher level of transparency is perceived. One example of how sales managers use this access to information is in being able to hold their salespeople more accountable for the accuracy of their communications (Bush et al. 2007). A recent accounting ethics study conducted by Mayhew and Murphy (2009) found that individuals whose identity and reporting behavior was to be made public misreported information at significantly lower rates than those who remained anonymous. Therefore, this study proposes that Perceived Salesperson Transparency, as Enabled by Technology, be defined as a salesperson's perception of management's

ability to access (i.e., monitor), and thereby influence (i.e., use the accessed information) relevant behaviors through Sales Technology.

Sales Technology

As stated earlier, technological developments have enabled sales managers to monitor aspects of the selling process that they previously could not (Bush et al. 2007). Research into sales technology, also referred to as Sales Force Automation, defined as the application of different kinds of technology, in both communicative and informative ways, to execute selling and sales management duties more efficiently and more effectively (Ingram, LaForge, and Leigh 2002), especially in the area of managing their relationships with customers. Hunter and Perreault (2007) suggest that technology's influence on the relationship between a buyer and a seller is more striking than its impacts in other areas of business.

A number of studies focus on how both sales managers and sales people could best utilize recent developments in technology (Morgan and Inks 2001; Jones, Sundaram, and Chin 2002; Robinson, Marshall, and Stamps 2005). Ingram et al. (2002) present a well-thought out overview of how sales organizations could utilize new technologies more rewardingly over time.

Sales technology research has been conducted on the potential problems created by recent technological developments (Spier and Venkatesh 2002; Honeycutt 2005); pre-deployment attitudes toward it and its intended use by administration and front-line salespeople (Sundaram et al. 2007); making it effective (Hunter and Perreault 2007); accompanying managerial implications (Bush, Moore, and Rocco 2005); and productivity (Clark, Rocco, and Bush 2007). Hunter and Perreault (2006) propose a model for

organizations to measure the cost effectiveness of implementing new sales technologies, including the effect of salesperson ability to learn and use the sales technology.

One of the more popular topics related to sales technologies usage concerns its application to customer relationship management (CRM). It has been suggested that information technology is an organizational strategy that caused CRM to develop into more of a business philosophy than a system to manage customer contact information; thus explaining why so much capital has been invested to increase salesperson effectiveness and efficiency (Leigh and Marshal 2001). CRM is described as both a "business philosophy and a technology," (Hunter and Perreault 2006, p. 96). Tanner et al. (2005) describe CRM as a "cross-functional process" that allows for on-going personalized communications between sellers and buyers. This, in turn, leads to greater client retention. Swift (2001) also addresses the need to understand as clearly as possible how technology, such as the Internet, can be integrated with an organization's sales force. Unfortunately, neither recognizes the potential for unethical behavior or the need to monitor for such.

Ahearne, Srinivasan, and Weinstein's (2004) work on the impact of technology on sales performance is perhaps the closest of all existing studies to the one proposed here. Their findings indicate the existence of a point of optimization; i.e., where sales performance that has been enabled by CRM technology begins to diminish, eventually resulting in a "disabling effect."

However, despite all of the existing and impressive research on technology's far-reaching potential to impact every aspect of the selling process, and the role of trust in business relationships, an incredibly, inexplicably small number of studies include any

28

reference to the potential ethical issues involved; not as their primary focus nor even as a possible topic for future research. One area of interest is how technology has made an increasing amount of confidential company information transparent to salespeople, in both terms of accessibility and in monitoring. This includes elements of company strategy, previously unavailable to front-line salespeople (Leigh and Marshall 2001). Salespeople express the ease with which they can use technology to exploit, spy on, deceive, and manipulate others internal and external to the firm. Potentially more devastating to an organization is the simplicity involved in salespeople poaching company files and confidential information for their own personal gain; again, due to technology (Bush et al. 2007). Bush, Bush, and Orr (2010), note that it may be in the best interest of the organization to monitor the ethical use of technology by salespeople.

Along with monitoring to ensure salespeople use technology ethically, sales-oriented organizations can use technology to monitor the overall ethical behavior of their sales force. The procedures they utilize to accomplish the monitoring, directing, and assessing of their employees are known as a control system. There are two types of control systems: behavior-based and outcome-based (Anderson and Oliver 1987). Under an outcome-based control system, managers' evaluations of their salespersons tend to be teleological, that is, based on what their results are (revenue, profit, units moved, etc.), not how those results were obtained. Behavior-based systems, however, involve managers who "work to ensure the sales force behaves accordingly," (Anderson and Oliver 1987, p. 77). There is growing support for utilizing this manner of system with salespeople, "a prominent stream of research on sales performance has shown that sales

organizations may benefit from the use of behavior-based control systems," (Hunter and Perreault 2007, p. 19).

If a marketer, "can predict the consequences of changing certain resources under his control, then the marketer has at least some ability to *control* the system," (Hunt 1991, p. 107). Sales managers have several resources at their disposal to control the selling system: financial resources (compensation plans such as sales contests, bonuses, or commissions), administrative resources (such as company policies and procedures, codes of ethics or conduct), and technological resources (such as the ability to monitor salesperson communications and other work-related activities that occur under or away from direct supervision). Therefore, it follows that if sales managers can use these resources to predict ethical salesperson behavior; they should be better able to control and ensure ethical salesperson behavior.

Unethical Salesperson Behavior

Business Ethics. Early articles on the ethicality of business practices were more observing and suggestive (Baumhart 1961; Bartels 1967), with some questioning the strategy of organizations to concern themselves with moral issues, "the governing rule in industry should be that something is good only if it pays" (Levitt 1958). Ethical behavior is defined as, "behavior that conforms to a set of moral principles or values," (Sherwin 1983, p. 186). Kaptein (2008) writes that business ethics involves both the ethics of business organizations and of people and groups in business organizations. According to Lewis (1985) and Kaptein (2008), adherence to the moral norms contained in the various codes, rules, standards, and principles designed to provide guidance for morally sound behavior is what constitutes ethical behavior; violation of them is the equivalent of

unethical behavior. Therefore, the failure of employees (agents) to adhere to the codes

and standards of ethics or conduct set forth by their employers (principals) would be

considered as unethical behavior under these definitions. This study will operationalize

salesperson behavioral ethicality by the likelihood of their performing behaviors

recognized as unethical, i.e., deceiving clients, falsifying administrative reports, failing to

disclose relevant information to potential buyers, etc.

Uncertainty over what should be expected from business ethics research has also

been examined. For example, Solomon (1992) asks what relevant ethical theories should

look like and how should they be applied, if they even exist. Over time, individual

departments of organizations became the subject matter of more concentrated

investigatory efforts: management (Sherwin 1983), purchasing (Rudelius and Buchholz,

1979), marketing (Ferrell and Weaver 1978; Laczniak 1983; Hunt, Wood, and Chonko

1989), and, even sales (Dubinsky and Ingram 1983; Wotruba 1990; Dubinsky et al. 1992;

Bellizzi 1995).

Early works looked into an individual's personal ethics (Kohlberg 1969).

Kohlberg's (1969) work, begun in the late 1950's, led to his Theory of Cognitive Moral

Development (CMD). CMD emphasizes the cognitive processes involved in how an

individual determines the moral rightness of a course of action (Trevino 1992). It has

received a tremendous amount of attention from business ethics researchers (Gibbs and

Widaman 1982). Mayer's (1970) work on determinants of unethical behavior argues that

dishonest behavior by an individual may occur under any of three conditions: (1) an

inclination towards such behavior, (2) the opportunity to engage in such behavior, and (3)

expectation of gains that more than offset possible penalties. Hegarty and Sims (1978)

found four variables of personality to be significant covariates of unethical behavior: (1)

locus of control, (2) economic value orientation, (3) political value orientation, and (4)

Machiavellianism. This study also found ethical decision behavior to be lower under

conditions of extrinsic reward and higher under threat of punishment. Another

noteworthy finding from this study is that publicity can have a positive influence because

it acts as a "threat of punishment" and therefore has a restricting impact on unethical

behavior. Further, without some form of consequential punishment associated with

unethical behavior, combined with competitive situations where such behavior is

profitable, individuals who are, "not endowed with high standards of ethical conduct,"

are likely to give in to the profitable temptations of unethical behavior (Mayhew and

Murphy 2009, p. 456).

Several benchmark models developed a generation or so earlier, identify key

determinants of ethical decision-making among marketers (Ferrell and Gresham 1985;

Hunt and Vitell 1986; Wotruba 1990). Common among these are the influences of a

person's own sense of right and wrong, those of significant other referent groups, and the

opportunity to perform unethical behavior.

Studies on the relationships between ethical behavior and possible demographic

determinant external factors such as age and gender have been inconclusive (Weeks,

Moore, and McKinney 1999). One investigation found that younger business

professionals exhibited a lower standard of ethical beliefs, with younger males

demonstrating lower ethical beliefs than females and being more susceptible to external

factors (Peterson, Rhoads, and Vaught 2001). Valentine et al. (2010), in opposition to

this, found males performed more ethically than females.

The amount of influence that the ethical climate of a workplace has over a person's ethicality is also a common topic of debate. Ethical climate, in the context of a selling organization, has been defined as how salespeople perceive their company's ethical standards as evidenced by their practices, procedures, norms, and values (Schwepker 2001).

Ferrell and Gresham (1985) found people at home had less influence over ethical decision-making than managers and supervisors, while Peterson, Rhoads, and Vaught (2001), found people at home had the most influence on ethical beliefs. The implication of this is that although personal values may hold greater sway over a salesperson's beliefs, they may be discarded in favor of values deemed more beneficial to the organization. This, in turn, can lead to salespersons engaging in behaviors that conflict with their own personal set of values in order to obtain gain for either themselves or their employer. This could especially be the case if such questionable behavior is perceived to lead to a possible reward from their employer (Hunt and Vasquez-Parraga 1993). It has been shown that customers tend to perceive a salesperson that works for an organization with a high ethical climate as also being ethical and credible (Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander 2006).

Other studies have looked at the relationships between individual ethical values and job performance (Schwepker and Ingram 1996) as well as the influence of ethical climate on salesperson job satisfaction and intent to remain (Valentine et al. 2009). The growing acceptance of service-dominant logic has made ethicality accountability easier to integrate into decision making of marketers and salespeople (Abela and Murphy 2008).
Sales and Salesperson Ethics

The importance of ethics in sales cannot be understated. Schwepker and Ingram (1996) wrote, "...salespeople making more ethical decisions indicate higher performance," (p. 1155), supporting the belief that an ethical salesperson performs better for themselves and their organization. Hawes et al. (1989) pointed out that to develop "trust-based relationships with customers," salespeople must exhibit at least one form of ethical sales behavior, being honest," (Hawes, et al. 1989, p. 1153). Salespeople's ethical beliefs have been found to be less sensitive to ethics than purchasing agents' are (Dubinsky and Gwin 1981).

One reason for the continued importance of ethical behavior among organizational boundary spanners is that accountability from ethical and legal perspectives is at an all-time high. This may be due to its being one of three dimensions common to those working world of sales. Ingram et al. (2005) acknowledge that practicing ethical sales behavior is, "easier said than done," (Ingram *et al.* 2005, p. 149), but that as accountability increases, sales managers must focus on ensuring the compliance with the organization's ethical and legal framework. Adding to the ethical dilemmas facing salespeople are the expectations and responses of management. Sales managers are responsible for defining, communicating, and enforcing the standards of ethical behavior (Johnston and Marshall 2003).

Management's decision to either positively or negatively reinforce salesperson behavior is more influenced by the rightness or wrongness of the behavior (deontological orientation), than by the consequences of them (teleological orientation) (Hegarty and Sims 1970; Hunt and Vasquez-Parraga 1993). Sales managers in a recent study by DeConinck and Lewis (1997) admitted to basing their decision to reward or reprimand

unethical behavior not on the behavior itself, but how the behavior affected the company. One-fourth claimed they would reward unethical behavior (overstating factory capacity) that resulted in a positive outcome (sale) for the organization before they would reward ethical behavior (honestly stating capacity) if it influenced the company negatively (no sale) (DeConinck and Lewis 1997).

Schwepker and Ingram (2006) investigated the relationship between individual moral judgment and performance of salespeople, finding that higher moral judgment positively correlated with higher performance. The empirical work of Valentine et al.'s (2010) empirical research among white-collar workers in the financial industry found a positive response between job satisfaction (lack of intent to discontinue employment) and ethical behavioral. Positive job response was associated with higher supervisory ratings of the subordinates' ethical job performance. The authors wrote, *"…an employee's ethical decision-making is regarded as an aspect of his or her job performance,"* (Valentine et al. 2010, p. 196). It is of note that they advocated research being undertaken in the future to specifically define what is considered ethical job performance. Recent studies have investigated the determinants of ethical decision-making specifically among salespeople (Schwepker 1999; Weeks et al. 2004; Schwepker and Good 2007; Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander 2009), as well as its consequences (Hansen and Riggle 2009; Rogers 2009).

This study will focus its measurement of ethical salesperson behavior on Hawes et al.'s (1989) recommendation that honesty is the one ethical behavior every salesperson should have in order to develop relationships based on trust. It will be operationalized by the performance of dishonest actions. These actions will be measured using a 12-item

scale. Ten of the items are from existing scales that measure unethical salesperson behavior (Lagace, Ingram, and Boorom 1994; Kaptein 2008). Lagace, Ingram, and Boorom's (1994) original 15-item scale measures buyer's perceptions of unethical salesperson behavior and has an alpha coefficient of .91. Kaptein's (2008) 8-items from the sales factor subscale of his original 37-item scale developed to measure unethical behavior in the workplace has an alpha co-efficient of .93. The remaining two items were adapted from Akaah and Lundh's (1994) analysis of Newstrom and Ruch's (1975) scale of unethical workplace behavior based on suggestions by several business-to-business salespeople who assisted in the development of the Perceived Transparency scale (Churchill 1979).

Agency Theory

Agency theory is a well-known business concept grounded in "economic utilitarianism" (Ross 1973; Wright, Mukherjib, and Kroll 2001). It is an economic theory, encapsulated and published by Stephen Ross in the American Economic Review in 1973. According to Ross, agency theory addresses incentive problems and compensation contracting, i.e., to create a compensation system that, "will produce behavior by the agent consistent with the principal's preferences," (Mitnick 2006, p. 2). The institutional theory of agency is credited to Barry Mitnick, who proposed that institutions form around agency and that, "institutions and social mechanisms exist to guide such behaviors," (Mitnick 2006, p. 3).

