

THE INFLUENCE OF SALES FORCE NEWCOMERS' MET EXPECTATIONS  
ON SELECTED OUTCOME VARIABLES: DEVELOPMENT  
AND TESTING OF A MODEL

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Sales management researchers and practitioners give considerable attention to early employment expectations, attitudes, and behaviors primarily because of a desire to specify the cognition process leading to performance and retention of salespeople.

While a massive body of literature exists concerning turnover of employees and determinants of employee performance, more empirical study specific to the sales force as a research population is needed to assess the nature of turnover and performance. Because the bulk of salesperson turnover occurs in early employment, particular attention needs to be devoted to the cognitive process of newcomers to the sales force.

The present work examines expectation-based and perception-oriented models of performance and retention for sales force new hires. Interests of this investigation focus on the initial expectations of newly hired sales representatives and on how the degree of fulfillment of these expectations relates to subsequent performance and retention behavior. Extant research suggests that the degree to which expectations are met positively influences mediating variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and indirectly influences outcomes such as job performance and retention of newcomers. Alternatively, some researchers contend that these results are due to improper measurement of met expectations. A longitudinal research design and

alternative measurement methods are employed here to better assess the role of met/unmet expectations.

The proposed study is based on theoretical research from a variety of academic disciplines, and the results of the study will have multi-disciplinary implications.

Contributions include: (a) replication and extension of theoretical research concerning processes leading to performance and retention of sales force newcomers, (b) a thorough examination of met expectations as a precursor to early sales force outcomes, and (c) methodological advances in the measurement of met expectations.

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## CHAPTER 1

### BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### Introduction

Sales management researchers and practitioners continue to search for means to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of sales forces. In line with this issue it seems as though contemporary research efforts are directed toward predicting “ultimate outcome variables” (e.g., individual performance and retention). Ultimate outcome variables, similar to the concept of “end-outcome variables” discussed by Challagalla and Shervani (1996), are strategic targets or metrics used by sales management.

Based on a review of the sales management literature and face-to-face interviews with sales managers, two ultimate outcomes receive the greatest attention: performance and retention of salespeople (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982b; Honeycutt, Howe & Ingram, 1993; McNeilly & Russ, 1992; Wanous, Poland, Premack & Davis, 1992). Variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment have received attention as intermediate or mediating linkages between antecedent variables and outcome variables (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993; Johnston, Parasuraman, Futrell & Black, 1990; Sager & Johnston, 1989). This attention is primarily because of researchers’ desire to specify the process of thought and emotion leading to performance and turnover.

Sales force outcomes are of particular interest today because of their impact on profitability. Three reasons for the impact are: (a) Performance of salespeople drives

gross revenue and general success (McNeilly & Goldsmith, 1991); (b) retention of salespeople enhances a firm's ability to grow its market, because salespeople perform a boundary spanning role wherein they can build lasting business relationships with customers (Pruden & Reese, 1972; Teas, 1983); and (c) costs of turnover, including recruiting and training, are expenses that detract from net income (Darmon, 1990; Sager, 1990). These three points accentuate the importance of retaining salespeople. Keeping a sales rep, all else held constant, increases sales revenue, allows business relationships to develop, and lowers recruiting and training costs. To positively influence retention and performance of salespeople, those who design sales forces and develop sales job descriptions need to better understand how climate and tactical variables influence mediating variables and outcome variables.

A massive body of literature exists concerning turnover of employees and the determinants of employee performance. However, studies in the general literature vary greatly as to variables and populations examined. Populations commonly investigated relative to turnover/retention include hospital employees, students, clerical persons or military subjects (Hom, Caranikas-Walker, Prussia, & Griffeth, 1992). However, the work context of these occupations diverges greatly from that of selling. The organizational roles, employment climate, and demographics of the selling profession make it difficult to directly apply findings from the non-sales research (Sager & Menon, 1994). More empirical study specific to the sales force as a research population is needed to assess the nature of turnover and performance antecedents as they occur in the selling field. Particular attention needs to be devoted to the role of newcomers to the sales force

(Dubinsky, Howell, Ingram, & Bellenger, 1986). Such focused investigation will provide information that is more contextually valid and will provide a better basis for developing programs that increase retention of new salespeople.

In light of the need for knowledge concerning cognitions and behaviors that are specific to the sales force as a population, the present work examines expectation-based and perception-oriented models of performance and retention for sales force new hires. New hires (alt., sales trainees) were chosen as a sales force population for two reasons: First, using sales trainees facilitates control for the influence of experiential and other tenure or career stage variables on the relationships of interest. It allows more confident focus on the relationships of interest. Sales trainees come into the organization on a relatively equal footing in terms of knowledge of the company. Second, several authors have noted that the initial period of employment in an organization plays an important role in shaping employees' subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976; Wanous, 1980; Youngblood, Mobley, & Meglino, 1983). A window to initial development can be gained by focusing on sales trainees.

Interests of this investigation focus on the initial expectations of newly hired sales representatives and on how these expectations relate to subsequent performance and retention behavior. Extant research suggests that the degree to which expectations are met influences positively mediating variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and indirectly influences outcomes such as job performance and retention of newcomers (e.g., Feldman, 1989; Greenhaus, Seidel & Marinis, 1983; Hicks & Klimoski, 1987; Major, Kozlowski, Chao & Gardner, 1995; Porter & Steers, 1973;

Premack & Wanous, 1985; Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 1991; Wanous et al., 1992). A limited number of studies have examined the phenomenon of met expectations with regard to salespeople (e.g., Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991).

Despite researchers' having focused increased attention on met expectations (cf. Major et al., 1995; Wanous et al., 1992), gaps remain in the research stream concerning expectations held by newcomers. More specifically, the body of research that addresses met/unmet expectations is characterized by shortcomings. The shortcomings include the lack of specificity of expectations, methodological variances, and variations in how met/unmet expectations have been measured. In light of the variations in measurement, methodology and analysis that characterize the body of research that addresses met expectations, a revised study is needed to attain a clearer idea concerning the relationship between the met/unmet expectations, attitudes, and behavior of new salespeople.

The following three areas present an opportunity to add value to the body of research addressing met expectations:

1. Because expectations and perceptions evolve, longitudinal data are needed to assess changes in initial expectations vis-à-vis perceived reality (Irving & Meyer, 1994; Wanous et al., 1992). A longitudinal research design will provide data necessary to tap met/unmet expectations. Such a design also alleviates problems associated with retrospective assessment of met expectations (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Tannenbaum et al., 1991).

2. To date, research that evaluates met expectations has focused on only a single expectation or on a limited set of job aspects, such as role stress (Major et al., 1995) or

training perceptions (Tannenbaum et al., 1991). Irving and Meyer (1994) recommend investigating the effect of confirmed expectations using several sets of job characteristics. At this point academics and practitioners would benefit from studying multiple job aspects as targets for job expectations. That is, studying effects for specific sets of job-related perceptions will allow more direct inference as to tactical applications for training and socializing new salespeople.

3. Irving & Meyer (1994, 1999) suggest that met expectations have little significant influence on job outcomes. Instead, job perceptions directly influence outcomes. They contend that support for the met expectations hypothesis may be attributed to invalid and unreliable measurement of the met expectations construct (e.g., autocorrelation between lagged means; problems associated with retrospective measures and difference scores). The linkages or paths between expectations and outcomes need to be assessed using more rigorous measurement and conceptual models.

In summary, a logical rationale supports research targeted at gaining a better understanding of how met expectations influence several types of sales force outcomes. The following sections: (a) synopsise the nature of several intervening and outcome variables that apply to sales force research, (b) establish the need to study sales force new hires as a sub-population, and (c) delineate the role of met/unmet expectations relative to attitudes and behavior of sales employees. The balance of chapter 1 further delineates the focus, purpose and scope of the proposed research, outlines the research design, specifies research questions, and summarizes the justification for the proposed research.



## Outcome and Intermediate Variables

Sales force managers at all levels are expected to produce short-term results. In many sales organizations, personal income and job status of sales managers is tied to short-term sales. It is a great challenge to work toward improved long-term performance and retention of salespeople while meeting high short-term performance objectives. Managers must find ways to aid salespeople so as to maximize performance and also enhance retention. Retaining salespeople is also important because of turnover costs. Turnover increases recruiting and training expenses and lessens revenue (Darmon, 1990; Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Johnston & Futrell, 1989).

To gain a greater understanding of how to help sales forces increase performance and retain salespeople longer, researchers have focused on mediating variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and withdrawal cognitions. Several researchers propose that linkages exist between these intervening variables and antecedent variables on one side, and retention-oriented behavior on the other side (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Mobley, 1977; Porter & Steers, 1973).

The following sections examine performance and turnover as well as several intervening variables. Table 1 defines each of the variables investigated in the study.

### *Performance*

While improved performance is a desired outcome, the definition of “improved performance” is unclear. Kane (1986) defines performance on a job function as “the record of outcomes achieved in carrying out the job function during a specified period” (p. 237). Sample dependent researchers and management professionals typically measure

performance in terms of short-term behavioral or monetary results (e.g., prospects contacted, sales volume, profit margins). In fact, many sales organizations rely on objective sales productivity as the main indicator of performance (Dubinsky & Barry, 1982).

Researchers have the added difficulty of gaining access to even short-term performance data. In the absence of objective data or supervisor evaluations, researchers operationalize performance with ratings obtained from peers, subordinates, self, or customers. Such responses may possess problems with bias (Viswesvaran, Ones, & Schmidt, 1996). Performance measurement is further complicated by company or situation specific variations. For example, different companies may use varied objective and subjective measures of performance (e.g., raw sales, increases in sales, percent of quota, supervisor evaluations, positive behaviors). Despite measurement problems, performance remains a most desirable outcome variable to the study of salespeople as a research population.

### *Turnover*

Turnover can be defined as “cessation of membership in an organization by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organization” (Mobley, 1982). Turnover behavior is more readily generalized than is performance across sales forces. Therefore, turnover rate can be used as a metric to evaluate the success and stability of a sales force (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

Most researchers and practitioners believe that retaining salespeople over a career window is beneficial (Lucas, Parasuraman, & Enis, 1987). Turnover of salespeople is

costly on an individual basis and in aggregate for organizations. Costs associated with turnover include administrative costs, separation compensation, recruiting and training of new sales reps, employee morale, and lost business opportunities (Darmon, 1990; Jones, Kantak, Futrell, & Johnston, 1996; Sager, 1990). For example, Heide (1998) estimates costs of training alone average over \$7,000 per salesperson (p. 20). Turnover in the selling field can be especially costly when sales territories are left empty or have to be served by a manager (Darmon, 1990; Johnston & Futrell, 1989). Because such costs are largely hidden, many sales managers do not realize the full extent of these costs.

It is certainly true that there are some beneficial aspects to turnover. These benefits could include reduced costs for compensation and benefits, induction of fresh ideas from new employees, and functional turnover (i.e., poor performers leave) (Bluedorn, 1982a; Williams & Livingstone, 1994). Functional turnover is beneficial because it affects low performers but not high performers (Darmon, 1990). The implication is that companies should focus their efforts on retaining high performers, because the negative effects of turnover may be overstated for lower performers (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Johnston & Futrell, 1989).

Despite benefits associated with certain patterns or types of turnover, such as the loss of marginal or poor performers (Johnston & Futrell, 1989; Williams & Livingstone, 1994), the negative aspects of the phenomenon make identifying means to increase retention a most necessary task. In a sales force context, more concern may be directed toward the turnover of high performers; however, the turnover process of lower performers, particularly those salespeople in earlier career stages, needs to be scrutinized

(Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984). Uncontrollable fluctuations in sales performance may be due to transitory, random influences. With contingent rewards, this can lead to premature quitting by potentially effective salespeople (Harrison, Virick, & William, 1996). Also, new salespeople represent a substantial investment because the learning curve is relatively long for new salespeople (12-18 months) (Sager, Griffeth, & Hom, 1998). Essentially then, any salesperson serves as a revenue-generating capital asset, and optimizing return on a capital asset entails retention. A chief assumption of this study is that increasing retention of salespeople in general is a target objective for sales organizations.

#### *Withdrawal Cognitions*

Turnover is an ultimate behavior. To gain an understanding of turnover from a process perspective, researchers usually incorporate one or more withdrawal cognitions. Withdrawal cognitions variables are primary precursors to turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Mobley, 1977; Sager et al., 1998). Withdrawal cognitions variables include the three behavioral intentions variables Mobley (1977) specified: thinking of quitting, intention to search, and intention to leave (alt., propensity to leave, intention to search, intention to stay) (Sager et al., 1998).

Withdrawal has consistently shown a predictive relationship with actual sales force turnover (Bluedorn, 1982b; Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, & Sincich, 1993; Johnston et al., 1990; Sager, Varadarajan, & Futrell, 1988; Steel & Ovalle, 1984). The concept of intentions leading to behavior traces back to the attitude-intention-behavior model developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). Such a predictive relationship is well enough

established that several studies use one or more withdrawal cognitions as a surrogate for turnover (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993; Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984).

### *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction, defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976), has long been studied as a desired outcome within organizations (e.g., Hoppock, 1935). From an individual and societal perspective, satisfaction with one’s job is undeniably a positive goal. From an organization’s perspective, satisfied employees have been shown to exhibit greater commitment to the organization (Bluedorn, 1982a; Koch & Steers, 1978; Steers, 1977; Williams & Hazer, 1986), higher performance (Mowday et al., 1982), and lower tendency to leave the organization (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993; Cohen, 1993; Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Johnston, et al., 1990; Sager & Johnston, 1989). Job satisfaction is a recognized precursor to organizational commitment and intention to stay (as shown in Figure 1; Porter, Crampon, & Smith, 1976; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). In some cases, job satisfaction has been shown to be a mediator for other antecedents such as role ambiguity and role conflict (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Sager, 1994).

### *Organizational Commitment*

Organizational commitment is the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). The construct has received extensive attention as an antecedent to withdrawal (Cohen, 1993; Jaros et al., 1993; Porter et al., 1974; Randall, Fedor & Longenecker, 1990), turnover (Cohen & Hudecek, 1993; Huselid & Day, 1991) and

performance (Huselid & Day, 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1979).

Organizational commitment correlates positively and consistently with job satisfaction (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992).

Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment are widely accepted as mediating or intervening variables largely because of their correlation with outcomes such as performance and turnover (Mobley, 1977; Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978). Meta-analyses of turnover support the mediating or intervening role of these two variables (cf. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Antecedent variables such as climate, job or task variables, and role stress contribute to job satisfaction and commitment. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment influence behavioral intentions and retention (Bluedorn, 1982a; Hom, Griffeth, & Sellaro, 1984; Johnston et al., 1990; Sager, 1994). In light of the mediating role of the attitudinal constructs, it is logical to include job satisfaction and organizational commitment in models of turnover and performance.

#### *Relationships Among Sales Force Intermediate and Outcome Variables*

Early models of turnover, including March & Simon (1958), Porter et al. (1974), Mobley (1977), Mobley, Horner and Hollingsworth (1978), Bluedorn (1982a), Steers and Mowday (1981), and Jackofsky (1984), served as a basis for construct and theory development in sales force research. Sales management researchers have replicated, modified, refuted or combined specific models (e.g., March & Simon, 1958; Mobley, 1977) with other models in an effort to gain greater understanding regarding the antecedents of employee turnover (e.g., Dubinsky et al., 1986; Johnston et al., 1990;

Walker, Churchill, & Ford, 1977). Such investigations have facilitated development of theory. Chapter 2 discusses these models and the hypothesized relationships in greater detail.

Less research attention has been devoted to understanding performance than has been devoted to turnover (cf. Churchill, Ford, Harley, & Walker, 1985). Although performance has been cited as a construct that is in need of research, the determinants of performance are poorly understood (Churchill et al., 1985). Such a disappointing scenario may be the case because performance indicants could be largely population specific – and even specific within workplace populations (Moncrief, 1986). As well, organizations are reticent to release performance data.

Organizational commitment has received mixed support as an antecedent variable to performance (Angle & Perry, 1981; Darden, McKee, & Hampton, 1993; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). The inconsistent findings regarding organizational commitment and other possible performance antecedents could be due to: (a) effort serving as a mediating construct (Blau, 1993; Brown & Leigh, 1996; Gardner, Dunham, Cummings, & Pierce, 1989), or (b) difficulties and inconsistencies in the measurement of performance (Benkhoff, 1997; Viswesvaran et al., 1996).

In general, a greater understanding is still needed concerning the relationship between the variables that influence salespeople's performance and turnover. While these constructs (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, withdrawal) intercorrelate reliably (Brown & Peterson, 1993), question still exists concerning causality between the

variables (Bagozzi, 1980; Farkas & Tetrick, 1989). Investigations are needed to determine systematic relationships involved in the processes that lead to target behaviors.

### *Sales Force Outcomes Model*

The present study proposes job satisfaction as a predictor of organizational commitment, with commitment mediating the effect of satisfaction on subsequent cognitions. Figure 1 depicts a Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) model, showing relationships among the mediating and outcome variables discussed here. These relationships have received the most consistent support in the employee behavior literature to date. The prevailing theory is that job satisfaction and organizational commitment relate negatively to withdrawal intentions such that higher organizational commitment and job satisfaction are associated with lower turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

The role of performance relative to organizational commitment and withdrawal cognitions is under-researched (Brown & Peterson, 1993). Several studies have shown a link between organizational commitment and performance. But the results of those studies are inconsistent (Huselid & Day, 1991; Mowday et al., 1979; Randall et al., 1990). It is safe to say that organizational commitment has limited validity as a positive antecedent to performance (Angle & Perry, 1981; Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1994; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989). Performance has also received support as a negative antecedent to turnover (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Williams & Livingstone, 1994). This is especially likely in a commission sales force where pay is directly tied to performance. Those salespeople who perform well are paid well and



therefore more likely to stay. Meanwhile, low performers do not make enough money to remain on the job.

The SFO model (Figure 1) draws from previous research pertaining to relationships among sales force outcome variables. The hypothesized relationships in the SFO model are summarized as: (a) job satisfaction relating positively to organizational commitment, (b) job satisfaction relating negatively to withdrawal cognitions, (c) organizational commitment relating positively to performance, (d) organizational commitment relating negatively to withdrawal cognitions, and (e) performance relating negatively to withdrawal cognitions. Further theoretical background is explored in chapter 2.

The SFO model incorporates some of the more critical outcomes of concern to sales managers and hypothesizes relationships among these mediating and outcome variables. The next step is to explore variables that influence these outcomes. The following sections discuss the focus of the present study and outline some important antecedents to the aforementioned outcomes in the SFO model.

#### Focus on Sales Force Newcomers

The expectations and behavior of organizational newcomers is an area that has received increased attention from researchers (e.g., Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1998; Bauer & Green, 1994, 1998; Major et al., 1995; Wanous et al., 1992). The study of newcomers as a subpopulation is particularly relevant, because the turnover rate among newly hired employees greatly exceeds that of employees with greater tenure (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley, 1982). Sales force newcomers also normally exhibit lower performance because

of their early position on the learning curve. That is, a new salesperson takes time to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to sell effectively (Dubinsky et al., 1986). These tendencies point to the need to study perceptions and behavior of salespeople from the point where they first enter the job.

To gain a better idea regarding why and how new salespeople leave their jobs, it is necessary to track new salespeople as a cohort (Baltes & Nesselroade, 1979; Rogosa, 1979). By tracking salespeople in cohorts through this early period of learning and socialization, researchers can better identify patterns and consistencies in relationships among attitudinal and behavioral variables. Such patterns will help researchers learn how attitudes and perceptions that salespeople hold toward the job vary consistently. Such consistent patterns will help researchers identify ways to help salespeople learn to perform well and also to increase retention of newcomers.

Much of the research on early employment has focused on the concept of organizational socialization, defined as “the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role” (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 211). A growing body of research regarding sales force and other employee group newcomers has addressed the socialization process as a means to investigate newcomer behavior (e.g., Dubinsky et al., 1986; Major et al., 1995). Socialization research draws largely on newcomers’ perceptions, including met/unmet expectations (Irving & Meyer, 1995; Tannenbaum et al., 1991; Wanous, 1992), training perceptions (El-Ansary, 1993) and job satisfaction (Youngblood, Mobley & Meglino, 1983).

One view of socialization, the social learning model (Bandura, 1986), holds that as an employee enters a new job, a series of acclimation experiences can have a profound effect on eventual performance and job status (i.e., stay or leave) (Feldman, 1981; Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1975). The social learning model holds that individuals develop expectations early in the employment relationship. For example, during the recruitment process, a salesperson develops a set of expectations regarding rewards, amount and types of support, job role, and training, among other things. With these expectations as a backdrop, the salesperson proceeds through the socialization process, undergoing events such as training and less formalized means of adjustment to the company and job environment. Socialization events influence subsequent attitudes and behavior of salespeople, early and pre-employment expectations, and early acclimation experiences. Because of their salience, the events that occur during early socialization of salespeople offer promise as means to increase understanding regarding determinants of performance and retention behavior of new salespeople.

#### The Role of Expectations

The study of early employment acclimation experiences, often characterized as socialization (Major et al., 1995), has received relatively little attention until recently, but appears to have a strong impact on sales force outcomes. Acclimation involves “the process of becoming, or the state of being, acclimated, or habituated to a new climate” (Webster’s, 1998). Wanous et al. (1992) indicate that the effects of acclimation experiences, and their long-term outcomes, appear to be closely tied to the initial expectations of new employees. The idea of acclimation holds that salespeople develop

incipient expectations concerning various aspects of the job and that they use the incipient expectations as a basing point for subsequent attitudes and behaviors.

The central thesis of the met expectations hypothesis holds that the degree to which expectations are met influences early job outcomes (Irving & Meyer, 1995; Wanous, 1992; Wanous et al., 1992). Porter and Steers (1973) explain the basis of the met expectations hypothesis:

The concept of met expectations may be viewed as the discrepancy between what a person encounters on the job in the way of positive and negative experiences and what he expected to encounter. Thus, since different employees can have quite different expectations with respect to payoffs or rewards in a given organizational or work situation, it would not be anticipated that a given variable (e.g., high pay, unfriendly work colleagues, etc.) would have a uniform impact on withdrawal decisions. We would predict, however, that when an individual's expectations —whatever they are – are not substantially met, his propensity to withdraw would increase. (p. 152)

It appears that initial expectations offer a logical basis for understanding longevity and performance of new salespeople. Typically, performance is lowest and turnover is highest during the first several months tenure of a sales job (Lucas et al., 1987).

Therefore, it appears that sales managers can improve retention and performance of new salespeople by understanding initial expectations of new salespeople and establishing

realistic initial job expectations, thereby fostering behaviors that help salespeople meet or exceed initial expectations through a constructive socialization process.

Despite the promise of social learning theory, sales management researchers have focused relatively little attention on initial expectations salespeople hold (cf. Dubinsky et al., 1986; Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991). In addition to the few studies that have addressed expectations and behavior of salespeople, the body of research addressing the role of expectations in turnover is relatively limited (Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1995).

In addition to the point that few studies have addressed expectations of salespeople, the body of research addressing expectations is flawed. First, expectations are typically studied in isolation, or with few related constructs (e.g., organizational commitment and turnover). Also, most studies isolate newcomers' expectations regarding only a few job characteristics (cf. Irving & Meyer, 1994; Major et al., 1995; Tannenbaum et al., 1991). Finally, the difficulty of measuring met expectations has led to questions of validity (Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1999). The following section delineates the focus of the present study and explains how these limitations will be addressed.

#### Proposed Research Focus

An extensive body of research exists in the sales management realm concerning interrelationships among a set of constructs: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, intention to leave/stay, and turnover (e.g., Johnston et al., 1990; Lucas et al., 1987; Sager et al., 1998; Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991). This literature exists because researchers believe that a better understanding of these constructs, their outcomes, and

their antecedents will help them develop more effective tactical approaches for retaining and developing salespeople.

Two types of antecedent variables researchers can investigate to expand knowledge of determinant variables include (a) new salespeople's initial expectations and (b) to what extent these expectations are met/unmet. The proposed research will assess initial job expectations, the extent to which salespeople realize these expectations, and their influence on selected mediating and outcome variables, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and behavioral intention.

Figures 2 and 3 represent retro integral extensions to the SFO model (Figure 1). Figure 2 illustrates a model that integrates met expectations as antecedents to job satisfaction and organizational commitment as mediator variables, and performance and withdrawal as outcome variables. This is referred to as the Met Expectations (ME) model. Figure 3 depicts an alternative model, the Direct Effects (DE) model. The DE model omits met expectations. Instead, initial expectations indirectly influence intervening variables (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) through mediation by actual perceptions of job experiences. The proposed research design compares the ME and DE models to improve our understanding of expectations as an antecedent to sales force mediating and outcome variables.

In summary, by focusing on the nature and implications of met or unmet expectations, the study sheds light on how management can help salespeople improve performance and enhance longevity. The balance of chapter 1: (a) further delineates the

purpose and scope of the research, (b) specifies the primary research questions, and (c) summarizes justification for the research.

### Purpose and Scope

Given the need for further study of the influence of processes in the early employment period, the present study entails three purposes.

1. To examine salespeople's initial expectations, subsequent perceptions, and a measure of met expectations relative to a set of job aspects (i.e., perceptions of training, job role, perceived manager support, job rewards, job comfort, and job responsibilities). Previous studies involving met expectations have been limited to only one or a few of these job aspects.

2. To operationalize met expectations using a multi-point panel design and polynomial regression (Edwards, 1994; Irving & Meyer, 1999). Initial expectations of the various job aspects will be measured for cohorts of salespeople on the first day of training. Six months later, perceptions of the same cohorts concerning identical job aspects will be measured. Then hypothesized outcomes of met expectations will be regressed onto pre-entry expectations of job aspects and subsequent perceptions of the same job aspects. This approach represents a substantial advance over the use of retrospective data and difference scores to operationalize met expectations (Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1999; Wanous et al., 1992).

3. To use theoretical models (Figures 2 and 3) to evaluate the influence of initial expectations, job perceptions, and met expectations on several mediator variables and distal outcomes (i.e., organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance and

withdrawal intentions). Alternative structural models will be compared in order to assess the influence of met expectations versus its component parts (i.e., initial expectations and subsequent job perceptions).

A longitudinal research design is needed to better ascertain causality and improve measurement of the met expectations construct (Irving & Meyer, 1994). The research design taps salespeople's initial employment expectations regarding various aspects of the job (i.e., support perceptions, job role perceptions, and job aspect perceptions) and compares them to perceived experiences six months into the job. More specifically, expectations of a cohort of sales force newcomers will be measured on their first day of training. The cohorts will again be tapped six months after initial training (reasons for time frame discussed in chapter 3). The second survey will measure a set of job-related attitudes and perceptions, involving the extent to which expectations have been met. The subject company will provide job status and performance data for the 6-month window.

The goal of the study is to evaluate the utility of met expectations in terms of relationships with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance and withdrawal of new salespeople. Study findings will be directed toward helping researchers identify specific ways to influence retention and performance of new salespeople. Alternatively, as suggested by Irving and Meyer (1994), met expectations may have minimal influence on early sales force outcomes.

In summary, the proposed study will deepen researchers' understanding of the influence of met expectations on important sales outcomes. The panel design will collect data over a 6-month window. As the study examines a wide range of job aspects and



outcomes, it will allow an in depth look on the influence of early employment experiences on attitudes and intentions of sales trainees. This will address the need for further inquiry regarding the true role of met expectations (Hom, Griffeth, Palich, & Bracker, 1999; Irving & Meyer, 1999).

### Research Design

The study is designed to evaluate the met expectations hypothesis (Irving & Meyer, 1995; Porter & Steers, 1973; Wanous et al., 1992) in a sales force context. To evaluate the met expectations hypothesis, the research design of the study facilitates tracking new salespeople employed by a large national communications company. Each new salesperson will complete a survey on the first day of initial training, and will complete a second survey after six months on the job.

The first survey will focus on initial expectations and perceptions of the job. This survey will be administered in person to all members of the training class. The second survey, mailed to salespeople via company channels and returned directly to the researcher, will assess socialization beliefs, job perceptions (some matched with expectations) and employment intentions. Individual performance data and retention data will be collected directly from the company.

### Research Questions and Conceptual Models

The purpose of the proposed research can be explicated through two general research questions. The first research question concerns relationships between initial expectations, met expectations, and job perceptions and the intermediate and outcome variables of interest. The primary focus is on differences between the ME and DE models

(Figures 2 and 3). The second research question is exploratory in nature and examines structural relationships from the first research question over a range of job aspects. The first research question serves as a basis for the hypotheses to be tested in the study. The following sections synopsise the research questions. The research questions will be more fully developed and explained as research hypotheses in chapter 3.

Research Question 1: Do met expectations offer added explanatory power vis-a-vis the components of initial expectations and subsequent job perceptions?

- (a) Do salespeople's initial job expectations exert a direct influence on subsequent attitudes and behavioral job outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, withdrawal intentions) independent of the degree to which those expectations are met?
- (b) Do salespeople's job perceptions after six months on the job exert a direct influence on subsequent attitudes and behavioral job outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, withdrawal intentions) independent of the degree to which their expectations are met?
- (c) Does the degree to which salespeople's initial expectations are met exert a direct influence on subsequent attitudes and behavioral job outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, withdrawal intentions) independent of initial expectations and job perceptions?
- (d) Do predicted relationships among intermediate and outcome variables (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and withdrawal) hold in a population of sales force newcomers?

Research Question 2: Do initial expectations, met expectations, and job perceptions have differing relationships (i.e., different strength or direction of correlation) with specific intermediate and outcome variables (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, withdrawal intentions) for different job aspects (i.e., role ambiguity, role conflict, training perceptions, perceived manager support, and perceptions of job attributes)?

The first research question specifies conceptual models that represent how early met/unmet expectations influence attitudes and outcomes. The conceptual models can be evaluated by developing constructs and then simultaneously evaluating relations between the component constructs (Bagozzi, 1980).

The met expectations hypothesis suggests that an algebraic measure of met expectations will predict organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance and withdrawal (Figure 2). Alternatively, the elements of met expectations (i.e., initial expectations and subsequent job perceptions) may offer more explanatory power by themselves (Figure 3), as proposed by Irving and Meyer (1994). A comparison of alternative structural equation models representing algebraic and component models (Figures 2 & 3, respectively) will illuminate this.

#### *Role of Initial Expectations*

Part (a) of the first research question addresses the influence of initial expectations on intermediate variables and distal outcomes. This is closely tied to the realistic job preview literature, which rests on an assumption that calibrating expectations of new employees through realistic job previews (RJPs) can increase employees' job satisfaction

and thereby enhance longevity on the job (Wanous, 1980). Some espouse that RJP work on the assumption that more realistic expectations are more likely to be met or exceeded (Phillips, 1998; Premack & Wanous, 1985). However, theory exists to counter this assumption. Irving and Meyer (1994) suggest that higher expectations can directly influence positive outcomes. Thus, part (a) examines the direct influence of initial expectations on intermediate and outcome variables.

#### *Role of Contemporaneous Perceptions*

Irving and Meyer (1994, 1995) suggest that the influence of met expectations is primarily a function of current experiences. That is, if current job perceptions are controlled, the met expectations construct might have little or no influence on outcome variables. Hom et al. (1999) re-tested a previous model (Hom, Griffeth, Palich, & Bracker, 1998) using a polynomial regression technique employed by Irving & Meyer (1999) to measure met expectations. They found that a more valid measure of met expectations yielded results as predicted by Irving & Meyer (1999). Now the question is whether met expectations influence performance and retention directly or only through contemporary experiences.

Therefore, part (b) of the first research question focuses on the influence of current job perceptions aside from job expectations. If current job perceptions (e.g., role ambiguity, role conflict, job reward, job comfort, job responsibility, perceived manager support, and training satisfaction) are predictive of outcomes independently of expectations, then such perceptions may mediate or supplant the influence of met expectations.

### *Role of Met Expectations*

The met expectations hypothesis suggests that a direct relationship should exist between the *confirmation* of expectations and job outcomes (Porter & Steers, 1973). That is, the extent to which a salesperson's expectations concerning a job are met corresponds positively to performance and retention. The notion of confirmation implies that subsequent perceptions of job aspects meet or exceed initial expectations.

The premise underlying findings concerning met expectations is that the relationship between initial expectations and outcome variables is influenced over a time window by the extent to which the expectations are met (Colella, DeNisis, & Wanous, 1994). That is, the more the salesperson believes expectations are met or exceeded, the more strongly initial expectations correlate to outcomes. One body of empirical research supports the idea that performance and retention are enhanced to the extent that newcomers' expectations are met (Major et al., 1995; Porter & Steers, 1973; Tannenbaum et al., 1991; Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991; Wanous et al., 1992). Therefore, part (c) of the first research question addresses relationships between met expectations of salespeople and several attitudinal and behavioral outcome variables, independent of initial expectations and job perceptions.

### *Relationships among Intermediate and Outcome Variables*

As discussed previously, turnover research generally supports a sequence of intermediate outcomes leading to turnover. The dominant turnover models depict job satisfaction preceding organizational commitment, which then leads to reduced withdrawal cognitions (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982a; Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley, 1977;

Price & Mueller, 1986). Withdrawal cognitions mediate the influence on turnover of other variables (Bluedorn, 1982b; Johnston et al., 1990).

The role of performance is less understood. However, studies have shown a positive relationship between organizational commitment and performance (Darden et al., 1993; Huselid & Day, 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) and a negative relationship between performance and turnover, at least in some cases (Jackofsky, 1984; Johnston, Varadarajan, Futrell, & Sager, 1987; Williams & Livingstone, 1994). Part (d) of research question one concerns the structural relationships among job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and withdrawal.

#### *Focus of Expectations*

Previous studies of met expectations focused on specific aspects of a job, including role stress (Major et al., 1995), training perceptions (Tannenbaum et al., 1991), and job attributes (Irving & Meyer, 1994). The present study expands the spectrum of expectations by including a more comprehensive set of foci (e.g., role ambiguity, role conflict, training satisfaction, perceived manager support, and job perceptions of reward, comfort and responsibility). By doing so, the study will help researchers better understand the scope of the impact of expectations.

The second research question is exploratory and pursues deeper analysis of the structural relationships presented in the first research question. Researchers would benefit from the greater understanding obtained concerning the nature of linkages that exist between expectations and outcomes. For example, unmet expectations regarding training may have a stronger or weaker correlation with organizational commitment than do

unmet expectations of other job aspects. Researchers can gain a better idea concerning what *types* of expectations influence sales force outcomes.

#### Justification for Proposed Research

This research proposal fills several gaps in the existing sales management literature. Gaps include: (a) a paucity of studies examining expectations in relation to multiple job aspects, (b) over-reliance on difference scores and retrospective measures to operationalize met expectations, (c) over-reliance on cross-sectional research designs for making causal inferences, and (d) a lack of sales force samples in the met expectations literature, which limits generalizability. Although several studies (Table 2) have examined met expectations and subsequent outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, withdrawal, performance, and turnover), the current research will add to knowledge and theory development in the following ways:

1. The met expectations construct will entail a broad spectrum of expectations, including salespeople's expectations regarding (a) training, (b) job roles, (c) perceived manager support, and (d) job characteristics (e.g., job reward, job responsibility, job comfort). Most previous studies have included expectations of only a limited number of job aspects.

2. The research design will include data gathering at two points in time to incorporate time into measurement of met expectations and to allow estimation of lagged effects. The 6-month window will allow stronger inference as to the *process* a new salesperson undergoes in adjusting to a new job.

3. Met expectations will be measured using a polynomial regression technique suggested by Irving and Meyer (1994) and Edwards (1991; Edwards & Cooper, 1990). Polynomial regression improves estimation of met expectations by examining the increment in variance explained by higher order terms and eliminating the reliance on difference scores (Irving & Meyer, 1994).

4. The study will provide a test of existing theory to delineate more clearly the nature and influence of employees' acclimation experiences. In particular, the study will examine the effects of initial expectations, met expectations, and job perceptions in relation to a broad range of job aspects and outcome variables in a sales force setting. The field sample of salespeople offers an opportunity to rigorously evaluate the met expectations hypothesis in an under-studied and highly relevant employment setting.

#### Summary

Despite an extensive body of research on turnover and performance, important gaps remain. The gaps are especially apparent in the selling field, where performance and retention of new hires are critical outcomes. The focus on newcomers' expectations as they enter the job will expand our understanding of a potentially valuable antecedent that can be controlled and/or used to predict outcomes. By studying these constructs with a panel design, the processes leading to performance and turnover can be more accurately assessed. This study will provide a rigorous test of prevailing theories and assumptions, will expand the scope of the phenomena of interest, and will deepen our understanding of the implications of expectations and the extent to which these expectations are met.



Chapter 2 provides a more detailed review of the extant literature. Theoretical constructs and models that form the basis of this study are outlined and explained. Chapter 3 develops the research hypotheses, explains the operationalization of constructs, and explicates the research design.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELEVANT THEORY AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

#### Overview

Chapter 1 presented the rationale for the present study. Two models depicting the role of met expectations were presented: the Met Expectations (ME) model (Figure 2) and the Direct Effects (DE) model (Figure 3). Nested within these models is the Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) model (Figure 1). The ME and DE models are derived from theoretical models of employee behavior developed by Hom et al. (1998, 1999), Mobley (1977), Porter and Steers (1973), Price and Mueller (1986), and Steers and Mowday (1981). The ME and DE models relate alternate conceptions concerning the role of met expectations relative to mediating and outcome variables in a sales force training environment.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature that underlies the development of the proposed models. First, the body of literature that addresses met expectations, including major research streams related to the met expectations of salespeople, is reviewed. Because evaluating job expectations necessitates understanding how individuals conceive aspects of their jobs, that aspect of behavioral literature is also reviewed. The balance of chapter 2 relates thought concerning variables that serve as outcomes of met expectations, and it reviews several models that involve relationships among these variables.

## Met Expectations

Porter and Steers (1973) explain the concept of met expectations as “the discrepancy between what a person encounters on the job in the way of positive and negative experiences and what he expected to encounter” (p. 152). A meta-analysis conducted by Wanous et al. (1992) revealed significant, but inconsistent, correlations for met expectations with several outcome variables, among them job satisfaction, organizational commitment, retention, and performance. Theory is emerging concerning the role met expectations play relative to attitudes, performance, and retention behavior of employees (Hom et al., 1998, 1999; Wanous et al., 1992). Following a summary of the extant met expectations literature, related research streams are reviewed.

### *Extant Research Concerning Met Expectations*

Two approaches to met expectations have dominated the literature: *unrealistic* expectations and *unmet* expectations (Louis, 1980). Unrealistic expectations refers to newcomers’ initial expectations being unrealistically inflated, leading directly to negative outcomes (e.g., Wanous, 1977). This view spawned the emphasis on realistic job previews as a means to calibrate the initial expectations of new hires. Under the unmet expectations approach, outcomes such as turnover are attributed to a difference between newcomers’ initial expectations and early job experiences (e.g., Dunnette, Arvey, & Banas, 1973; Katzell, 1968). Unmet expectations differ from unrealistic expectations in that the influence of initial expectations occurs through a mechanism, and thereby they have no direct influence on outcomes. That is, the difference between reality and initial expectations influences outcomes.

This section reviews researchers' findings concerning met/unmet expectations. The following section addresses unrealistic expectations within the context of realistic job previews and expectancy lowering procedures.

Most studies that examine the role of expectations in the workplace employ variants of newcomers' met/unmet expectations as precursors to turnover behavior. Table 2 summarizes the research involving met expectations. Several patterns are evident. First, a wide variety of subjects have been used, but few studies have employed salespeople as a research population (Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991). Second, met expectations were often measured retrospectively (e.g., Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Lee & Mowday, 1987; Michaels & Spector, 1982; Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991). However, in several studies researchers measured initial expectations and later assessed experiences (e.g., Greenhaus et al., 1983; Irving & Meyer, 1994; Katzell, 1968; Tannenbaum et al., 1991). Third, the most common outcomes associated with met expectations are job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to stay. Though the body of research addressing expectations provides support for the idea that met expectations correlate systematically with these mediating and outcome variables (see Table 2), inconsistent results have been reported by those who studied met expectations as an antecedent to performance (Wanous et al. 1992). However, the failure to link met expectations to performance is not surprising since Porter and Steers (1973) never suggested performance as an outcome of met expectations.

Much of the research on met/unmet expectations derives from the Porter and Steers (1973) conceptualization of the concept. They provided an early framework

(Figure 4) wherein unmet expectations lead to dissatisfaction, which in turn leads to exit. Thus, Porter and Steers postulate that job dissatisfaction mediates the relationship between unmet expectations and turnover. Notably, Porter and Steers' (1973) operational definition of met expectations centers on the discrepancy between one's initial expectations and one's subsequent perceptions. Only the expectations of salient aspects of the job (e.g., pay, promotion, supervisor relations, peer group interactions) are included in the met expectations hypothesis espoused by Porter and Steers. They aver that individuals have varying salient expectation sets, depending on which job aspects are most important to the individual.

Porter and Steers' (1973) model was the first to incorporate met expectations into a model concerning employees' decisions about turnover. The model proposes that if an individual's expectations are not met, dissatisfaction results, leading to withdrawal from the job and eventual turnover. Porter and Steers' conception of the turnover process served as a basis for further studies examining met expectations (e.g., Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Hom et al., 1984; Lee & Mowday, 1987; Major et al., 1995; Reilly, Brown, Blood, & Malatesta, 1981; Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991).

Along with research investigating met/unmet expectations, a parallel research stream examines *unrealistic* expectations. This research is intertwined with the study of realistic job previews, to be reviewed next.

#### *Role of Realistic Job Previews and Expectancy Lowering Procedures*

One body of research akin to Porter and Steers' (1973) thought has focused on lowering, or making more realistic, the expectations of new employees as a means to

enhance early employment job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance, and thereby to enhance retention. Management may choose to alter initial expectations through recruiting and training practices in order to effect realistic expectations (Wanous et al., 1992).

Wanous (1982) promotes realistic job previews (RJPs) as a practice that helps to instill realistic expectations in newcomers. A realistic job preview facilitates more accurate job expectations among applicants by providing orientation information that is factual rather than romanticized (Louis, 1980; Wanous, 1976). The RJP is administered to employees immediately before or after an applicant accepts a new job. An RJP can be delivered through written, verbal, or video-taped media (Phillips, 1998).

The premise behind RJPs holds that realistic job previews lower newcomers' expectations and thereby reduce the employee's chance of experiencing reality shock, which is the feeling associated with situations where expectations are not met (Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981). Likewise, more realistic job expectations lead to met expectations, less dissatisfaction, and less inclination to leave the organization (Irving & Meyer, 1994; Wanous et al., 1992). Worded another way, met expectations serves as a desirable outcome of RJPs and a possible mechanism through which RJPs operate (Hom et al., 1998; Wanous, 1978).

Meta-analyses conducted by Premack and Wanous (1985) and Phillips (1998) supported the notion that RJPs influence positively job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and retention of newcomers. However, the correlations are modest and inconsistent, with situational or contextual variables possibly influencing

results (e.g., setting of the study, timing of the RJP, media for RJP delivery) (Phillips, 1998).

Findings of recent research cast doubt as to the role of met expectations as a mediating construct between RJP and positive employment outcomes. Using partial correlations and Edwards' (1991, 1994a) polynomial regression approach, Hom et al. (1999) found that RJP promote accurate preemployment expectations rather than improve the *confirmation* of those expectations. Their findings suggest that post-entry experiences of the new hire, rather than met/unmet expectations, translate how RJP mediators mediate between RJP and subsequent attitudes (Hom et al., 1999; see also Irving & Meyer, 1999). The implication is that RJP research needs to focus on other mediators, such as delayed self-selection or cognitive dissonance, rather than expectation fulfillment (Hom et al., 1999).

An alternative to using RJP to lower expectations is for management to employ an expectation lowering procedure (ELP) (Buckley, Fedor, Veres, Weise, & Carraher, 1998). An ELP lowers general expectations without using job-specific information. For example, while an RJP may target expectations of specific job aspects, an ELP targets overall expectations not specific to the job. This procedure effects the expectations themselves more directly, and it also avoids the necessity for detailed job analysis, which can be expensive and may not apply should a job description change (Buckley et al., 1998; Cardy & Dobbins, 1996).

Buckley et al. (1998) found that both RJP and ELPs were associated positively with job satisfaction and reduced turnover of newcomers via met expectations. That is,

both RJPs and ELPs function to lower expectations, thereby making it more likely that expectations will be met (Buckley et al. 1998). Regardless of which approach is used, both RJPs and ELPs are intended to foster more realistic expectations on the part of newcomers, which in turn are expected to foster more positive job attitudes, improved performance, and improved retention (Wanous et al., 1992). All given, it appears that building accurate expectations concerning a sales job via RJPs or ELPs should help the new salesperson make it along the learning curve for the sales job, resulting in improved performance, better attitudes, and enhanced retention.

#### *Role of Socialization Theories in Expectations Building*

Socialization is defined as the process by which an individual acquires the task knowledge, social knowledge, and behaviors needed to participate as an organizational member (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Several stage-oriented models of socialization include or imply met expectations as a component of the socialization process (see Table 3). One can infer from models of socialization that unmet expectations are associated with negative consequences, such as lower job satisfaction and higher turnover (Wanous et al., 1992).

The following models demonstrate the important role of met expectations during a newcomer's socialization experience (Wanous, 1980).

1. Buchanan's (1974) three-stage early career model: The first stage of the career model, covering the first year on the job, involves the extent to which expectations are realized, and the possible reality shock when they are unrealized.



2. The Porter-Lawler-Hackman (1975) three-stage entry model: The Porter-Lawler-Hackman model corresponds closely with the met/unmet expectations concept. This model focuses first on initial expectations prior to beginning the job. Newcomers have a set of values and expectations at this point. The second stage of the model involves the emergence of discrepancies between the values and expectations the individual holds and the reality the individual experiences.

3. Feldman's (1976) descriptive model of organizational socialization: The anticipatory socialization stage takes place prior to entering the organization. One of the process variables in this stage is "realism," or the degree to which recruits have a complete and accurate notion of what life will be like in the firm. The anticipatory socialization stage includes the employees' job expectations prior to formalizing membership in the organization and the degree to which the expectations of both the individual and the organization are realistic. The more realistic the expectations held, the easier will be the employees' adjustment to membership.

4. Schein's (1978) three-stage socialization model: Schein's first stage is entry, wherein a major problem encountered involves creating false expectations about the early part of the newcomer's career in the organization. When the company and new employees focus only on long-term matches and outcomes (e.g., high earnings through commission-based selling), they ignore possible discrepancies between initial expectations and reality experienced in the early months on the job.

5. Wanous's (1980) four-stage model of socialization: The initial stage of the Wanous model involves the employee's confronting and accepting organizational reality. Confronting reality entails the employee either confirming or disconfirming expectations.

In summary, met expectations play a major role in the early stage of socialization. The early stage in most of the models emphasizes the degree to which expectations are met (i.e., confirmed or disconfirmed). Improved socialization in later stages should result from realistic expectations. Specifically, socialization researchers reveal that realistic expectations in a sales force setting correlate with job satisfaction (Dubinsky et al., 1986) and organizational commitment (Werbel, Landau, & DeCarlo, 1996). Other theories of socialization similarly include the role of expectations (e.g., Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

#### *Applying the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Model to Met/Unmet Expectations*

One approach to increasing retention of salespeople involves conceiving a new hire as a customer. The expectancy-disconfirmation (E-D) paradigm of consumer satisfaction (Oliver, 1980, 1993) has been applied extensively in the customer satisfaction literature (Yi, 1990). It is closely related to the models of met expectations in organizational settings. Much akin to the met expectations hypothesis, the E-D model views customer satisfaction as a linear function of prepurchase expectations, perceived product performance, and the degree to which expectations are confirmed or disconfirmed during consumption (LaBarbera & Mazursky, 1983; Zwick, Pieters, & Baumgartner, 1995).

Some E-D studies indicate that higher product performance and higher initial expectations influence satisfaction directly and positively (Swan & Trawick, 1981; Zwick et al., 1995). In addition, positive disconfirmation (i.e., performance exceeds expectations) increases satisfaction, while negative disconfirmation (i.e., performance falls short of expectations) decreases satisfaction (Zwick et al., 1995). Thus, the role initial expectations play in influencing the satisfaction of customers parallels the role of expectations in the job satisfaction of new employees.

However, research testing the E-D model has produced conflicting findings (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Patterson, Johnson, & Spreng, 1997; Voss, Parasuraman, & Grewal, 1998). While limited support exists for a positive relationship between pre-purchase expectations and satisfaction (e.g., Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994), findings of other studies fail to support the relationship (e.g., Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993). Inconsistencies in the research led researchers to propose that different satisfaction processes operate under different conditions, such as different product categories, different levels of product involvement, or for products versus services (Patterson et al., 1998).

Despite inconsistent findings, E-D research has developed along a vein similar to met expectations research and thereby may provide useful insight. Patterson et al. (1997) developed a model, partially shown in Figure 5, that demonstrates the parallels between the two streams of research. Product performance (similar to job experiences) has a positive relationship with positive disconfirmation (i.e., exceeded expectations) and with satisfaction. Initial expectations have a negative relationship with positive

disconfirmation, meaning higher initial expectations are less likely to result in the expectations being exceeded.

The most positive relationship with satisfaction in the Patterson et al. (1997) model is positive disconfirmation of expectations. However, other studies show that initial expectations may also have a direct *positive* relationship with post-purchase satisfaction. These findings contrast with the indirect *negative* relationship between initial expectations and satisfaction via the decreased likelihood of expectations being met or exceeded (Swan & Trawick, 1981; Voss et al., 1998; Zwick et al., 1995). Notably though, as with much of the met expectations research in organizational psychology, E-D research has relied on retrospective measures of disconfirmation (Zwick et al., 1995).

#### *Control Theory and Expectancy Theory Relating to Met Expectations*

Aside from turnover, socialization, and expectancy-disconfirmation research, control theory and expectancy theory relate to the met expectations hypothesis. These theories add insight that can assist theoretical development concerning met expectations of salespeople.

1. Buckley et al. (1998) observe that control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Taylor, Fisher, & Ilgen, 1984) offers some explanation for the responses to experiences that are inconsistent with expectations. Control theory purports that greater differences between expectations and experience create bigger gaps to which an individual must respond (i.e., take action to reduce or eliminate gaps). With large expectation gaps in the job setting, action to alleviate the gaps (e.g., intention to leave) is more likely (Buckley et al., 1998).

2. Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964) relates to the met expectations concept in that employees develop instrumentality perceptions. Instrumentality perceptions involve the expectations that certain outcomes will occur if specific behaviors are performed (Wanous et al., 1992). In a selling scenario, sales trainees may be instructed that effort begets sales calls and sales calls beget sales. Instrumentality exists to the extent that salespeople expect sales calls beget sales. If instrumentality perceptions are not fulfilled (i.e., sales calls do not beget sales), a form of disconfirmation of expectations occurs.

#### *Focus of Met Expectations*

One aspect of expectations that needs to be clarified concerns how individuals conceive them. Researchers who study met expectations typically operationalize the construct as either a general construct or as expectations regarding specific job characteristics. Some studies simply use a single retrospective measure of general job expectations as suggested by Wall and Payne (1973; e.g., Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Dunnette et al., 1973; Hom et al., 1984; Lee & Mowday, 1987; Michaels & Spector, 1982). As an example, Arnold & Feldman (1982) used a single item, “All in all, have you realized your expectations with regard to the profession?” Other studies measure retrospective met expectations by specific job attributes (e.g., Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991).

However, other researchers have developed more robust operationalizations of met expectations. A difference-based measure comprised of initial expectations minus subsequent perceptions regarding a list of job characteristics has been applied (e.g., Greenhaus et al., 1983; Tannenbaum et al., 1991). To enact the difference-based measure, panel-based research designs typically tap initial expectations regarding a variety of

specific job aspects, then perceptions of those same aspects after a given period of time on the job (e.g., Irving & Meyer, 1994).

Unfortunately, researchers have paid little attention to specific targets of expectations. Logically, employees form expectations of many job experiences (e.g., role states, social support, training, job attributes) that tend to influence subsequent attitudes and behaviors. The job experience constructs reviewed here were selected on the basis of: (a) extant research regarding antecedents to intermediate and outcome sales force variables, (b) extant research regarding met expectations, and (c) qualitative analysis of the sales force targeted in this study. Based on these criteria, constructs representing role conflict, role ambiguity, training perceptions, perceived manager support, and job attributes (rewards, comfort, responsibility) are reviewed in light of their potential role as precursors to salesperson attitude and behavioral outcomes. These constructs also represent potential dimensions of employees' met/unmet expectations.

*Role States.* Expectations can relate to job roles as represented through role theory (Kahn et al., 1964). Ford, Walker, and Churchill (1976) characterize salespersons' perceptions of job roles and related variables as *role stress* or *role states*. Role stress variables (e.g., role conflict and role ambiguity) have been posited as precursors of salesperson satisfaction and eventual behavioral consequences (e.g., turnover and performance). Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970) define role ambiguity as a situation where an individual is unsure about the expectations of his or her role in the job or organization. They define role conflict as incompatibility in communicated role

expectations that impinge on perceived role performance. These characterizations are consistent with other definitions (e.g., Churchill, Ford, & Walker, 1976; see Table 1).

As boundary personnel linking an organization to its customers, salespeople are especially susceptible to role ambiguity and role conflict (Brown & Peterson, 1994). These constructs have been linked to a variety of job attitudes and behaviors for salespeople (Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, & Moncrief, 1996; Dubinsky & Mattson, 1979; Jackson & Schuler, 1985; Michaels, Cron, Dubinsky, & Joachimsthaler, 1988). Evidence suggests that role ambiguity and role conflict have a direct negative influence on job satisfaction (Babakus et al., 1996; Behrman & Perreault, 1984; Brown & Peterson, 1993; Ford et al., 1976; Singh, Verbeke, & Rhoads, 1996; Teas, 1983) and organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). Relationships between role perceptions and organizational commitment (negative) and turnover (positive) appear to be mediated by job satisfaction (Babakus et al., 1996; Brown & Peterson, 1993; Singh et al., 1996). Role ambiguity and role conflict are also positively correlated with one another (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Sager, 1994).

Major et al. (1995) pinpointed role conflict and role clarity as important targets of expectations for organizational newcomers. Findings of their longitudinal study revealed that met expectations concerning role conflict and role clarity (operationalized as difference scores between pre-entry expectations and perceptions four weeks after entry) correlated positively with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Role expectations may also result in less purposeful effort, resulting in lower performance (Behrman & Perreault, 1984).

*Training Perceptions.* Training programs are an integral part of the socialization process for new employees (Feldman, 1989). Despite possible influences of trainees' attitudes and expectations on early employee outcomes, few researchers have examined the influence of training constructs on job outcomes such as retention (cf. Tannenbaum et al., 1991). In particular, few studies have examined the role that expectations play in a training context (Hicks & Klimoski, 1987). Given the socialization bent of training, the lack of attention to training expectations is surprising.

Tannenbaum et al. (1991) studied the influence of trainees' expectations and perceptions of training on organizational commitment using a longitudinal research design. They created a construct called *training fulfillment* to represent the extent to which training met or fulfilled a trainees' expectations and desires. Their approach differs from most research on expectations in that the valence for various training experiences is included in the measure. The researchers found that training fulfillment is positively related to post-training organizational commitment and motivation.

Earlier studies also indicated the importance of training expectations as influencers of early job outcomes. Hoiberg and Berry (1978) found that unmet training expectations of military recruits correlated negatively with the completion of training (i.e., unmet expectations related positively to turnover of recruits). Results of an experiment reported by Hicks and Klimoski (1987) also suggest the importance of unmet expectations. The researchers manipulated pretraining expectations and found that trainees who received realistic information exhibited greater motivation and commitment than trainees who did not receive realistic information. Findings reported by Hicks and



Klimoski are consistent with thought expressed in the realistic job preview literature, where the phenomenon of met/unmet expectations is only implied as a potential mechanism.

*Perceived Manager Support.* Porter, Lawler, and Hackman (1975) observe, “To the new hire, the supervisor *is* the organization” (p. 184). Employees experiencing supportive relationships early on the job can be critical to achieving later success in areas such as performance and retention (Berlow & Hall, 1966; Kirchmeyer, 1995). In particular, supervisor support is important to achieving early job outcomes (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Kirmeyer & Dougherty, 1988). Higher levels of supervisor support are associated with greater job satisfaction (Poulin, 1994), greater pretraining motivation (Facteau, Dobbins, Russell, Ladd, & Kudisch, 1995), improved performance (Deeter-Schmelz & Ramsey, 1997), intention to stay (Deeter-Schmelz & Ramsey, 1997), and increased retention (Tai & Robinson, 1998). Along a similar vein, sales managers’ behavior in relation to sales employees has been shown to drive salespeople’s attitudes, stress, and attachment to the selling environment (Sager, Yi, & Futrell, 1998). In particular, supervisory behaviors directly influence salespeople’s job satisfaction (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Churchill et al., 1976; Jaworski & Kohli, 1991).

Manager support may also ameliorate the negative influence of role overload on job outcomes, including job dissatisfaction (Kirmeyer & Dougherty, 1988; Seers, McGee, Serey, & Graen, 1983). However, Vance, Coovert, MacCallum, and Hedge (1989) found that supervisor support did not explain significant variance in task performance of U.S. Air Force jet engine mechanics. While the question is important, relatively little

knowledge exists concerning the relationship between met expectations pertaining to support and job outcomes. Oddly, little evidence exists to support or refute manager support as a component of employees' expectations, and minimal research investigates the role of social support in the sales area (Deeter-Schmelz & Ramsey, 1997).

*Structure of Job Attributes.* A chief concern regarding expectations involves how they are structured. That is, what format do salespeople employ to conceive and evaluate expectations? A logical approach assumes that salespeople form expectations in the same component-oriented way as they view a job. Two established typologies of work attributes are Hackman and Oldham's (1975) Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) and Manhardt's (1972) work aspects scale. The JDS measures five core job dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Hackman and Oldham (1975) related the job dimensions to employees' psychological states and work outcomes.

Manhardt (1972) identified work aspects (e.g., job security and sense of accomplishment) that could potentially predict work attitudes and behaviors. Irving and Meyer (1994) applied a principle components analysis to Manhardt's work aspects, revealing three components: (a) job comfort, (b) job reward, and (c) job responsibility. They applied twenty scale items comprising the three components to a longitudinal analysis of the met expectations hypothesis. To operationalize expectations, Irving and Meyer (1994) measured expectations of each scale item prior to job entry, then measured the same items one, six, and twelve months post-entry. Two-thirds of the met expectations indexes (i.e., difference scores) had significant zero-order correlations with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. However, only two

correlations retained significance after controlling for experiences (i.e., post-entry perceptions): (a) job comfort correlated with job satisfaction five months later, and (b) job responsibility correlated with intention to leave six months later. Irving and Meyer concluded that difference scores of met expectations “contribute little information beyond that provided by their components, particularly experiences” (p. 942).