Agency theory addresses several key issues related to the struggle between cooperation and self-interest within the relationship that exists when one party (the principal) hires another party (the agent) to perform some task in exchange for a level of

compensation agreed upon in advance. Agency theory has been applied to a range of organizational business concerns including compensation (Eisenhardt 1985), vertical integration (Anderson 1985), organizational strategy (Amihud and Lev 1981), and the adoption and use of sales technology by salespeople (Mallin and DelVecchio 2007). As Mallin and Delvecchio (2007) declare, "agency theory offers explanations of how the boundary spanning positions affect the salesperson's perceptions . . . the agent's (salesperson's) behavior is influenced by both his or her need for autonomy and the principle's (sales manager's) need for control," (p. 486). This particular study, centered on salesperson behavior regarding the usage of sales force automation or information technology tools, reported that salesperson behavior is predicated upon whom they perceive the behavior will benefit most. Similarly, this dissertation's focus on the effect of salesperson perceptions of management's use of technology to monitor and influence salesperson ethical behaviors makes agency theory an ideal theoretical found

The goal of agency theory is to resolve problems that occur in this relationship, such as agency problem where, "the principal cannot verify the agent has behaved appropriately," and (2) risk sharing, where "when the principal and the agent may prefer different actions because of the different risk preferences," (Eisenhardt 1985, p. 58). These issues have also been referred to as moral hazard and adverse selection. Moral hazard is defined as when the agent can take actions that affect the principal but that the principal cannot monitor or enforce. Adverse selection is defined as when, "one party to a transaction knows things which are relevant to the transaction but which are unknown to the other party," (Kurland 1996, p. 54). Bergen, Dutta, and Walker's (1992) agency theory framework makes similar assumptions about both the principal and the agent.

These include: (1) self-interest as a goal or motivator; (2) principals operate with incomplete information regarding the actions and behaviors of the agent; (3) factors other than the agent's behavior will impact outcomes; (4) the level of risk aversion of the principle and the agent may differ (p. 3-4). A graphical model of agency theory is presented in Figure 2.1 below.
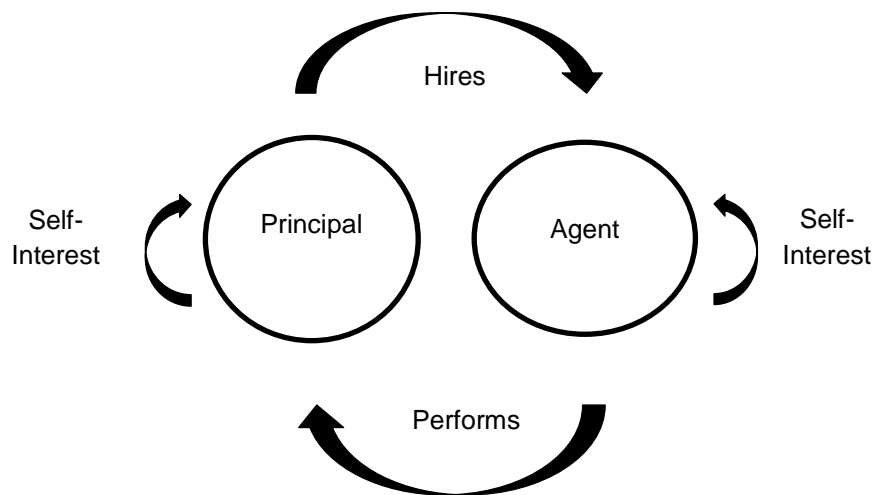
FIGURE 2.1
Agency Theory Model

It is the principal's lack of available information about the agent that the technology enabled transparency addresses. The systems that have been traditionally available to sales managers for the monitoring of their sales force involved, "requiring call reports, field observations by a sales manager, narrow spans of control, and the use of behaviorally anchored rating scales," (Bergen, Dutta, and White 1992, p. 4). These were very costly and very limited. Although they could monitor the number of sales calls or

presentations made, managers would not be able to be present for every one; they would

not know how the salesperson actually presented the materials, responded to questions, or

how the customers reacted (p. 4). Eisenhardt (1989) proposes that as the cost of

monitoring an agent's actions went down, the efficiency of a behavior-based approach to

the relationship between principal and agent would increase.

Sales technology has greatly reduced the financial and time costs involved in

monitoring salesperson behaviors and actions. For example, digital communications

organization Google has developed a system known as Postini for just such a purpose.

This software package offers organizations of any size the ability to outsource all of their

electronic communications, meaning every e-mail plus any attachment sent or received

by any company agent, for an extremely low per user fee. This service includes security

encryption of communications, scanning and filtering for viruses, as well as on-demand

storage by date, sender, recipient, subject, or any other possible parameter desired, for up

to 10 years of retention (www.google.com/postini/discovery). Similarly, software giant

Microsoft offers organizations its "Dynamics" software that includes customer resource

management (CRM) programming for sales departments. This product enables sales

managers to, "track all activities and interactions for each contact and account,"

(www.microsoft.com/ dynamics). These are just two examples of how sales technology

can make a principal's ability to monitor agent behavior more cost effective and thereby

create a more efficient relationship – the ultimate goal of agency theory (Eisenhardt

1989).

This research study proposes that the more a salesperson perceives their behaviors

to be transparent to sales management, the more ethical their behaviors will be; in other

words, the desires and goals of the principal sales manager will be more influential over salesperson ethical behavior than the agent salesperson's own desires and goals.

Salesperson Beliefs

Although agency theory can explain the positive influence of a salesperson's perception of their behavioral transparency to technologically enabled management, their personal beliefs regarding the performance of such unethical behaviors may moderate this relationship. Therefore, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen 1988) and the Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010) and their recommended measurement methods were integrated into this study.

The Theory of Planned Behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) original Theory of Reasoned Action proposed to be able to predict an individual's intention to perform a specific behavior. Originally, this theory had only two dimensions: (1) behavioral beliefs, addressing the individual's beliefs regarding the consequences of performing or not performing a particular behavior; and (2) normative beliefs, regarding what others - whose opinions and thoughts about the individual are important to the individual - would think of the individual if they performed the behavior in question. A second concern is what the individual believes those same others would do were they in similar circumstances. A decade later, Ajzen (1985) expanded it to create the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by adding a third intent determinant to the original two prediction criteria: control beliefs. This term refers to the person's, "perceived control over the performance of the behavior," (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010, p. 154). Control beliefs focus on the individual's beliefs concerning personal and environmental elements that would either expedite or hinder engagement in the activity or activities in question in relation to

the individual's behavioral intentions. Control beliefs are rooted in self-efficacy, as formulated in social cognitive theory (Bandura 1997).

TPB is a composite measurement of the direct perspective of the respondent, depending on each of the three belief-oriented predictors of intention for its success. Based on its ability to predict behavior, TPB was to measure the individual salesperson's intent to perform unethical behaviors, despite having a high level of perceived transparency (a possible environmental control factor). Figure 2.2 provides a graphical representation of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

```
┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│ Behavioral   │─────▶│   Attitude   │──────┐
│   Beliefs    │      │              │      │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      ▼
┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
│  Normative   │─────▶│    Social    │──▶│  Behavioral  │──▶│   Behavior   │
│   Beliefs    │      │   Pressure   │   │    Intent    │   │              │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘
┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ▲
│  Easy/Hard   │─────▶│  Perceived   │──────┘
│  Behavior    │      │   Control    │
│   Beliefs    │      │   Beliefs    │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘
```
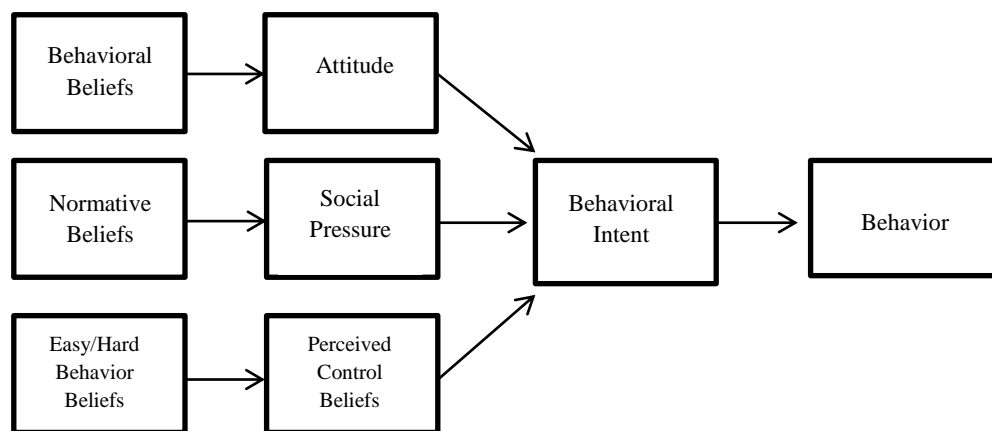
FIGURE 2.2
Theory of Planned Behavior/Reasoned Action Approach

An investigation predicting dishonest behaviors among college students successfully used the Theory of Planned Behavior as its theoretical foundation (Beck and Ajzen 1991). The results indicated that when the measures for perceived behavioral control (TPB) were added to attitude (behavioral beliefs) and subjective norms (normative beliefs), anywhere from 62 to 69% of the variance was accounted for. The

esteemed researchers appreciatively note in their concluding observations that understanding what leads to the performance of deceitful and unethical behaviors can be more difficult than why people perform socially desirable behaviors.

It is hypothesized in this study that a salesperson's individual beliefs towards behavior understood to be unethical in nature, will influence their intent to perform it. From a general perspective, it is expected that if that if a salesperson perceives his or her actions and behaviors during the selling process are being monitored and are therefore transparent to management, they are less likely to engage in unacceptable (unethical) behavior. However, if they simultaneously perceive that they have control over this behavior and its transparency to management, they may decide to engage in it despite its possibly being visible to authority. Perhaps they believe they can control managerial access to (thus preventing managerial use of) relevant behavioral information.

Salesperson Job Performance

Salesperson job performance has been described as a function of the combination of motivation, aptitude, and perceptions regarding how to sell (Walker, Churchill, and Ford 1977). The view that an employee's ethical decision-making is also to be regarded as, "an aspect of his or her job performance," is increasing in popularity (Valentine et al. 2010, p. 196). It is a more common position in research studies for job performance to be an endogenous, or dependent, variable rather than as an independent moderator variable that can change the form of the relationship between some other independent variable and performance (Hair et al. 2006). It has, however, been used as a moderating variable in studies on determinants of job turnover (Futrell and Parasuraman 1984; Lucas, Babakus, and Ingram 1990; McNeilly and Russ 1992).

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Churchill et al.'s (1985) heavily cited meta-analysis of performance determinants finds several factors that impact salesperson job performance, including skill, role variables, aptitude, and motivation. The findings also reveal that what is sold can determine how strong the relationship is between the specific determinant and the salesperson's performance. Twenty years later Jamarillo, Mulki, and Marshall's (2005) meta-analysis find that although organizational commitment (defined as an employee's intention to continue working there and their attitude towards the organization), "only explains about 6% of the variance in salesperson job performance,"(p. 711), it supports Churchill et al. (1985). More importantly, they show the correlation between organizational commitment and job performance is, "stronger for sales than for non-sales positions" (p. 711).

Among the research topics covered in salesperson job performance is one common to the Theory of Planned Behavior: self-efficacy; that salespeople perform better when they feel they have the ability and proficiency to succeed) (Barling and Beattie 1983). This study of 200 insurance sales agents found self-efficacy beliefs predicted insurance salesperson job performance better than response-outcome expectation.

The influence of job performance and job satisfaction on a range of other work-related variables has been a popular research topic. Côté (1999) found that affect (the key basis for attitude, or behavioral beliefs, under the Reasoned Action Approach) is a better predictor variable of job performance than job satisfaction is and that positive performance results in positive effect, as well. Bagozzi's (1980) research into the relationship between job performance and job satisfaction among industrial salespeople

showed job performance had, "18% more impact on job satisfaction than does achievement motivation" (p. 76). Further, the study indicates anticipated satisfaction associated with job performance is a stronger motivator of salespeople than job performance itself.

Schwepker and Ingram (1996) recognize that increasing pressure on salespeople to perform could be a catalyst for unethical behavior. Their investigation into the relationship between moral judgment (ethics) and job performance of salespeople defines moral judgment as, "an individual's decision as to whether something is considered ethical or unethical" (p. 1152). It notes that honest and ethical salespeople are more likely to improve their performance by focusing on and building relationships with customers, and, consequently, making sales. Support is found for their hypothesis that a salesperson's moral judgment positively relates to their job performance. Salespeople whose decision-making and behavior is more ethical tend to have higher levels of performance.

Further, it has been shown that sales organizations could benefit from the use of behavior-based sales control systems, as examining salesperson behaviors towards creating and maintaining strong relationships with clients is a very important aspect of salesperson job performance (Anderson and Oliver 1987; Hunter and Perreault 2007). Although objective measures such as units sold or their dollar value are certainly desirable, it is unlikely that companies whose salespeople are participating in this study would voluntarily supply this information.

A conceptual definition of salesperson job performance is, "behavior evaluated in terms of its contribution to the goals of the organization," (Brown and Peterson 1994;

Johnston and Marshall 2006, p. 412; Hunter and Perreault 2007). Its operationalization is how well a salesperson performs his or her duties related to two key elements of achieving organizational goals: building relationships with customers and the completion of requisite administrative duties. Measurement will be accomplished using a composite multidimensional scale, including items from a scale adapted by Hunter and Perreault (2007) designed to measure subjective administrative performance and relationship-building performance with customers, which includes several items from Behrman and Perreault's (1982) scale for measuring salesperson job performance.

Salesperson job performance then should have a moderating effect on the relationship between use of information and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior, altering the level of the association (Hair et al. 2006).

Hypotheses

This section provides the proposed model linkages between the two dimensions of perceived salesperson transparency (salesperson perceived managerial access to information as enabled by technology and salesperson perceived use of information access by technology-enabled management) and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. It also discusses the proposed moderating effects of Perceived Salesperson Control Beliefs and Perceived Salesperson Job Performance on the mediating effect of salesperson perceived use of information access by technology-enabled management on the relationship between salesperson perceived managerial access to information as enabled by technology and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. A graphical representation of the relationships of the three hypotheses is shown in Figure 2.3 at the end of this chapter.

Perceived Salesperson Transparency Enabled by Technology. The relationship

between salespeople and their managers is an agency relationship in that

salespeople/agents have been contracted to perform certain duties on behalf of their

principal employer, to be supervised by their managers (Bergen, Dutta, and Walker

1992). One of the problems inherent in agency relationships is the lack of financial and

labor cost effective information regarding the behaviors and actions of the agent while in

the employ of the principal. That salespeople typically work unmonitored or

unsupervised is well documented as a source of great potential trouble in the form of

unethical behaviors (Ferrell and Gresham 1985; Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008).