In another study of met expectations of specific job aspects, Wotruba and Tyagi (1991) applied a retrospective met expectations scale to a direct selling sample. Their measure of met expectations included 25 items anchored by, “My experience with this aspect of my job is very much less (more) than I expected.” Factor analysis produced four factors: (a) outcomes and rewards, (b) interpersonal relations, (c) conditions of work participation, and (d) job challenges and demands. Met expectations of these four factors differed across active versus inactive salespeople. Support exists for a relationship between met expectations and turnover; that relationship may vary based on the focus of the expectations.

#### Mediating and Outcome Variables

A bevy of variables can be expected to mediate relationships between salespeople’s job expectations and chief outcomes. While speculating content of the variables is a worthwhile exercise, it seems more judicious to investigate the constructs that can be expected to mediate between initial expectations and ultimate behaviors. The model offered in Figure 1 summarizes the mediating variables reviewed here.

To a greater extent than most employment groups, sales forces are charged with meeting or exceeding specified performance outcomes. Targeted performance (e.g.,

revenue, profit, units sold) is the ultimate outcome charged to sales forces. Behavioral outcomes including performance and retention of individual salespeople are of interest to researchers because management believes they correlate with long-term organizational performance (Johnston & Futrell, 1989; Walker, Churchill, & Ford, 1977). Job satisfaction is a desired outcome because it has been assumed to influence positively outcomes such as retention, if not for altruistic reasons as well (Babakus et al., 1996; Johnston et al., 1988; Mobley et al., 1978). Similarly, high organizational commitment is seen as desirable because it has been associated with lower withdrawal cognitions and greater retention (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Johnston et al., 1990; Mowday et al., 1977). Withdrawal cognitions (i.e., intention to leave, thinking of quitting, and searching for another job) are important to assess because of their proximal relationship with actual turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Jaros et al., 1993; Johnston et al., 1990; Sager et al., 1988; Steele & Ovalle, 1984). From a long-term perspective, the entire set of variables (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, individual performance, and withdrawal/retention) can be considered intermediate outcomes, because the ultimate outcome of interest to the organization is profitability. Profitability can be enhanced through lower expenses of doing business (e.g., hiring expenses associated with turnover) or through higher performance of salespeople.

Performance of individual salespeople is important to long run fiscal solvency. The sales position is usually judged according to clear performance objectives. To enhance the benefits of higher performance of salespeople, companies include at least some commission in the payment plan. Not only are performance and retention important

outcomes, but there is also some potentially crucial interaction between these variables. For example, sales managers want to retain high performers but may encourage turnover of low performers (i.e., functional turnover) (Johnston & Futrell, 1989). A commission pay structure will discourage low performers from staying, while rewarding high performers for staying (Darmon, 1990).

Perceptually based relationships can be difficult to decipher. In light of the complexity of relationships among turnover precursors, researchers seek to decipher causal relationships among the constructs. Causal modeling is one way to achieve this kind of scientific explanation (Bagozzi, 1980). Bagozzi indicates that a causal model consists of “theoretical constructs (e.g., antecedent, intervening, or consequent variables), relationships of constructs to observations, and hypotheses or propositions connecting constructs” (p. 63). Causal models help researchers add order and precision to theory development and allow them to better represent complex social and psychological processes (Bagozzi).

An extensive body of research addresses turnover. Numerous models of turnover have been developed and tested. The following sections review major conceptual models representing processes leading to performance and turnover. These conceptual models help researchers and practitioners understand relationships among constructs and provide a basis for examining processes leading to outcomes of interest. Following a discussion of conceptual models, the intermediate outcome variables of interest are examined individually.

### *Conceptual Models*

Several perceptual models have served as a basis for development in turnover theory. Models that provide guidance for the present study are reviewed in chronology of publication.

*March and Simon (1958): Model of Participation.* March and Simon (1958) introduced a seminal model of employee participation (Figure 6) that helped shape many subsequent models of turnover (e.g., Mobley, 1977; Steers & Mowday, 1981). The March and Simon model portrayed turnover as a function of the employee's job satisfaction and perceived ease of changing jobs. The model is based on achieving an equilibrium state between organizational inducements and employee contributions. Few studies have directly tested the March and Simon model, but many researchers have incorporated the constructs of the March and Simon model in studies of turnover and performance (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

*Price (1977): Model of Turnover.* Price's (1977) model of turnover (Figure 7) theorizes a series of perceptions of job aspects leading to satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Reduced job satisfaction leads to turnover, moderated by opportunity for alternative employment. The Price model was later expanded by Price and Mueller (1981). The revised model added intention to leave as a mediating variable between job satisfaction and turnover. An additional extension of the Price model (Price & Mueller, 1986; Figure 8) added commitment as a mediating variable between job satisfaction and intention to leave. Bluedorn (1982a) proposed a similar model that added job search as a precursor to intention to leave.

Although the Price (1977) model has received rigorous testing and refinement, the explanatory ability remains low. Price and Mueller's (1981, 1986) empirical investigations found that all the model components combined explained only 18 percent (1981) and 13 percent (1986) of variance in turnover. Also, many of the hypothesized paths were not supported.

*Mobley (1977): Intermediate Linkages Model.* Mobley's (1977) turnover model (Figure 9) specifies a series of causal relationships leading to turnover. Negative evaluation of the job, including unmet expectations, leads to dissatisfaction with the job. Dissatisfaction leads to thoughts of quitting, followed by assessment of the utility of searching for alternatives and of leaving the job. If the assessment is positive, intentions to quit develop, followed by actual turnover. The Mobley model has been tested repeatedly, with some modifications to the order of intermediating variables (e.g., Bannister & Griffeth, 1986; Hom and Griffeth, 1991; Hom et al., 1984).

Although, the original Mobley (1977) model has dominated work on psychological approaches to turnover, empirical tests of the original model have found weak support (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Tests of an abbreviated model (Mobley et al., 1978, Figure 10) have yielded some support for the paths connecting job satisfaction, thinking of quitting, intention to search, intention to quit/stay, and turnover/retention.

The Mobley (1977) model provided a basis for related models by Hom and Griffeth (1991, Figure 14), Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro (1984), Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978, Figure 10), Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino (1979, Figure 11), and Steers and Mowday (1981, Figure 12). These later models added elements and/or

took specific portions of the Mobley model. The model components that remain central to continuing turnover studies are job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, various withdrawal cognitions, and intention to leave leading preceding the turnover decision.

*Steers and Mowday (1981): Model of Turnover.* Building on the works of Porter and Steers (1977), Porter et al. (1974) and other models of turnover, Steers and Mowday (1981) theorized a model of turnover (Figure 12) that included job expectations, values, organizational experiences, and individual attributes influencing job affect (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement). Job affect then influences withdrawal cognitions and eventual turnover behavior. Job performance is portrayed as having a reciprocal relationship with job affect variables. Although the Steers and Mowday model has a process orientation and includes many relevant variables in the turnover process, the structural relationships are imprecise and difficult to test (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). The only complete test of the model yielded incomplete support (Lee & Mowday, 1987).

*Bluedorn (1982a): Unified Model of Turnover.* Bluedorn (1982a) presented a unified model of turnover (Figure 13), incorporating several elements of previous turnover models. Numerous personal and organizational characteristics influence job satisfaction, which is positively related to organizational commitment. Lower organizational commitment leads to job search, intent to leave, and eventual turnover.

*Hom and Griffeth (1991, 1995): Integrative Model of Turnover.* Hom and Griffeth (1991) tested a model of turnover using structural equation modeling. The model (Figure 14) incorporated elements from many of the previously reviewed models. A re-



formulated integrative model (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Figure 15) added met expectations and organizational commitment to the Hom & Griffeth (1991) model.

*Sager, Yi, and Futrell (1998): Model of Salespeople's Perceptions.* Sager et al. (1998) developed an integrative model of higher order constructs (Figure 16). This approach attempts to consolidate knowledge concerning relationships among aggregate constructs. The research found manager behavior positively related to attitude (including job satisfaction) and negatively related to job stress (including role ambiguity and role conflict). Attitude and job stress were correlated with attachment to the selling environment (including organizational commitment). Attachment was then negatively related to withdrawal (including turnover and intention to leave). These higher order relationships confirm theory presented in earlier models of turnover precursors.

A review of these conceptual models of turnover (Figures 6-16) reveals constructs consistently considered important in the turnover process. The most common elements are: (a) job satisfaction as a mediating outcome variable for multiple personal and organizational characteristics, and (b) withdrawal cognitions (described in various ways) as the primary mediator between other turnover antecedents and turnover. Other recurring elements of turnover models are (a) organizational commitment as a negative correlate of withdrawal, and (b) some form of met expectations playing a role in the development of job satisfaction and turnover. The role of performance is more complex and less studied (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

Specific intermediate and outcome variables from the preceding turnover models are now reviewed, along with tables summarizing extant research.

### *Withdrawal*

One area of research that has fairly consistent support is that of withdrawal cognitions having a significant positive influence on actual turnover (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982b; Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Jaros et al., 1993; Johnston et al., 1990; Mobley et al., 1979; Mobley et al., 1978; Sager et al., 1988). Carsten and Spector's (1987) meta-analysis revealed an average coefficient of .38 for the intent-turnover relationship. The concept idea of intentions leading to behavior traces back to the attitude-intention-behavior model developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). This predictive relationship is well enough established that several studies use one or more of these cognitions as a surrogate for turnover (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984).

Given the important role of withdrawal cognitions, several researchers have examined antecedents to withdrawal cognitions. Organizational commitment has consistently emerged as a chief antecedent to withdrawal cognitions (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993; Farkas & Tetrick, 1989; Jaros et al., 1993; Williams & Hazer, 1986). Job satisfaction is another variable that appears to antecede withdrawal cognitions and turnover (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Johnston et al., 1990). The prevailing view holds that job satisfaction and organizational commitment mediate the effects of other antecedent variables (e.g., role ambiguity) on withdrawal cognitions, and withdrawal cognitions mediate the influence of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on turnover (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Hunt & Morgan, 1994; Johnston et al., 1990; Sager, 1994).

### *Job Satisfaction*

“Job satisfaction is one of the most widely studied constructs in sales force research” (Brown & Peterson, 1993, p. 63). From an organization’s perspective, satisfied employees have been shown to exhibit greater commitment to the organization (Koch & Steers, 1978; Marsh & Mannari, 1977; Steers, 1977; Williams & Hazer, 1986), higher performance (Mowday et al., 1982), and lower tendency to leave the organization (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993; Cohen, 1993; Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Johnston, et al., 1990; Sager & Johnston, 1989). Job satisfaction is a recognized correlate of organizational commitment and intention to stay (Porter, Crampon, & Smith, 1976; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Several studies depict job satisfaction as a mediator for other antecedents such as role ambiguity and role conflict (cf. Brown & Peterson, 1993; Sager, 1994). Table 4 shows studies revealing support for job satisfaction as an antecedent to organizational commitment and turnover/retention. In consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction literature, satisfaction is also shown to mediate relationships between other antecedents and intentions/behavior (LaBarbera & Mazursky, 1983).

### *Organizational Commitment*

The organizational commitment construct has received extensive attention as a negative antecedent to withdrawal (Cohen, 1993; Jaros et al., 1993; Porter et al., 1974; Randall, Fedor & Longenecker, 1990) and turnover (Cohen & Hudecek, 1993; Huselid & Day, 1991), and as a positive antecedent to performance (e.g., Huselid & Day, 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1979). Organizational commitment correlates positively and consistently with job satisfaction (e.g., Bateman & Strasser, 1984;

Vandenberg & Lance, 1992). However, organizational commitment has received only mixed support as an antecedent variable to performance (Angle & Perry, 1981; Darden, McKee, & Hampton, 1993; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Table 5 summarizes studies of organizational commitment that show significant relationships with performance and retention/turnover.

The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment has received considerable attention. Some researchers advocate the antecedence of organizational commitment (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Darden et al., 1993; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992). This stance holds that commitment is a relatively stable construct; commitment is established early in employment and it remains the same over time (Porter et al., 1976).

A countervailing body of research supports job satisfaction being antecedent to organizational commitment. That is, employees become more committed to the organization *after* they develop satisfaction with the job (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Johnston et al., 1990; Marsh & Mannari, 1977; Mobley, 1977; Price & Mueller, 1981; Sager, 1994). One argument for job satisfaction being antecedent to organizational commitment is that job satisfaction is a more immediate affective response to the work environment, while organizational commitment develops more slowly (Porter et al., 1974).

Farkas & Tetrick (1989) propose a reciprocal relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment that changes over time. For example, early organizational commitment instills greater job satisfaction, which then further enhances the

commitment. This is similar to the idea that antecedent constructs could have different relationships with turnover over time (Carsten & Spector, 1987; Farkas & Tetrick, 1989; Johnston, Futrell, Parasuraman & Sager, 1988; Sager et al., 1998; Sager & Menon, 1994).

### *Performance*

Job performance has been studied in various ways in relation to the turnover process (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). One research approach examines the relationship between performance and turnover. Some studies show a negative relationship between performance and turnover, that is, poor performers are more likely to quit (e.g., Bycio et al., 1990; Marsh & Mannari, 1977; McEvoy & Cascio, 1987; Stumpf & Dawley, 1981). Others indicate a positive relationship between performance and turnover (i.e., good performers are more likely to quit) in some cases (e.g., Johnston et al., 1988; Lazarsfeld & Thielens, 1958; Pavalko, 1970). Still other studies show instances with no correlation between performance and turnover (e.g., Martin, Price, & Mueller, 1981; Mobley, 1982; Price, 1977). A meta-analysis by Williams and Livingstone (1994) suggests a general negative relationship (i.e., poor performers are most likely to leave), but either a positive or U-shaped relationship may exist under certain conditions. In the case of a U-shaped relationship, high and low performers are more likely to leave, while middle-range performers are less likely to leave (Jackofsky, 1984).

Several variables, including reward contingency (Williams and Livingstone, 1994), may moderate the performance-turnover relationship. With reward contingency, low performers are more likely to leave when rewards are contingent on performance. Harrison et al. (1996) found that the performance-turnover relationship was stronger

under maximally contingent rewards. However, other potential moderators have received less support. Williams and Livingstone did not replicate the findings of McEvoy and Cascio (1987) that unemployment rates moderate the correlation between performance and turnover. Additional moderators, such as threat of dismissal (Jackofsky, 1984) and time lapse between measures (Johnston et al., 1988; McEvoy & Cascio, 1987), have received little empirical testing. The nature of moderating relationships in the turnover process remains very complex and varies by situation (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Johnston et al., 1988; Williams & Livingstone, 1994).

A final approach to studying performance in relation to turnover is to combine the two, resulting in functional or dysfunctional turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Functional turnover implies a negative relationship between performance and turnover, whereby poor performers are more likely to leave. This is functional for the organization to the extent that it retains the best performing employees. Conversely, dysfunctional turnover occurs when good performers leave or poor performers stay. Several researchers have addressed the importance of distinguishing between functional and dysfunctional turnover (e.g., Dalton, Krackhardt, & Porter, 1981; Darmon, 1990; Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Hollenbeck & Williams, 1986; Johnston & Futrell, 1989; Jones et al., 1996; Mobley, 1982).

While performance is most often studied as a dependent variable in relation to other turnover precursors, some studies show a possible antecedent relationship of performance to job satisfaction (Bagozzi, 1980; Darden et al., 1993). However, there is only partial support for this relationship, and the correlation may be spurious (Behrman &

Perreault, 1984; Brown & Peterson, 1993, 1994; Sager, 1990). Table 6 lists studies that have suggested performance as an antecedent to job satisfaction or turnover.

### Summary

Chapter 2 reviewed the extant literature concerning variables and models that relate to employees' expectations and outcomes of met expectations. Several models of turnover have been proposed and tested (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982a; Mobley, 1977; Porter & Steers, 1973; Price, 1977; Steers & Mowday, 1981), and the most central components of the models were examined as they relate to the performance and turnover of salespeople. Met/unmet expectations have received attention as an important antecedent to the turnover process (Wanous et al., 1992), but have been under-studied within the sales force context (Wotruba & Tyagi, 1991). Streams of research involving socialization, turnover, and related concepts all illustrate the need to improve understanding of the turnover process in the early part of a salesperson's career by including met expectations.

Chapter 3 outlines the proposed hypotheses and research design. The proposed research study is designed to examine the expectations, attitudes, performance, and intentions of salespeople over their first six months on the job. In particular, structural models are proposed as a way to analyze the extent and nature of met/unmet expectations influence in the early employment period.

## CHAPTER 3

### PROPOSED RESEARCH METHOD

#### Introduction

Chapter 1 demonstrated the importance of understanding constructs and relationships associated with performance and retention of salespeople. Within this context, the role of met/unmet expectations was discussed as a potential precursor to intervening variables that may enhance retention and organizational performance.

Alternate models of met/unmet expectations, the Met Expectations (ME) model and the Direct Effects (DE) model) were presented (Figures 2 and 3, respectively) as a way to represent the role of met expectations in relation to the influence of its component parts (i.e., initial expectations and subsequent experiences). Within the context of the ME and DE models, research questions were specified. The questions are intended to clarify the role of met expectations in the turnover process.

Chapter 2 presented the theories and constructs used to develop of the models and research questions. The chapter outlined the history of met expectations research and related research streams. Then, the mediating variables leading to retention (SFO model, Figure 1) were examined within the context of established models of the turnover process (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982a; Mobley, 1977; Porter & Steers, 1973; Price, 1977; Steers & Mowday, 1981).



The conceptual presentation and research questions offered in chapter 1 and the theoretical background discussed in chapter 2 set the background for research hypotheses and a research design that can be used to evaluate these hypotheses. Thus, chapter 3 is organized around the following objectives:

1. Summarize the theoretical development of the structural relationships in the models to be tested (ME and DE models, Figures 2 and 3 respectively).
2. Develop specific research hypotheses as a basis for testing proposed structural relationships among turnover precursors.
3. Relate the proposed research design that will be utilized to evaluate the structural models.
4. Explain the operationalizations of the research constructs.
5. Explicate sequence of statistical analyses to be used to test the hypotheses.
6. Discuss limitations and implications of the proposed research.

#### Theoretical Framework

A rigorous analysis of causal relationships is best approached by constructing and testing causal models (Bagozzi, 1980). Chapter 2 contains reviews of some of the most prominent models of turnover (see Figures 4-16). The present study draws from these models, along with met expectations research, to construct a framework for attaining scientific explanation. The causal models presented here: (a) identify theoretical constructs of importance to the turnover process, (b) specify relationships of the constructs to observations (i.e., operationalize the constructs via measurement models),

and (c) hypothesize relationships connecting the constructs via structural models. This protocol provides a basis for testing the hypotheses via structural equation modeling.

The research design will be used to evaluate two models that posit roles for met expectations. The Met Expectations model (ME, Figure 2) represents the met expectations hypothesis advocated by Porter & Steers (1973). The ME model posits that the extent expectations of new salespeople are confirmed directly influences sales force outcomes. The Direct Effects model (DE, Figure 3) brings forth the idea that met expectations provide no additional value beyond that provided by the component parts of initial expectations and subsequent perceptions of experiences (Irving & Meyer, 1994). That is, subsequent perceptions (of job experiences), and possibly initial expectations themselves, are the chief determinants of retention and performance. Comparative testing of these two models will clarify the nature or role of met expectations pertaining to early attitudes and behaviors of sales force newcomers (Hom et al., 1999).

In addition to examining the role of met/unmet expectations, theorized relationships among intervening and outcome variables are tested via the Sales Force Outcomes model (SFO, Figure 1). This model examines relationships among the most proximal turnover antecedents, as discussed in chapter 2. A test of the SFO model in relation to expectations of new employees will add to theoretical development in turnover research by examining turnover precursors in a specific sales force setting.

The theoretical framework encompasses the research questions presented in chapter 1. A more specific delineation of research hypotheses will further explicate the focus of the proposed study.

## Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses follow from research question one discussed in chapter 1. The first set of hypotheses focuses on the influence of met expectations. The goal is to ascertain the degree of influence that met expectations contribute above that of the component parts (i.e., initial expectations and subsequent job perceptions) with regard to sales force mediating and outcome variables. The second set of hypotheses encompasses relationships among the mediating and outcome variables in the SFO Model (Figure 1). The 10 hypotheses relate to Research Question 1 (chapter 1).

Research Question 2 is addressed by evaluating various job aspects (i.e., role ambiguity, role conflict, perceived manager support, training perceptions, job comfort, job reward, and job responsibility) as the foci of expectations. The ME and DE models will be evaluated separately for each job aspect as the focus of expectations.

### *Hypotheses Pertaining to Antecedent Expectations and Experiences*

Hypothesis 1: Met expectations relate directly and positively to job satisfaction when initial expectations and perceived experiences are held constant.

Hypothesis 2: Met expectations relate directly and positively to organizational commitment when initial expectations and perceived experiences are held constant.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job relate directly and positively to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job relate directly and positively to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5: Initial expectations relate directly and negatively to perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job.

Hypotheses one through five follow from the literature pertaining to met expectations (see chapters 1 and 2). The first two hypotheses concern the influence of met/unmet expectations on two mediating variables – job satisfaction and organizational commitment (see Figure 2). Extant research supports a positive correlation between met expectations and both job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Lee & Mowday, 1987; Major et al., 1995; Michaels & Spector, 1982; Wanous et al., 1992). Hypotheses three through five specify a direct influence for initial expectations and subsequent job perceptions on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (see Figure 3). These hypotheses address the point of view proposed by Irving and Meyer (1994). That is, initial expectations and subsequent job perceptions influence early outcome variables directly, and the met expectations construct does not add significant explanatory power.

Hypotheses one through five will be tested using a variety of job aspects as the focus of expectations and experiences, as suggested by Irving & Meyer (1994). The job aspects include role ambiguity, role conflict, training perceptions, manager support, job reward, job comfort, and job responsibility. As discussed in chapter 2, these job foci are expected to be antecedents of intervening variables (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment), and they have been measured as specific targets of early job expectations (e.g., Irving & Meyer, 1994; Major et al., 1995; Tannenbaum et al., 1991).

*Hypotheses Relating Mediator Variables to Outcome Variables in the SFO Model*

Hypothesis 6: Job satisfaction relates directly and positively to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 7: Job satisfaction relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.

Hypothesis 8: Organizational commitment relates directly and positively to performance.

Hypothesis 9: Organizational commitment relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.

Hypothesis 10: Performance relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.

Hypotheses 6 through 10 concern the relationships among mediating turnover precursors, as presented in the SFO model (Figure 1). The hypothesized relationships are based on the stream of research presented in chapter 2. Primary elements of the turnover models reviewed in chapter 2 (Figures 4-16) are included in the SFO model. Hypotheses six through nine have ample support from research relating to these turnover models (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982a; Hom & Griffeth, 1995; March & Simon, 1958; Mobley, 1977; Price & Mueller, 1986; Steers & Mowday, 1981).

Hypothesis ten is the only one with limited support. As discussed in chapter 2, researchers have found inconsistent results on the relationship between performance and withdrawal/turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Williams & Livingstone, 1994). The reason may be, as Brown and Peterson (1993) suggest, performance is an end in itself, and only weakly related to other important work outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and withdrawal. However, a limited body of evidence supports a probable negative relationship between performance and withdrawal (Bycio et al., 1990; Williams

& Livingstone, 1994), particularly in the case of contingent rewards (Harrison et al., 1996).

### Research Design

Research to date involving newcomer socialization and met expectations use non-sales occupations (e.g., nurses and military subjects) (Hom et al., 1992; cf. Dubinsky et al., 1986). A secondary intent of this study is to focus on the early expectations and outcomes of *sales force* newcomers. Therefore, the data will be gathered by surveying newly hired salespeople employed by a large communications corporation.

The study tracks new sales recruits for their first six months on the job, gathering data via surveys at two points in time: (a) on their first day of centralized training, and (b) after six months in the field.

The two stage design is a key component of the study. One factor that has impeded understanding of the processes leading to key sales job outcomes is that the relationships are too often assessed with cross-sectional studies (Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981; Irving & Meyer, 1994; Wanous et al., 1992). Tapping expectations and experiences at distinct points in time permits more powerful inference as to the influence of early socialization variables such as met expectations (Adkins, 1995). Details of the sample, survey instruments, and procedures are explained in the following sections.

### *Sample*

The population of interest is sales force newcomers. The sample consists of all new sales recruits entering a single company within an 18-month time frame. The salespeople sell advertising products to businesses. The sample company employs over

1,200 salespeople and targets local businesses across the country. Salespeople sell a product business people use to communicate with their market. Sales representatives are assigned to one of fourteen regional sales divisions. The sample includes both inside and outside salespeople. All respondents will first be surveyed at corporate headquarters on the first day of formal training. At the time of the second survey, respondents will be spread across the country in different divisions of the company. There will be some attrition of new salespeople before the time of the second survey.

In light of the company's turnover rate (approximately 40 percent), the 18-month window should produce a cohort of over 500 new sales trainees. Since the first survey will be administered in person, the response rate should approach 100 percent (only a few non-usable surveys). Sample size for the second survey will be lower due to the high turnover rate through six months and to the expected response rate, because the survey will be administered via mail. The goal is to obtain over 250 matched responses.

Despite limitations concerning generalizability, using a sample from a single company has been an accepted procedure for testing theory. Calder, Phillips, and Tybout (1981) indicate that a homogeneous sample from a single population provides a rigorous test of the theoretical constructs and relationships. Testing models with a sample from a single type of subjects and a specific company also controls for some of the spurious differences found when sample subjects have unique job circumstances. Hom et al. (1999) point out that their sample of nurses may be unique enough to not project to other populations. Therefore, Hom et al. (1999) call for testing the met expectations hypothesis

on different types of samples. As discussed in chapter 1, the sales profession offers a unique sample with which to test theory.

### *Development of the Survey Instruments*

Two survey instruments were developed to collect data from respondents. Both surveys are comprised largely of 7-point Likert-type response formats. The content of the survey instruments is based on the following considerations:

1. Interviews with salespeople, sales managers, and trainers from the target company pinpointed areas of concern for that company. This helped the researchers identify important topics to study.

2. A review of turnover and met expectations research provided a framework for measuring specific constructs of interest. This involved consulting published research in sales management, general management, and organizational psychology. Where possible, validated scales were used for construct measurement.

The first survey (Phase 1) will be administered on the first day of formal training. The instrument is four pages long, including items of interest to the researchers and to the company. The instrument focuses on the initial expectations of the sales recruits, within the constraints of company needs and guidelines. The second survey instrument (Phase 2) is very similar to the first. The Phase 2 survey is also limited to four pages in order to meet company constraints. Therefore, a parsimonious collection of measurement scales is used to gauge the current perceptions, attitudes, and intentions of the salespeople. The scales included in each survey are explained in detail in a later section.



### *Data Collection Procedure*

The Phase 1 survey will be administered in person by the researchers to new salespeople on their first day of formal training. A new group of sales recruits is brought to company headquarters approximately every two weeks for a two-week training program. This will change to a three-week training program half way through the study, with classes starting in three week intervals. The company expects to train approximately 500 new recruits over the 18-month time frame of the study.

The procedure for administering the survey will remain consistent for each new group of trainees. A member of the research team will go to company headquarters on the first day of each training session. The survey will be administered to the recruits at 1:00 p.m., following a standard form of instructions (Appendix C). Current employees of the company will be asked to leave the room for thirty minutes to ensure confidentiality of responses. The respondents should spend approximately 20 minutes filling out the survey by marking bubbles beside each item. After collecting the completed surveys, the survey administrator will process the surveys through a scanning machine. This machine creates a data file for each respondent, and these data files can then be saved to a disk and kept with the research team. All data files will then be merged into a master data file.

The Phase 2 survey will be sent to Phase 1 respondents approximately six months after their initial training. This time frame was selected for several reasons. First, the company has a 6-month post-training period; therefore, the second survey follows the completion of all training. Second, six months has been a common standard in similar previous studies (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990; Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Johnston et al.,

1988). Third, the 6-month time frame meets the needs of the company and the researcher. Both the company and the researcher feel that a shorter time frame would be too soon and a longer time frame would unnecessarily delay results.

The Phase 2 survey will be sent, with salesperson's name, to the appropriate sales divisions. The division manager will then deliver the survey to the salesperson as soon as possible. After completing the survey, the salesperson will return it directly to the researchers in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. This assures the salespeople of confidentiality. If a survey is not returned within about three weeks, a second survey will be delivered, along with a letter from the national sales training manager encouraging response. Data from the Phase 2 surveys will be entered manually through an independent data entry center. After processing and editing the data, the researchers will combine the Phase 2 data with the Phase 1 data for each salesperson.

Additional data will be gathered directly from the company. The company agreed to provide performance data for each salesperson. In addition, the company will provide a record of turnover, including the date of departure of any salespeople leaving during the time frame of the study. Names and identification numbers will be kept with both surveys and with the company-provided information. This will allow the researchers to match all data by respondent.

#### Operationalization of Constructs and Measures

Previously validated scales were used to measure most constructs in the surveys. Some adaptations were necessary due to survey instrument constraints and company requirements. The operationalization and measurement of each construct is explained in

this section and summarized in Table 7. Operationalization of constructs is also illustrated in the measurement models shown in Figures 17 and 18. The full scales from both surveys can be found in Table 8.

### *Met Expectations*

The operationalization of the met expectations construct is a focal point of this study. Most previous research on met expectations, summarized in Table 2, has used either retrospective measurement or difference scores, both of which have methodological flaws (Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1995). For example, difference scores could lead to finding artifactual relations with outcome variables because the scores tend to be systematically correlated with their component parts (Cronbach & Furby, 1970; Irving & Meyer, 1994). A common alternative measure is retrospective assessment, whereby respondents indicate the degree to which they perceive that their expectations have been met. However, this approach assumes respondents can remember what their expectations were prior to organization entry. There is also no guarantee that respondents are not implicitly or explicitly calculating differences in the process of providing a response. In this case, retrospective measures are subject to the same inherent problems as with difference scores (Edwards, 1991; Irving & Meyer, 1994).

This study uses a response surface technique, incorporating polynomial regression, proposed by Edwards (1991) for measuring person-job fit. This technique was applied to met expectations by Irving and Meyer (1994) as a way to avoid problems with previous measures of met expectations. Recent studies by Irving and Meyer (1999) and Hom et al. (1999) indicate that this new way of operationalizing met expectations leads to

contradictory results when compared with previous measures. This suggests that the hypothesized influence of met expectations in turnover models may be artifactual due to the inappropriate measurement of the construct (Irving & Meyer, 1999). Hom et al. (1999) suggest using the polynomial regression technique on additional samples in order to examine whether their results are generalizable to other populations.

#### *Focus of Expectations and Perceptions*

Met/unmet expectations can be measured in a general sense or with regard to specific job aspects. The proposed study will focus on the expectations and perceptions of specific job aspects. The job aspects and measures are explained below.

*Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict.* Role states have received considerable attention as precursors to job satisfaction and other work outcomes (Babakus et al., 1996; Ford et al., 1976; Michaels et al., 1988). In particular, role ambiguity and role conflict are consistently included as antecedents in models of job satisfaction and turnover (cf. Brown & Peterson, 1993). This study uses scales developed by Rizzo et al. (1970) for measuring role states. Their scales for role ambiguity and role conflict have been used and validated in many studies. Reliability is good for both scales – in the .80 range for each.

*Training Perceptions.* Training is considered an important factor in early job outcomes (Feldman, 1989; Hicks & Klimoski, 1987). Yet, few scales are available for assessing training perceptions. Tannenbaum et al. (1991) used a 16-item scale to measure training fulfillment. The scale items were drawn from Hoiberg and Berry (1978) and Noe and Schmitt (1986). The training items for the present study are similar to these scales, but were customized more specifically for the target company.

*Perceived Manager Support.* Perceived support from immediate managers can have a significant impact on job outcomes (Deeter-Schmelz & Ramsey, 1997; Poulin, 1994). Manager support, or supervisor support, is typically measured as a dimension of social support (Kirmeyer & Dougherty, 1988). A more extensive scale of manager support was developed for the present study. This scale was also applied in a pilot study with a different company. The alpha reliability with a sample size of 79 was .89. The fifth scale item had low item-total correlation and did not load well in a one-factor principle components analysis, but it was included for interest to the company.

*Job Attributes.* In order to assess met expectations of a broader range of job aspects, a job attribute scale is utilized. Irving and Meyer (1994) used scale items from a Manhardt (1972) study to measure initial expectations and subsequent perceptions of the same job aspects. Irving and Meyer's principle components analysis revealed three job dimensions: reward, comfort, and responsibility. The twenty items used by Irving and Meyer to assess these three dimensions are used in the present study. The job reward and job responsibility scales exhibited alpha reliabilities of .70 or better, but the job comfort scale had lower reliabilities of .56 to .69.

#### *Job Satisfaction*

The first mediating variable in the model, job satisfaction, is measured with validated scale items. Job satisfaction has been assessed with a variety of scales (Brown & Peterson, 1993). The scale items for the proposed study are drawn from Curry, Wakefield, Price, and Mueller (1986), who derived their scale from Brayfield and Rothe

(1951). Curry et al. (1986) found respectable reliability of .86 for the job satisfaction scale.

### *Organizational Commitment*

Organizational commitment is comprised of multiple dimensions, including continuance commitment, normative commitment, and affective commitment. The affective, sometimes called attitudinal, component is closely aligned with traditional single-dimension conceptions of the construct (Allen & Meyer, 1990). For the present study, organizational commitment is measured using the affective component as defined by Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model. The six-item version of the affective commitment scale used in current study has demonstrated an alpha reliability of .85 (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993).

### *Performance*

Performance can be measured in several ways. Some researchers have used output based measures (e.g., Klein & Kim, 1998), while others use behavioral based measures (e.g., Bashaw & Grant, 1994). The current study uses an objective output-based measure provided by the subject company. Salespersons in the company are evaluated and rewarded based on a moving average percent-to-budget measure. This measure is derived from the actual increase in business generated by the salesperson as a percentage of a target quota. Performing above 100 percent-to-budget is considered good. Salespersons who fall below 85 percent-to-budget make minimal income and receive direction to try to improve. The company rarely fires a salesperson for poor performance, because a poor performer will typically leave due to low income.

### *Withdrawal*

Withdrawal refers to declining participation in the job (Rosse & Hulin, 1991), and the cognitions associated with withdrawal are generally accepted as direct precursors to turnover (Mobley, 1977; Mobley et al., 1979; Sager et al., 1998). Three primary turnover cognitions are thinking of quitting, intention to search, and intention to leave/quit (Mobley, 1977; Sager et al., 1998). The turnover literature lacks formally validated scales for turnover cognitions, so this study uses variations of items previously used to measure these cognitions (Bluedorn, 1982a; Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Hom, Griffeth, & Sellaro, 1984; Sager et al., 1998). Each of the three dimensions of withdrawal is represented by a single item, combining for a general measure of withdrawal.

### Proposed Method of Statistical Analysis

The first step to analyzing the data will be proper management and editing of the data. All data will be assessed for validity and integrity. This will include visual checks of the data and descriptive statistics as a means of identifying possible entry mistakes, incorrect reverse coding, or invalid responses. The descriptive statistics will include mean, standard deviation, dispersion percentages, skewness, and kurtosis for each questionnaire item. Data will be examined extra carefully because of the merging of two large survey data sets and additional performance data. Subgroups will also be compared on selected items. Relevant subgroups may include premise versus phone representatives and salespersons who had two weeks of training versus those who had three weeks of training.

Following validation of the data, the construct scales will be assessed. An open factor analysis will be conducted on the survey items meant to represent each construct. Factor loadings and the number of factors will indicate possible problems with any items or constructs. Items with low factor loadings on a factor representing a given construct will be eliminated. Construct scales will also be assessed for reliability with Cronbach's alpha and by checking individual scale items for item-total correlations. Any deviations noted in factor analysis or reliability analysis will be noted and compared with relevant literature in order to determine the final items to be used for each scale.

Dimensionality of the constructs will then be assessed with the procedure recommended by Gerbing and Anderson (1988). An exploratory factor analysis will be performed for all construct items. Items that cross-load on more than one factor will be noted and checked for possible deletion. A confirmatory factor analysis will follow to confirm the unidimensionality of the constructs. Figures 17 and 18 depict the measurement models to be used. However, the models will be broken down into separate models for each focus of expectations/perceptions (e.g., role stress, training support, job reward). Normalized residuals will be examined, and excessive residuals may indicate an item that needs to be deleted (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Once the construct scales have been set and the unidimensionality determined, a correlation matrix will be generated to demonstrate patterns of relationships among the constructs. The hypotheses will then be ready for testing. The hypotheses will be tested with structural equation modeling and, for the met expectations hypotheses, hierarchical regression analysis (response surface methodology) as suggested by Irving and Meyer



(1994, 1999). This will allow a more rigorous test of the direct and indirect relationships among variables.

### Discussion

The proposed research design will allow a rigorous test of the research hypotheses. The research design offers several advantages over much of previous research. First, the longitudinal measurement of met/unmet expectations allows for an improved measurement of the construct (Tannenbaum et al., 1991; Wanous et al., 1992). Using the polynomial regression technique suggested by Irving and Meyer (1994) will avoid problems associated with retrospective measures and difference scores. Second, the large sample from a single sales force provides a rigorous test of theory in a unique occupational setting. Third, an evaluation of structural models will add to theory development involving relationships among turnover precursors. Finally, met expectations are examined with a broad range of targets of expectations. This will give added depth to our understanding of met expectations. That is, we can detect whether met expectations of specific job aspects are more (or less) important as antecedents of job attitudes and behaviors.

Despite the advantages offered by the proposed research design, several limitations should be noted:

1. The sample time frame, while an advantage over cross-sectional studies, has limitations. First, using only two data points limits the temporal influence of met/unmet expectations. Perceptions of job aspects (used in measures of met expectations) are measured at the same point as perceptions of intervening outcomes. Ideally, job

satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and withdrawal should be measured at a third time point in order to have a time lag between proposed causes and effects. Also, the hypotheses are tested only within a 6-month time frame. Future research should replicate the study with different time frames. Finally, since panels of new salespeople are introduced to the company over an 18-month period, changes in extraneous variables could interfere with results. This potential limitation will be addressed by comparing salespeople from different time periods to determine if significant differences exist.

2. The size and type of sample present additional limitations. The single-company sales force sample provides a strong test of theory, but replication with other sales forces and other types of employees will add to theoretical development. While the expected sample size is above that recommended for structural equation modeling (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), a larger sample would be helpful for making comparisons among subgroups. The response rates are expected to be high, but there will still be some limitations due to attrition and nonresponse bias. The company has a high turnover rate in the first six months, so early leavers will not be available for the Phase 2 survey. As a precaution, original survey data will be compared for stayers versus leavers.

3. Other limitations involve the measurement of constructs. Multicollinearity among constructs can be a common problem in turnover research due to high correlation among turnover antecedents. Also, common method variance will be a problem due to measuring most variables with the same scale formats. Low reliability and validity for some constructs will also have to be taken into consideration.

## Summary

The proposed research design should allow for a rigorous examination of the met expectations hypothesis. The relatively high sample size and response rate, mostly validated measures, and theory-based structural models will provide a sound test of theory, despite the aforementioned limitations. Using the response surface methodology recommended by Irving and Meyer (1994) will permit an improved measure of met/unmet expectations. Finally, a comparison of structural equation models will enhance causal analysis of the turnover process for sales force newcomers. At the conclusion of the study, conclusions and recommendations can be made concerning (a) the role of met/unmet expectations as precursors to early sales force outcomes, (b) the significance of how met/unmet expectations are measured, (c) the nature of relationships among early sale force outcomes, and (d) the direction future research should take with regard to improving theoretical understanding of antecedent variables and early outcome variables for sales force newcomers.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

#### Introduction

Chapter 3 developed the ME (Met Expectations) and DE (Direct Effects) models, specified research hypotheses, and described the research design. Chapter 4 reports results of data analyses conducted to test the hypothesized models. The analytical protocol is outlined first, followed by analysis of the measurement of research constructs and assessment of the hypothesized linkages and models.

#### Analytical Protocol

The longitudinal nature of the data collection used for this study entailed additional effort directed to data preparation and validation. Each training cohort was tracked (i.e., initial training survey and 6-months follow-up survey). Data preparation involved pairing data gained from two surveys. Preparation also involved securing internal (company) performance information for each respondent. Finally, the initial training data, 6-months data, and performance data were merged into a master data set.

Once the database was composed, data were examined to ensure their integrity. First, data were validated through examining frequencies and descriptive statistics for all 114 items on both Phase 1 and Phase 2 surveys. Next, proposed model constructs were examined for unidimensionality, item validity and measure reliability. Dimensionality and factor structure of the research constructs comprising the study models were

evaluated using factor analysis and reliability assessment. Dimensionality was assessed as suggested by Gerbing and Anderson (1988). With the exception of the training support construct and manager support construct, existing measures were used to operationalize the study constructs (see Table 7).

Proposed theoretical structural models (Figures 2 and 3) were evaluated using covariance structure modeling (alt. structural equation modeling). Polynomial regression was used to assess the influence of initial met expectations on subsequent Time 2 attitudes and perceptions (Irving and Meyer, 1995).

The following sections relate the results of data analysis. Tables 12-28 summarize descriptive statistics for all items, organized by associated construct. Figures 2 and 3 relate relationships hypothesized for the Met Expectations model and Direct Effects model, respectively. Chapter 5 discusses conclusions and implications of the research findings.

#### Database Validation

The following sections explain data validation checks and the covariance-based model estimations.

#### *Data Checks and Response Rate*

Data from the first survey were scanned into a text file. Respondents' items were checked randomly against the original surveys as an audit. Data files from training classes were then merged into one spreadsheet, including 535 completed surveys out of 538 new sales trainees surveyed (99.4%).

Data from the second (6-months follow-up) survey were hand entered into a separate spreadsheet by a professional data entry service. The data entry operators employed a screening program. Randomly selected responses were checked against original surveys as an accuracy check.

To create a longitudinal data set, respondent identification numbers on the second surveys were matched with those on the first survey. The resulting data set included 270 matched responses (50.5% of original sample). Analysis of missing data and invalid responses reduced the paired valid sample size to 263. The following paragraph details the response patterns.

Table 9 summarizes study response rates. Of 538 Phase 1 surveys, 535 (99%) were completed. Of those 535 respondents, 379 respondents (71%) were still with the company six months later. The 156 respondents to the Phase 1 survey who were no longer with the company (29.2% 6-months turnover) had either left voluntarily or been terminated, but the company classifies them all the same. Phase 2 surveys were returned by 270 salespersons, for a response rate of 71%. After these surveys were matched with Phase 1 surveys, seven respondents were eliminated due to data problems (e.g., too much missing data on one survey or selecting identical response options for all or most of the 114 items).

The subject company provided performance data by respondent. The data were given in spreadsheets arranged by training cohort (individual training classes composed of approximately 15 to 30 sales trainees). Individual performance figures representing the average percent-to-budget ratio for the first six months on the job were supplied by cohort

at the six months point. Percent-to-budget is the primary performance metric in the sample company. This measure is obtained by dividing actual increase in sales by targeted increase in sales. Performance data were matched with the survey data from Phases 1 and 2. (Respondents' names were included with Phase 1 survey data for this purpose.)

After Phase 1 survey data had been matched with Phase 2 survey data and performance data, all data were converted into an SPSS system file. Data validation procedures were enacted on the system file. All reverse-coded items were transformed. Items were spot checked to ensure that the reverse-coding worked correctly. Frequencies were examined for all survey items to identify anomalies. There were no visible errors, and very little data were missing (only two or fewer missing responses per item).

Prior to analysis, item characteristics were examined. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, variance, skewness, kurtosis) were calculated for each item. Many items deviated from a normal distribution (see Tables 12-28). Extreme skewness or kurtosis was noted for consideration in further analysis.

#### *Covariate Checks*

The possibility of systematic bias in responses to items based on membership in subgroups was assessed. The subgroups evaluated included: (a) the 116 premise (outside) sales representatives versus the 147 telephone (inside) sales representatives, and (b) the 122 sales trainees who went through a two-week long training period (first year of data collection) versus the 141 sales trainees who went through a three-week long training period (second year of data collection). Tables 10 and 11 offer a breakdown of sample

subgroup characteristics. Cross-tabulations and t-tests were run on a representative selection of items for each subgroup.

Few differences in response by subgroup were noted for items of primary interest to this study (the survey items pertaining to entry expectations). Phase 2 survey respondents had higher performance scores than those who did not respond to the Phase 2 survey, which was expected because of the high early turnover of low performers. In support of low nonresponse bias, no differences were detected in initial expectations of Phase 2 responders versus those who did not respond to the Phase 2 survey. There was also no response difference based on the length of training (two weeks or three weeks).

However, means of several perceptual constructs, attitudes, and performance were different for some subgroups. Trainees who attended three-week training sessions had higher job satisfaction and higher satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ) with training support than those who attended two weeks of training. The three-week training group also had somewhat higher organizational commitment and lower withdrawal intention ( $p < .10$ ). This indicates that the extra training had a marginal positive effect on subsequent job attitudes.

Notable differences in attitudes were also detected for premise (outside) sales reps versus telephone (inside) sales reps. Premise sales reps had higher job satisfaction, lower withdrawal intentions, and lower job comfort ( $p < .05$ ). Premise reps' performance was also modestly higher ( $p < .10$ ). Regardless of the job (premise or telephone), higher performers exhibited higher job satisfaction, higher organizational commitment, lower withdrawal intent, and higher perceptions of job reward ( $p < .05$ ).



## Analysis of Construct Measures

As summarized in chapter 3 and Table 7, most of the measures employed in this study were used in previous studies and have exhibited acceptable validity and reliability (e.g., role ambiguity and role conflict measures, Rizzo et al., 1970; job perception measures, Irving and Meyer, 1994; affective organizational commitment measure, Allen and Meyer, 1990; job satisfaction measure, Curry et al., 1986). Measures for several constructs were developed or adapted specifically for this study (i.e., training perceptions, manager support, withdrawal). For the Phase 1 survey, the wording of items used to represent each perceptual construct was slightly altered to tap pre-training expectations. For example, the role ambiguity perception item, “I feel certain about how much authority I have” was altered to reflect pre-employment expectations, worded as: “I expect to feel certain about how much authority I have.” For the Phase 2 survey, items were administered in the standard unadjusted form. Tables 12 through 28 summarize all items as they appeared on the Phase 2 survey, separated by construct.

The following sections relate the items used to measure constructs of interest in the study. The measures are listed in related groupings. For example, role ambiguity and role conflict are discussed together as they capture role expectations and role perceptions. Training support and manager support are discussed together as support expectations and perceptions. Job comfort, job reward, and job responsibility are discussed together as job-characteristics expectations and perceptions. Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and withdrawal are analyzed together as outcome, affective variables.

The procedure used to evaluate dimensionality and discriminant validity for constructs was that suggested by Gerbing and Anderson (1988). The Lisrel 8.3 software program (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) was used to assess measurement models. The procedure used to evaluate item-based validity and reliability followed suggestions of Churchill (1979) and Nunnally (1978). For each construct, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted to provide an initial impression of dimensionality. In addition, alpha reliability and item-total correlations were calculated for each measure. Finally, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the dimensionality of the constructs.

For the exploratory factor analysis, two indicators were used to determine whether principle components analysis was appropriate for the data. First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) compares the magnitude of observed correlation coefficients to the magnitude of partial correlation coefficients. A KMO index of .5 to .6 is considered barely tolerable, while an index of .9 is considered excellent (Kaiser, 1974). All scales in the present study had a KMO index of at least .84, which indicates that principle component analysis is appropriate. Second, the Bartlett Test of Sphericity evaluates the hypothesis that the correlation matrix of items is an identity matrix (Norušis, 1990). A significant test statistic indicates that the data are suitable for principle components analysis. The Bartlett Test for Sphericity was significant for all scales in the present study.

Now, the factor analysis and reliability analysis for each group of constructs is discussed. Tables 30 to 46 summarize indicators of validity and dimensionality for

construct measures employed in the study. Table 29 summarizes alpha reliability for each construct scale.

### *Role Expectations and Perceptions*

Respondents' pre-entry expectations concerning role ambiguity and role conflict on the sales job were measured in Phase 1. Six months subsequent perceptions of role stressors were measured in Phase 2. The measures employed by Rizzo et al. (1970) are commonly used in organizational behavior research. Dimensionality and reliability for the measures are consistent with that reported in earlier work (e.g., Sager, 1994).

Tables 12-15 relate descriptive statistics for items used to measure role expectations and role perceptions, including mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. Sales trainees' expectations for both role ambiguity and role conflict were positive (i.e., new salespeople expected to experience low levels of role ambiguity and role conflict). Salespersons' perceptions of role ambiguity at the six months point were greater (i.e., higher role ambiguity) than pre-entry expectations for every scale item. However, item-based perceptions of role conflict were mixed in relation to pre-entry expectations – some perceptions were higher than expected, some perceptions were lower. Descriptives reveal some skewness and kurtosis and, for expected role ambiguity, low standard deviation. In general, sales trainees had consistently high expectations that there would be low role ambiguity and low role conflict in the sales job. Analysis of descriptive statistics for the role stress items revealed no item that would have to be excluded from the measure.

As summarized in Table 29, alpha reliabilities for measures of expected role ambiguity, expected role conflict, perceived role ambiguity, and perceived role conflict are acceptable as per Nunnally (1978). Analyses of corrected item-to-total correlations (Tables 30 and 31) revealed only one item that did not correlate well with the rest of the scale items of its respective measure (.23 for #113 on expected role conflict scale). However, the corresponding item from the Phase 2 survey was more consistent with other scale items on the perceived role conflict scale.

In light of alterations effected to the role stress scale items to operationalize sales trainees' expectations, the role-related scales were evaluated using with exploratory factor analysis. A principle components analysis with varimax rotation was used to maximize the variance of the squared item loadings for each factor and obtain a parsimonious factor structure (Kim & Mueller, 1978). First, all thirteen role stress expectation items were run together. None of the items cross-loaded, and only one loading was below  $\bullet = .5$  (see Tables 30 and 31). The lowest loading was  $\bullet = .33$  for item #113 of the expected role conflict scale (consistent with reliability analysis results). When all fifty expectation items (from Phase 1 survey) were run together, the role expectation items loaded strongly on the appropriate factors, with the exception of the first item of each scale (#113 and #107). The same factor analyses were run for the role perception scales from the Phase 2 survey. The loadings were stronger in all cases, although the first role conflict item still cross-loaded with the role ambiguity dimension.

Dimensionality of role stress expectations and perceptions was further evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis. Tables 40 and 41 suggest that items loaded on

appropriate constructs. Again, the only loading below  $\lambda = .40$  was for the first item (survey item #113) on the role conflict scale: "I expect to have to do things that I think should be done differently." As Tables 40 and 41 indicate, the model fit for both Phase 1 (expectations) and Phase 2 (perceptions) was marginal. AGFI, NFI, and NNFI (Tucker-Lewis Indicator) were all close to the .90 rule-of-thumb. RMSEA was below .10 for each model, but none of the fit measures would be considered better than "fair" (Fan, Thompson, & Wang, 1999; MacCallum & Hong, 1997).

In light of sound measurement properties of the Rizzo et al. (1970) measures of role conflict and role ambiguity for both expectations and perceptions, all items representing the two constructs were retained for the study.

#### *Support Expectations and Perceptions*

Pre-entry expectations of training support and manager support were measured in Phase 1, and subsequent perceptions of the same two support dimensions were measured in Phase 2. Scales tapping each of these constructs were adapted for this study. Therefore, validity of the measures of training support and manager support were carefully screened.

*Training Support Items.* The expected training support scale items were problematic because nearly all respondents held extremely high expectations (all item means 6.5 or above out of a possible 7). Such upward bias resulted in high skewness and kurtosis and low standard deviation for the six expected training support scale items (see Table 16). Training perceptions for the same items in Phase 2 reflected much more variance, with consequently lower skewness and kurtosis (see Table 17). Individual scale items were highly correlated in both cases, with alpha reliabilities of  $\alpha = .91$  and  $\alpha = .92$  for

the respective phases. Exploratory factor analyses were run for each set of training support items, first with just the manager support items included, and second with all survey items (50 items from Phase 1 or 64 items from Phase 2 survey) included. In both cases, factor loadings (at least  $r = .60$  for all items) and item-total correlations (at least  $r = .67$  for all items) were high and cross-loadings were negligible. Table 32 summarizes results of the factor analyses and item-total correlation analyses.

*Manager Support Items.* The manager support scale exhibited problems as well. A Cronbach reliability for the expectations scale was  $r = .85$ . Two items (#78 and #83) had item-total correlations under  $.40$ , indicating relatively low correlation with the rest of the scale. The Phase 2 manager support perceptions scale had a higher reliability of  $r = .91$ , with no item-total correlations below  $.40$ . Exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed more significant problems. When all fifty expectations items (i.e., expectations of training support, manager support, role ambiguity, role conflict, job comfort, job reward, and job responsibility) were included, five items (#78, #80, #81, #82, #83) cross-loaded. The problem did not recur for the perceptions measured in Phase 2 – all items loaded together, with only one item (#142) cross-loading on a different factor. Table 33 summarizes results of measure analyses for manager support.

Dimensionalities of training support and manager support were assessed using confirmatory factor analysis. All training items had high loadings on the expected dimensions for both time periods. However, items #78 and #83 from the initial manager support expectations survey both had loadings below  $r = .40$ . Therefore, items #78 and #83 were removed from the scale. Item #78 was, “If I make all my presentations like my

DSM's, I will secure more accounts for (The Company).” Item #83 was, “I can turn to my DSM when I am having problems outside of my sales job.”

Confirmatory factor analysis for all manager support and training support items was run with the reduced scale for manager support. Tables 42 and 43 show that all factor loadings were at least  $\geq .50$  (except one perception item at  $\geq .42$ ). Model fit statistics improved for the reduced scale, but fit statistics were still marginal at best (see Tables 42 and 43).

### *Job Expectations and Perceptions*

Expectations of job comfort, job responsibility, and job reward were measured in Phase 1, and subsequent perceptions of these job aspects were measured in Phase 2. Scale items used to tap expectations and perceptions of job aspects were developed by Manhardt (1972), and applied to tapping expectations and subsequent perceptions by Irving and Meyer (1994). Principle components analysis reported by Irving and Meyer (1994) supports a three dimensional model of job expectations: reward, comfort, and responsibility.

In light of the incipient level of development of these job perception scales, an exploratory factor analysis was performed. When the twenty “expectation” scale items were evaluated, all items exhibited factor loadings on the hypothesized dimension of at least  $\geq .60$ . Item communalities all equaled or exceeded  $\geq .40$ . For the Phase 2 job perception items, the loadings and communalities were very similar. Tables 34 to 36 summarize loadings and communalities from confirmatory factor analyses including all Phase 1 job expectation items or all Phase 2 job experience items. Alpha reliabilities for

the job expectation and job perception scales were all at least .70, and reliabilities for the job reward and job responsibility scales were above .80. All item-total correlations were above .40.

Confirmatory factor analysis was utilized to further test the dimensionality of job expectations and perceptions. All items had loadings of at least  $r = .45$  on the hypothesized factors. Tables 44 and 45 summarize standardized loadings, squared multiple correlations and fit statistics. The results support the desired three dimensions of job expectations and perceptions, but fit indices fall slightly outside recommended levels.

### *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction was measured in Phase 2. The scale items drawn from Curry et al. (1986) exhibited an alpha reliability of  $r = .91$  in the present study (compared to  $r = .86$  in the Curry et al. study). Under principle components analysis with varimax rotation all items loaded on the same dimension with factor loadings of at least  $r = .70$ . The only item that had somewhat lower factor loading, communality, and item-total correlation was item #128 (“I am seldom bored with my job.”), which was the only reverse-coded item. Table 37 summarizes results for the job satisfaction items.

Confirmatory factor analysis for job satisfaction (Table 46) included organizational commitment and withdrawal items. All job satisfaction items had loadings above  $r = .70$  on the hypothesized dimension. Some model fit statistics were within reasonable ranges (e.g., NFI=.91; NNFI=.92), but other fit statistics indicated poor fit (e.g., AGFI=.80; RMSEA=.109).



### *Organizational Commitment*

Organization commitment was measured in Phase 2 using the affective commitment items from Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model of organizational commitment. Alpha reliability for the affective commitment scale in the present study was  $\alpha = .87$  (compared to  $\alpha = .85$  in the Allen and Meyer study). Principle components analysis with varimax rotation revealed high loadings and communalities for all items except the last one (#58). Item-total correlation for this item was also low relative to the other items. However, the factor loading was still above  $\alpha = .50$ , so the item was retained. Table 38 summarizes results of the affective commitment scale analysis.

The confirmatory factor analysis including job satisfaction and withdrawal items presented a slightly different pattern of loadings (Table 46). Item #58 loaded strongly on the organizational commitment factor ( $\alpha = .82$ ), but item #53 had a lower standardized loading. Despite mixed results on model fit, the factor loadings revealed adequate discriminant and convergent validity and there were no consistent problems with any of the items. Therefore, all items were retained to operationalize affective commitment.

### *Withdrawal*

Withdrawal tendencies were measured in Phase 2 using items from three related scales: thinking of quitting, intention to search, and intention to leave (Sager et al., 1998). These items were combined to form a more general "withdrawal" construct. Scale analysis revealed extremely high factor loadings, communalities, and item-total correlations (Table 39). The alpha reliability for the scale was  $\alpha = .94$ . Confirmatory factor

analysis affirmed unidimensionality with high standardized loadings for all three items (Table 46).

### Structural Model Testing

Alternative models of sales force newcomers' expectations, perceptions, and outcomes are hypothesized in chapter 3. The Met Expectations (ME) model (Figure 2) hypothesizes that met/unmet expectations of early job factors influence outcome variables (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, withdrawal).

Alternatively, the Direct Effects (DE) model (Figure 3) hypothesizes that perceptions of early job experiences are primary influencers of outcome variables, and factoring in the expectations of those job experiences will not add additional explanatory power.

The component common to both the ME and DE models is the Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) model (Figure 1). Following a build up protocol, the hypothesized SFO model is tested first, followed by tests of competing ME and DE models. All model testing was performed using Lisrel 8.3 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993).

#### *Two-Step Approach to Model Testing*

Using the two-step approach to model testing suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the measurement model is tested first, followed by testing of the structural model of interest. The previous section included results of the measurement model tests. The confirmatory factor analysis conducted using Lisrel 8.3 gave reasonable support for the dimensionality and discriminant validity of the constructs.

The second step entails testing the theoretical models using structural equation modeling. All models were assessed with multiple fit indices. The standard  $\chi^2$  statistic is

reported, although this statistic almost always rejects the model (due to high sample size) and does not actually provide information regarding *degree* of fit (Gerbing & Anderson, 1992). This statistic is used more for model comparison purposes. Other fit indices reported here include the root-mean-square residual (RMR), the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the nonnormed fit index (NNFI; also called the Tucker-Lewis index). The NNFI is a widely used incremental fit index, while the RMR and RMSEA (recommended by Cudeck & Browne, 1989) are absolute fit indices. The NNFI and RMSEA are especially helpful in compensating for the effect of model complexity (Hu & Bentler, 1998). The following sections explicate the model testing for the SFO, ME, and DE models.