Recent developments in technology have provided both help and hindrance to the areas

of Sales and Sales Ethics with salespeople using it to exploit customers while sales

managers attempt to control the selling process and their sales forces with it

simultaneously (Bush et al. 2007). It has also been shown that higher ethical salesperson

decision-making and behaviors is positively correlated with higher salesperson

performance (Schwepker and Ingram 1996). Eisenhardt (1989) proposed that lower

monitoring costs would lead to more monitoring and, consequently, more behavior-based

principal-agent relationships than outcome-based. Hunter and Perrault (2007) note a

clear difference between using sales technology for accessing information and using sales

technology for communicating information. As their work concentrated on separate

dimensions for sales technology utilization, this present research addresses the impact of

the application of sales technology in these dimensions.

When a third variable or construct intercedes between two other related variables

or constructs, a mediating effect takes place. Researchers often investigate for the

presence of mediators (also referred to as intervening variables) in order to develop a

fuller knowledge of, and to help enhance the explanation of, existing or hypothesized

relationships (Cheung and Lau 2008). In practice, significant correlation must be present

between all three variables or constructs (Warner 2008). In theory, this type of effect

should advance, or even clear the way for, the relationship between the original two

variables or constructs (Hair et al. (2006). Mediating variables are described as,

"conditions, states, or other factors that intervene between the independent variable and

the outcome variable in a causal chain" (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008 p. 205). Baron and

Kenny's (1986) define a variable as a mediator to, "the extent that it accounts for the

relation between the predictor and the criterion," (p. 1176). Therefore, it is expected that

the variable 'salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by

technology-enabled management' will serve as a mediator of the relationship between the

variables salesperson perceived managerial access to information, as enabled by

technology, and likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. This expectation, as with

hypothesis two, stems from the comments of several business-to-business salespeople

during the early stages of this research. The implication is that the likelihood of unethical

salesperson behavior is only significantly impacted by salesperson perceptions of

management's technology-enabled access to information related to salesperson behavior

if there is the accompanying perception that such information could or would be used by

management either for or against the salesperson. This leads to the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1:   Salesperson perceived managerial use of information
                                             has a mediating effect on the relationship between
                                             salesperson perceived managerial access to
                                             information as enabled by technology and the
                                             likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior.

Salesperson Job Performance as a Moderator. The moderating variable preferably is not correlated with either the independent or the dependent variable and is always an independent variable (Baron and Kenny 1986). Strong job performance - either subjective, such as customer relationship management or objective, such as commission earned or sales goals met - provides job security for salespeople. This occurs for a variety of reasons including the potential loss or cannibalization of customers should the salesperson leave, especially to work for a competing firm (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2008). Strong performers are believed to be less likely to fear losing their jobs over subjective issues such as ethics (DeConinck and Lewis 1997). These individuals tend to have a teleological orientation in the performance of their duties; getting the sale is more important to them than how they get it. Salesperson job performance has been shown to have an effect on whether, and to what extent, a salesperson's behavior is considered punishable by management (Hunt and Vasquez-Parraga 2006). It is conceivable that ethically questionable behavior may be one of the underlying reasons for the seller's strong (or weak) performance.

Transparency makes the behaviors of all salespeople more visible to management, which is expected to drive behavior that is more ethical. Yet, high job performance by a salesperson may provide a perceived level of insulation from reprimand or punishment for ethically unacceptable behavior (Bellizzi and Hite 1989; DeConinck and Lewis 1997). McNeilly and Russ (1992) showed how sales force job performance acted as a moderating variable between attitude (towards their job) and turnover intent. Futrell and Parasuraman's (1984) research study of over 200 salespeople found that low performing salespeople experience pressures to improve performance or risk termination, while high

performers not only did not face such pressures but received rewards and positive

feedback. Increased pressure on low-performing salespeople to improve their

performance could lead to an increased temptation to engage in undesirable behavior

(Ferrell, Fraedrich, and Ferrell 2008). Subsequently, the increased potential in the

likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior increases the need for increased access to

information related to salesperson behavior in order to be able to use such information,

leads to Hypothesis 2:

Hypothesis 2:   Salesperson Job Performance will moderate the relationship
                  between salespersons perceptions that management will use
                  information gained through information technology and
                  salesperson unethical behavior, SUCH THAT the negative
                  relationship will be weaker for higher performing salespeople.

Salesperson Control Beliefs as a Moderating Variable. Fishbein and Ajzen's

Theory of Reasoned Action (1975), Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1985), and

Fishbein and Ajzen's Reasoned Action Approach (2010), claim that individual behavior

is predictable, and therefore, manageable or controllable. Their initial theory of reasoned

action (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, 1980) proposed two determinants: behavioral beliefs

(i.e., attitude toward the behavior) and normative beliefs (i.e., what others would think of

the actor for performing the behavior in question). Behavioral beliefs involve the

subjective probability that performing a certain behavior leads to a certain consequence.

Normative beliefs involve perceived social pressures to perform or not perform a

particular behavior. A decade later, Ajzen (1985) added a third determinant - control

beliefs - which focus perceived control of behavioral performance with regard to personal

and/or environmental factors that could make performing the behavior in question either

easier or more difficult. TRA/TPB/RAA tells us that behavior is more likely to be

performed the stronger the perceived social pressure to perform is.

It is hypothesized, therefore, that a salesperson's individual beliefs towards

behavior understood to be unethical in nature, will influence their intent to perform it.

From a general perspective, it is expected that if that if a salesperson perceives his or her

actions and behaviors during the selling process are being monitored and are therefore

transparent to management, they are less likely to engage in unacceptable (unethical)

behavior. However, if they simultaneously perceive that they have control over this

behavior and its transparency to management, they may decide to engage in it despite its

possibly being visible to authority. Perhaps they believe they can control managerial

access to (thus preventing managerial use of) relevant behavioral information. This led to

the third hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3:   Salesperson Beliefs will moderate the relationship between salespersons perceptions that management will use information gained through information technology and salesperson unethical behavior, SUCH THAT the negative relationship will be weaker for salespeople with higher control beliefs.
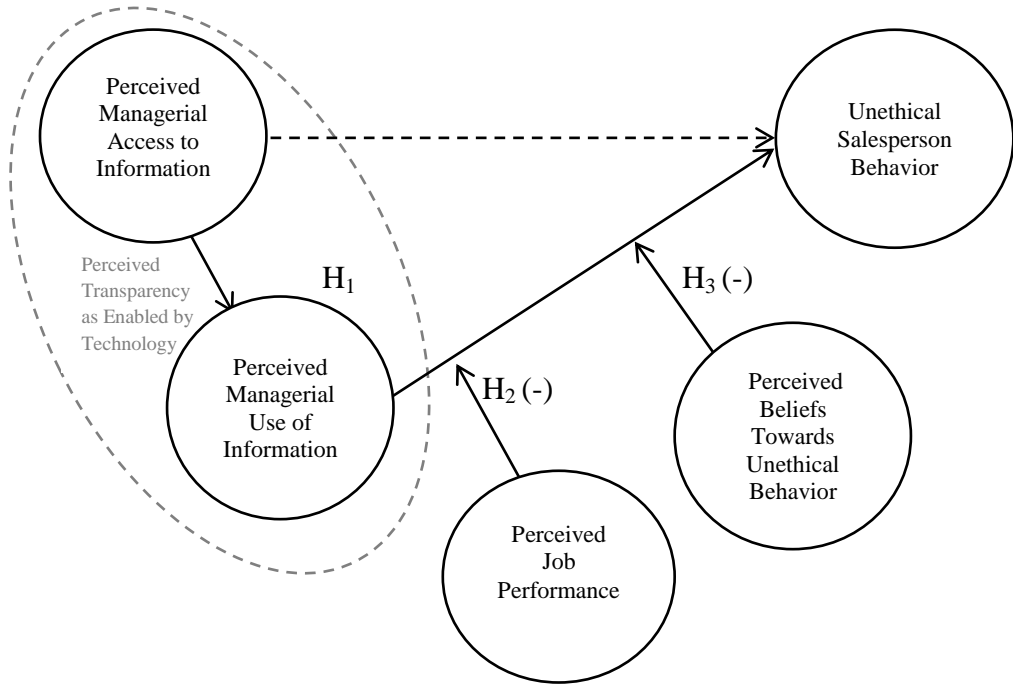
.

FIGURE 2.3
**Hypotheses Model of the Effect of Perceived Salesperson Transparency
as Enabled by Technology on Unethical Salesperson Behavior.**

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter Three provides the methodological details of this research study. It outlines the direction and goals of this project with regard to its overall design, the collection of data, as well as the statistical procedures involved in the testing of the different research hypotheses. More specifically, this chapter discusses the process that was followed in identifying and utilizing the particular scales that were chosen to measure the constructs of perceived salesperson transparency, unethical salesperson behavior, control beliefs, and salesperson job performance. Additionally, it provides an analysis of the obtained statistical results for both the small-scale and large-scale measures as they pertain to each of the study's hypotheses and correlations.

Measures

Chonko et al. (1996) claim scenarios have been the "foundation for ethics research in marketing" (p. 35). Alexander and Becker (1978) point out scenarios create a more realistic situation for respondents. Jaramillo et al. (2003) found in their investigation that salespersons' self-reported performance evaluations tends to be curvilinear, with bottom performers overestimating their performance and top salespeople underestimating theirs. Despite the traditional use of scenarios to measure ethics in sales research, attempting to reduce the infinite number of possible scenarios involving salespeople and their beliefs regarding behavioral determinants and consequences is too great to be equitably scripted into a handful of examples as representative of the entire population of possibilities. With as many situational variations as are experienced by salespeople across a range of industries, fields, products, services, backgrounds, ethical

climates, etc. preconceived scenario-based measures would be too inflexible, thus the decision to use self-reporting measures. Established scales have been adapted wherever and whenever required to maintain integrity, thus facilitating comparisons and generalizations with other sales or ethics research (Hensel and Bruner 1992).

Self-report scales are an accepted means of obtaining information about individual or group beliefs regarding behaviors, especially given the lack of practical alternatives (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010). However, it is recognized that self-presentation biases are a legitimate concern, especially when dealing with socially desirable or undesirable behaviors. Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) urge researchers to be aware of the possible threats to the validity by using behavioral self-reporting methods and to do what can be done to increase reporting accuracy to its fullest. They recommend encouraging respondents to be honest, to stress the confidentiality and anonymity of their participation and emphasizing the scientific importance of their being accurate in their responses. Several research studies have been successfully conducted where self-reporting of ethical behavior was employed (Himmelfarb and Lickteig 1982; Beck and Ajzen 1991). A copy of the scale items used in the pretest survey is provided in Appendix A. The revised final survey version is available in Appendix B.

Perceived Salesperson Transparency. A review of the available academic Sales literature was conducted in an attempt to discover if any scales existed that were designed to measure perceived transparency. Several scales designed to measure concepts associated with management's use of technology for the accessing and monitoring of employee information for evaluative purposes were found. Chalykoff and Kochan (1989) measured employee attitude towards "computer-aided" monitoring and its impact on

employee turnover and job satisfaction. Oz, Glass, and Behling's (1999) research

utilized an original 8-item Likert-style scale to obtain employee opinions of electronic

workplace monitoring, but this work did not include employees' perceptions as to

whether they themselves were being monitored. Greenberg and Barling (1999) created a

scale that utilizes seven different forms of monitoring (time cards, punch cards, sign-in

sheets, etc.). The monitoring measured here, again, is more for evaluative purposes than

for behavioral surveillance. Alge (2001) investigated the effects of computer surveillance

on employee perceptions of invasion of privacy in the workplace issues. A few years

later, Alge et al. (2006) developed an information privacy scale based on previous scales

items (E.F. Stone et al. 1983) to examine employee perceptions of management's right to

gather personal (i.e., not work-related) information within their work organizations.

These studies emphasize technology-based monitoring of employees, but do not define or

expound upon the idea of transparency.

It is worth noting here that Saxe and Weitz's (1982) milestone SOCO scale, one of

the earlier instruments designed for measuring salesperson attributes, lists seven different

characteristics of customer-oriented selling, based on the existing literature and

interviews with 25 sales managers and salespeople (p. 344). Yet, it does not include

either transparency directly or any indirect term that could be interpreted as the

equivalent of transparency as a basic attribute of customer-orientation. Twenty years

later, however, company transparency is considered a crucial element of the multi-

dimensional CUSTOR scale, which is designed to measure the customer orientation of a

company (Hajjat 2002). In 2003, Eggert and Helm developed a cross-sectional survey

designed to measure the impact of transparency on business relationships as perceived by

organizational purchasers.

Given the absence of an established scale, it was decided that a new scale for measuring perceived salesperson transparency should be developed in accordance with the processes set forth by Nunnally (1978), Churchill (1979), Saxe and Weitz (1982), and Hunter and Perrault (2007). Business-to-business salespeople were contacted through a variety of approaches, including the telephone, e-mail, and private Sales-oriented discussion boards on-line to help determine and clarify how salespeople view the concept of transparency. Their input and insight was solicited regarding how they define transparency as it related to their profession and what impact technology (i.e., GPS, e-mail access, keystroke tracking, etc.) has on their transparency to their managers and if it influences their behavior? From these conversations, development of a 50-item scale designed to measure perceived salesperson transparency composed of items inspired by and grounded in the comments and observations provided from these industry experts as well as from established scales, including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis 1989; Venkatesh and Davis 2000) was started. It also involved adaptations from Alge's (2006) information privacy scale designed to measure an individual's perception of their ability to control managerial access to personal information.

While reviewing applicable existing literature to aid in the development of this new scale, an established scale measuring the extent of behavior-based sales management control (Cravens et al. 1993; Babakus et al. 1996) was found in the literature. Although the items were intended for sales manager respondents, it was determined that it was adaptable for front-line salespeople. Item alpha coefficients all met the minimal requirements for reliability with coefficient alphas in excess of .70. The original eight

items of this scale (Cravens et al. 1993; Babakus et al. 1996) are in Appendix C. Adapted items from the established scale and items generated from discussions with salespeople during the development of the intended new scale comprised the scale that used in the survey. The result was a 10-item, seven-point Likert style scale, anchored by 'not at all' and 'very much'. The construct of perceived salesperson transparency as enabled by technology consists of two dimensions: 1) salesperson perceptions of management's technology-enabled ability to access information related to salesperson behavior and 2) salesperson perceptions regarding how management uses the information accessed. The adapted scale represent these two dimensions in order to obtain a more complete measure of perceived salesperson transparency as enabled by technology.

Unethical Salesperson Behavior. Salesperson ethical behavior was measured using an adapted version of Lagace, Ingram, and Boorom's (1994) established one dimensional scale designed to measure customer or client perceptions of unethical salesperson behavior, defined as, "that set of actions on the part of the salesperson which may be perceived as right, just, or morally correct," (p. 119). It focuses on behaviors such as lying, providing false reports or answers, high-pressure sales techniques, and misrepresenting the item being sold.

The behaviors represented in the Lagace, Ingram, and Boorom (1994) scale are almost identical to other scale items exemplified as unethical salesperson behavior in the existing sales literature, such as deception or falsification (Newstrom and Ruch, 1975; Honeycutt et al. 2001; Román 2003; Kaptein 2008; Hansen and Riggle 2009). The adapted version is designed to measure the perceived likelihood of salespeople engaging in, or performing, unethical behaviors. After discarding items directed towards retail

salespeople (not the focus of this research), the final version features eight of the scale's original 15 items in a 7 point Likert-style format where one equals 'not likely' and seven equals 'very likely' (Bearden and Netemeyer 1999). The original version has an overall scale reliability of α =.91 (Bearden and Netemeyer 1999), easily surpassing the low-end criteria for acceptable levels of reliability (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

Salesperson Beliefs. Fishbein and Ajzen stress that their Reasoned Action Approach (2010) requires a composite of three separate types of individual beliefs: behavioral, normative, and control. This section discusses the methodology utilized for measuring each type of belief. It is hypothesized that positive or negative salesperson beliefs towards the performance of unethical behavior will have moderating effects on the relationships between different levels of perceived salesperson transparency and the likelihood of unethical performance.

Behavioral Beliefs. Behavioral beliefs, or outcome expectancies, are the beliefs about potential consequences of performing (or not performing) a particular behavior. The possible resulting outcomes are evaluated as being positive or negative. They are "assumed to determine people's attitude toward personally performing the behavior," (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010, p. 20). It is the attitude toward performing the behavior in question that is measured; does the performer have a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior.

In accordance with the recommendations made by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) regarding the measuring of attitudes towards performing the behavior in question (behavioral beliefs), a semantic differential scale was used in the initial pretest with bi-polar adjectives measuring the subject's overall evaluation of performing the action

(Oliver and Bearden 1985; Bruner, Hensel, and James 2005). A scale established by

Beck and Ajzen (1991) and utilized by Harding et al. (2007) with a suitable reliability

coefficient of .84 (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979) that used to measure dishonest actions

among college students was adapted for use with salespeople for this specific study. The

semantic adjectives used to describe specific examples of unethical behavior (Fishbein

and Ajzen 2010) are foolish/wise, unsafe/safe, harmful/beneficial, punishing/rewarding,

and unfavorable/ favorable.

Normative Beliefs. Normative beliefs are those that an individual has regarding

perceived social pressure of others, some whose opinions matter and some whose

opinions do not matter quite as much. As the theory's founders write, "the stronger the

perceived social pressure, the more likely it is that an intention to perform the behavior

will be formed," (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010, p. 130). There are two types of normative

beliefs: injunctive and descriptive. Injunctive norms deal with what the performer

believes the opinions of others who are important to him or her will be should the

behavior in question be performed. Descriptive norms are concerned with beliefs the

performer has about whether those significant referent others would perform the behavior

if they were in the same or a similar position as that of the performer (2010). The

measure of normative beliefs in this study will concentrate solely on injunctive norms.

As with behavioral beliefs, a seven-point semantic differential scale was adapted

from existing work (Beck and Ajzen 1991; Harding et al. 2007). The coefficient alpha's

for the normative belief scales used to measure cheating, shoplifting, and lying in Beck

and Ajzen's (1991) research showed acceptable reliability levels of .81, .73, and .83

respectively (Nunnally 1978). An example of a normative belief item is, "The people in

my life whose opinion matters to me would be willing to lie about the competition if they were in a similar situation."

Control Beliefs. Control beliefs were defined earlier as an individual's beliefs about, "personal or environmental factors that can help facilitate or impede their attempts to carry out the behavior," (Fishbone and Ajzen 2010, p. 21). The measure of these beliefs followed the same approach used with the other two types (Beck and Ajzen 1991; Harding et al. 2007) - a 7-point semantic differential scale anchored by false and true. Beck and Ajzen (1991) and Harding et al. (2007) reported satisfactory levels of reliability with coefficients of $\alpha = .70$ and $.71$ respectively (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

It is important to note that there is a key difference with the items measuring control beliefs. These items require responses based on the respondent's beliefs of others (i.e., "Salespeople have…" or "…a salesperson could not…"), whereas behavioral and normative belief items require responses based on the respondent's beliefs of himself or herself (i.e., "Deceiving a client…" or "The people in my life…"). One example of an item to measure control belief is, "Salespeople have a great deal of control over whether they give or receive gifts or favors in exchange for preferential treatment."

Salesperson Job Performance. This study hypothesizes that salesperson job performance will have a moderating effect on the relationships between perceived salesperson transparency and the likelihood of unethical salespeople behavior. Several different scales have been used over the years to measure salesperson performance (Berhman and Perreault, 1982; Schwepker and Ingram 1996; Hunter and Perreault 2007). Churchill's (1985) meta-analysis found existing studies into salesperson performance used either subjective or objective evaluations. A review of the literature shows these

approaches tend to evaluate different things and are not interchangeable (Rich et al. 1999; Dwyer, Hill, and Martin 2000). Therefore, this study will use two existing self-report scales to measure job performance.

Salesperson perceived *subjective* performance, such as customer relationship management and completing administrative duties will be measured using a scale developed by Hunter and Perreault (2007). It is an eight-item 7-point Likert style scale (where one equals "needs improvement" and seven equals "outstanding"). It includes items adapted from "the rich literature on sales performance and blended them with new items to reflect modern demands on salespeople," (Hunter and Perreault 2007, p. 23). Two of these items are originally from Behrman and Perrault's (1982) seminal scale on sales performance designed to measure, respectively, sales presentations (traditionally an unmonitored salesperson activity) and how well salespeople work with prospective or established clients. The Hunter and Perreault (2007) scale reported an alpha reliability of .82 for the items that measure customer performance; administrative performance measures have an alpha reliability of .90. Both results substantiate the reliability of the scale (Nunnally 1978).

Objective sales productivity is often the basis for managerial evaluation of salesperson performance (Churchill, Ford, and Walker 1990; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Fetter 1993). However, researchers experience great difficulty in obtaining objective performance measures from organizations (Bommer et al.., 1995; Jaramillo et al.., 2005). Subsequently, self-reported perceptions of objective measures are often used. The self-reporting scale that will be used to measure salesperson perceived *objective* performance, such as commissions earned and the accomplishment of selling goals and

targets, was created by Dwyer, Hill, and Martin (2000). It is a five-item, 7 point, Likert-like scale used to, "assess salesperson relative performance within the sales organization (with one equaling 'far below average' and seven equaling 'far above average)," (p. 152). Dwyer, Hill, and Martin (2000) reported a coefficient alpha of .81 for this scale, thus sufficiently meeting reliability requirements (Nunnally 1978). An objective performance item would ask respondents to rate themselves regarding an area such as exceeding sales objectives and targets.

Social Desirability. Social desirability is defined as individuals under-reporting their activities or behaviors that they feel may be looked down upon or seen as undesirable by society or, on the other end of the spectrum, over-reporting activities and behaviors the perceive society valuing (Crowne and Marlowe 1960; Ganster et al. 1983). Recognizing that social desirability bias is highly likely when measuring subjective topics, such as ethics, Crowne and Marlowe's (1960) designed a scale to measure the degree to which individuals use socially acceptable terms to describe themselves in hopes of obtaining the approval (or avoid the disapproval) of others. However, despite the limited number of alternate options for measurement, it does not have a flawless reputation.

Randall and Fernandes (1991) researched the impact of social desirability response bias in self-reported ethical behavior, the type that proposed in this research. Their findings indicate that self-reported ethical conduct is associated with personality characteristics and is most influenced by, "the perceived desirability of behavior," (p. 805). They found that although the Crowne and Marlowe scale (1962) had significant correlation with self-reported ethical behavior, it failed to make any significant

contribution towards predicting ethical conduct. As an alternative, the Balanced

Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) (Pauhlus 1991) is preferred by researchers

investigating social desirability as a personality characteristic. The BIDR consists of a

set of 20 items to measure impression management (purposeful self-presentation) and 20

items to measure self-deception (a believed positivistic bias). Impression management,

the dimension of concern in this study, is designed to assess the degree to which

individuals deliberately inflate the inclination to engage in desirable rather than

undesirable behaviors. The items used to measure this describe concrete observable acts.

Ten of the twenty items developed to measure impression management will be used in

this research survey (only half are used here in order to avoid demanding too much of the

respondents) to measure for the existence of social desirability bias in the responses.

Examples include "I never swear" or "I sometimes lie if necessary" (reverse coded)

(Pauhlus 1991). The impression management section of the BIDR scale reported an

alpha coefficient of .83 (Pauhlus 1983) which supports the reliability of the BIDR scale

for assessing intentional self-presentation to others (Nunnally 1978).

Pre-Test of Measurement Scales

Although the measurement scales used in this study were previously established

for other studies, their reliability was empirically confirmed through pre-testing with

respondents similar to those who would be used for the primary dissertation data

collection and analysis. In addition to ensuring scale reliability, preliminary correlations

between the proposed relationships were also observed as part of the pre-test. Business-

to-business salespeople were solicited by the study's author, as well as through a

professional market research organization that performs nation-wide, pre-screened panel-

based surveys, to participate in the pre-testing phase. Twenty-nine usable responses were received.

Reliability is defined as, "the assessment of the degree of consistency between multiple measures of a variable" (Hair et al. 2006, p. 137). This was achieved through two types of measures. The item-to-total correlation was tested first (which should exceed .50) followed by an analysis of the inter-item correlation (the minimal level of acceptance is one greater than .30). The next analytic measure checked was the reliability coefficient. According to Hair et al. (2006) the consensus regarding the low-end level of acceptance for this coefficient is .70, although .60 may be allowed for exploratory research (Robinson et al. 1991). Reliability tests of the pre-test measures were run using SPSS v. 14. The results of the reliability analyses for each measurement scale, the three subscales for Salesperson Beliefs, and the two subscales for Salesperson Job Performance are given in Table 3.1 below.

TABLE 3.1
Pre-Test Reliability Coefficients

Scale Name	Items	Alpha
Perceived Salesperson Transparency	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10	0.84
- Access	1, 3, 5, 6	0.75
- Use	2, 8, 9, 10	0.88
Unethical Salesperson Behaviors	11 - 18	0.90
Salesperson Beliefs*	19 - 52	0.74
- Behavioral beliefs	19 - 38	0.88
- Normative beliefs	39 - 44	0.69
- Control beliefs*	45 - 52 (46 - 51)	0.61
Salesperson Job Performance	53 - 65	0.91
- Subjective	53 - 60	0.83
- Objective	61 - 65	0.92
Social Desirability	66 - 75	0.75

Perceived Salesperson Transparency. Cravens et al.'s (1993) and Babakus et al.'s (1996) measure of sales manager's behavior-based control of salespeople was adapted for this research to evaluate salesperson perceptions of their own transparency to management given technology's enabling of management to increase salesperson behavioral transparency. Each of the 29 pre-test respondents completed the 10 item, 7-point scale (anchored by 'not at all' to 'very much'). The reliability coefficient for the perceived salesperson transparency scale was .86, which meets the acceptable reliability criteria of .70 or higher (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

It was briefly considered to assess perceived salesperson transparency as a multi-dimensional scale instead of as a unidimensional one. Several of the salespeople who provided insight for the early phases of developing a new scale to measure this construct saw transparency to clients (external) as being different from transparency to management (internal). However, this study focuses on the influence of how technology has enabled management to better monitor, increase the accountability of, and limit the empowerment of their sales force (Bush et al. 2007). Therefore, it was determined to keep this scale unidimensional, at least for the pre-test.

Unethical Salesperson Behaviors. All salesperson respondents in the pre-test were asked to respond to an eight-item scale adapted from Lagace, Ingram, and Boorom's (1994) unidimensional, 15-item scale designed to measure how likely they thought salespeople in general were to perform various unethical behaviors (Bearden and Netemeyer 1999). Items in the original that pertained to retail sales were removed in order to narrow its scope to behaviors more applicable to field salespeople. The items were measured on a scale anchored by one equaling 'not likely' and seven equaling 'very

likely'. The coefficient alpha for the 8-item unethical salesperson behavior scale was α = .90 indicating the scale is extremely reliable for assessing the likelihood of salespeople performing unethical behaviors in the performance of their job (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

Salesperson Beliefs. The recommendations set forth by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) for obtaining self-reported measures of the three dimensions of Reasoned Action/Planned Behavior were followed in the pre-test phase of this research study. Respondents were provided with a 34-item scale (numbers 19 - 52) adapted from an existing study (Beck and Ajzen 1991) designed to measure the behavioral, normative, and control beliefs surrounding the likelihood of college students to perform the behaviors of cheating, stealing, and lying. For this specific research study, two specific unethical behaviors - deceiving clients and submitting false information to management - were chosen based on discussions with the professional B2B salespeople assisting with the earlier scale development.

Behavior Beliefs. To measure behavior beliefs, six separate semantic differential items specifying two types of unethical behavior were used. The first item for each behavior had five subparts to it, thus, resulting in 20 separate items (numbers 19 - 38) to be responded to in order to measure respondent's beliefs about the behaviors in question. Respondents were instructed to think only of themselves and no other salespeople in responding to these items. Pre-test results show that the coefficient alpha for the behavioral belief scale was .88 and met the acceptable minimum for scale reliability (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

Normative Beliefs. Normative beliefs were measured using a scale consisting of

six statements (three for each specific type of unethical salesperson behavior), items 39 -

44. They were followed by a 7-point semantic differential scale (Care/Not Care,

Okay/Not Okay, Would/Would Not) to measure the respondent's perception of how those

people who matter to the respondent would react if the respondent performed the

unethical behaviors. These items were also adapted from the scale developed by Beck

and Ajzen (1991). The reliability coefficient for the normative belief scale was initially

.69, but the removal of two items from the original scale led to the coefficient increasing

to .83, which is a satisfactory level for scale reliability (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

Control Beliefs. This final measure of salesperson beliefs was obtained in similar

fashion to those of normative beliefs. Four statements, items 45 - 52, regarding each

specific type of unethical salesperson behavior were adapted from Beck and Ajzen

(1991), followed by a 7-point semantic differential scale (False/True). The items were

designed to measure respondents' perceptions about how much control salespeople have

in performing the two specific types of unethical salesperson behaviors. Coefficient

alpha for these eight items was originally .61, but following the recommended removal of

two pre-test items (45 and 52) resulted in a stronger reliability coefficient of .73, which

qualifies as an acceptable amount of reliability (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979). This

adjustment also resulted in a slightly stronger coefficient alpha for the entire Salesperson

Belief scale, increasing it from .74 to .76.