#### *Sales Force Outcome (SFO) Model*

As illustrated in chapter 3, the outcome variables (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and withdrawal) are hypothesized to demonstrate the relationships shown in the Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) Model (Figure 1). The hypotheses being tested are as follows:

Hypothesis 6: Job satisfaction relates directly and positively to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 7: Job satisfaction relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.

Hypothesis 8: Organizational commitment relates directly and positively to performance.

Hypothesis 9: Organizational commitment relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.

Hypothesis 10: Performance relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.

These hypotheses were tested by assessing the fit of the SFO model and the significance of each gamma or beta coefficient (see Figure 19). Table 47 summarizes the fit indices for comparative models. The proposed theoretical (SFO) model exhibited better fit than both the structural null and absolute null anchor models. The chi-square goodness of fit was worse than for the saturated structural model (all paths just-identified), but other fit indices were comparable (e.g., NNFI for both models was .90). However, the theoretical model has only marginal support. Fit indicators suggest that the SFO model as hypothesized fails to adequately reproduce the covariance structure matrix.

The performance measure seems to be part of the problem. Performance does not correlate as highly with other job outcomes, and the performance-to-withdrawal path had a low beta ( $p > .10$ ). A revised model (Figure 20) was evaluated that omits a path from performance to withdrawal. The goodness-of-fit indices for the revised model do not differ appreciably from those of the theory model, so that path does not appear to add any value to the model. Since performance is an important outcome to sales managers, this variable was retained for further testing of the ME and DE models.

Despite the less-than-ideal fit of the overall model, the beta coefficients strongly support hypotheses six through nine. Hypothesis ten (performance influencing withdrawal) is not supported ( $p > .10$ ).

#### *Alternative Theoretical Models*

While the SFO model demonstrates relationships among sales force outcome variables, interest exists regarding the precursors of these variables. Positive perceptions of various job elements (e.g., role stress, training support, job rewards) have been shown

to correlate positively with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and intention to stay (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Major et al., 1995). The crux of the current study is to determine whether expectations play an important role in these relationships. That is, does the extent to which expectations of these job elements (role stress, training support, job rewards) are met or exceeded on the job provide explanatory power beyond the simple perceptions of the job elements? Chapter 3 illustrated two alternative models that represent perceptions as primary antecedents to sales force outcomes (Direct Effects Model; Figure 3) versus met expectations as primary antecedents (Met Expectations Model; Figure 2).

The Met Expectation (ME) Model and the Direct Effects (DE) Model were used to test hypotheses one through five. The testing process involved using different job elements as antecedent variables. Each alternative structural model was evaluated using each of the following constructs as antecedents: (a) role stress (including dimensions of role ambiguity and role conflict), (b) training support, and (c) job reward. Notably, the manager support, job comfort, and job responsibility constructs were not employed in this model evaluation. The data for the manager support construct presented problems in the structural model testing. In addition, open-ended comments from salespersons indicated that there might have been some validity problems due to a person's having more than one sales manager during the first six months on the job. The job comfort and job responsibility constructs were removed from model testing after discovering that these two constructs contributed little or no additional explanation when job reward was included in the model. This finding makes sense due to the heavy focus on the

commission-based pay system and the high number of salespersons who fail to achieve their performance targets.

The first two hypotheses support the ME model, in that met expectations relate directly to job outcomes. Hypotheses three and four support the DE model, where the perceptions of job experiences directly influence job outcomes. Hypothesis five is added as an exploratory test of the direct influence of initial expectations on job outcomes. The hypotheses are stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Met expectations relate directly and positively to job satisfaction when initial expectations and perceived experiences are held constant.

Hypothesis 2: Met expectations relate directly and positively to organizational commitment when initial expectations and perceived experiences are held constant.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job relate directly and positively to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job relate directly and positively to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5: Initial expectations relate directly and negatively to perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job.

The met expectations hypotheses (H1 and H2) were tested by using the algebraic difference score between perceptions of job experiences after six months on the job and the pre-entry expectations of the same job aspects (i.e., pre-entry expectations minus post-entry perceptions). When expectations exceed perceived subsequent experiences, the resulting high difference score indicates unmet expectations. A low score indicates that

experiences were closer to expectations, while a negative score indicates that post-entry experiences exceeded pre-entry expectations.

For hypotheses three and four (post-entry perceptions antecedent to job satisfaction and organizational commitment), pre-entry expectations and 6-months perceptions of experiences were separated. The theoretical linkages included post-entry perceptions influencing job satisfaction and organizational commitment. An exploratory dimension (hypothesis five) posits a direct influence of pre-entry expectations on subsequent perceptions and job outcomes. Research support for direct influences of expectations is lacking or inconsistent (Hom et al., 1999), and initial model testing showed that the expectations constructs exhibited low beta coefficients. Therefore, hypothesis five was rejected and the pre-entry expectations constructs were omitted from the DE model (see Figure 22). As the removal of the expectations-perceptions path from the theoretical model did not change model fit, the expectations construct was withdrawn from all subsequent model evaluations.

The following sections report the results of structural equation model testing of relationships hypothesized in the ME and DE models (i.e., hypotheses one through four). First, the alternative models are discussed separately. Then overall results of model testing and comparisons are discussed.

*Met Expectations Model.* The Met Expectations (ME) model hypothesizes that the more sales force newcomers' expectations are met or exceeded (i.e., higher met expectations) the more satisfied the salespeople will be and the more committed they will be to the organization. Then, as the SFO model demonstrates, increased job satisfaction

and organizational commitment will contribute to lower withdrawal tendency. In addition, met expectations are hypothesized to influence performance indirectly through escalated organizational commitment.

A series of structural equation model evaluations produced the results summarized in Tables 48-53. For each target of expectations (i.e., role stress, job aspects, manager support, training support), a separate series of model tests was performed. A nested model structure was employed (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Williams & Holahan, 1994). First, estimates were attained for the structural null model (no paths) and the saturated structural model (all paths possible). Next, the theoretical model was tested (based on Figure 21). Finally, simple path modifications to the theoretical model were effected.

The met expectations construct for role ambiguity and role conflict was operationalized in a slightly different way than for job reward and training support. Since the role item scores were expressed in a negative sense, a higher difference score means met expectations were met or exceeded. Thus, the met expectations construct should relate positively to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as the results indicate (Table 48; Figure 23). The theoretical model had a reasonable fit (e.g., RMSEA=.07). None of the revised models for role met expectations offered significantly better fit (based on chi-square difference test).

Met expectations of job reward and training support were actually operationalized as “unmet expectations.” That is, a higher positive number indicates unmet expectations. Therefore, higher scores for these constructs represent unmet expectations and should



correlate negatively with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Unmet expectations of job reward (Table 50; Figure 25) indeed had a strong negative correlation with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Likewise, the theoretical model using training support as the object of met/unmet expectations reproduced the covariance structure matrix as well or better than any of the revised models (Table 52; Figure 27). Therefore, the theoretical ME model appears to best represent the data.

*Direct Effects Model.* The same sequence of models was run for the Direct Effects (DE) model (Figure 22). For these models, the pre-entry expectations constructs were eliminated. Preliminary testing had shown no direct correlations between pre-entry expectations and any outcome variables. Any influence would be either mediated by job experiences, or it would be a function of the extent to which the expectations were met. Therefore, the DE models analyzed perceptions of job experiences after six months on the job as the primary antecedent variable to the sales force outcomes.

The theoretical models, using separate models for role stress, job reward, and training support constructs, all provided less than reasonable fit with the covariance structure matrix. Tables 49, 51, and 53 provide details of model comparisons. The RMSEA for each model was below .10, which falls barely within the range for reasonable model fit (Fan, et al., 1999). Other fit indices indicated that the model only marginally fit the data (see Tables 49, 51, and 53).

*Comparison of Alternative Models.* The goal of testing structural equation models was to determine to what extent the ME model and DE model offer explanatory power. Met expectations research leads to an expectation that the ME model should provide

better fit than the DE model, which does not factor in pre-entry expectations. In this case, multiple model comparisons were possible. For each variable (i.e., role stress, job perceptions, manager support, training support), the ME and DE models were compared. In each case, the chi square difference between the two models was significant. The ME model had better fit in each comparison (Table 48 vs. Table 49; Table 50 vs. Table 51; Table 52 vs. Table 53). For example, the role ME model had an RMSEA of .070 versus .077 for the role DE model. These results would lead one to conclude that the ME model better represents the data.

#### Polynomial Regression Analysis

A central focus of this study is to test whether the apparent influence of met expectations is truly significant, or whether it is an artifact of improper measurement and testing (Hom et al. 1999; Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1999). The previous model testing involved the use of difference scores to operationalize met expectations. However, this method is fraught with problems (Edwards, 1991; Irving & Meyer, 1994). Although the results of the structural model comparisons revealed better fit for the met expectations model in every case, this could be a misleading result.

One way to examine the validity of these findings is to use a hierarchical regression approach suggested by Edwards (1994) for improving measurement in person-job fit research. Irving and Meyer (1994) applied the same concept to met expectations research, concluding that the supposed influence of met expectations on job outcomes was not apparent when controlling for job expectations and job experiences (i.e., the component parts of the met expectations construct).

Hierarchical regression was run for each variable separately. First, the Phase 1 expectation and Phase 2 experience for a single antecedent (role ambiguity, role conflict, training support, manager support, job comfort, job responsibility, or job reward) were entered together. Next, the interaction term (expectation X experience) was entered for that variable. Equations were tested using job satisfaction as the dependent variable, then the same equations were repeated with organizational commitment as the dependent variable. The change in  $R^2$  was noted for each step. Also, the partial beta coefficient was noted for the interaction term.

Tables 54 and 55 summarize the beta coefficients and change in squared multiple correlation ( $R^2$ ) for each antecedent construct. The step one entry of expectations and experiences produced a significant  $R^2$  for all fourteen equations. In every case but one (job comfort – organizational commitment), pre-entry expectations showed no relationship with the dependent variable (i.e., job satisfaction or organizational commitment). Conversely, time two perceptions of experiences produced beta coefficients significant at  $p < .01$ , with the lone exception of job responsibility in relation to organizational commitment. Thus, the primary antecedent to either job satisfaction or organizational commitment appears to be the perceptions of experiences.

Results of polynomial regression analysis indicate that the interaction of pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences explains no additional variance in job satisfaction or organizational commitment beyond that explained by the component parts (i.e., expectations and experiences). When the interaction term was entered in step two of the hierarchical regression analysis, the change in  $R^2$  was significant ( $p < .05$ ) for only one of

the fourteen regression equations. The one exception was for organizational commitment regressed on job reward.

The polynomial regression analysis, unlike the structural equation modeling analysis, indicates that hypotheses one and two should be rejected. That is, met expectations do not relate directly to job satisfaction and organizational commitment when pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences are controlled.

#### Summary

Chapter 4 has reported the analysis and results of the research. The analytical protocol was outlined, the construct analysis was explained, and the testing of hypotheses was completed. The central research question of this research study is whether the met expectations construct explains variance in sales force outcome variables beyond that contributed by its component parts. Two alternate methods of analysis were used to assess this question. The structural equation model approach produced evidence that the met expectations model offers better explanatory ability than the direct effects model. However, polynomial regression indicated that met expectations do not offer additional explanatory power once the component parts have been controlled. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of these results, outlines theoretical and managerial implications, specifies contributions of this research, and offers limitations and directions for future research.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

Chapter 4 presented the analysis of relationships hypothesized. Chapter 5 discusses the results and implications of the findings. Contributions of the study are explicated, along with limitations and recommendations for future research.

#### Findings of Analysis of Structural Equation Models

As explained in chapter 4, hypotheses were first tested with structural equation modeling. This approach represents a more sophisticated way to assess simultaneously a system of predictive relationships. For structural model analysis, simple difference scores were used to operationalize met expectations. The problems with this method of operationalization have been discussed in previous chapters. Difference scores were used here to illustrate the possible misleading results.

Several structural equation models were evaluated. The Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) model (Figures 19 and 20) was first tested in order to determine the best representation of theoretical relationships among job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and withdrawal. Next, competing theoretical models were tested, using different antecedent constructs (e.g., role ambiguity and role conflict, training support, job reward). First, the Met Expectations (ME) model (Figure 21) was tested, followed by the Direct Effects (DE) model (Figure 22). As discussed in chapter 4,

the models were fitted against the covariance structure matrices using three independent foci of expectations and experiences: (a) role stress, (b) training support, and (c) job rewards. Results of the structural equation model tests are discussed in the following sections.

#### *Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) Model*

Fit indices did not indicate good fit for the revised SFO model (see Table 47). However, path coefficients were significant for all hypothesized paths (Figure 20). Phi matrix correlations among job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and withdrawal are high, and extensive research has supported this core part of the SFO model (see Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Performance was expected to correlate highly and negatively with withdrawal, due to the existence of contingent rewards (Harrison et al., 1996). However, the results of this study evidenced a weak correlation between performance and withdrawal ( $r = -.03$ ), which coincides with the inconsistent results of previous research (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Williams & Livingstone, 1994).

One possible confound in the current study is that many of the lower performers had already left the company prior to the Phase 2 survey. If the attitudes and intentions of early leavers (i.e., pre-6-months tenure) could have been measured, the correlation between performance and withdrawal would likely have been higher (given that a high number of low performers actually left the company). A possible conclusion that may be drawn from the study findings is that for commission-based salespeople who perform well enough to stay through the 6-month point, performance is not a reliable indicator of withdrawal.

### *Met Expectations (ME) Model*

The ME model is based on the met expectations hypothesis offered by Porter & Steers (1973). The ME model posits that the extent to which early entry expectations of new salespeople are confirmed (later in the job) directly influences sales force outcomes (see Figure 21). Previous research shows met expectations correlate positively with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention (Wanous et al., 1992). However, research results are inconsistent, and few studies have accounted for the independent effects of expectations and subsequent perceptions (Irving & Meyer, 1994).

The met expectations hypothesis was first tested in the current study with a structural equation modeling approach. The fit indicators suggest that the ME model fits the sample data reasonably well (see Tables 48, 50, and 52). The model was tested in three separate runs, using three different foci of expectations and experiences: role stress, job reward, and training support. The Tucker-Lewis Index was at least .89 for all three models. However, the RMSEA met the .07 acceptability mark in only the role stress model. Thus, the ME model received only marginal support. Despite marginal model fit, all path coefficients from met expectations to job satisfaction and organizational commitment were statistically significant in the direction expected (see Figures 23, 25, and 27). This indicates that salespersons' met expectations of role stress, job reward, and training support influence sales force outcomes. The overall lack of model fit is more likely traced to the deficiencies in the SFO model.

### *Direct Effects (DE) Model*

The DE model posits a direct influence of job experience perceptions on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (see Figure 22). Prior evidence supports the direct influence of job experiences such as role stress (Babakus et al., 1996; Mowday et al., 1982), job reward (Irving & Meyer, 1994), and training support (Tannenbaum et al., 1991) on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, indices of structural model fit fell short of recommended levels (see Tables 49, 51, and 53). Despite weak overall model fit, path coefficients for all three experience antecedents were significant with the exception of the role ambiguity to organizational commitment path (Figure 24).

### *Structural Model Comparisons*

From a structural equation modeling perspective one would be tempted to conclude that the met expectations hypothesis has some validity. All three ME models (Figures 23, 25 and 27) had better fit than the respective DE models (Figures 24, 26 and 28). However, closer examination reveals higher lambda coefficients for the experience main effects than for the met expectations main effects. In addition, all models received only marginal support at best. This approach to testing the met expectations hypothesis appears to offer little valid support. Therefore, a more rigorous analysis using polynomial regression (as recommended by Irving & Meyer, 1994) is necessary.

### *Findings of Polynomial Regression Analysis*

After analyzing the hypotheses from a structural equation model perspective, a series of polynomial regressions were utilized for a more rigorous test (as per Irving & Meyer, 1999). A goal was to avoid the use of difference scores (expectations vs.



perceptions) and to partial out the effects of initial expectations and subsequent experiences. In so doing, the additional contribution of the met expectations construct (i.e., interaction term) can be extracted.

The results of the polynomial regression analysis provide greater support for the direct effects of experiences than for the met expectations hypothesis (see Tables 54 and 55). In every case but one, the interaction of pre-entry expectations and 6-months experiences failed to produce a significant change in  $R^2$  after the direct effects had been previously entered. The one exception was for organizational commitment regressed on job reward expectations and experiences. Given the importance of the contingent reward system in the case of the target company, it is not surprising that unmet expectations with regard to job reward would produce an additional negative effect on organizational commitment.

Aside from the one exception, the polynomial regression tests refute hypotheses one, two, and five while supporting hypotheses three and four (Table 56). That is, met expectations (i.e., the interaction of pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences) do not explain additional variance in job satisfaction and organizational commitment beyond the statistically significant variance explained by the component parts (i.e., pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences). This contradicts the apparent support for hypotheses one and two generated through structural equation modeling. The findings agree with those of Irving & Meyer (1994) and Hom et al. (1999). A primary inference derived from the findings is that, given the lack of support for the met expectations

construct, the value of met expectations as an influential antecedent to early sales force outcomes may have been overstated in previous studies.

## Discussion

The results of the present study have distinct implications for theoretical development and managerial practice. The remainder of chapter 5 discusses these implications and specifies the limitations of this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of future research directions.

### *Theoretical Implications*

The results of this study present a challenge to the theoretical development of met expectations research. The findings corroborate the results of Irving and Meyer (1994, 1999) and Hom et al. (1999), which indicated that met expectations do not contribute to explaining variation in job outcomes beyond the contribution of the component parts (i.e., initial expectations and subsequent perceptions). Several implications can be drawn relative to methodology and theoretical development.

1. The use of difference scores appears to yield misleading results. Given the known problems of difference scores (Irving & Meyer, 1994), alternative methods such as polynomial regression analysis are necessary to more accurately operationalize the met expectations construct. Therefore, research concerning met expectations should avoid operationalizing the construct with difference scores, or at least employ additional means of testing hypotheses. The polynomial regression approach failed to support the met expectations hypothesis, suggesting that the support found with different scores may be overstated.

2. A second theoretical implication relates to the mechanism of realistic job previews (RJPs). While RJPs may still have value to sales managers as tools for enhancing job attitudes and retention, met expectations may not be the lynchpin for explaining how RJPs work (Hom et al., 1999). RJP researchers should then turn their attention to other mediation mechanisms, such as self-selection, ability to cope, or employer honesty (Irving & Meyer, 1999).

3. Similarly, the results of this study further cast doubt regarding the importance of the role met expectations play in achieving desired sales force outcomes. The apparent importance of more direct effects (e.g., perceived role ambiguity, role conflict, job reward, or training support) suggests that researchers should place more focus on perceptions of actual experiences that will improve employee perceptions of outcome variables, regardless of their initial expectations. If these results can be replicated in other samples, the implications could extend to other workplace settings. This is not to say that met expectations should be completely ignored as an antecedent to sales force outcomes. Rather, other constructs may provide more utility in explaining these outcomes.

4. An additional theoretical implication is that the relationships hypothesized in the SFO model received only partial support. As expected, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are highly correlated, and both constructs correlate negatively with withdrawal. However, the role of performance remains elusive. As with many previous studies, performance is shown to have inconsistent relationships with other sales force outcome variables. Theory development regarding sales force performance will

depend on more robust approaches to measuring performance and its relationship with other sales force outcome variables.

5. Finally, the results in the present study could potentially have implications for the study of met expectations in other academic areas. For example, similar techniques could be applied to the study of customer satisfaction with regard to the customers' met expectations. The expectancy-disconfirmation model (Oliver, 1980, 1993) is one paradigm of consumer satisfaction that could be more rigorously assessed with the techniques of the present study.

#### *Managerial Implications*

Sales managers continue to search for means to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of sales forces. Even small increases in sales force retention and performance produce profitability gains. The results of this study offer helpful clues regarding how sales managers can improve retention and performance of salespeople. First, evidence was reinforced for job satisfaction and organizational commitment as key mediating constructs for reducing employee withdrawal. This emphasizes the importance of finding methods for improving employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The importance of job satisfaction and organizational commitment necessitates a better understanding of antecedents to these variables. Met expectations has been studied as one of these antecedent constructs. However, the present study calls into question the value of focusing on met expectations. Rather, more emphasis should be placed on job experiences, such as reducing role ambiguity and role conflict, increasing training support, and ensuring that the reward system is perceived positively.

Unfortunately, little was discovered in terms of identifying the likelihood of salespeople performing well and remaining with the company based on pre-entry evaluations. There were no differences in pre-entry expectations of high performers versus low performers or stayers versus leavers. The lack of support for the met expectations hypothesis also casts some doubt about the value of realistic job previews. However, the researchers in the present study observed a lack of realism in the job previews presented to new salespeople. This could account for the extremely high expectations found in the Phase 1 survey, and could also have possible implications regarding the high turnover rate.

### *Contributions*

The research design offers several advantages over much of previous research. The results of the present study make meaningful contributions in the following ways.

1. The longitudinal measurement of met/unmet expectations allows for an improved measurement of the construct by avoiding reliance on retrospective measures of met expectations (Tannenbaum et al., 1991; Wanous et al., 1992). Also, using the polynomial regression technique suggested by Irving and Meyer (1994) avoids problems associated with difference scores. The results provide a substantial contribution by comparing alternative analysis techniques and revealing that the oft-used technique of difference scores may produce observed effects that are artifactual.

2. The large sample from a single sales force provides a rigorous test of theory in a unique occupational setting. This contributes to the theoretical development of the met

expectations hypothesis by testing it in a different employment setting (Hom et al., 1999). Additional research is still needed in other settings.

3. A third contribution involves the use of structural equation models to add to theory development involving relationships among turnover precursors. A large sample size and multiple indicators of constructs allow for robust model testing. Despite the use of difference scores, structural equation modeling is considered a sound technique for assessing theoretical relationships among latent constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The comparison of ME and DE models provides additional evidence for linkages among the constructs of interest to sales managers.

4. A final contribution is that the met expectations construct was examined with multiple targets of expectations. This gives added depth to our understanding of met expectations. That is, we can detect whether met expectations of specific job aspects are more (or less) important as antecedents of job attitudes and behaviors. In the present study, there were at least some small differences based on which job aspect was used as the focus of met expectations. For example, beta coefficients for job reward met expectations and experiences were higher than for role and training support met expectations and experiences. Also, based on structural equation model comparisons, the job reward analysis revealed greater differences between ME model coefficients (Figure 25) and DE model coefficients (Figure 26). These differences might not be as evident in a non-commission employee setting.

### *Limitations*

Despite the advantages offered by the proposed research design, several limitations should be noted.

The first limitations have to do with the sample employed for this study. The sample time frame, while an advantage over cross-sectional studies, has limitations. First, using only two data points limits the temporal influence of met/unmet expectations. Perceptions of job aspects (used in measures of met expectations) are measured at the same point as perceptions of intervening outcomes. Ideally, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, and withdrawal should be measured at a third time point in order to have a time lag between proposed causes and effects. Also, the hypotheses are tested only within a 6-month time frame. Future research should replicate the study with different time frames. Finally, since panels of new salespeople are introduced to the company over an 18-month period, changes in extraneous variables could interfere with results. However, comparisons of salespeople from different time periods revealed no differences in pre-entry expectations, and differences in 6-month perceptions were likely due to the later cohorts having three weeks of training instead of two.

The size and type of sample present additional limitations. The single company sales force sample provides a strong test of theory, but this limits generalizability. Replication with other sales forces and other types of employees will add to generalizability and theoretical development. While the expected sample size is above that recommended for structural equation modeling (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), a larger

sample would be helpful for making comparisons among subgroups. The response rates were high, but there still are possible limitations due to attrition and nonresponse bias. The company's high turnover rate in the first six months resulted in 156 early leavers, predominantly low performers, who were not available for the Phase 2 survey. The availability of exit interview data would help comparisons in future studies.

Other limitations involve the measurement of constructs. Multicollinearity among constructs is a common problem in turnover research due to high correlation among turnover antecedents. As expected, this study had some problems with multicollinearity, particularly among expectations constructs. Most sales force newcomers had very high pre-entry expectations. Also, common method variance was a problem due to measuring most variables with the same scale formats. Finally, reliability and validity measures for some constructs were less than recommended levels. In particular, the role conflict scales had low reliability (.78 for Time 1; .82 for Time 2) and less than 50% variance explained (see Table 29). However, the training support scales developed for this study had reliabilities above .90 and variance explained above .70.

#### *Recommendations for Future Research*

The present study opens the door to multiple possibilities for future research. The primary recommendations involve additional replication, improved research designs, and further extensions of theoretical development. Details of these future research directions are expressed here.

Several types of replication are necessary to enhance the theory development undertaken in the present study. As Hom et al. (1999) suggest, multiple types of samples



should be used to determine the generalizability of the findings regarding the met expectations hypothesis. Other types of sales force samples are needed to enhance the applicability of the findings to general sales force settings. Also, nonsales samples will extend the theory development across job settings. The sample of nurses used by Hom et al. and the sales force sample used here both represent unique types of employees. Other types of job settings could produce different results.

Another type of replication involves the use of different job characteristics as targets of met expectations. Several job characteristics were used in the present study; however, the final analysis limited the focus to role stress variables, job reward, and training support. Manager support, which was not included due to measurement and situational problems, could be an important aspect in other settings. Studying the effect of confirmed expectations regarding additional job characteristics would enhance the generalizability of findings across multiple targets of expectations. Or alternatively, it could reveal important differences in met expectations effects.

The present study also infers several methodological recommendations for future studies. The primary recommendation regards the measurement of the met expectations construct. While more longitudinal designs are needed, the use of difference scores could be misleading in assessing the true impact of met expectations. The use of polynomial regression analysis, as suggested by Irving and Meyer (1994), offers added rigor to the analysis of met/unmet expectations effects. Other suggested methodological advancements include using different scale formats for measuring constructs and asking about expectations in different ways. For example, Irving and Meyer (1994) worded

expectations as “likelihood” of experiencing a certain job characteristic, while the present study asked for the “expectation” of experiencing a job characteristic. There could be differing interpretations based on how items are worded (Irving & Meyer, 1994).

Future research designs can also be improved by adding multiple data points and different time intervals between data liftings. The dynamic processes of early employment expectation fulfillment and attitude development can be better assessed with multiple data points, and the time interval of six months is somewhat arbitrary. The fulfillment of expectations may be different at various time intervals. Testing the met expectations hypothesis with varied longitudinal designs will offer additional credence to previous findings.

A final methodological recommendation is to incorporate exit data from early leavers. This is especially important in a contingent reward system, where low performers are much more likely to leave early. If measures of met expectations, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment can be obtained from salespeople right after they terminate employment, this will allow a better opportunity to compare constructs across the full sample. Administering a follow-up survey earlier than six months is another way to increase coverage of the sample.

A final area for future research involves extending the methods of this study to other related areas of research. This could include research concerning consumer expectations and satisfaction, as well as similar relationships found in sociology (e.g., met expectations, satisfaction, and commitment in marriage).

## Summary

Chapter 5 summarizes the results and implications of the present study. The results support a stream of research that casts doubt about the influence of met expectations on early job outcomes. Although the met expectations hypothesis cannot be completely rejected, the use of longitudinal data and multiple methods of analysis offer further evidence that previous findings in support of the met expectations hypothesis might be a product of improper methods of analysis. In particular, the findings suggest that using polynomial regression to separate the effects of initial expectations, subsequent perceptions, and the interaction of these two measures (i.e., met/unmet expectations) reveals a lack of support for the met expectations hypothesis. The conclusions from this study contribute to several streams of research, including research of met expectations, turnover models, and performance antecedents. The methodology offers an advance over traditional means of assessing models of early sales force processes and outcomes. Finally, several limitations were addressed, and directions for future research were explicated. Therefore, the present study offers contributions in terms of extending theoretical development in current research streams, as well as offering guidance for continued development.

APPENDIX A

TABLES

Table 1  
*Definitions of Constructs Comprising ME and DE Models*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Role Ambiguity	The degree to which a salesperson does not feel he has the necessary information to perform his job adequately; when he is uncertain about what his role partners expect of him, how to act to satisfy those expectations, or how his ultimate performance will be evaluated (Churchill, Ford, and Walker, 1976).
Role Conflict	The degree to which a salesperson believes that the demands of two or more of his role partners are incompatible and that he cannot simultaneously satisfy all the demands (Churchill, Ford, and Walker, 1976).
Training Support	The extent to which training meets or fulfills a trainee's expectations and desires (Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers 1991, p. 760).
Manager Support	Dimension of social support, which is defined as interpersonal transactions that include affect, affirmation, and/or aid (House, 1981).
Job Comfort	The degree to which individuals (expect to) experience comfortable working conditions (Irving & Meyer, 1994, p. 942).
Job Reward	The degree to which individuals (expect to) receive both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards on the job (Irving & Meyer, 1994, p. 942).
Job Responsibility	The degree to which individuals (expect to) occupy an important role in the organization (Irving & Meyer, 1994, p. 942).
Met Expectations	Lack of discrepancy between what a person encounters on the job in the way of positive and negative experiences and what he expected to encounter (Porter & Steers, 1973).
Job Satisfaction	A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976).
Organizational Commitment	Relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982, p. 27).
Performance	Record of outcomes achieved in carrying out the job function during a specified period (Kane, 1986, p. 237). <i>Note:</i> For this study, actual sales results are measured by average percent-to-budget over a six-month period.
Withdrawal	Salesperson's thoughts, intentions, or desires to leave the current sales job (Rosse & Hulin, 1985).
Turnover	Secession of the employment relationship between the salesperson and the organization (Bluedorn, 1982a). <i>Note:</i> opposite of "retention."