Salesperson Job Performance. Salesperson job performance was measured using two different established scales - one for subjective performance and one for objective performance. Eight items from a scale developed by Hunter and Perreault (2007) was adapted to measure subjective salesperson performance. Using a seven-point Likert-style scale where one equals 'needs improvement' and seven equals 'outstanding,' respondents were asked to rate themselves on a range of subjective performance issues (i.e., customer relations and administrative duties). The reliability coefficient for the subjective measures was .83, exceeding the established minimal requirement for scale reliability of 0.70 (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

Given the infeasibility of obtaining actual sales performance data from the organizations employing the respondent salespeople, the respondents were asked to evaluate their performance in objective performance areas such as commissions earned, goal attainment, and new account creation. The five items utilized were adapted from a scale developed by Dwyer, Clark, and Martin (2000). The pre-test coefficient alpha obtained for this scale was .92, suggesting that these items are very reliable for salesperson self-assessment of the objective aspect of their job performance.

Correlations of Proposed Relationships

Whereas it is understood that correlation does not imply causality, basic correlation analysis can provide a clearer understanding of the direction and strength of the relationship between two or more variable. The correlations of the two sub-dimensions of perceived salesperson transparency - salesperson perceived managerial access to information as enabled by technology and salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by technology-enabled management with the likelihood of

unethical salesperson behavior are provided in Table 3.2. The results indicate that

although there is not significant correlation in the pre-test between access to information

and unethical behavior, there is significant correlation between the perceived use of that

information and salesperson behavior. This result caused a shift in how use of

information is perceived relative to behavior. Initially, it was thought that perceived

access would have the greater influence on the likelihood of unethical performance, but

the pre-test correlations show otherwise. Not surprisingly, a positive relationship is

evidenced between access to information and use of information. What is surprising is

that it is not significant or not any stronger than it is. As discussed previously, and

supported by this result, how transparency is viewed by individuals may be worth

pursuing further.

TABLE 3.2
Pre-Test Correlations of Access to Information and Use of Information
(i.e., Perceived Salesperson Transparency) and Unethical Salesperson Behavior

	Access to information	Use of information	Unethical SP Behavior
Access to information	1		
Use of information	0.278	1	
Unethical Salesperson Behavior	-0.545	-.902*	1

* Indicates significant correlation at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Pre-Test Results

All scales and sub-scales met the required levels of acceptable reliability, with

coefficient alphas ranging from .73 to .92 (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979). The pre-test

results led to the conclusion that the original construct Perceived Salesperson

Transparency should be measured as two separate dimensions: 1) salesperson perceived managerial access to information, as enabled by technology and 2) salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by technology-enabled management. The correlation results obtained from the pilot test show preliminary empirical support for the relationships proposed in the hypotheses as both dimensions had acceptable levels of reliability, as shown earlier in Table 3.1.

The most severe flaw revealed through the pre-test was with the adapted scales to measure behavioral beliefs and normative beliefs in accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010). These were the only scales in the entire pre-test where the respondents were asked to base their response on themselves and not on salespeople in general. The limited range of responses received during the pre-test led to the decision to omit these two scale dimensions from the primary data collection; Table 3.3 below shows the ranges of the responses for the three sub-scales adapted to measure salesperson beliefs.

This decision was reached after discussions between the author of this dissertation and the majority of its advisory committee. This conclusion is based on the recognition that TPB/RAA scales were not designed for application to professional salespeople. It was pointed out that the two research studies (Beck and Ajzen 1991; Harding et al. 2007) that served as the basis for adaptation of the Theory of Planned Behavior and Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein and Ajzen 1977, 2010) to this research was focused on college students who earned course credit for participation, not full-time working adult salespeople.

Discussions with professional salespeople consultants who assisted in the early development of a perceived transparency scale often commented that they knew more about technology than their managers and could, therefore, control what information could be accessed and what information could not. Therefore, for the primary research study, it was concluded that the third perceived salesperson beliefs dimension, control beliefs, (whose responses were not as heavily skewed as the other belief dimensions), should be retained. As a result, for the structural equation modeling-based analysis of the data, this latent moderating variable will be referred to as Perceived Salesperson Control Beliefs. The academic motivation underlying its retention was to determine if high levels of perceived salesperson control over managerial ability to access information would have a moderating influence on the relationship between perceived salesperson transparency and the likelihood of unethical behavior.

TABLE 3.3
Respondent Frequencies for Behavioral, Normative, and Control Beliefs

Salesperson Belief	Range of Scores	Percent
Behavioral Belief	Between 1-3	97
Normative Belief	Between 5-7	90
Control Belief	Between 3-6	83

Lastly, to determine if social desirability had any influence over the responses, ten of the original twenty-items from Paulhus' (1991) Balanced Inventory Desired Response scale were included in the survey. The reduction in scale size was for the sake of brevity and parsimoniousness. A corrected item-to-total correlation test resulted in seven items with values greater than 3.0 and an acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .78 (Nunnally 1978; Peter 1979).

Primary Research Design and Analysis

Discussions with fellow researchers - from doctoral candidates to fully tenured professors - led to the decision to use a professional market research organization to supply respondents for the primary collection of data to test the proposed relationships presented in the hypotheses, as opposed to using more traditional postal or telephone methods. Research of the organizations that offer this service led to the decision to select Opinionology (www.opinionology.com) to handle data collection. Although this approach differs from traditional methods, it is gaining in acceptance and approval among researchers. It has been said that, "the Internet has democratized data collection," (Kraut et al. 2004 p. 106) and that questionnaires done on line are, "both flexible and less error prone" (p. 107). The costs of online surveys are lower than customary collection methods that involve printing and mailing/return mailing expenses (McDonald and Adam 2003; Kraut et al. 2004). Turnaround times and response speed are much faster than for postal surveys (Adam and Deans 2000; Bachman et al. 2000). One research study found more item-missing data in 80% of the demographic questions in postal surveys compared to those completed on-line (McDonald and Adams 2003). Similarly, Basi's (1999) research found respondents completing surveys online actually completed more questions than those who filled out pencil-and-paper surveys mailed to them.

Pre-screened panels of business-to-business salespeople from a wide range of industries, including advertising, finance, information technology, business consulting, medical, and non-profits were contacted and asked to complete a revised on-line version of the survey used for the pre-test phase of this study. A copy of the revised survey is provided in Appendix B. A sample size of 300 was initially requested in order to obtain a

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sample size large enough to meet the requirements to test for statistical significance, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, and for effect size (Cohen, 1988; Harkin 1995; Hair et al. 2006). Hinkin (1995) claimed sample sizes of 150 should allow for an accurate solution in exploratory analysis given strong inter-correlations (Guadagnoli and Velicer 1988). Hair et al. (2006) states that a sample size of 250 will allow factor loadings of .350 to be considered significant during analysis. Cohen (1988) reports that for an effect size of .30 (slightly larger than effects categorized as small, i.e., ES = .2) with a significance of .05, and a power level of .80, a minimum sample size of 175 is required (Cohen 1988, p. 55). The demographic characteristics of the sample obtained for the primary research study are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Every survey instrument provided to the respondents contained an informed consent statement in accordance with the requirements of the University's Institutional Review Board. Respondents were required to supply the date of the day that they complete the survey as an indication of their understanding that they were under no obligation to participate, their responses were completely confidential, and that they could withdraw at any time. All respondents supplied consent to participate without incident or issue.

The questionnaire comprised three main sections. The first section asked participants to respond based on their knowledge of salespeople in general, i.e., those other than the respondents themselves. This section contained scales to measure perceived salesperson transparency (both dimensions - access to information and use of information), the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior, and perceived salesperson control belief. The second section focused on subjective and objective salesperson job

performance, asking that respondents think only about themselves as salespeople and not on any other salesperson. This portion of the survey also contained the scale for measuring social desirability bias. Finally, the third section asked questions related to respondent demographics (age, gender, education, etc.), sales experience, training, and method of compensation. Responses that indicated professions other than sales were eliminated from inclusion in the final data analysis.

Hypotheses Testing

The primary stage of any formal data examination is to assess the measures utilized. The measures that involved multiple items were initially subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA), followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to address the issues of reliability, dimensionality, convergent, and discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing 1988; Joreskog and Sorbom 1993; Hair et al. 2006). Although EFA and CFA both identify scale dimensionality, these methods are actually intended for different purposes. The goal of EFA is one of discovery, where CFA's is one of endorsement. EFA is a data-driven approach wherein, "all variables load on all factors," (Hox and Bechger 1998, p. 356). It allows the number and nature of the retained factors to be determined by the sample data provided, instead of specifying the number of factors or relationship patterns in advance, usually keeping only the factors that have an Eigenvalue of at least 1.0, in keeping with the Kaiser-Gutterman rule (Hair et al. 2006; Brown 2006). Confirmatory factor analysis, on the other hand, requires a strong foundation - either empirical or theoretical - to direct the factor model; the model is enacted upon the data (Warner 2008). This type of analysis traditionally begins with a researcher's conceptual model supplying the number of indicators, latent variables, and

the model itself in advance (Brown 2006; Hair, et al. 2006). The CFA was conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM). The variance-covariance matrix is the statistical basis for SEM. It provides a stronger and more thorough data analysis than correlations that do not account for the variable standard deviation (Gau 2010). SEM also generates fit indices that allow for a more detailed evaluation of the proposed model; it also permits the examination of multiple dependent and mediating variables (Gau 2010). One of structural equation modeling's most vital uses in research is its ability to verify the existence of construct validity through confirmatory factor analysis (Babin, Hair, and Boles 2008).

Both exploratory and confirmatory analyses were performed using maximum likelihood (ML) estimation (Babakus, Ferguson, and Jöreskog 1987; Anderson and Gerbing 1988). One of the primary advantages of ML estimation is its allowance for, "statistical evaluation of how well the factor solution is able to reproduce the relationships among the indicators," (Brown 2006, p. 21). ML was also selected due to its ability to generate a range of fit indices to assist with the overall factor analyses (Brown 2006). It has been stated that, "all fit indices are either a direct or indirect function of the maximum likelihood loss function," (Babin, Hair, and Boles 2008, p. 282).

All three hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). This approach is preferred among researchers as it accounts for measurement error in the model, helping to avoid the subsequent risk of confusing or misleading results led to the decision to re-run the data in SEM (Hair et al. 2006; Warner 2008). Hypothesis 1 claims salesperson perceived use of information accessed by technology-enabled management

has at least a partial mediating effect on the relationship access of information and the likelihood of unethical behavior. A chi-square difference test was conducted to determine if there was any difference between the partially mediated and fully mediated models. SEM is the favored technique to determine if mediation effects exist using a two-step process (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). SEM was also used to test for the moderating effects stated in the second and third hypotheses as well.

Because of the personal nature of salesperson performance and beliefs, and as empirically experienced during the pre-test, salespeople may be inclined to respond in a manner that is more socially desirable than honest. Social desirability is a potential bias that social sciences researchers must be aware of and take into account for all self-report surveys they conduct (Crowne and Marlowe 1960; Paulhus 1991). Such responses could veil true variable relationships and improperly affect data results. An adapted version of Pauhlus's (1991) Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding was included in the survey to determine if there was a social desirability bias in the responses. Testing for reliability in confirmatory factor analysis through structural equation modeling in M-Plus failed to meet minimal reliability standards in both methods.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter provides descriptions of the characteristics of the salespeople participants of the sample study. It also conveys the assessments of the construct measures used to address the issues of dimensionality, convergent, and discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). Additionally, the results obtained from the testing of all hypotheses are in this chapter.

Sample

Overall, 300 surveys were distributed and received via the on-line market research organization hired at the recommendation of research advisors and colleagues. Surveys with no response to the industry worked in, the number of companies sold for, or years spent working in sales were discarded, resulting in 253 responses being deemed usable, for a response rate of 84.1%. Table 4.1 below lists the sample characteristics of the study's final respondents.

From a broad perspective, the study's sample is representative of the United States' population from which it was taken. For example, regarding ethnicity or heritage, 76% of the sample participants report a European or Caucasian heritage compared to a national average of 74%. Asians constituted 5% of the sample vs. 3% of the country; Latinos 8% (sample) compared to 11% nationally. As being representative of business-to-business salespeople, approximately 70% of the sample selected attended college that compares favorably with the 76% of the national average for sales and sales related occupations, according to the United States' Department of Labor' (www.bls.gov).

Additionally, the DOL, for example, reports the mean percentage of women who work as "Sales representatives - services and all others" and as "Sales representatives - wholesale and manufacturing" as being 30% (www.bls.gov). The percent of women respondents in this sample is 23%. (Note: This figure should not be confused with other studies that report 50% percent of the workforce in the United States' Department of Labor's category of 'sales and sales related occupations', which includes administrative support staff such as secretaries and sales assistants who are not salespeople, as being female). Representation of the business-to-business salesperson population is well reflected in the sample. Of the entire group of respondents, seventy-seven percent (77.1%) are male, sixty-seven percent (67.2%) are at least thirty-six years old, eighty-eight percent (88%) at least attended college, and sixty-six percent (66%) have been married at least once. This translates into the average respondent as being a middle-aged, college-educated, Caucasian male, married at least once, earning at least $51,000 annually, who has worked in Sales for approximately ten years (perhaps soon after leaving college). It is felt that this is a fairly accurate representation of the current population of business-to-business salespeople.

TABLE 4.1
Respondent Salesperson Demographics

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	195	77.1
Female	58	22.9
Marital Status		
Single	86	34
Married	138	54.5
Divorced	29	11.5

Table 4.1
Respondent Salesperson Demographics (continued)

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Age		
Under 25	26	10.3
26-35	57	22.5
36-45	42	16.6
46-55	61	24.1
56-65	49	19.4
Over 65	18	7.1
College Degree		
Yes	145	57.3
Attended, no degree	77	30.4
Did not attend	31	12.3
Income		
< $25k	52	20.6
$26k - $50k	71	28.1
$51k - $75k	60	23.7
$76k - $100k	40	15.8
$101k - $250k	20	7.9
Over $250k	10	3.9
Heritage		
European	194	76.7
Latino	20	7.9
Asian	13	5.1
African-American	11	4.3
Middle-Eastern	8	3.2
Indian	7	2.8

The sample respondents exhibit valuable sales knowledge based on their

responses to demographic items regarding their training in sales, ethics, and sales

technology. For example, the average participant has spent almost 10 years in sales, six

of which are with their current employer; over half have had formal sales training

(58.5%) and formal training in ethics (53%). Table 4.2 provides the data concerning the

respondents training in sales, ethics, sales technology (CRM), along with their personal

experiences as salespeople.

TABLE 4.2
Respondent Sales-Oriented Characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Formal Sales Training (Y/N)		
Yes	148	58.5
No	105	41.5
If yes, where		
School	7	4.7
Work	99	66.9
Both	42	28.4
Formal Ethics Training		
Yes	134	52.9
No	119	47.1
If yes, where		
School	17	12.7
Work	73	54.5
Both	44	32.8
Sales Technology (CRM) Training		
Yes	70	27.7
No	183	72.3
If yes, where		
School	8	11.4
Work	43	61.4
Both	19	27.2
What do you sell		
Products	84	33.2
Services	80	31.6
Both	89	35.2
Method of Compensation		
Straight Salary	106	41.9
Straight Commission	28	11.1
Salary plus Commission	111	43.9
Draw against Commission	8	3.2

TABLE 4.2
Sample Sales-Related Characteristics (continued)

Mean number of years in sales:	9.68
Mean number of industries sold in:	3.14
Mean number of years with present employer:	6.04
Mean number of weekly hours spent selling:	29.39

Measurement Model: Factor Analysis and Validity. Prior to its final distribution, the research survey was revised to ensure that scales with matching instructions for the respondents were sectioned together. Efforts were made to ensure that at least one item in every scale was reversed coded to help aid in discovering possible social desirability bias responses. The senior member of the research study's advisory committee was consulted to confirm the instrument was as well organized as it could be. After several checks and double checks, the instrument was sent to the market research company to be coded into an on-line version. Once completed, the URL link was provided to the author for review. Upon completion of a few grammatical revisions for clarity, the survey was distributed to potential respondents.

Three-hundred completed questionnaires were received by the author in the form of an Excel spreadsheet for convenient loading into SPSS for analysis. The data was screened for missing values, incomplete data, and other errors. During this time, it was revealed that not all salesperson respondents completed all of the demographic items. Of particular concern were the incomplete items related to the industry worked in, number of years in selling and number of companies sold for during their selling career. These cases were eliminated from inclusion in the final data analysis in an attempt to maintain the study's and the data's integrity.

Assessing the data empirically focused initially on the reliability and validity of each measure. This involved reviewing the corrected item to total correlations coefficient for each scale (Warner 2008). Strong results were obtained from this initial examination for reliability. All but two items (ETH4, SUBSJP6) met the minimal criteria for reliability with values of least a 3.0 (Bearden, Hardesty, and Rose 2001). Those items with values below 3.0 were deleted. Less than impressive results were also obtained from the Salesperson Control Belief scale. However, as it was designed to be one-third of a composite scale, it was decided to retain it until further analysis was performed on the scale in order to gain more information about it and the role it may play in the model.

Even though the research study utilized existing scales established in previously published research, exploratory factor analysis was conducted to ensure that all factor loadings were consistent with the pre-test results. As stated before, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) has a different objective than that of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). EFA is used to discover if relationships exist between factors and indicators and, if so, how strong that association is. EFA is a data-driven approach wherein, "all variables load on all factors," (Hox and Bechger 1998, p. 356). It allows the number and nature of the retained factors to be determined by the sample data provided, instead of specifying the number of factors or relationship patterns in advance, usually keeping only the factors that have an Eigenvalue of at least 1.0, in keeping with the Kaiser-Gutterman rule (Brown 2006; Hair et al. 2006). The Kaiser-Gutterman rule was followed to determine factor selection, where only those latent factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 were selected (Brown 2006). If the eigenvalue is less than 1.0, then the corresponding factor accounts for less variance than the indicator (Brown 2006). The result of the exploratory

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factor analysis using maximum likelihood estimation was the elimination of several items (PT2, PT6, PT7, ETH2, ETH4, ETH5, SSJP4, SSJP6-8, OBSJP1-5, and CB1-2, CB4-6, CB8).

Although EFA provides valuable information to the researcher, it, "fails to provide the definitive test of measurement made possible by SEM applications of CFA," (Babin, et al. 2008, p. 284). Therefore, the data was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using structural equation modeling, again with a maximum likelihood estimation, to confirm factor loadings and to verify construct validity. One of structural equation modeling's most important contributions to research is its ability to verify the existence of construct validity through confirmatory factor analysis (Jöreskog and Sorbom 1993; Babin, Hair, and Boles 2008). MPlus was utilized to analyze the raw data for the confirmatory factor analysis. The results indicated that each indicator loaded onto its construct. The results of the CFA are presented in Table 4.3 below.

Given the uncertain reliability of the chi-square test statistic (χ^2) for samples larger than 200 (Cudek and Henly 1991; Jackson, Gillaspy, and Purc-Stephenson 2009), several fit indices were examined in adherence with Hu and Bentler's (1998) suggestion to rely on those that have different property measures. For example, they recommend using the Comparative Fit Index [CFI] along with a fit index that is residual-based, such as the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR] (Jackson, Gillaspy, and Purc-Stephenson 2009). This is also in keeping with Cortina's (2007) recommendation to use fit measures that are not highly correlated. The results indicate a good fit of the model (χ^2_{125}=200.169 p=0.00, Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .97; Tucker-Lewis Index

[TLI]/Non-Normed Fit Index [NNFI] = .96; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .05; Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR] = .04).

As shown in Table 4.3, the levels of the standardized item loading estimates were significant with values ranging from .60 to .92. *T*-values were each greater than 2.0, providing further empirical support for convergent validity. The combination of the loading estimates and the construct reliabilities also provides support for convergent validity (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988; Babin and Boles 1996). Perceived Salesperson Control Belief items (CB3, CB7) measured close to the minimal acceptance level at 2.11 and 2.13 respectively. Further, the average variance extracted (AVE) demonstrated acceptable level of convergent validity with all values in excess of 0.50; the level for Control Beliefs is barely at this level at .462, which is not surprising given that it is a two-item measure (Fornell and Larcker 1981). Discriminant validity was supported, as the largest value for shared variance between all construct pairings is 0.27, which is less than the lowest value for AVE (0.46)(Fornell and Larcker 1981). These levels indicate that the measures utilized in the survey demonstrate reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Table 4.4 presents the correlations, means, and standard deviations for each of the study's variables.

TABLE 4.3
Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results and
Scale Measurement Properties

Scale	Standardized Loading	t-Value	α
Access to Information (AVE = 0.600)			0.86
PT1	0.69	18.00	
PT3	0.83	31.34	
PT4	0.87	38.35	
PT5	0.70	18.76	
Use of Information (AVE = 0.690)			0.87
PT8	0.67	17.69	
PT9	0.88	41.73	
PT10	0.92	48.53	
Unethical Salesperson Behavior (AVE = 0.619)	0.89		0.89
ETH6	0.75	32.73	
ETH7	0.82	17.59	
ETH8	0.89	44.26	
Salesperson Control Belief (AVE = 0.462)			0.63
CB3	0.60	2.11	
CB7	0.75	2.13	
Salesperson Job Performance (AVE = 0.609)			0.86
SJP1	0.81	27.33	
SJP2	0.80	25.78	
SJP3	0.81	26.49	
SJP5	0.70	18.01	

<u>**Model Fit Statistics**</u>
$\chi^2 = 200.169$ ($p = 0.00$), $df = 125$
Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .97
Non-Normed Fit Index [NNFI] = .96
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .049
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR] = .039

TABLE 4.4
Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations of the Primary Research Variables

	PT1	PT3	PT4	PT5	PT8	PT9	PT10	ETH1	ETH3
PT1	1								
PT3	0.599**	1							
PT4	0.586**	0.728**	1						
PT5	0.420**	0.557**	0.618**	1					
PT8	0.454**	0.432**	0.506**	0.483**	1				
PT9	0.410**	0.436**	0.465**	0.441**	0.577**	1			
PT10	0.429**	0.446**	0.499**	.0506**	0.608**	0.814**	1		
ETH1	0.165**	0.174**	0.201**	.0138*	0.083	0.045	-0.011	1	
ETH3	.0206**	0.177**	0.192**	0.127*	0.055	0.057	0.030	0.604**	1.000
ETH6	0.147*	0.173**	0.161*	0.163**	0.061	0.015	0.038	0.420**	0.612**
ETH7	0.146*	0.223**	0.230**	0.181**	0.055	0.045	-0.001	0.486**	0.618**
ETH8	0.148*	0.140*	0.193**	0.124*	0.058	0.037	0.046	0634**	0.681**
CB3	0.082	0.111	0.123	0.021	0.051	0.085	0.110	0.023	0.011
CB7	0.063	0.086	0.063	-0.041	0.072	0.068	0.111	0.116	0.051
SJP1	0.046	-0.052	0.008	0.022	0.021	0.100	0.088	-0.024	-0.046
SJP2	0.068	0.002	0.090	0.062	0.040	0.056	0.052	-0.009	-0.091
SJP3	0.022	-0.017	0.031	0.057	0.049	0.066	0.060	-0.049	-0.143*
SJP5	-0.007	-0.040	0.113	0.070	0.013	0.072	0.079	-0.045	-0.033
MEAN	5.13	4.71	4.88	4.57	5.55	5.46	5.47	4.22	4.19
SD	1.509	1.683	1.592	1.566	1.446	1.451	1.435	1.689	1.748

	ETH6	ETH7	ETH8	CB3	CB7	SJP1	SJP2	SJP3	SJP5
ETH6	1.000								
ETH7	0.666**	1.000							
ETH8	0.652**	0.738**	1.000						
CB3	0.033	0.021	-0.001	1.000					
CB7	0.128*	0.069	0.066	0.450**	1.000				
SJP1	-0.023	-0.096	-0.035	0.057	0.020	1.000			
SJP2	-0.058	-0.128*	0.019	0.027	-0.007	0.628**	1.000		
SJP3	0.009	-0.114	-0.051	0.045	0.060	0.688**	0.629**	1.000	
SJP5	0.027	-0.056	0.023	-0.036	-0.037	0.542**	0.624**	0.526**	1
MEAN	4.64	3.81	3.87	5.74	5.79	5.31	5.07	5.44	5.05
SD	1.811	1.674	1.727	1.448	1.493	1.415	1.275	1.313	1.382

** indicates correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
 * indicates correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Structural Model and Hypotheses Tests

Each hypothesis was tested using MPlus with maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. As the chi-square test statistic (χ^2) is not considered overly reliable for sample sizes greater than 200, several different fit indices were examined. The obtained results indicate that the model fits the data fairly well ($\chi^2_{81} = 148.31$, p = 0.000, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .057, Tucker-Lewis Index [TLI]/Non-Normed Fit Index [NNFI] = .95, Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .96) (Bentler and Bonnett 1980; Hu and Bentler 1999; Brown 2006). Modification indices suggest significant direct effects from perceived salesperson job performance (SJP) and borderline significant effects from perceived salesperson control beliefs on the mediating effect of salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by technology-enabled management on the relationship between salesperson perceived managerial access to information as enabled by technology and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. The standardized parameter estimates and their associated t-value are available in Table 4.5.

Mediation.

Hypothesis 1stated that salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by technology-enabled management would have a mediating effect on the relationship between salesperson perceived managerial access to information as enabled by technology, and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. A chi-square difference test was performed between the fully mediated and partially mediated models to determine if there was a significant different between the models. Fornell and Larcker (1981) report, "the critical value for a chi-square with one degree of freedom at the .01

level of statistical significance is 6.63," (p.44). The results exceed this criteria ($\Delta\chi^2_1 =$ 16.877 p = 0.000). Thus, there is strong empirical support for a partially mediating effect of the salesperson perceived managerial use of information (Fornell and Larcker 1981; Babin and Boles 1996) and thus indicating empirical support for H_1.

Moderation

Baron and Kenny (1986) define a moderating variable as one that, "affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion variable" (p. 1174). Hypothesis 2 stated that Perceived Salesperson Job Performance would have a moderating effect on the relationship between salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by technology-enabled management and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. Moderation indices and the results of the interaction effects are provided in Table 4.5. Moderator effects are indicated by the interaction of the independent variable and the moderator variable in explaining the criterion variable (Baron and Kenny 1986). The test results indicate the presence of significant interaction between the two variables SP and USE, (β = -0.21, t = -2.38), thus providing support for H_2.

Hypothesis 3 stated that Perceived Salesperson Control Beliefs would have a moderating effect on the relationship between salesperson perceived managerial use of information accessed by technology-enabled management and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. The test results indicate no direct statistical significance (β = 0.21, t = 1.59). It is possible that as the CB variable was designed to measure salesperson's beliefs regarding their ability to control their performance of unethical behaviors, a different result may have been obtained had the items been phrased to measure

salesperson's ability to control managerial access to or use of information related to

unethical salesperson behaviors. The standardized estimates and t-*values* for these

variables are included in Table 4.5. Figure 4.1 shows the hypotheses model with the

reported path estimates.

<div align="center">

TABLE 4.5
Structural Model Parameters and Goodness-of-Fit Indices

</div>

| *Structural Model Parameter*			*Standardized Estimate*	*t-Value*	R^2
ACCESS	→	USE	0.66	14.76	0.43
ACCESS	→	UNETH	0.41	4.31	
USE	→	UNETH	- 0.23	- 2.34	0.10
PERFORM	→	UNETH	-0.05	-0.58	
CONTROL	→	UNETH	0.19	1.32	
SPxUSE	→	USE	- 0.22	- 2.38	
CBxUSE	→	USE	0.22	1.59	

Model Fit Statistics

χ^2 = 148.31 (*p* = 0.00), *df* = 81

Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .96

Tucker-Lewis Index [TLI]/Non-Normed Fit Index [NNFI] = .95

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .06

Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR] = .04
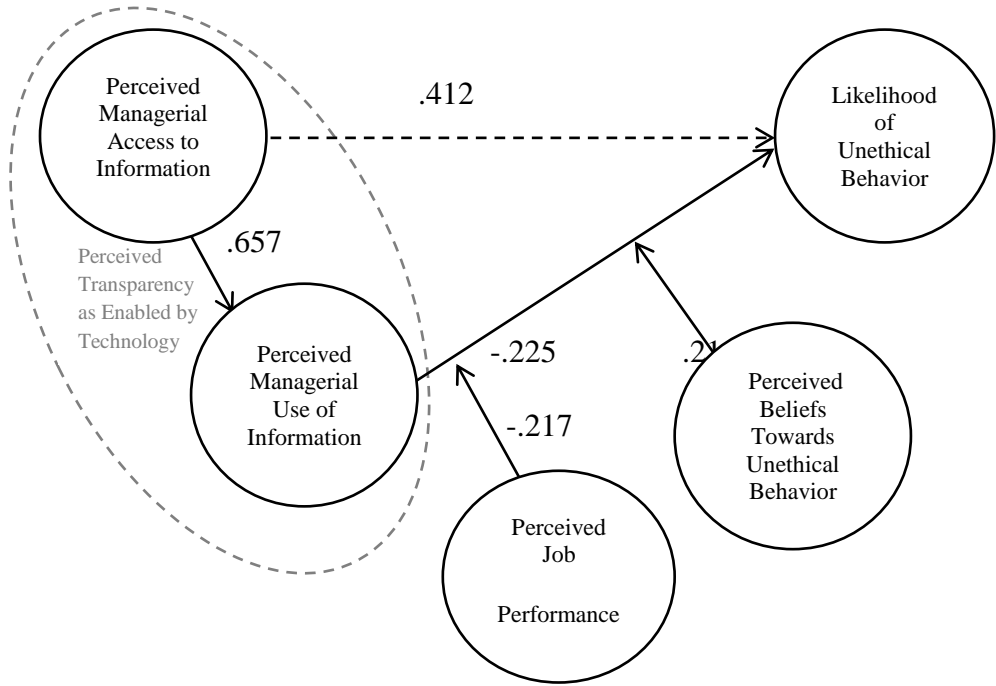
FIGURE 4.1
Hypothesis Model with Path Estimates

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section addresses the theoretical implications and managerial applications of the study's findings. This is followed by a discussion of the constraints and limitations experienced in conducting this research, along with their impact. Lastly, suggestions and recommendations are provided concerning future research of the issues contained in this study.