Table 2

*Research Findings – Outcomes of Met Expectations (ME)*

<b>Study</b>	<b>Timing or Setting of Measurement Used</b>	<b>Results</b>
Katzell (1968)	Panel – 8 months	ME -→ turnover
Dunnette, Arvey & Banas (1973)	Retrospective Met Expectations	ME -→ turnover
Federico, Federico, & Lundquist (1976)	Expected vs. highest salary achieved	(Achieved – expected salary) +→ tenure
Reilly, Brown, Blood, & Malatesta (1981)	Retrospective Met Expectations	ME +→ organizational commitment ME -→ turnover
Arnold & Feldman (1982)	Retrospective Met Expectations	ME +→ job satisfaction ME +→ organizational commitment ME -→ turnover
Michaels & Spector (1982)	Retrospective Met Expectations	ME +→ job satisfaction ME +→ organizational commitment
Greenhaus, Seidel & Marinis (1983)	Panel – 3 months	ME +→ job satisfaction
Hom, Griffeth & Sellaro (1984)	Retrospective Met Expectations	ME +→ job satisfaction
Lee & Mowday (1987)	Retrospective Met Expectations	ME +→ job satisfaction ME +→ organizational commitment ME -→ intent to leave
Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers (1991)	Panel – pre-training vs. post-training (“training fulfillment”)	Training fulfillment +→ organizational commitment
Wotruba & Tyagi (1991)	Retrospective Met Expectations (2 data points)	ME -→ turnover (when measured at same point in time)
Wanous, Poland, Premack, & Davis (1992)	Meta-analysis	ME +→ job satisfaction ME +→ organizational commitment ME -→ intent to leave ME -→ turnover
Irving & Meyer (1994)	Panel – 12 months (4 data points)	Marginal influence of ME when controlling for work experiences
Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner (1995)	Panel – 4 weeks	ME +→ job satisfaction ME +→ organizational commitment ME -→ intent to leave
Werbel, Landau, & DeCarlo (1996)	Panel – 10 weeks	ME +→ organizational commitment

*Note.* All correlations under “Results” are significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 3  
*Stage-Oriented Models of Employees' Socialization*

<b>Developer(s)</b>	<b>Socialization Stages</b>
Buchanan (1974)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Basic training and initiation</li> <li>2. Performance</li> <li>3. Organizational dependability</li> </ol>
Porter, Lawler, & Hackman (1975)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prearrival</li> <li>2. Encounter</li> <li>3. Change and acquisition</li> </ol>
Feldman (1976)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anticipatory socialization</li> <li>2. Accommodation</li> <li>3. Role management</li> </ol>
Schein (1978)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Entry</li> <li>2. Socialization</li> <li>3. Mutual acceptance</li> </ol>
Wanous (1980)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confronting and accepting organizational reality</li> <li>2. Achieving role clarity</li> <li>3. Locating oneself in the organizational context</li> <li>4. Detecting signposts of successful socialization</li> </ol>

Table 4

*Findings of Published Research Addressing Outcomes of Job Satisfaction (JS)*

<b>Study</b>	<b>Results</b>
Marsh & Mannari (1977)	JS +→ organizational commitment (OC)
Mobley (1977)	JS +→ OC
Steers (1977)	JS +→ OC
Koch & Steers (1978)	JS +→ OC
Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth (1978)	JS -→ turnover
Bartol (1979)	JS +→ OC
Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino (1979)	JS -→ turnover
Price & Mueller (1981)	JS +→ OC
Bluedorn (1982)	JS +→ OC
Bateman & Strasser (1984)	JS +→ OC
Reichers (1985)	JS +→ OC
Cotton & Tuttle (1986)	JS -→ turnover
Williams & Hazer (1986)	JS +→ OC
Johnston, Varadarajan, Futrell, & Sager (1987)	JS -→ turnover
Pierce & Dunham (1987)	JS +→ OC
Johnston, Futrell, Parasuraman, & Sager (1988)	JS -→ turnover
Sager, Varadarajan, & Futrell (1988)	JS -→ turnover
Sager & Johnston (1989)	JS -→ turnover
Johnston, Parasuraman, Futrell, & Black (1990)	JS +→ OC JS -→ turnover
Sager (1990)	JS +→ OC
Hom & Griffeth (1991)	JS -→ turnover
Vandenberg & Lance (1992)	JS +→ OC
Brown & Peterson (1993)	JS +→ OC
Darden, McKee, & Hampton (1993)	JS +→ OC
Tett & Meyer (1993)	JS +→ OC
Sager (1994)	JS +→ OC JS -→ turnover
Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, & Moncrief (1996)	JS +→ OC JS -→ turnover
Cramer (1996)	JS +→ OC
Jones, Katak, Futrell, & Johnston (1996)	JS -→ turnover
Singh, Verbeke, & Rhoads (1996)	JS +→ OC

*Note.* All correlations under “Results” are significant at  $p < .05$ .



Table 5

*Findings of Published Research Addressing Outcomes of Organizational Commitment (OC)*

<b>Study</b>	<b>Results</b>
Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian (1974)	OC -→ turnover
Porter, Crampon, & Smith (1976)	OC -→ turnover
Steers (1977)	OC -→ turnover
Koch & Steers (1978)	OC -→ turnover
Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino (1979)	OC -→ turnover
Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979)	OC -→ turnover
Arnold & Feldman (1982)	OC -→ turnover
Bluedorn (1982a)	OC -→ turnover
Michaels & Spector (1982)	OC -→ turnover
Mowday, Porter, & Steers (1982)	OC -→ turnover
Stumpf & Hartman (1984)	OC -→ turnover
Johnston, Varadarajan, Futrell, & Sager (1987)	OC -→ turnover
Farkas & Tetrick (1989)	OC -→ turnover
Meyer, Paunonen, Goffin, & Jackson (1989)	OC +→ performance
Johnston, Parasuraman, Futrell, & Black (1990)	OC -→ turnover
Mathieu & Zajac (1990)	OC +→ performance
Randall, Fedor, & Longenecker (1990)	OC -→ turnover OC +→ performance
Sager (1990)	OC -→ turnover
Huselid & Day (1991)	OC -→ turnover OC +→ performance
Brown & Peterson (1993)	OC -→ turnover
Cohen (1993)	OC -→ turnover
Darden, McKee, & Hampton (1993)	OC +→ performance
Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, & Sincich (1993)	OC -→ turnover
Tett & Meyer (1993)	OC -→ turnover
Hunt & Morgan (1994)	OC -→ turnover
Sager (1994)	OC -→ turnover
Somers (1995)	OC -→ turnover OC +→ performance
Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, & Moncrief (1996)	OC -→ turnover
Singh, Verbeke, & Rhoads (1996)	OC -→ turnover OC +→ performance
Benkhoff (1997)	OC +→ performance

*Note.* All correlations under “Results” are significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 6

*Findings of Published Research Addressing Outcomes of Performance (PERF)*

<b>Study</b>	<b>Results</b>
Wanous (1974)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Sheridan & Slocum (1975)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Bagozzi (1978)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Bagozzi (1980)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Jackofsky (1984)	PERF -→ turnover
Podsakoff & Williams (1986)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Johnston, Varadarajan, Futrell, & Sager (1987)	PERF -→ turnover
McEvoy & Cascio (1987)	PERF -→ turnover
Johnston, Futrell, Parasuraman, & Sager (1988)	PERF -→ turnover
Fern, Avila, & Grewal (1989)	PERF -→ turnover
Bycio, Hackett, & Alvares (1990)	PERF -→ turnover
Sager (1990)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Darden, McKee, & Hampton (1993)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Brown & Peterson (1994)	PERF +→ job satisfaction
Williams & Livingstone (1994)	PERF -→ turnover
Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, & Moncrief (1996)	PERF +→ job satisfaction

*Note.* All correlations under “Results” are significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 7

*Operationalization of Constructs Comprising ME and DE Models*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Scale Source</b>	<b>Reliability</b>	<b>Item Location on Survey</b>
Role Ambiguity	Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman (1970)	$\alpha = .80$	Phase One: #107-112 Phase Two: #7-12
Role Conflict	Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman (1970)	$\alpha = .82$	Phase One: #113-119 Phase Two: #13-19
Training Support	Developed for this study	N/A	Phase One: #17-22, 84 Phase Two: #1-6, 66
Manager Support	Developed for this study	N/A	Phase One: #71-76, 78, 80-83 Phase Two: #138-148
Job Comfort	Irving & Meyer 1994; Manhardt 1972	$\alpha = .56 - .69$	Phase One: #87-91 Phase Two: #26-30
Job Reward	Irving & Meyer 1994; Manhardt 1972	$\alpha = .70 - .81$	Phase One: #92-98 Phase Two: #31-37
Job Responsibility	Irving & Meyer 1994; Manhardt 1972	$\alpha = .70 - .78$	Phase One: #99-106 Phase Two: #38-45
Met Expectations	Measurement based on Irving & Meyer (1994, 1999)	N/A	Derived from Phase One and Phase Two survey data
Job Satisfaction	Curry, Wakefield, Price, & Mueller (1986); Brayfield & Rothe (1951)	$\alpha = .86$	Phase Two: #126-130
Organizational Commitment	Allen & Meyer (1990) (Affective Component)	$\alpha = .85$	Phase Two: #53-58
Performance	Company Data 6-month average percent-to-budget	N/A	Gathered directly from company data
Withdrawal	Hom, Griffeth, & Sellaro (1984)	N/A	Phase Two: #131-133

Table 8

*Item Listing for Phase 1 (P items) and Phase 2 (Q items) Surveys*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Scale Items</b>
Role Ambiguity (P107-P112) and (Q007-Q012)	I feel certain about how much authority I have. (R) Clear, planned goals and objectives exist for my job. (R) I know that I have divided my time properly. (R) I know what my responsibilities are. (R) I know exactly what is expected of me. (R) Explanation is clear of what has to be done. (R)
Role Conflict (P113-P119) and (Q013-Q019)	I have to do things that I think should be done differently. I receive a sales objective without the resources necessary to complete it. I have to bend a rule or policy in order to attain a sales objective. I work with two or more (Company) managers who operate quite differently. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others. I receive a sales objective without adequate support from the company.
Training Support (P017-P022) and (Q001-Q006)	My training: Better enabled me to complete my assignments and duties. Helped me to perform quality work. Better enabled me to perform my job at (The Company). Had a lot to do with my job performance. Helped me to perform well at my first job assignment. Helped me to be a successful employee of (The Company).
Manager Support (P071-P076, P078, P080-P083) and (Q138-Q148)	My DSM helps me practice opening my sales call. My DSM regularly provides additional training in investigating customers' needs. My DSM seldom provides additional training in negotiating skills. (R) My DSM regularly provides additional training on closing sales. My DSM seldom provides additional training in time management. (R) My DSM points out areas needing improvement in my selling technique. If I make all my presentations like my DSM's, I secure more accounts for (The Company). When I have problems during a canvass, my DSM usually has some good suggestions. My DSM spends a lot of time with me on planning. My DSM shares other sales reps' successful selling techniques with me. I can turn to my DSM when I am having problems outside of my sales job.

Table 8 continues

Table 8 (continued)

Construct	Scale Items
Job Comfort (P087-P091) and (Q026-030)	My job: Provides job security. Permits a regular routine in time and place of work. Has clear-cut rules and procedures to follow. Provides ample leisure time off the job. Provides comfortable working conditions.
Job Reward (P092-P098) and (Q031-Q037)	My job: Encourages continued development of knowledge and skills. Is intellectually stimulating. Provides a feeling of accomplishment. Provides the opportunity to earn a high income. Allows me to be respected by other people. Permits me to work for people I admire and respect. Rewards good performance with recognition.
Job Responsibility (P099-P106) and (Q038-045)	My job: Gives me responsibility for taking risks. Permits me to develop my own methods of doing the work. Requires working on problems of central importance to the organization. Makes a social contribution by the work I do. Provides change and variety in duties and activities. Requires originality and creativeness. Satisfies my cultural and aesthetic interests. Permits working independently.
Job Satisfaction (Q126-Q130)	I find real enjoyment in my job. I like my job better than the average worker does. I am seldom bored with my job. Most days I am enthusiastic about my job. I feel fairly well satisfied with my job.
Organizational Commitment (Q053-Q058)	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to (The Company). (R) I do not feel emotionally attached to (The Company). (R) (The Company) has a great deal of personal meaning for me. I do not feel like part of the family at (The Company). (R) I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with (The Company). I really feel as if any problems (The Company) may have are my own.
Withdrawal (Q131-Q133)	During the next six months, I intend to search for another full-time job. I intend to leave this company during the next six months. I regularly think about quitting my job.

*Note.* (R) = reverse-coded item. All items measured on a seven-point Likert scale. Phase 2 items were worded as “expectations.”

Table 9

*Response Information*

Response Group	Number	Percentage
Time 1 surveys administered	538	100%
Time 1 surveys returned	535	99%
Voluntary/involuntary termination between Time 1 and Time 2	156	29%
Time 2 surveys sent	379	71%
Time 2 surveys returned (of 379 sent)	270	71%
Invalid or highly questionable responses (of 270 returned)	7	3%
Valid Matched surveys (of 379 sent)	263	69%

Table 10

*Sample Characteristics: Sales Job Type by Length of Training Session*

Salesperson Characteristics	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Telephone Salespersons	147	55.9%
2-Week Training	66	25.1%
3-Week Training	81	30.8%
Premise Salespersons	116	44.1%
2-Week Training	56	21.3%
3-Week Training	60	22.8%
Total:	263	

Table 11

*Sample Characteristics: Sales Job Type by Performance Group*

Salesperson Characteristics	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Telephone Salespersons	147	55.9%
High Performance	54	20.5%
Middle Performance	64	24.3%
Low Performance	29	11.0%
Premise Salespersons	116	44.1%
High Performance	56	21.3%
Middle Performance	41	15.6%
Low Performance	19	7.2%
Total:	263	

*Note.* Performance group rankings based on all survey one respondents.

High Performance: 100% to budget or better;

Middle Performance: 50% to budget to 99% to budget;

Low Performance: Less than 50% to budget.

Table 12

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Role Ambiguity Items*

Item #	Item Wording (all reverse coded)	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P107	I expect to feel certain about how much authority I have.	270	2.45	1.10	0.492	0.175
P108	Clear, planned goals and objectives will exist for my job.	270	1.53	0.71	1.270	1.270
P109	I expect to know that I have divided my time properly.	270	1.89	0.82	0.858	0.913
P110	I expect to know what my responsibilities are.	270	1.52	0.68	1.306	1.817
P111	I expect to know exactly what is expected of me.	270	1.51	0.69	1.327	1.640
P112	Explanation will be clear of what has to be done.	270	1.67	0.83	1.316	1.790

Table 13

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Role Ambiguity Items*

Item #	Item Wording (all reverse coded)	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q007	I feel certain about how much authority I have.	270	3.11	1.51	0.708	-0.011
Q008	Clear, planned goals and objectives exist for my job.	270	2.57	1.34	0.979	0.690
Q009	I know that I have divided my time properly.	268	3.23	1.23	0.418	0.074
Q010	I know what my responsibilities are.	270	2.30	1.13	1.217	1.836
Q011	I know exactly what is expected of me.	270	2.34	1.30	1.199	1.548
Q012	Explanation is clear of what has to be done.	270	2.87	1.43	0.744	0.232

Table 14

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Role Conflict Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P113	I expect to have to do things that I think should be done differently.	269	5.23	1.42	-0.882	0.650
P114	I expect to receive a sales objective without the resources necessary to complete it.	270	2.57	1.71	1.187	0.537
P115	I expect to have to bend a rule or policy in order to attain a sales objective.	270	2.21	1.48	1.373	1.423
P116	I expect to work with two or more (Company) managers who operate quite differently.	268	4.38	1.81	-0.333	-0.840
P117	I expect to receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	269	3.45	1.79	0.209	-0.898
P118	I expect to do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	269	3.68	1.83	0.123	-1.040
P119	I expect to receive a sales objective without adequate support from the company.	269	2.15	1.47	1.594	2.049

Table 15

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Role Conflict Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q013	I have to do things that I think should be done differently.	270	4.89	1.61	-0.491	-0.589
Q014	I receive a sales objective without the resources necessary to complete it.	269	3.83	1.72	0.036	-1.044
Q015	I have to bend a rule or policy in order to attain a sales objective.	269	3.01	1.84	0.589	-0.762
Q016	I work with two or more (Company) managers who operate quite differently.	269	4.31	2.01	-0.191	-1.186
Q017	I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	269	3.36	1.82	0.350	-0.949
Q018	I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	269	3.47	1.74	0.164	-0.997
Q019	I receive a sales objective without adequate support from the company.	269	3.46	1.85	0.403	-0.981



Table 16

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Training Support Items*

Item #	Item Wording [If I successfully complete (Company) training it will:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P017	Better enable me to complete my assignments and duties.	270	6.72	0.59	-4.172	32.125
P018	Help me to perform quality work.	270	6.67	0.64	-2.841	12.353
P019	Better enable me to perform my job at (The Company).	269	6.77	0.52	-3.886	27.162
P020	Have a lot to do with my job performance.	270	6.43	0.95	-2.175	5.388
P021	Help me to perform well at my first job assignment.	270	6.58	0.69	-1.905	4.213
P022	Help me to be a successful employee of (The Company).	270	6.56	0.73	-1.998	4.886

Table 17

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Training Support Items*

Item #	Item Wording [In general, the training I have received at (The Company) has:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q001	Better enabled me to complete my assignments and duties.	268	5.35	1.27	-0.776	0.490
Q002	Helped me to perform quality work.	269	5.35	1.19	-0.750	0.252
Q003	Better enabled me to perform my job at (The Company).	268	5.38	1.22	-0.662	0.112
Q004	Had a lot to do with my job performance.	269	4.96	1.35	-0.575	0.087
Q005	Helped me to perform well at my first job assignment.	269	4.78	1.48	-0.520	-0.300
Q006	Helped me to be a successful employee of (The Company).	269	4.91	1.41	-0.631	0.037

Table 18

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Manager Support Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P071	My DSM will help me practice opening my sales call.	270	5.40	1.50	-1.027	0.605
P072	My DSM will regularly provide additional training in investigating customers' needs.	270	5.31	1.46	-0.875	0.338
P073	My DSM will seldom provide additional training in negotiating skills. (R)	270	5.44	1.44	-0.910	0.252
P074	My DSM will regularly provide additional training on closing sales.	269	5.39	1.37	-0.905	0.453
P075	My DSM will seldom provide additional training in time management. (R)	270	5.19	1.54	-0.792	0.105
P076	My DSM will point out areas needing improvement in my selling technique.	268	6.08	1.03	-1.603	3.811
P078	If I make all my presentations like my DSM's, I will secure more accounts for (The Company).	267	4.82	1.67	-0.455	-0.652
P080	When I have problems during a canvass, my DSM will usually have some good suggestions.	269	6.11	0.98	-1.413	3.148
P081	My DSM will spend a lot of time with me on planning.	270	4.60	1.47	-0.356	-0.253
P082	My DSM will share other sales reps' successful selling techniques with me.	270	5.82	1.05	-0.999	1.677
P083	I will be able to turn to my DSM when I am having problems outside of my sales job.	270	3.95	1.74	0.019	-0.812

*Note.* (R) = reverse-coded item.

Table 19

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Manager Support Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q138	My DSM helps me practice opening my sales call.	266	4.14	1.90	-0.193	-1.145
Q139	My DSM regularly provides additional training in investigating customers' needs.	266	4.36	1.87	-0.326	-1.079
Q140	My DSM seldom provides additional training in negotiating skills. (R)	265	4.40	1.89	-0.210	-1.136
Q141	My DSM regularly provides additional training on closing sales.	265	4.36	1.84	-0.369	-0.940
Q142	My DSM seldom provides additional training in time management. (R)	263	4.36	1.86	-0.074	-1.207
Q143	My DSM points out areas needing improvement in my selling technique.	266	5.23	1.56	-1.114	0.724
Q144	If I make all my presentations like my DSM's, I secure more accounts for (The Company).	265	4.57	1.68	-0.554	-0.324
Q145	When I have problems during a canvass, my DSM usually has some good suggestions.	265	5.14	1.63	-0.986	0.301
Q146	My DSM spends a lot of time with me on planning.	265	3.83	1.77	0.027	-1.052
Q147	My DSM shares other sales reps' successful selling techniques with me.	265	4.87	1.79	-0.808	-0.408
Q148	I can turn to my DSM when I am having problems outside of my sales job.	265	4.18	1.98	-0.284	-1.102

*Note.* (R) = reverse-coded item.

Table 20

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Job Comfort Items*

Item #	Item Wording [I expect my job with (The Company) to:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P087	Provide job security.	270	5.90	1.30	-1.644	2.932
P088	Permit a regular routine in time and place of work.	270	5.06	1.72	-0.731	-0.411
P089	Have clear-cut rules and procedures to follow.	270	5.97	0.98	-0.994	0.900
P090	Provide ample leisure time off the job.	270	4.93	1.65	-0.636	-0.279
P091	Provide comfortable working conditions.	269	6.06	0.92	-0.813	0.025

Table 21

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Job Comfort Items*

Item #	Item Wording [My job:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q026	Provides job security.	269	4.24	1.86	-0.216	-1.024
Q027	Permits a regular routine in time and place of work.	267	4.66	1.75	-0.597	-0.580
Q028	Has clear-cut rules and procedures to follow.	267	5.06	1.54	-0.874	0.323
Q029	Provides ample leisure time off the job.	267	4.27	1.86	-0.268	-1.028
Q030	Provides comfortable working conditions.	267	5.35	1.39	-0.992	0.750

Table 22

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Job Reward Items*

Item #	Item Wording [I expect my job with (The Company) to:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P092	Encourage continued development of knowledge and skills.	270	6.53	0.63	-1.183	1.120
P093	Be intellectually stimulating.	270	6.14	1.00	-1.664	4.159
P094	Provide a feeling of accomplishment.	270	6.39	0.75	-1.412	2.790
P095	Provide the opportunity to earn a high income.	270	6.57	0.64	-1.364	1.430
P096	Allow me to be respected by other people.	270	5.95	1.05	-1.269	2.592
P097	Permit me to work for people I admire and respect.	270	5.91	1.04	-0.906	0.941
P098	Reward good performance with recognition.	270	6.39	0.75	-1.148	0.953

Table 23

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Job Reward Items*

Item #	Item Wording [My job:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q031	Encourages continued development of knowledge and skills.	267	5.48	1.31	-1.061	1.177
Q032	Is intellectually stimulating.	267	5.07	1.55	-0.913	0.389
Q033	Provides a feeling of accomplishment.	268	5.26	1.55	-1.066	0.723
Q034	Provides the opportunity to earn a high income.	268	5.59	1.43	-1.187	1.105
Q035	Allows me to be respected by other people.	268	5.11	1.32	-0.521	0.249
Q036	Permits me to work for people I admire and respect.	268	4.93	1.47	-0.702	0.273
Q037	Rewards good performance with recognition.	268	5.67	1.32	-1.448	2.277

Table 24

*Descriptive Statistics for Expected Job Responsibility Items*

Item #	Item Wording [I expect my job with (The Company) to:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
P099	Give me responsibility for taking risks.	269	5.97	0.93	-0.782	0.124
P100	Permit me to develop my own methods of doing the work.	269	5.05	1.35	-0.362	-0.581
P101	Require working on problems of central importance to the organization.	269	5.40	1.20	-0.684	0.655
P102	Make a social contribution by the work I do.	270	5.00	1.38	-0.534	0.166
P103	Provide change and variety in duties and activities.	270	5.10	1.32	-0.442	0.004
P104	Require originality and creativeness.	270	5.95	1.07	-1.245	2.344
P105	Satisfy my cultural and aesthetic interests.	269	4.38	1.51	-0.175	-0.401
P106	Permit working independently.	270	5.79	1.24	-1.127	0.847

Table 25

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Job Responsibility Items*

Item #	Item Wording [My job:]	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q038	Gives me responsibility for taking risks.	268	4.83	1.43	-0.481	-0.048
Q039	Permits me to develop my own methods of doing the work.	268	4.43	1.56	-0.578	-0.315
Q040	Requires working on problems of central importance to the organization.	267	4.31	1.42	-0.380	-0.120
Q041	Makes a social contribution by the work I do.	266	4.09	1.41	-0.356	0.047
Q042	Provides change and variety in duties and activities.	265	4.45	1.48	-0.437	-0.269
Q043	Requires originality and creativeness.	265	5.43	1.37	-1.088	1.103
Q044	Satisfies my cultural and aesthetic interests.	266	3.99	1.68	-0.204	-0.602
Q045	Permits working independently.	266	5.52	1.40	-1.314	1.645

Table 26

*Descriptive Statistics for Job Satisfaction Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q126	I find real enjoyment in my job.	269	4.93	1.54	-0.752	0.131
Q127	I like my job better than the average worker does.	268	4.97	1.52	-0.647	-0.069
Q128	I am seldom bored with my job.	269	5.55	1.43	-1.197	1.146
Q129	Most days I am enthusiastic about my job.	269	5.28	1.41	-1.010	0.824
Q130	I feel fairly well satisfied with my job.	269	4.90	1.54	-0.764	0.032

Table 27

*Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Commitment Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q053	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to (The Company). (R)	268	4.50	1.78	-0.296	-0.939
Q054	I do not feel emotionally attached to (The Company). (R)	268	4.36	1.78	-0.301	-0.873
Q055	(The Company) has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	267	4.43	1.69	-0.418	-0.615
Q056	I do not feel like part of the family at (The Company). (R)	268	4.65	1.66	-0.512	-0.445
Q057	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with (The Company).	268	5.01	1.73	-0.648	-0.397
Q058	I really feel as if any problems (The Company) may have are my own.	268	3.90	1.64	-0.222	-0.652

Note. (R) = reverse-coded item.

Table 28

*Descriptive Statistics for Withdrawal Items*

Item #	Item Wording	n	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q131	During the next six months, I intend to search for another full-time job.	267	2.69	1.96	0.960	-0.241
Q132	I intend to leave this company during the next six months.	269	2.48	1.89	1.174	0.265
Q133	I regularly think about quitting my job.	268	2.68	1.91	0.943	-0.299

Table 29  
Scale Assessment

Construct	Sample Size	Reliability	Eigenvalue	% Variance Explained
Role Ambiguity	Time 1: 270	$\alpha_{T1} = .84$	$E_1=3.678$	Time 1: 61%
	Time 2: 268	$\alpha_{T2} = .84$	$E_2=3.405$	Time 2: 57%
Role Conflict	Time 1: 264	$\alpha_{T1} = .78$	$E_1=5.085$	Time 1: 44%
	Time 2: 264	$\alpha_{T2} = .82$	$E_2=3.419$	Time 2: 49%
Training Support	Time 1: 269	$\alpha_{T1} = .91$	$E_1=4.311$	Time 1: 72%
	Time 2: 267	$\alpha_{T2} = .92$	$E_2=4.401$	Time 2: 73%
Perceived Manager Support	Time 1: 263	$\alpha_{T1} = .85$	$E_1=4.123$	Time 1: 46%
	Time 2: 263	$\alpha_{T2} = .91$	$E_2=5.421$	Time 2: 60%
Job Comfort	Time 1: 269	$\alpha_{T1} = .73$	$E_1=2.504$	Time 1: 50%
	Time 2: 264	$\alpha_{T2} = .74$	$E_2=2.477$	Time 2: 50%
Job Reward	Time 1: 270	$\alpha_{T1} = .85$	$E_1=3.781$	Time 1: 54%
	Time 2: 266	$\alpha_{T2} = .88$	$E_2=4.040$	Time 2: 58%
Job Responsibility	Time 1: 266	$\alpha_{T1} = .84$	$E_1=3.881$	Time 1: 49%
	Time 2: 263	$\alpha_{T2} = .83$	$E_2=3.639$	Time 2: 45%
Job Satisfaction	Time 2: 268	$\alpha_{T2} = .91$	$E_2=3.731$	Time 2: 75%
Organizational Commitment	Time 2: 267	$\alpha_{T2} = .87$	$E_2=3.662$	Time 2: 61%
Withdrawal	Time 2: 266	$\alpha_{T2} = .94$	$E_2=2.683$	Time 2: 89%

*Note.* Time 1 scales were worded as “expectations”; Time 2 scales were regular perceptions. All 270 matched surveys were used for this analysis.



Table 30  
*Scale Analysis: Role Ambiguity*

Item #	Scale Items	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P107	(Expectation of...)	T1=.27	T1=.52	T1=.41
Q007	I feel certain about how much authority I have. (R)	T2=.49	T2=.70	T2=.57
P108	(Expectation of...)	T1=.68	T1=.83	T1=.71
Q008	Clear, planned goals and objectives exist for my job. (R)	T2=.57	T2=.75	T2=.63
P109	(Expectation of...)	T1=.58	T1=.76	T1=.64
Q009	I know that I have divided my time properly. (R)	T2=.42	T2=.65	T2=.51
P110	(Expectation of...)	T1=.76	T1=.87	T1=.75
Q010	I know what my responsibilities are. (R)	T2=.69	T2=.83	T2=.72
P111	(Expectation of...)	T1=.76	T1=.87	T1=.75
Q011	I know exactly what is expected of me. (R)	T2=.69	T2=.83	T2=.71
P112	(Expectation of...)	T1=.62	T1=.79	T1=.67
Q012	Explanation is clear of what has to be done. (R)	T2=.55	T2=.74	T2=.61

*Note.* (R) = reverse coded.