Discussion of the Results

This research introduces the concept of perceived salesperson transparency into the Sales academic literature. The gap that previously existed in Sales literature concerning perceived transparency of salespeople has begun to be partially filled. Although transparency has been defined at a macro level both historically and contextually, focusing on organizations and corporations, it has now been expanded to a micro level. This is a new area of research that has not been undertaken previously - the effects of transparency at a micro-level; specifically at the level of individual, boundary-spanning salespeople.

The greatest singular contribution of this research to both academics and practitioners is the finding of empirical support that perceived transparency is not a unidimensional idea, as has been traditionally viewed, but rather is comprised of at least two dimensions - 1) perceived access to information and 2) use of accessed information. This makes sense given two considerations that in order to use information, it must first be accessed and that if it is perceived that any information accessed will *not* be used, than its access should have no bearing or influence on behavior.

Sales technology has grown at an incredible rate in the past decade or two. Customer relationship management (CRM) has enabled companies to better identify, better relate, and better serve their customers. Many studies has been undertaken that focus on how both sales managers and sales people can best utilize recent developments in technology (Morgan and Inks 2001; Jones, Sundaram, and Chin 2002; Robinson, Marshall, and Stamps 2005). Ingram et al. (2002) presents a well-thought out overview of how sales organizations could utilize new technologies more rewardingly over time.

Sales technology research has been conducted on the potential problems created by recent technological developments (Spier and Venkatesh 2002; Honeycutt 2005); pre-deployment attitudes toward it and its intended use by administration and front-line salespeople (Sundaram et al. 2007); making it effective (Hunter and Perreault 2007); accompanying managerial implications (Bush, Moore, and Rocco 2005); and productivity (Clark, Rocco, and Bush 2007). Hunter and Perreault (2006) propose a model for organizations to measure the cost effectiveness of implementing new sales technologies, including the effect of salesperson ability to learn and use the sales technology. This current research study adds to this rapidly growing body of knowledge.

Hypothesis 1 is the heart of this research. The meditating effect of how salespeople perceived accessed information will be used on the relationship between perceptions of the accessing of the information and the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior was supported by the study's results. This indicates that it is not the perception of visibility that drives salesperson behavior, but rather the perception of the likelihood of negative consequences, of how knowledge gained by management through visibility will be used. The application of gained information parallels one of the more

common research topics in recent years: the application of sales technologies to CRM (Leigh and Marshall 2001; Hunter and Perreault 2007).

The second hypothesis addresses perceived salesperson job performance as a moderator on the relationship between use of information and the likelihood of unethical behavior. The interaction effect of salesperson job performance on use of information was significant, thereby supporting H_2. If there is a salesperson perception that management will use the information accessed by technology, how the information will be used may expected to be negated by how valuable the salesperson perceives his or her self to be to the organization. In other words, some salespeople may believe that their performance (ends) is justified by unethical behavior (means). Therefore, if salesperson job performance (as measured by self-reporting) is perceived by them to be strong, and they credit its strength to behavior that is ethically questionable, they may in turn perceive their performance as a justification and expect their managers to share this thinking. If they do not perceive their performance as being strong enough to counter any potential negative consequence to performing unethical behavior, they are more likely to be swayed into avoiding such unacceptable behavior.

Lastly, the hypothesis 3 states that perceived salesperson control beliefs have a moderating effect on the association of perceived use of information with the likelihood of unethical salesperson behavior. Although this hypothesis was not statistically supported by the results, it should be re-investigated; perhaps with different respondents or different item wording. It may be that respondents interpreted the item to refer to control over information use; if so, it would be interesting to re-examine this variable

from the perspective of salesperson control over management's technology-enabled access.

Theoretical Contributions

This study introduces the concept of perceived transparency into the academic literature for Sales, Marketing, Ethics, and possibly Management. It also supplies a SEM model for measuring perceived transparency that incorporates perceived use as a mediating variable moderated by performance. This represents a new and important direction for Sales research. Very little literature exists that addresses the potential influence of salesperson perceived transparency on the ethicality of their behavior and actions. Technology has changed the way many business operations are conducted and this is especially true in Sales. Technology's impact is not yet fully known or understood in many areas. This research helps explain a very important area that has been greatly affected by technology - salespeople and their relationships with management and clients.

The former relationship is the heart of agency theory, the relationship between a principals (i.e., management) and agents (i.e., salespeople) when a principal hires an agent to perform a task or tasks in exchange for some form of agreed upon compensation. Mallin and Delvecchio (2007) claim, "agency theory offers explanations of how the boundary spanning positions affect the salesperson's perceptions . . . the agent's (salesperson's) behavior is influenced by both his or her need for autonomy and the principle's (sales manager's) need for control," (p. 486). They found that salesperson behavior is predicated upon whom they perceive the behavior will benefit most. This may help in explaining the results of the tests for H_1. If salespeople want their managers to perceive that they (salespeople) are doing everything possible to make a sale, then they

may engage in ethically questionable (but not illegal) behavior to show their determination to generate revenue for the organization.

Agency theory has two primary goals of resolution: (1) moral hazard and (2) adverse selection (Eisenhardt 1985). Moral hazard is defined as when the agent can take actions that affect the principal but that the principal cannot monitor or enforce; i.e. "the principal cannot verify the agent has behaved appropriately," (p. 58). Adverse selection is exemplified as when, "one party to a transaction knows things which are relevant to the transaction but which are unknown to the other party," (Kurland 1996, p. 54). The enabling of management by technology to monitor more thoroughly its salespeople (access information relevant to their actions and behaviors) should - in theory - lessen the issue of moral hazard. However, as shown by the results of this study, that lessening is mediated by the agent's perception of how the principal will use the knowledge obtained by accessing information. This mediation is in turn, moderated by the salesperson's perception of their performance. The salesperson may believe that their performance is strong enough to protect them from any negative consequences that might befall them as a result of their manger's having access to information concerning their behaviors. The monitoring of communications between salesperson and customer (cell phone, e-mail, file transfers, presentations, etc.) should also lessen the impact of adverse selection, as the principal will be able to control the process via technology (Bush et al. 2007). What is shown by this study is that the agent's behavior will be predicated not by who benefits the most by the behavior in question, but by how the knowledge of their behavior will be used and that its use provides more benefit to the principal than the agent.

Managerial Applications and Contributions

Salespeople are the front-line boundary spanners of many organizations. How they conduct themselves is a direct reflection on their company (Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander 2006). When a salesperson engages in unethical practices, either with customers (misrepresenting information, exaggerating product or service benefits, lying about competition) or with management itself (padding expense reports, withholding market information), it can have seriously detrimental effects on the firm, its industry, even on firm shareholders and stockholders. By enabling sales managers to have greater access to information to salespersons' work-related activities, managers are in a position to both better protect and better serve their organization.

Technology provides a way for managers to gain more control over the selling process in both internal and external contexts, by providing the means for increased surveillance of salesperson actions and behaviors (Bush et al. 2007). This can include using GPS systems to track salespeople in the field, to know who is where at what time throughout the day to ensure that all prospective and established customers are being attended. Such technology also allows sales managers to increase the level of reporting accountability of salespeople. Managers can compare GPS tracking reports to salesperson call reports to ensure that they congruent and that the salesperson is not falsifying important information. It allows them to transition from traditional outcome-based control systems to behavior-based systems (Anderson and Oliver 1987).

This research has far-reaching applications for sales managers. It provides empirical support for the idea that if salespeople do not perceive any information obtained by management will be used, i.e., if it's either just being collected for the sake of

collecting or if it is not actually being collected, that management simply implies that such is occurring, then they will behave as if there are no consequences. It is when they perceive that knowledge or information accessed by management, as enabled by technology, will be used that their behavior is impacted. In other words, salesperson behavior is not driven by the bark alone, but rather by the possibility of being bitten.

Limitations

This research was conducted with several limitations that may have influenced the results that were obtained. The first of these constraints is the sample from which the data was collected. Second would be the self-report methodology used in obtaining measures. Another potential limitation was that a longitudinal approach was not utilized.

The sample respondents were solicited through a professional market research organization that has been used by several fellow researchers and was highly recommended to the study's author. The primary constraint in obtaining respondents was that they be currently employed as business-to-business salespeople. Several items were included in the survey in order to weed out those who did not qualify, thus maintaining the study's integrity. These qualifying items included, "How long have you worked in Sales?", "How many different companies have you sold for?" and, "What industry do you sell in?" Several dozen respondents were eliminated from the final data analysis as a direct result of their responses to these items, thus raising a small level of doubt regarding the others' legitimacy as professional salespeople. However, they did respond to these screening items correctly and in all probability meet the criteria requested of the company collecting the data. Discussions with other researchers who had patronized this company garnered nothing but support and positive comments about them. Thus, it was decided

that the responses of those who met the screening criteria should not be disqualified due to the uncertainty of the others.

The second notable limitation with this research study concerns the self-report methodology used, as opposed to scenarios or experimentation. Although Alexander and Becker (1978) suggest scenarios create a more realistic situation for respondents, attempting to reduce the infinite number of possible scenarios involving salespeople and their behavioral determinants is too great to be fairly represented by a handful of examples. Jaramillo et al.'s (2003) contention that low performing salespeople tend to overestimating their performance and top salespeople underestimate theirs, self-report scales are an accepted means of obtaining information about individual or group beliefs regarding behaviors, especially given the lack of practical alternatives (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010). Established scales have been adapted to maintain integrity, thus facilitating comparisons and generalizations with other sales or ethics research (Hensel and Bruner 1992). Several research studies have been successfully conducted where self-reporting of ethical behavior was employed (Himmelfarb and Lickteig, 1982; Beck and Ajzen 1991; Harding et al. 2007).

It is recognized that self-presentation biases are a legitimate concern, especially when dealing with socially desirable or undesirable behaviors. This may further explain the results of H_1 testing, that the respondents were simply responding in the way that they would personally like to - if they sense that management does not trust them, they would then behave in a manner worthy of distrust - if they could afford to take such a risk. To help compensate for this, at least one item in each set was reverse coded. Additionally, Fishbein and Ajzen's (2010) advice to researchers to be aware of possible threats to the

validity by using behavioral self-reporting methods and to do what can be done to increase reporting accuracy to its fullest was well heeded in this research. Adherence to their counsel of encouraging respondents to be honest, to stress the confidentiality and anonymity of their participation and emphasizing the scientific importance of their being accurate in their responses helped to overcome this limitation.

The third constraint that may have influenced the results of this research is in the decision not to use a longitudinal approach. The method used resulted in basically a snapshot of individual salesperson perceptions regarding managerial use of technology to enable their ability to access information regarding salesperson behaviors and their use of such accessed information. Technology is far from being static. There seems to be no end to the continual development of software or hardware tools that allow managers do things they were unable to do earlier. Additionally, it must also be recognized that not all managers or organizations adopt these technological tools at the same rate due to budgetary or other constraints.

A longitudinal approach would have provided insight over time; for example, does the introduction of advanced monitoring capability - such as those enabled by recent technology developments - into an organization that had historically relied on traditional monitoring methods alter salesperson perceptions, and if so, how? This and other suggestions for future research opportunities provided by this study are discussed in the next section.

Future Research Opportunities

A number of research opportunities can be gleaned from this study and could greatly aid in the filling of the existing gap in personal selling literature. The first

possible area, as mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, concerns the multiple dimensions of the concept of transparency, especially when applied to individuals rather than organizations or corporations. This study found support for two dimensions: access to information and use of such information; there is more to how individuals define transparency than simply how visible they are.

The reported path estimates show a significant positive relationship (standardized estimate of .412 and a *t*-value of 4.31) between salesperson perceptions of managerial access to information and the likelihood of their (salespeople) engaging in unethical behavior. The interpretation of this would appear to be that the more salespeople perceive management has access to information about salesperson behavior, the more likely the salespeople are to perform unethical behavior? Why? Does this suggest a retaliatory tactic by the salespeople in response to a perception of managerial mistrust? Or is it possibly an attempt by salespeople to convey to management their willingness to do whatever it takes to make a sale? Despite the increase in behavior-based evaluative control systems, ultimately, a seller's objective performance (i.e., revenue generated, units moved, goals reached, etc.) determines his or her fate. This is certainly an issue and a finding worth additional pursuit.

Another collateral topic deals with whether salespeople perceive a difference between transparency to management and transparency to customers. This could be further ordered by customer type (prospective, new, or established), what is sold (product or service), the impact and type of formal sales and/or ethics training the salesperson has, or a range of demographic bases related to seller, buyer, or both. Yet another path could

investigate technology's role on each of these customer types, as well as the various communication methods used by salespeople (phone, e-mail, cold call, face-to-face, etc.).

Further research comparing salespeople based on the level of technological involvement of their organizations would provide a very interesting follow-up perspective to this study. Similarly, one item that was not included in this study that could further the knowledge provided here would be re-examine these findings from the perspective of how savvy salespeople perceive their managers to be from a technological standpoint. Alternately, the technological literacy of salespeople and their clients could provide important insight, as it has been well established that clients today expect sellers to be as well versed on a range of topics related to products, the market, etc. as they are.

Outside of the immediate sales arena, this research study provides a starting point to further existing research related to the relationship between ethics and behavior. Salespople make an excellent subject given their role as boundary spanners and their duty to manage a range of potentially conflicting internal and external relationships. They are more tempted by the lure of short-term reward offered by unethical behavior than any other organizational employee (Ferrell and Gresham 1985) is. Application of this study to other departments (i.e., Accounting, Customer Service, Human Resources, etc.) within a firm could provide beneficial information to management.