Table 31  
*Scale Analysis: Role Conflict*

Item #	Scale Items	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P113	(Expectation of...)	T1=.11	T1=.33	T1=.23
Q013	I have to do things that I think should be done differently.	T2=.34	T2=.58	T2=.44
P114	(Expectation of...)	T1=.41	T1=.64	T1=.49
Q014	I receive a sales objective without the resources necessary to complete it.	T2=.52	T2=.72	T2=.58
P115	(Expectation of...)	T1=.35	T1=.59	T1=.43
Q015	I have to bend a rule or policy in order to attain a sales objective.	T2=.47	T2=.69	T2=.56
P116	(Expectation of...)	T1=.54	T1=.73	T1=.58
Q016	I work with two or more (Company) managers who operate quite differently.	T2=.28	T2=.53	T2=.40
P117	(Expectation of...)	T1=.70	T1=.83	T1=.70
Q017	I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	T2=.60	T2=.78	T2=.66
P118	(Expectation of...)	T1=.63	T1=.79	T1=.65
Q018	I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	T2=.59	T2=.77	T2=.65
P119	(Expectation of...)	T1=.36	T1=.60	T1=.46
Q019	I receive a sales objective without adequate support from the company.	T2=.61	T2=.78	T2=.64

Table 32  
*Scale Analysis: Training Support*

Item #	Scale Items – My training:	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P017	(Expectation of...)	T1=.81	T1=.90	T1=.82
Q001	Better enabled me to complete my assignments and duties.	T2=.79	T2=.89	T2=.82
P018	(Expectation of...)	T1=.79	T1=.89	T1=.81
Q002	Helped me to perform quality work.	T2=.80	T2=.90	T2=.83
P019	(Expectation of...)	T1=.77	T1=.88	T1=.79
Q003	Better enabled me to perform my job at (The Company).	T2=.80	T2=.90	T2=.83
P020	(Expectation of...)	T1=.56	T1=.75	T1=.67
Q004	Had a lot to do with my job performance.	T2=.58	T2=.76	T2=.68
P021	(Expectation of...)	T1=.68	T1=.82	T1=.75
Q005	Helped me to perform well at my first job assignment.	T2=.66	T2=.81	T2=.74
P022	(Expectation of...)	T1=.70	T1=.84	T1=.78
Q006	Helped me to be a successful employee of (The Company).	T2=.76	T2=.87	T2=.81

Table 33  
*Scale Analysis: Manager Support*

Item #	Scale Items	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P071	(Expectation of...)	T1=.44	T1=.66	T1=.54
Q138	My DSM helps me practice opening my sales call.	T2=.75	T2=.87	T2=.81
P072	(Expectation of...)	T1=.60	T1=.78	T1=.65
Q139	My DSM regularly provides additional training in investigating customers' needs.	T2=.83	T2=.91	T2=.87
P073	(Expectation of...)	T1=.34	T1=.58	T1=.48
Q140	My DSM seldom provides additional training in negotiating skills. (R)	T2=.37	T2=.61	T2=.56
P074	(Expectation of...)	T1=.63	T1=.79	T1=.67
Q141	My DSM regularly provides additional training on closing sales.	T2=.71	T2=.84	T2=.78
P075	(Expectation of...)	T1=.29	T1=.54	T1=.46
Q142	My DSM seldom provides additional training in time management. (R)	T2=.23	T2=.48	T2=.43
P076	(Expectation of...)	T1=.49	T1=.70	T1=.56
Q143	My DSM points out areas needing improvement in my selling technique.	T2=.50	T2=.71	T2=.63
P078	(Expectation of...)	T1=.11	T1=.33	T1=.28
Q144	If I make all my presentations like my DSM's, I secure more accounts for (The Company).	T2=.44	T2=.66	T2=.59
P080	(Expectation of...)	T1=.35	T1=.59	T1=.48
Q145	When I have problems during a canvass, my DSM usually has some good suggestions.	T2=.63	T2=.79	T2=.73
P081	(Expectation of...)	T1=.41	T1=.64	T1=.51
Q146	My DSM spends a lot of time with me on planning.	T2=.65	T2=.80	T2=.74
P082	(Expectation of...)	T1=.47	T1=.68	T1=.55
Q147	My DSM shares other sales reps' successful selling techniques with me.	T2=.66	T2=.81	T2=.75
P083	(Expectation of...)	T1=.13	T1=.36	T1=.31
Q148	I can turn to my DSM when I am having problems outside of my sales job.	T2=.42	T2=.65	T2=.57

*Note.* (R) = reverse coded.

Table 34

*Scale Analysis: Job Comfort*

Item #	Scale Items – My job:	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P087	(Expectation of...)	T1=.41	T1=.64	T1=.44
Q026	Provides job security.	T2=.51	T2=.71	T2=.52
P088	(Expectation of...)	T1=.59	T1=.77	T1=.61
Q027	Permits a regular routine in time and place of work.	T2=.50	T2=.70	T2=.52
P089	(Expectation of...)	T1=.42	T1=.64	T1=.43
Q028	Has clear-cut rules and procedures to follow.	T2=.42	T2=.65	T2=.45
P090	(Expectation of...)	T1=.54	T1=.73	T1=.55
Q029	Provides ample leisure time off the job.	T2=.52	T2=.72	T2=.52
P091	(Expectation of...)	T1=.56	T1=.75	T1=.54
Q030	Provides comfortable working conditions.	T2=.54	T2=.73	T2=.54

Table 35

*Scale Analysis: Job Reward*

Item #	Scale Items – My job:	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P092	(Expectation of...)	T1=.59	T1=.77	T1=.65
Q031	Encourages continued development of knowledge and skills.	T2=.55	T2=.74	T2=.64
P093	(Expectation of...)	T1=.54	T1=.74	T1=.61
Q032	Is intellectually stimulating.	T2=.65	T2=.81	T2=.71
P094	(Expectation of...)	T1=.65	T1=.81	T1=.70
Q033	Provides a feeling of accomplishment.	T2=.69	T2=.83	T2=.75
P095	(Expectation of...)	T1=.30	T1=.55	T1=.43
Q034	Provides the opportunity to earn a high income.	T2=.43	T2=.66	T2=.55
P096	(Expectation of...)	T1=.56	T1=.75	T1=.65
Q035	Allows me to be respected by other people.	T2=.64	T2=.80	T2=.71
P097	(Expectation of...)	T1=.55	T1=.74	T1=.63
Q036	Permits me to work for people I admire and respect.	T2=.66	T2=.81	T2=.72
P098	(Expectation of...)	T1=.58	T1=.76	T1=.65
Q037	Rewards good performance with recognition.	T2=.41	T2=.64	T2=.53

Table 36

*Scale Analysis: Job Responsibility*

Item #	Scale Items – My job:	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
P099	(Expectation of...)	T1=.40	T1=.63	T1=.52
Q038	Gives me responsibility for taking risks.	T2=.32	T2=.56	T2=.44
P100	(Expectation of...)	T1=.44	T1=.66	T1=.54
Q039	Permits me to develop my own methods of doing the work.	T2=.50	T2=.71	T2=.60
P101	(Expectation of...)	T1=.55	T1=.74	T1=.63
Q040	Requires working on problems of central importance to the organization.	T2=.34	T2=.58	T2=.47
P102	(Expectation of...)	T1=.60	T1=.77	T1=.67
Q041	Makes a social contribution by the work I do.	T2=.47	T2=.69	T2=.56
P103	(Expectation of...)	T1=.62	T1=.79	T1=.69
Q042	Provides change and variety in duties and activities.	T2=.51	T2=.71	T2=.58
P104	(Expectation of...)	T1=.47	T1=.68	T1=.57
Q043	Requires originality and creativeness.	T2=.55	T2=.74	T2=.62
P105	(Expectation of...)	T1=.48	T1=.69	T1=.58
Q044	Satisfies my cultural and aesthetic interests.	T2=.53	T2=.73	T2=.59
P106	(Expectation of...)	T1=.33	T1=.57	T1=.46
Q045	Permits working independently.	T2=.43	T2=.66	T2=.53

Table 37

*Scale Analysis: Job Satisfaction*

Item #	Scale Items	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
Q126	I find real enjoyment in my job.	.85	.92	.86
Q127	I like my job better than the average worker does.	.83	.91	.84
Q128	I am seldom bored with my job.	.48	.70	.58
Q129	Most days I am enthusiastic about my job.	.84	.92	.86
Q130	I feel fairly well satisfied with my job.	.73	.86	.76

Table 38  
*Scale Analysis: Organizational Commitment*

Item #	Scale Items	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
Q053	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to (The Company). (R)	.71	.84	.74
Q054	I do not feel emotionally attached to (The Company). (R)	.77	.88	.79
Q055	(The Company) has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	.65	.81	.70
Q056	I do not feel like part of the family at (The Company). (R)	.65	.80	.69
Q057	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with (The Company).	.60	.78	.66
Q058	I really feel as if any problems (The Company) may have are my own.	.29	.54	.42

*Note.* (R) = reverse coded.

Table 39  
*Scale Analysis: Withdrawal*

Item #	Scale Items	Communality	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
Q131	During the next six months, I intend to search for another full-time job.	.92	.96	.90
Q132	I intend to leave this company during the next six months.	.90	.95	.88
Q133	I regularly think about quitting my job.	.86	.93	.84

Table 40

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Role Expectations*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Role Ambiguity – P107	.40	.16
Role Ambiguity – P108	.75	.57
Role Ambiguity – P109	.67	.45
Role Ambiguity – P110	.88	.78
Role Ambiguity – P111	.89	.79
Role Ambiguity – P112	.73	.53
Role Conflict – P113	.24	.06
Role Conflict – P114	.49	.24
Role Conflict – P115	.44	.19
Role Conflict – P116	.69	.47
Role Conflict – P117	.85	.73
Role Conflict – P118	.77	.60
Role Conflict – P119	.43	.19
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 169.44$ df = 64 AGFI = .87 NFI = .89	RMSEA = .079 RMR = .081 Critical N = 157.95 NNFI = .91



Table 41

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Role Experiences*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Role Ambiguity – Q007	.61	.38
Role Ambiguity – Q008	.68	.47
Role Ambiguity – Q009	.54	.30
Role Ambiguity – Q010	.80	.65
Role Ambiguity – Q011	.82	.68
Role Ambiguity – Q012	.69	.48
Role Conflict – Q013	.47	.22
Role Conflict – Q014	.68	.46
Role Conflict – Q015	.60	.37
Role Conflict – Q016	.44	.20
Role Conflict – Q017	.73	.53
Role Conflict – Q018	.71	.51
Role Conflict – Q019	.75	.56
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 203.61$ df = 64 AGFI = .85 NFI = .86	RMSEA = .091 RMR = .059 Critical N = 125.66 NNFI = .88

Table 42

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Support Expectations*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Training Support – P017	.92	.84
Training Support – P018	.87	.75
Training Support – P019	.88	.77
Training Support – P020	.62	.38
Training Support – P021	.73	.53
Training Support – P022	.75	.56
Manager Support – P071	.65	.42
Manager Support – P072	.83	.69
Manager Support – P073	.52	.27
Manager Support – P074	.83	.69
Manager Support – P075	.47	.22
Manager Support – P076	.64	.41
Manager Support – P080	.51	.26
Manager Support – P081	.57	.32
Manager Support – P082	.55	.31
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 401.18$ df = 89 AGFI = .77 NFI = .84	RMSEA = .116 RMR = .070 Critical N = 92.62 NNFI = .85

Table 43

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Support Experiences*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Training Support – Q001	.89	.79
Training Support – Q002	.89	.79
Training Support – Q003	.89	.80
Training Support – Q004	.69	.47
Training Support – Q005	.74	.55
Training Support – Q006	.83	.69
Manager Support – Q138	.90	.81
Manager Support – Q139	.95	.91
Manager Support – Q140	.55	.30
Manager Support – Q141	.81	.65
Manager Support – Q142	.42	.18
Manager Support – Q143	.68	.46
Manager Support – Q145	.72	.51
Manager Support – Q146	.76	.58
Manager Support – Q147	.77	.60
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 279.63$ df = 89 AGFI = .83 NFI = .91	RMSEA = .090 RMR = .060 Critical N = 118.44 NNFI = .92

Table 44

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Job Expectations*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Job Comfort – P087	.53	.28
Job Comfort – P088	.54	.29
Job Comfort – P089	.57	.33
Job Comfort – P090	.55	.31
Job Comfort – P091	.77	.60
Job Reward – P092	.72	.51
Job Reward – P093	.69	.48
Job Reward – P094	.74	.54
Job Reward – P095	.47	.22
Job Reward – P096	.74	.54
Job Reward – P097	.70	.49
Job Reward – P098	.70	.49
Job Responsibility – P099	.59	.35
Job Responsibility – P100	.58	.34
Job Responsibility – P101	.69	.48
Job Responsibility – P102	.74	.54
Job Responsibility – P103	.75	.56
Job Responsibility – P104	.62	.39
Job Responsibility – P105	.62	.39
Job Responsibility – P106	.50	.25
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 487.31$ df = 167 AGFI = .80 NFI = .79	RMSEA = .086 RMR = .067 Critical N = 119.01 NNFI = .83

Table 45

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Job Experiences*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Job Comfort – Q026	.62	.38
Job Comfort – Q027	.52	.27
Job Comfort – Q028	.58	.34
Job Comfort – Q029	.59	.34
Job Comfort – Q030	.69	.48
Job Reward – Q031	.68	.47
Job Reward – Q032	.77	.59
Job Reward – Q033	.79	.62
Job Reward – Q034	.58	.34
Job Reward – Q035	.76	.58
Job Reward – Q036	.78	.61
Job Reward – Q037	.55	.30
Job Responsibility – Q038	.47	.22
Job Responsibility – Q039	.59	.35
Job Responsibility – Q040	.49	.24
Job Responsibility – Q041	.65	.43
Job Responsibility – Q042	.66	.43
Job Responsibility – Q043	.69	.48
Job Responsibility – Q044	.72	.52
Job Responsibility – Q045	.56	.32
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 536.81$ df = 167 AGFI = .79 NFI = .78	RMSEA = .092 RMR = .067 Critical N = 109.68 NNFI = .82

Table 46

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Job Outcomes*

Construct – Question #:	Standardized Loading	Item Squared Multiple Correlation
Job Satisfaction – Q126	.81	.66
Job Satisfaction – Q127	.85	.72
Job Satisfaction – Q128	.77	.59
Job Satisfaction – Q129	.74	.55
Job Satisfaction – Q130	.75	.56
Organizational Commitment – Q053	.44	.19
Organizational Commitment – Q054	.93	.86
Organizational Commitment – Q055	.90	.81
Organizational Commitment – Q056	.60	.36
Organizational Commitment – Q057	.87	.76
Organizational Commitment – Q058	.82	.68
Withdrawal – Q131	.96	.92
Withdrawal – Q132	.92	.84
Withdrawal – Q133	.89	.79
Model Fit Statistics:	$\chi^2 = 304.21$ df = 74 AGFI = .80 NFI = .91	RMSEA = .109 RMR = .066 Critical N = 98.50 NNFI = .92

Table 47

*Results for Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	323.82	82	.065	.110	.90
Theoretical (Figure 19)	N/A	359.48	86	.076	.110	.90
Revised 1 (Figure 20)	FI Perf→Withdraw	360.03	87	.076	.109	.90
Revised 2	FI Perf→Withdraw FI Jsat→Withdraw	430.50	88	.079	.122	.88
Structural Null	N/A	717.68	91	.380	.162	.76
Absolute Null	N/A	3223.75	105	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* All SFO constructs were measured after six months on the job (Phase 2).

Table 48

*Results for Role Met Expectations (ME) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	752.54	336	.064	.069	.89
Theoretical (Figure 23)	N/A	779.91	342	.068	.070	.89
Revised 1	FI ME→OC	818.83	344	.085	.073	.88
Revised 2	FR ME→Withdraw	778.98	340	.068	.070	.89
Revised 3	FR ME→Perform	776.02	340	.068	.070	.89
Structural Null	N/A	1291.63	350	.25	.101	.77
Absolute Null	N/A	4581.90	378	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* Exogenous constructs were met expectations of role ambiguity and role conflict. Endogenous constructs were from the SFO model.

Table 49

*Results for Role Experiences Direct Effects (DE) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	844.45	336	.061	.076	.88
Theoretical (Figure 24)	N/A	867.20	342	.066	.077	.87
Revised 1	FI Perc→OC	929.84	344	.089	.081	.87
Revised 2	FR Perc→Withdraw	866.22	340	.066	.077	.87
Revised 3	FR Perc→Perform	862.35	340	.065	.077	.87
Structural Null	N/A	1436.40	350	.28	.109	.76
Absolute Null	N/A	5020.86	378	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* Exogenous constructs were 6-month perceptions of role ambiguity and role conflict. Endogenous constructs were from the SFO model.

Table 50

*Results for Job Reward Met Expectations (ME) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	557.77	200	.064	.083	.90
Theoretical (Figure 25)	N/A	591.28	204	.069	.085	.89
Revised 1	FI ME→OC	652.58	205	.087	.091	.88
Revised 2	FR ME→Withdraw	590.14	203	.069	.085	.89
Revised 3	FR ME→Perform	581.34	203	.068	.084	.90
Structural Null	N/A	1238.33	210	.350	.137	.74
Absolute Null	N/A	4144.98	231	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* Exogenous constructs were met expectations of job comfort, job reward, and job responsibility. Endogenous constructs were from the SFO model.

Table 51

*Results for Job Reward Experiences Direct Effects (DE) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	618.70	200	.061	.089	.89
Theoretical (Figure 26)	N/A	649.53	204	.067	.091	.88
Revised 1	FI Perc→OC	745.61	205	.092	.100	.86
Revised 2	FR Perc→Withdraw	649.53	203	.068	.092	.88
Revised 3	FR Perc→Perform	626.88	203	.064	.089	.88
Structural Null	N/A	1387.27	210	.390	.146	.72
Absolute Null	N/A	4544.11	231	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* Exogenous constructs were 6-month perceptions of job comfort, job reward, and job responsibility. Endogenous constructs were from the SFO model.



Table 52

*Results for Training Support Met Expectations (ME) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	517.63	180	.059	.085	.92
Theoretical (Figure 27)	N/A	542.44	184	.067	.086	.91
Revised 1	FI ME→OC	555.71	185	.076	.087	.91
Revised 2	FR ME→Withdraw	541.70	183	.067	.086	.91
Revised 3	FR ME→Perform	539.65	183	.065	.086	.91
Structural Null	N/A	1029.86	190	.320	.130	.80
Absolute Null	N/A	4579.08	210	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* Exogenous constructs were met expectations of training support. Endogenous constructs were from the SFO model.

Table 53

*Results for Training Support Experiences Direct Effects (DE) Model Comparisons*

Model	Modification	Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI
Saturated Structural	N/A	539.49	180	.061	.087	.91
Theoretical (Figure 28)	N/A	564.06	184	.068	.089	.91
Revised 1	FI Perc→OC	587.90	185	.086	.091	.90
Revised 2	FR Perc→Withdraw	563.74	183	.068	.089	.91
Revised 3	FR Perc→Perform	562.62	183	.068	.089	.91
Structural Null	N/A	1098.91	190	.340	.135	.79
Absolute Null	N/A	4682.85	210	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note.* Exogenous constructs were 6-month perceptions of training support. Endogenous constructs were from the SFO model.

Table 54

*Polynomial Regression Analysis of Relations Between Expectations, Experiences, and Job Satisfaction at Six Months*

Variable	Role Amb.	Role Conf.	Job Comf.	Job Rew.	Job Resp.	Mgr. Supp.	Tr. Supp.
Step 1							
Expectations	-.06	.03	-.07	-.01	-.08	-.02	.01
Experiences	-.40**	-.37**	.45**	.68**	.53**	.34**	.45**
$\Delta$ -R <sup>2</sup>	.17**	.13**	.20**	.46**	.25**	.12**	.20**
Step 2							
Expect X Exper	.37	.15	.15	.42	1.12	.18	-.63
$\Delta$ -R <sup>2</sup>	.006	.001	.000	.001	.020	.001	.002

Note. Amb. = ambiguity; Conf. = conflict; Comf. = comfort; Rew. = reward; Resp. = responsibility; Mgr. = manager; Supp. = support; Tr. = training.

\* p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 55

*Polynomial Regression Analysis of Relations Between Expectations, Experiences, and Organizational Commitment at Six Months*

Variable	Role Amb.	Role Conf.	Job Comf.	Job Rew.	Job Resp.	Mgr. Supp.	Tr. Supp.
Step 1							
Expectations	.00	.08	-.11*	-.04	-.03	.05	.07
Experiences	-.47**	-.52**	.51**	.75**	.58	.45**	.50**
$\Delta$ -R <sup>2</sup>	.22**	.26**	.25**	.54**	.32**	.21**	.26**
Step 2							
Expect X Exper	.42	-.18	.27	1.28*	.82	.55	.62
$\Delta$ -R <sup>2</sup>	.008	.001	.001	.009*	.010	.005	.002

Note. Amb. = ambiguity; Conf. = conflict; Comf. = comfort; Rew. = reward; Resp. = responsibility; Mgr. = manager; Supp. = support; Tr. = training.

\* p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 56  
*Results of Hypothesis Testing*

Hypothesis	Conclusions
H1: Met expectations relate directly and positively to job satisfaction when initial expectations and perceived experiences are held constant.	SEM: path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ PR: change in $R^2$ not significant for interaction term Conclusion: H1 only partially supported
H2: Met expectations relate directly and positively to organizational commitment when initial expectations and perceived experiences are held constant.	SEM: path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ PR: change in $R^2$ not significant for interaction term Conclusion: H2 only partially supported
H3: Perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job relate directly and positively to job satisfaction.	SEM: path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ PR: significant $R^2$ and partial correlation for experiences Conclusion: H3 supported
H4: Perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job relate directly and positively to organizational commitment.	SEM: path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ PR: significant $R^2$ and partial correlation for experiences Conclusion: H4 supported
H5: Initial expectations relate directly and negatively to perceived experiences of job aspects after six months on the job.	Path coefficients not significant at $\alpha = .05$ Conclusion: H5 not supported
H6: Job satisfaction relates directly and positively to organizational commitment.	Path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ Conclusion: H6 supported
H7: Job satisfaction relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.	Path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ Conclusion: H7 supported
H8: Organizational commitment relates directly and positively to performance.	Path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ Conclusion: H8 supported
H9: Organizational commitment relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.	Path coefficients significant at $\alpha = .05$ Conclusion: H9 supported
H10: Performance relates directly and negatively to withdrawal.	Path coefficients not significant at $\alpha = .05$ Conclusion: H10 not supported

*Note.* SEM = Structural Equation Modeling; PR = Polynomial Regression

Table 57

*Covariance Matrix for Performance and Summated Scales*

	P	RA1	RC1	TS1	MS1	JC1	JD1	JY1	RA2
P	0.48								
RA1	-0.08	13.69							
RC1	0.21	3.61	56.16						
TS1	-0.05	-3.54	-0.44	11.86					
MS1	0.29	-10.13	0.06	7.69	85.60				
JC1	0.09	-5.64	1.32	4.01	10.35	22.23			
JD1	0.39	-9.93	-1.28	6.25	15.60	10.33	18.92		
JY1	0.32	-12.30	8.34	7.23	22.47	13.85	20.53	48.46	
RA2	-0.88	4.56	-0.28	-0.45	-1.67	-0.08	-4.31	-5.11	35.19
RC2	-0.58	7.74	13.02	-4.57	-5.58	-3.61	-5.92	-9.86	25.39
TS2	0.82	-2.66	-4.03	2.61	3.64	2.37	6.19	7.43	-16.94
MS2	2.08	-4.38	-3.22	2.47	24.62	-6.02	2.86	8.62	-33.58
JC2	0.68	-3.82	-3.10	0.95	5.22	6.11	5.40	8.39	-16.04
JD2	1.37	-6.58	-2.35	2.62	14.94	3.24	10.58	14.04	-22.66
JY2	0.76	-3.77	7.42	1.85	11.60	1.95	7.34	18.99	-22.40
JS	1.61	-3.46	-1.91	1.27	2.73	0.88	5.87	4.45	-15.55
OC	1.01	-2.92	-1.65	3.60	9.46	0.08	6.97	9.61	-22.43
W	-0.97	2.51	1.16	-2.00	-1.98	-0.47	-4.27	-4.81	13.34

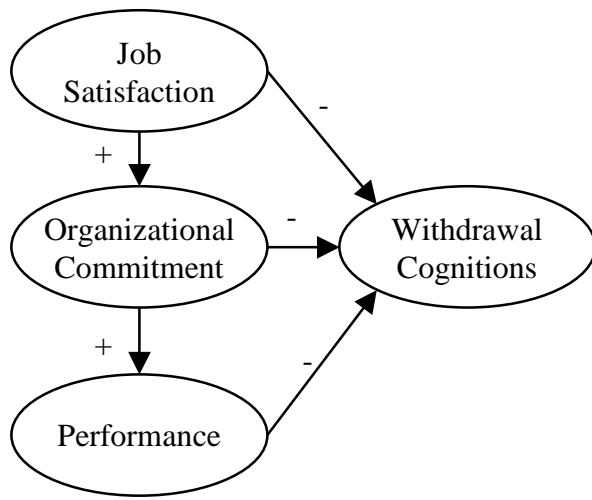
Table 57 (Continued)

	RC2	TS2	MS2	JC2	JD2	JY2	JS	OC	W
RC2	76.14								
TS2	-24.75	45.98							
MS2	-55.71	43.34	214.22						
JC2	-23.04	19.58	29.34	34.46					
JD2	-35.70	29.21	56.72	26.22	55.67				
JY2	-24.88	22.70	42.72	19.99	37.50	60.93			
JS	-20.15	19.45	31.82	16.52	32.55	24.86	41.32		
OC	-35.44	27.75	53.37	23.12	43.93	35.61	33.28	64.68	
W	19.54	-15.29	-25.66	-13.71	-27.25	-19.55	-25.54	-30.48	29.72

*Note.* P=Performance; RA1=Expected Role Ambiguity; RC1=Expected Role Ambiguity; TS1=Expected Training Support; MS1=Expected Manager Support; JC1=Expected Job Comfort; JD1=Expected Job Reward; JY1=Expected Job Responsibility; RA2=Perceived Role Ambiguity; RC2= Perceived Role Ambiguity; TS2= Perceived Training Support; MS2= Perceived Manager Support; JC2= Perceived Job Comfort; JD2= Perceived Job Reward; JY2= Perceived Job Responsibility; JS=Job Satisfaction; OC=Organizational Commitment; W=Withdrawal

APPENDIX B

FIGURES



*Figure 1.* Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) Model.

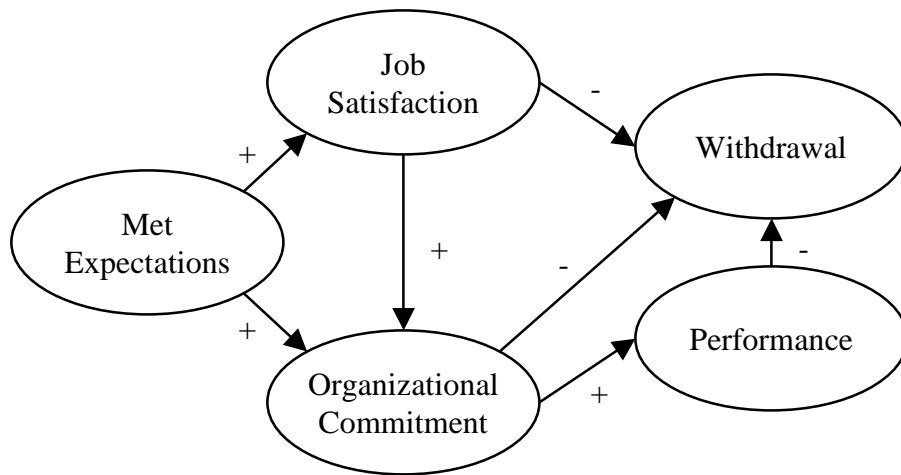


Figure 2. Met Expectations (ME) Model.

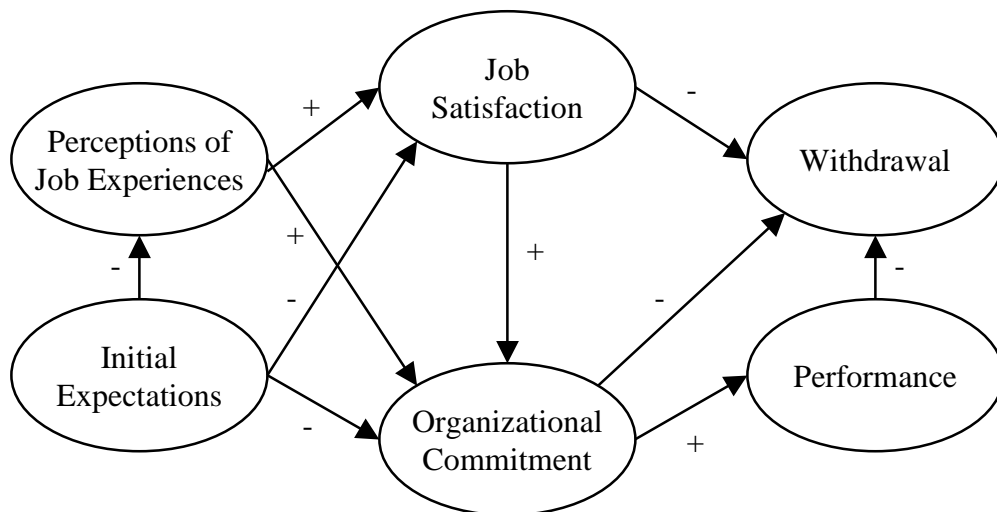


Figure 3. Direct Effects (DE) Model.