Conclusion

The concept of transparency, whether overt or perceived, despite its popularity among business practitioners, has not been the subject of much academic investigation concerning its cause, effect, and possible determinants. What research has been published tends to limit its focus to a macro-level; how organizations and firms provide

access to information about themselves, their goals, and their beliefs to shareholders and stockholders. This current research takes a new and needed approach by examining transparency at a micro-level, specifically the level of an organization's boundary-spanning, relationship-building, revenue-generating, front-line salespeople. The existence of a direct relationship between an individual's perceived level of transparency and the ethicality of their behavior is clearly supported. The behavioral influence on salespeople created by their being transparent to management, through developments in technology, comes less from management's having access to salesperson behavioral information and more from salesperson perceptions regarding managerial use of the accessed information. Managers who desire less unethical behavior from their sales forces would do well to utilize the information they are enabled to access with technology or to at the least attempt to increase their sale forces' perception of their willingness to use such information and knowledge. Researchers who interests include personal selling, ethics, salesperson behavior, or the impact of technology on sales are invited and encouraged to continue expanding this area.

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Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey of salespeople. It consists of sections concerning your perceptions of sales-related statements. There are no right or wrong answers. Your responses are completely confidential and will only be used for this study. In order to be meaningful, it is very important that you respond to ALL items openly and honestly. Thank you.

Please read each statement below, then circle the number that best reflects the experiences of salespeople in general, with *1 representing, "not at all" and 7 representing, "very much"*.

Sales managers use technology to . . .

1. Monitor salesperson activities.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Review salesperson reports more thoroughly.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Access salesperson communications.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Track salesperson-client interactions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Watch salesperson movements in the field.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Control the selling process.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Influence salesperson behavior.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Hold salespeople accountable.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Improve salesperson performance.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Provide better salesperson evaluations.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ethical Salesperson Behavior Scale
Please read each statement below very carefully, then indicate how likely you think salespeople are to perform the described behavior is by circling the number that best corresponds to your beliefs, where **1 = Not Very Likely** and **7 = Very Likely**.

1. Pad an expense account.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Blame someone else for his or her mistakes.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Misrepresent warranties or guarantees.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Pretend not to be a salesperson to prospects.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Exaggerate product or service benefits.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Lie about availability to make a sale.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Lie about the competition to make a sale.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Submit confusing invoices to clients.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Falsify reports submitted to management.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Salesperson Belief Scale
Please read each statement below very carefully and decide how strongly each statement applies to your profession. The phrase "deceiving a client" means providing wrong information or not fully disclosing all relevant information; "submitting false information on a report" refers to any type of report (i.e., expense accounts, call reports, test results, etc.). Then, please put an "X" in the space that most closely reflects your belief regarding the statement:

1. Deceiving a client is:

       Bad _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Good
    Foolish _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Wise
  Harmful _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Beneficial
    Wrong _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Not wrong
Avoidable _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Necessary

2. Deceiving a client can cause a salesperson to lose their job.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

3. Deceiving a client can cause irreparable harm to a salesperson's relationship with that client.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

4. Deceiving a client can usually help make a sale.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

5. Deceiving a client rarely causes trouble.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

6. Deceiving a client should result in the salesperson's termination.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

7. Submitting false information on a report is:

       Bad _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Good
    Foolish _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Wise
  Harmful _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Beneficial
    Wrong _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Not wrong
Avoidable _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Necessary

8. Submitting false information on a report can cause a salesperson to lose their job.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

9. Submitting false information on a report can cause irreparable harm to a salesperson's relationship with their manager.
     Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

10. Submitting false information on a report can usually help a salesperson keep their job.

Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

11. Submitting false information on a report rarely causes trouble.

Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

12. Submitting false information on a report should result in the salesperson's termination.

Disagree_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ Agree

Please read each statement below very carefully and then please put a large "X" in the space that most closely reflects your belief regarding the statement:

1. "Most people who matter to me would *NOT CARE/DISAPROVE* if I deceived a client."

NOT CARE _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____DISAPPROVE

2. "No one who is important to me would think it was *OKAY/NOT OKAY* to deceive a client."

OKAY_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ NOT OKAY

3. "The people in my life whose opinion matters to me *WOULD/WOULD NOT* be willing to deceive a client in a similar situation."

WOULD _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ WOULD NOT

4. "The people in my life whose opinion matters to me *WOULD/WOULD NOT* be willing to submit false information on a report in a similar situation."

WOULD _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ WOULD NOT

5. "No one who is important to me would think it was *OKAY/NOT OKAY* to submit false information on a report."

OKAY_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ NOT OKAY

6. "Most people who matter to me would *NOT CARE/DISAPPROVE* if I submitted false information on a report."

NOT CARE____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____DISAPPROVE

Next, please read each statement below very carefully and decide how *true* or *false* you feel each statement is. Then, please put a large "X" in the space that most closely reflects your belief regarding the statement:

1. "Salespeople have a great deal of control over whether they get caught deceiving a client."

True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

2. "Salespeople have the skills needed to deceive a client under any circumstance."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

3. "It is mostly up to the salesperson whether or not they deceive a client."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

4. "Even if they had a good reason, a salesperson could not bring his or herself to deceive a client."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

5. "Salespeople have a great deal of control over whether they submit false information on a report."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

6. "Salespeople have the skills needed to submit false information on a report."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

7. "It is mostly up to the salesperson whether or not they submit false information on a report."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

8. "Even if they had a good reason, a salesperson could not bring his or herself to submit false information on a report."
    True _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ False

For Questions 1 – 8 below: Please read the statements below and then rate yourself according to how well you have performed - *relative to the other salespersons you know in selling situations similar to your own*- on a one-to-seven scale, where **"1" = needs improvement and "7" = outstanding**.''

1. Listening attentively to identify and understand   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   the real concerns of your customers.

2. Building your clients' business with your   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   products or services.

3. Working out solutions to a customer's   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   questions or objections.

4. Working with customers to help improve their   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   profitability.

5. Working with buyers to develop a partnership   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   that is profitable to both firms.

6. Getting required paperwork done.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Addressing administrative responsibilities   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   in a timely manner.

8. Submitting required reports on time.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

For Questions 9 – 13: Please rate yourself in each of the five areas according to how you have performed relative to the average salesperson in your organization.

 9. Sales commissions earned.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Exceeding sales objectives and targets.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Generating new- customer sales.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Generating current-customer sales.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. Overall selling performance.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how true it is regarding you.

```
          1--------2--------3--------4--------5--------6--------7
Not true          Somewhat                          Very True
                    True
```

_____ 1. I never swear.

_____ 2. I never cover up my mistakes.

_____ 3. I have done things that I don't tell other people about.

_____ 4. I don't gossip about other people's business.

_____ 5. I always obey traffic laws, even if I am unlikely to get caught.

_____ 6. I have never taken sick leave from work or school when I wasn't really sick.

_____ 7. I sometimes tell lies if I have to.

_____ 8. I have never littered.

_____ 9. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.

_____ 10. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.

Last, please share some general information about yourself.

Gender: Male_____   Female_____

Marital: Single _____   Married _____ Divorced _____

Age: <25___   26–45___   46–65___   65+___

College degree   Yes___   No___ Attended, no degree___

Personal   Less than $25k_____ $26k-$50k_____
Income: $51k-$75k_____ $76k-$100k_____
                         $100k-$250k_____   Over $250k_____

<u>Sales Experience</u>:

What do you sell?   Products___   Services___   Both___

How many years have you been selling? _____

How many different companies have you sold for? _____

How many years have you been with your current employer? _____

How many salespeople are employed by your organization?
          1–10___   10–25___   26–50___
          51–100___   100–500___   500+___

How many hours per week on average do you work selling? _____

Have you had any formal sales training? Yes_____   No_____
        If yes, where? College _____   Job-provided _____

Have you had any formal ethics training? Yes_____   No_____
        If yes, where? College _____   Job-provided _____

What is your primary method of compensation?
        ___Salary
        ___Straight commission
        ___Salary plus Commission
        ___Draw Against Commission

<u>End of Survey.</u>
Thank you very much for your time, effort, and honesty in completing this. Your
responses are confidential and
will only be used for this study. Thank you.

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

I hereby agree to participate in this research study on transparency, technology, and behavior in Sales. I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study, may withdraw at any time, that my responses are completely confidential, are only for the purpose of this research, and will be destroyed when the study is over.

To acknowledge that you agree with the above statements and consent to participate, please type today's date below.
Today's date: _____

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to assist this research by completing the following questionnaire. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you respond to EVERY item, as honestly as possible. **Please read each statement carefully.**

SECTION I: Please respond based on your knowledge of salespeople in general (i.e., *those other than yourself*).

Using a scale where "1" represents "NOT AT ALL" and "7" represents "VERY MUCH," how does each statement complete the phrase below:

"*Sales managers use technology to…*"

1. Monitor salesperson activities.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Review salesperson reports more thoroughly.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Access salesperson communications.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Track salesperson-client interactions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Watch salesperson movements in the field.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Avoid controlling the selling process.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Influence salesperson behavior.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Hold salespeople accountable.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Improve salesperson performance.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Provide better salesperson evaluations.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Again, **based on your knowledge of salespeople in general (i.e., those other than yourself)**, please indicate how likely you think salespeople are to perform the following behaviors by circling the number that best reflects your belief with 1 indicating "Not Likely" and 7 indicating "Very Likely."

1. Pad an expense account.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Exaggerate product/service benefits.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Misrepresent a warranty or guarantee.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Admit to making a mistake.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Pretend not to be a salesperson to prospects.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Lie to make a sale.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Submit confusing invoices.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Falsify information on work-related reports, (such as expense reports, test results, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

For these items, please read each statement below, then indicate how *true* or *false* you believe it is - **based on your knowledge of salespeople in general (i.e., those other than yourself)** - by putting an "X" in the space that most closely reflects your belief:

1. Salespeople have a great deal of control over whether they get caught engaging in unethical behavior with clients.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True
2. Salespeople do not have the necessary skills to engage in unethical behavior with clients.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True
3. It is mostly up to salespeople whether or not they engage in unethical behavior with clients.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:__ ___:_____ True
4. Even if they have a good reason, salespeople could not bring themselves to engage in unethical behavior with clients.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True
5. Salespeople have very little control over whether they get caught submitting false information to management.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True
6. Salespeople have the skills needed to submit false information to management.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True
7. It is mostly up to salespeople whether or not they submit false information to management.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True
8. Even if they have a good reason, salespeople could not bring themselves to submit false information to management.
    False _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ True

Now, again **based on your knowledge of salespeople in general** where 1 = "not at all" and 7 = "very much", please indicate how well you believe each statement describes the attitude salespeople have towards clients.

1. Better informed about the market than SP.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Equipped with better technology than SP.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Are more detail-oriented than necessary.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Expect salespeople to do too much.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Should not be trusted.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Are more concerned with cost than value.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Are difficult to get in contact with.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Are extremely loyal to vendors.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Believe they know more than salespeople.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Think sellers make too much profit.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SECTION II: For this section, please base your responses on only _you_ as a salesperson and no one else. Thank you.

Now, <u>thinking about yourself as a salesperson</u>, please read each statement below. Then for each one *honestly* rate yourself *relative to other salespeople you know in selling situations similar to your own.* Here 1 means "Need Improvement" and 7 means "Outstanding."

1. Listening attentively to identify and   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   understand the real concerns of your customers.
2. Building your clients' business with your   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   products or services.
3. Working out solutions to a customer's   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   questions or objections.
4. Working with customers to help improve their   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   profitability.
5. Working with buyers to develop a partnership   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   that is profitable to both firms.
6. Avoiding required paperwork.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Addressing administrative responsibilities   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   in a timely manner.
8. Submitting required reports on time.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Next, relative to the average salesperson in your organization, please rate yourself, honestly, in each of the five areas below, with 1 representing "very much below average" and 7 representing "very much above average."

9. Sales commissions earned.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Exceeding sales objectives and targets.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. Generating new-customer sales.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. Generating current-customer sales.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Overall selling performance.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Using the scale below as a guide, **based on yourself alone and not on any other salespeople**, write a number beside each statement to indicate how true it is as it applies to you.

1--------2--------3--------4--------5--------6--------7
Not true   Somewhat True   Very True

1._____ I never swear.
2._____ I never cover up my mistakes.
3._____ I have done things that I do not tell other people about.
4._____ I do not gossip about other people's business.
5._____ I always obey traffic laws, even if I am unlikely to get caught.
6._____ I have never taken sick leave from work or school when I was not really sick.
7._____ I sometimes tell lies if I have to.
8._____ I have never littered.
9._____ There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.
10.____ I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.

SECTION III: In this section, please be sure to respond to EACH AND EVERY item to help classify your responses. Thank you.

Please take a few moments to share some general information about yourself as an individual and as a salesperson.

1. Gender: Male_____   Female_____
2. Marital: Single _____   Married _____   Divorced _____
3. Age: <25___   26–35___   36–45___
                        46-55___   56-65___   >65___
4. Ethnicity: European___ Asian___   African-American___
                        Latino___   Indian___   Middle-Eastern___
5. College: Graduated___   (Major: _____)
                Attended, but no degree___
                Did not attend__
6. Graduate degree (i.e., MBA):   Yes___   No___
7. Income: <$25k___ $26k-$50k___ $51k-$75k ___
                        $76k-$100k___ $101k-$150k___   >$150k___

Sales and Selling Experience:

8. How many years (total) have you been in sales? ___
9. How many industries have you sold in? ___
10. What industry do you currently work in? _____
11. What do you sell? Products___   Services___   Both___
12. How long have you been selling in this industry?   ___

13. How many firms have you sold for in this industry? ___

14. How long have you been with your current employer? ___

15. How many salespeople work for your current organization? ___

       1–10___10–25___26–50___51–100__ 100–250___ 250-500__500+___

16. How many average hours per week do you spend selling? ___

17. Have you had any classroom-style or seminar sales training?

       Yes___   No___

17a. If yes, where?   School___   Work___   Both___

18. Have you had any classroom-style or seminar ethics training? Yes___   No___

18a. If yes, where?   School___   Work___   Both___

19. Have you had any training in sales technology (i.e., CRM)?

       Yes___ No___

19a. If yes, where?   School___   Work___   Both___

20. What is your primary method of compensation?

       Straight Salary____

       Straight commission____

       Salary plus Commission___

       Draw Against Commission___

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
Your contribution, time, and honesty are sincerely appreciated.

Appendix C.

Original Scale Items from the Cravens, et al. (1993) and Babakus, et al. (1996) Scale
Designed to Measure Behavior-Based Sales Manager Control.

To What Extent Do You:

Monitor
1. Spend time in the field with salespeople
2. Make joint calls with salespeople.
3. Regularly review call reports from salespeople.
4. Monitor the day-to-day activities of salespeople.
5. Observe the performance of salespeople in the field.
6. Pay attention to the extent to which salespeople travel.
7. Closely watch salespeople's expense accounts.
8. Pay attention to the credit terms that salespeople quote customers.