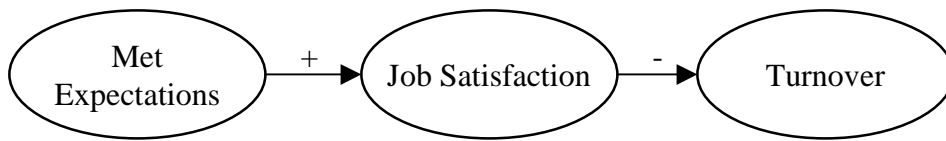


Figure 4. Porter & Steers Model - Adapted from Porter, L. W. & Steers, R. M. (1973). Organizational, Work, & Personal Factors in Employee Turnover & Absenteeism. *Psychological Bulletin*, 80, 151-176.

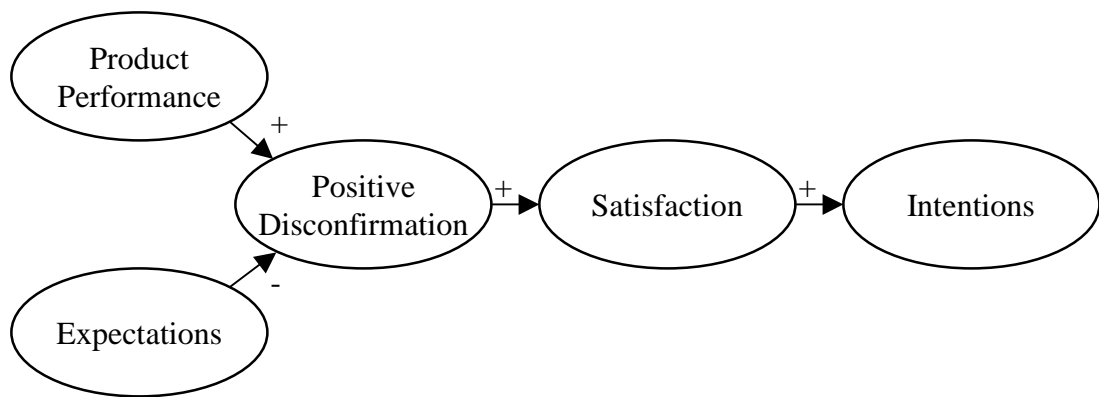


Figure 5. Patterson, Johnson, & Spreng Customer Satisfaction Model - Adapted from Patterson, P. G., Johnson, L. W., Spreng, R. A. (1997). Modeling the determinants of customer satisfaction for business-to-business professional services. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(1), 4-17.



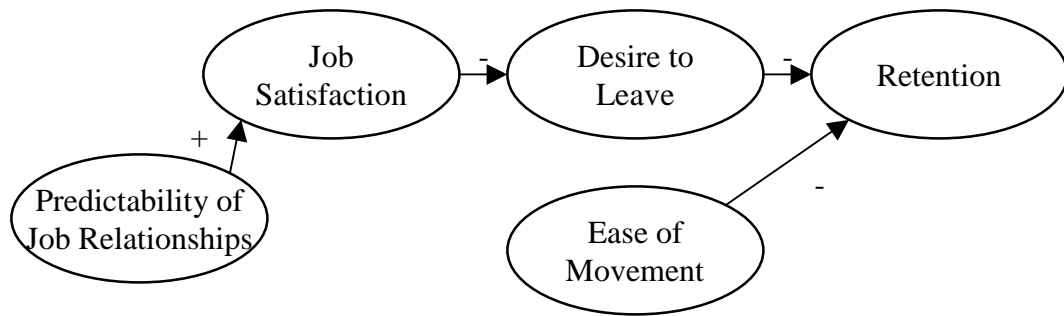


Figure 6. March & Simon Model - Adapted from March, J. G. & Simon, H. A. (1958). *Organizations*. New York: J. Wiley.

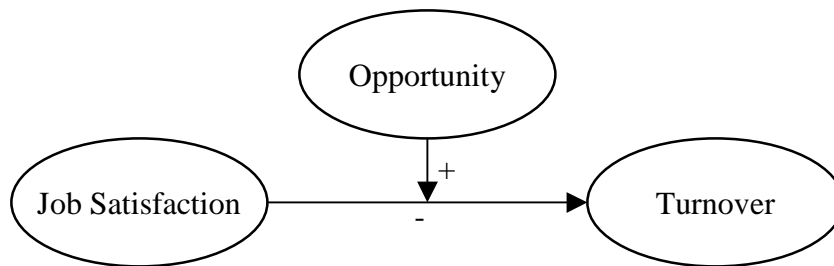


Figure 7. Price Model - Adapted from Price, J. L. (1977). *The measurement of turnover*. Ames: Iowa State Univ. Press.

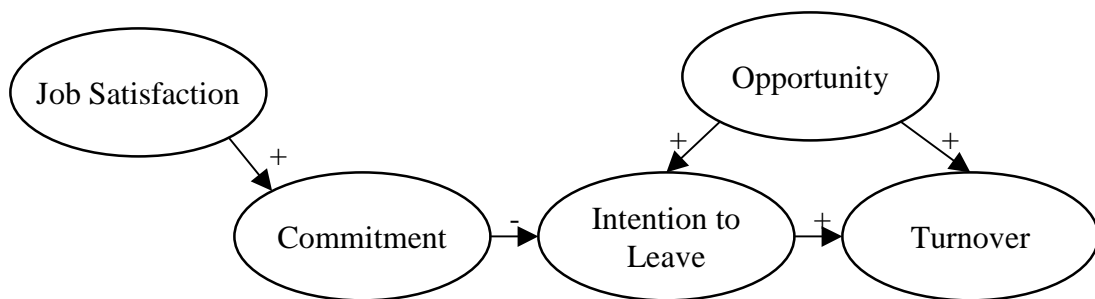


Figure 8. Price & Mueller Model - Adapted from Price, J. L., & Mueller, C. W. (1986). *Absenteeism and turnover of hospital employees*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

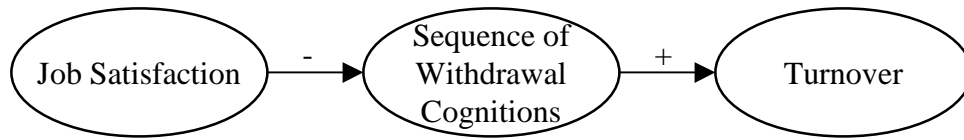


Figure 9. Mobley Model - Adapted from Mobley, W. H. (1977). Intermediate Linkages in the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction & Employee Turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 62, 237-240.

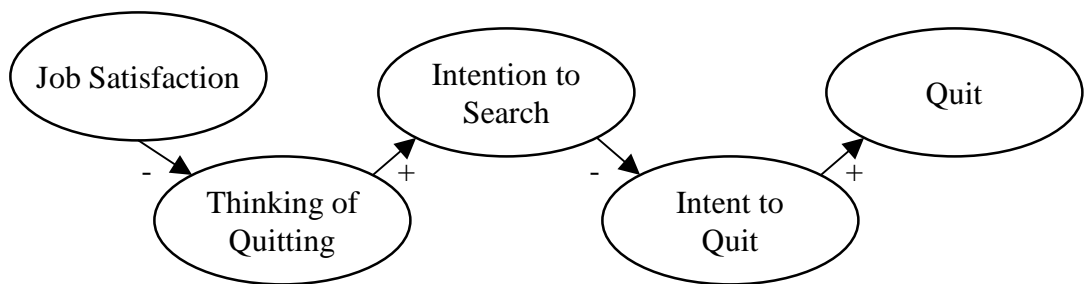


Figure 10. Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth Model - Adapted from Mobley, W. H., Horner, S. O., & Hollingsworth, A. T. (1978). An Evaluation of Precursors of Hospital Employee Turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 63, 408-414.

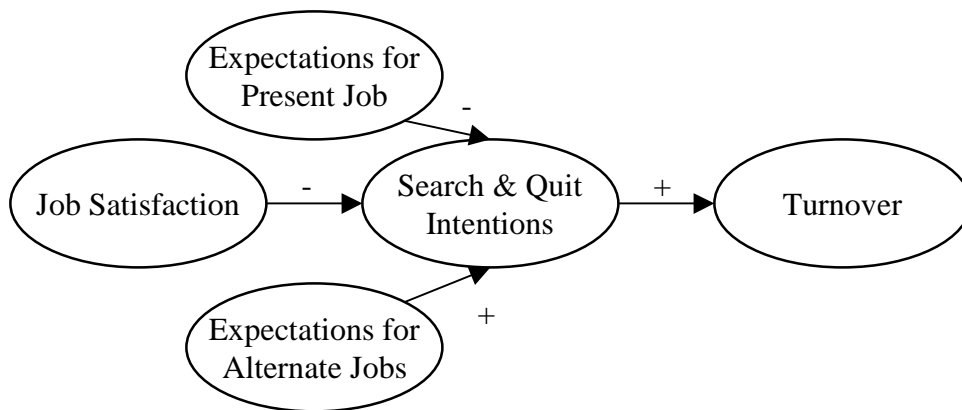


Figure 11. Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino Model - Adapted from Mobley, W. H., Griffeth, R. W., Hand, H. H., & Meglino, B. M. (1979). Review & Conceptual Analysis of the Employee Turnover Process. *Psychological Bulletin*, 86(May), 493-522.

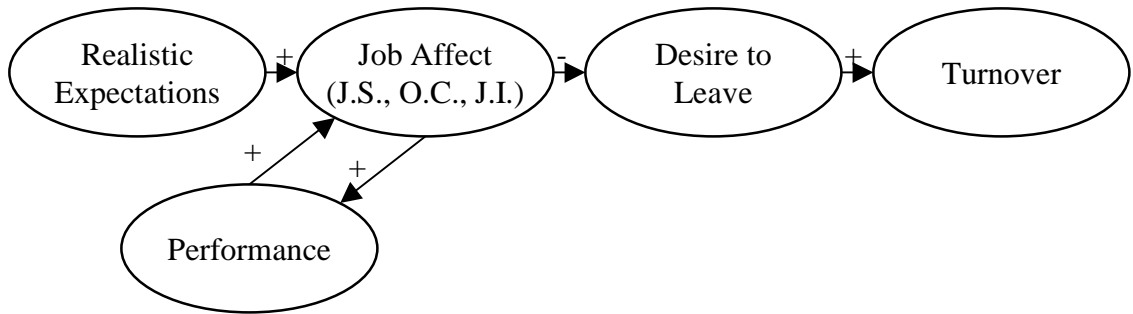


Figure 12. Steers & Mowday Model - Adapted from Steers, R. M. & Mowday, R. T. (1981). Employee turnover & postdecision accommodation processes. In Cummings, L. and Staw, B. (Eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 3, 235-281, New York: JAI Press. (Note. J.S. = Job Satisfaction; O.C. = Organizational Commitment; J.I. = Job Involvement)

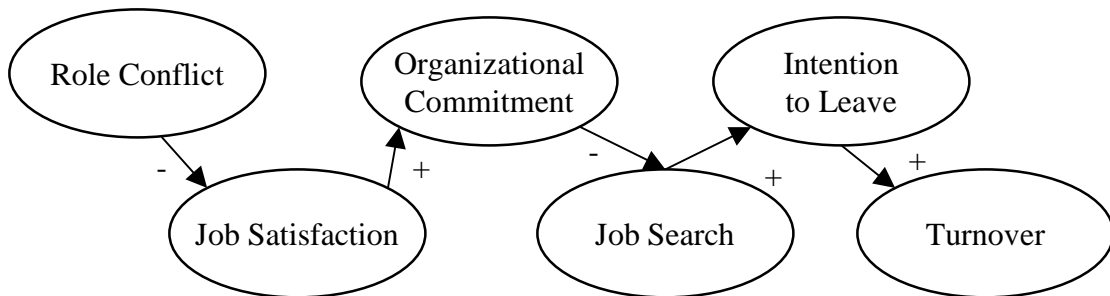


Figure 13. Bluedorn Model - Adapted from Bluedorn, A. C. (1982a). A Unified Model of Turnover From Organizations. *Human Relations*, 35(February), 135-153.

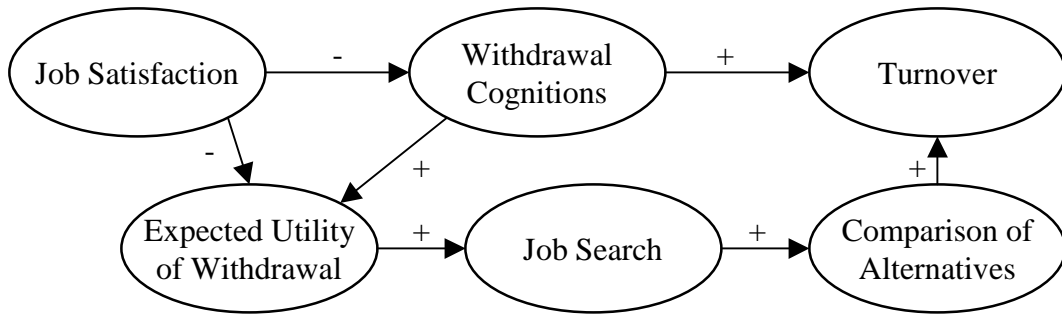


Figure 14. Hom & Griffeth Model - Adapted from Hom, P. W. & Griffeth, R. W. (1991). Structural equations modeling test of a turnover theory: Cross-sectional & longitudinal analyses. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76(3), 350-366.

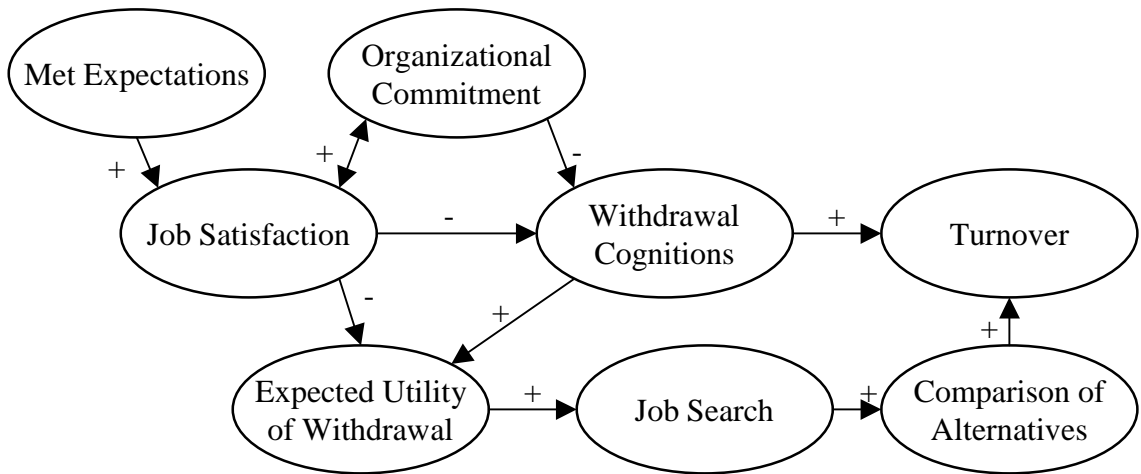


Figure 15. Hom & Griffeth Integrative Model - Adapted from Hom, P. W. & Griffeth, R. W. (1995). *Employee Turnover*. Cincinnati, OH: Southwestern College Publishing.

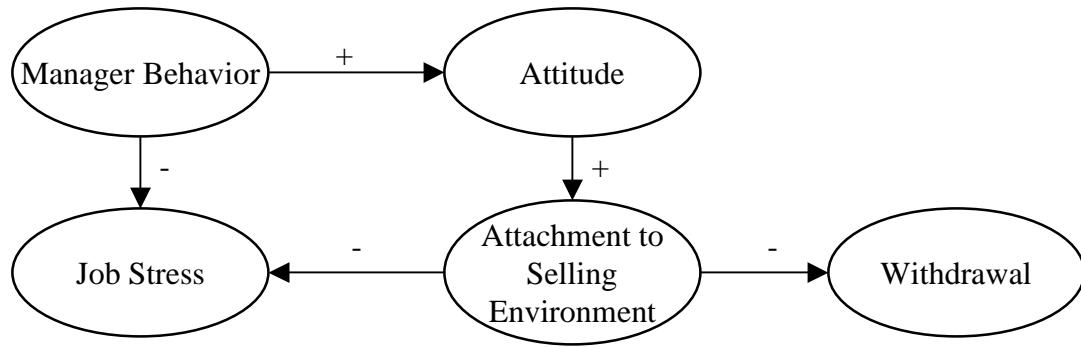


Figure 16. Sager, Yi, & Futrell Model - Adapted from Sager, J. K., Yi, J., & Futrell, C. M. (1998). *Journal Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 18(3), 1-22.

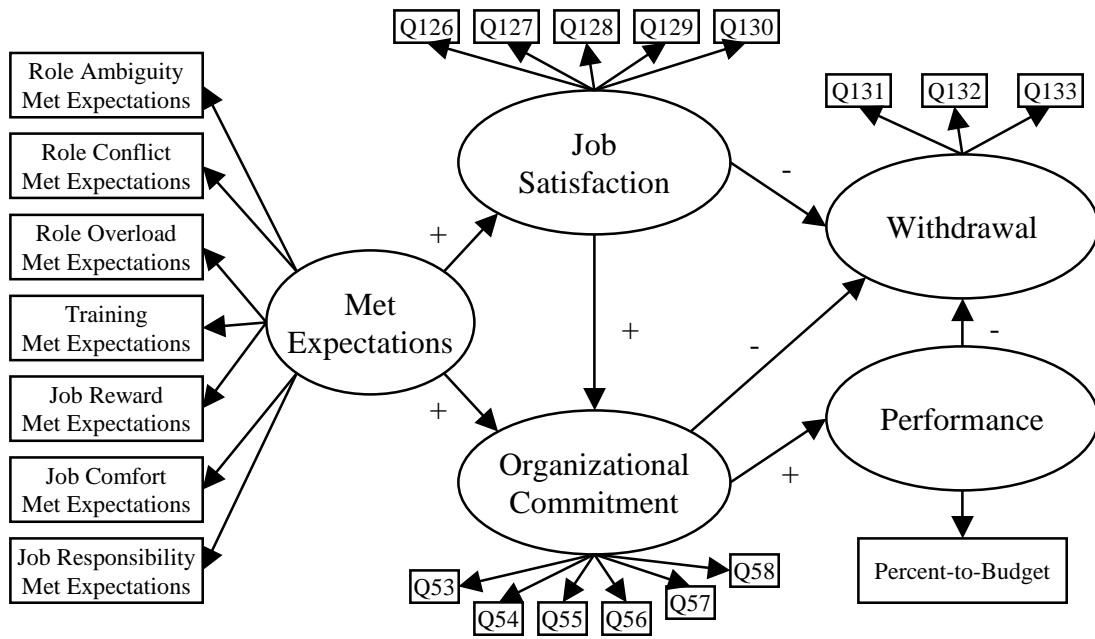


Figure 17. Met Expectations Measurement Model.

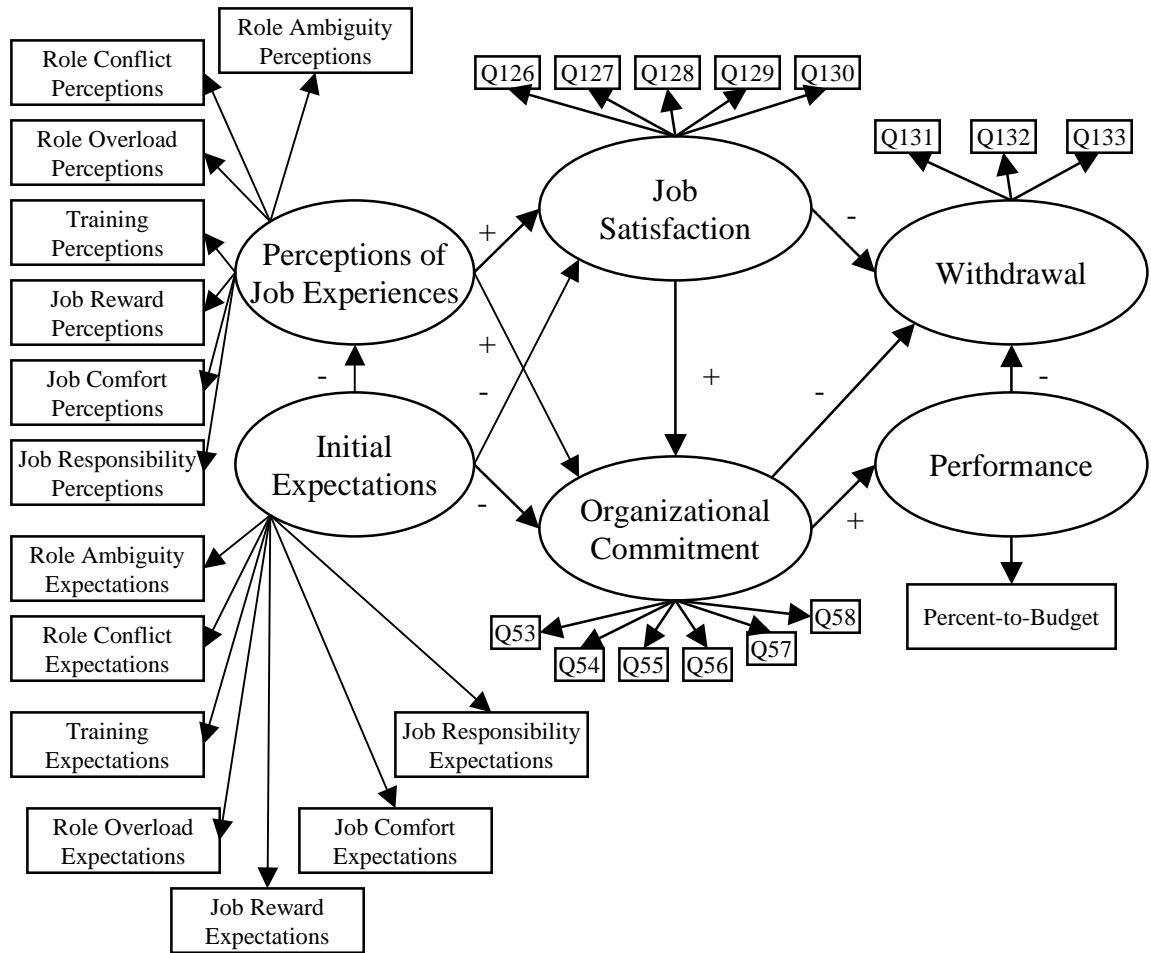


Figure 18. Direct Effects Measurement Model.

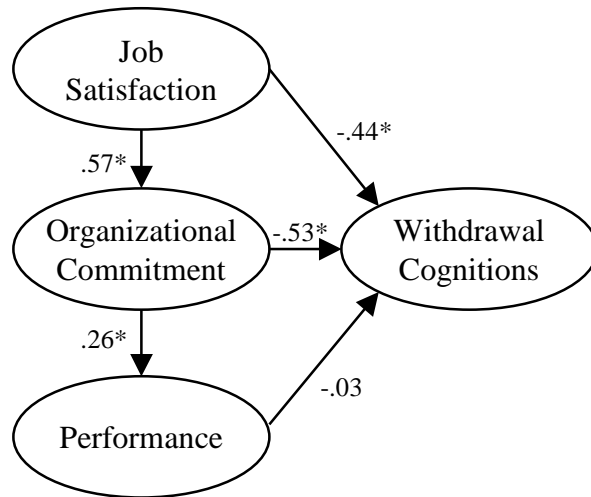


Figure 19. Sales Force Outcomes (SFO) Model Path Estimates. (\*p < .05)

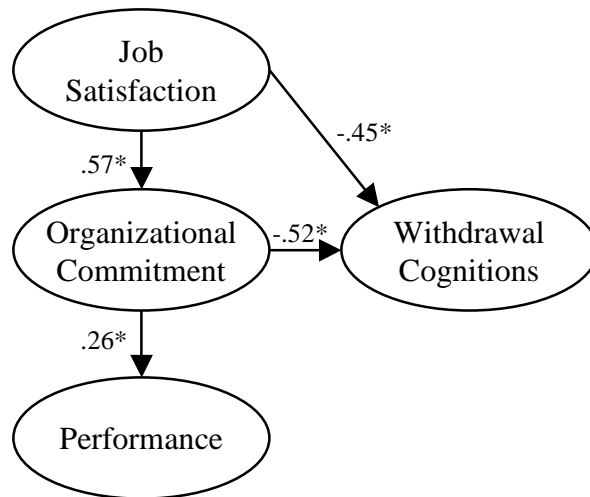


Figure 20. Revised SFO Model Path Estimates. (\*p < .05)



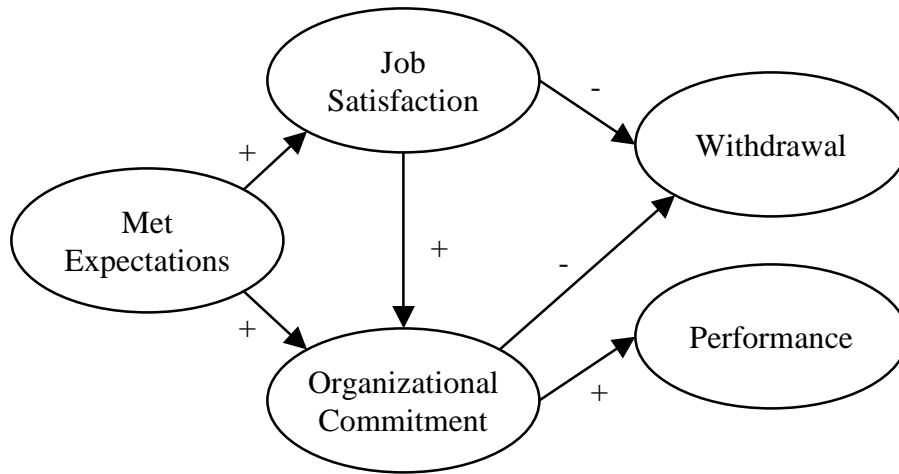


Figure 21. Revised Met Expectations (ME) Model.

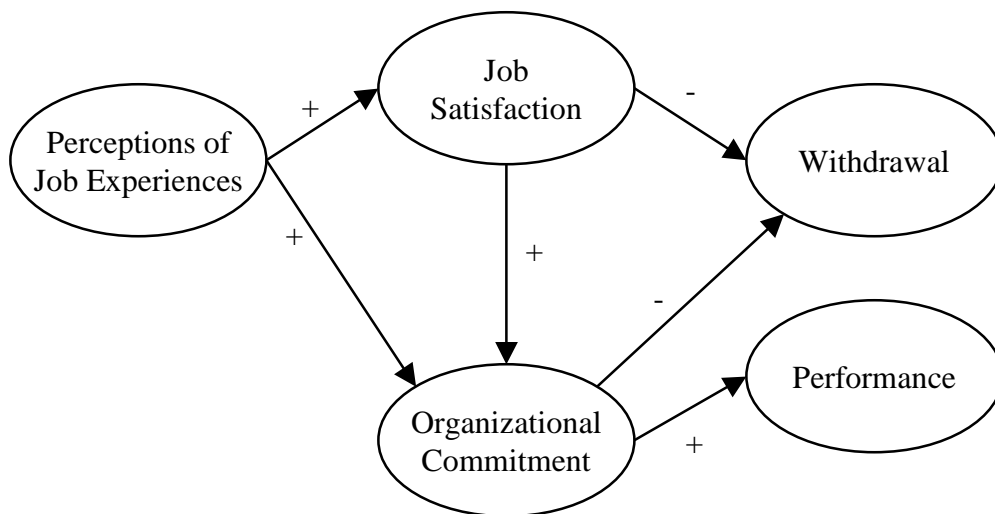


Figure 22. Revised Direct Effects (DE) Model.

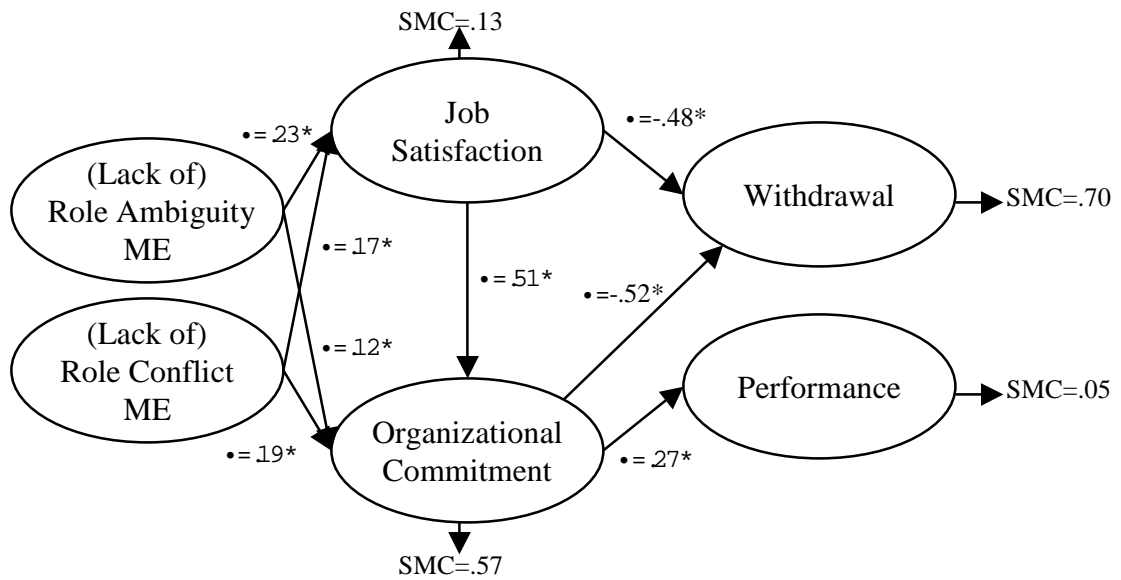


Figure 23. ME Model Path Estimates - Role Met Expectations.  
 (Note. SMC = Squared multiple correlation.  $*p < .05$ )

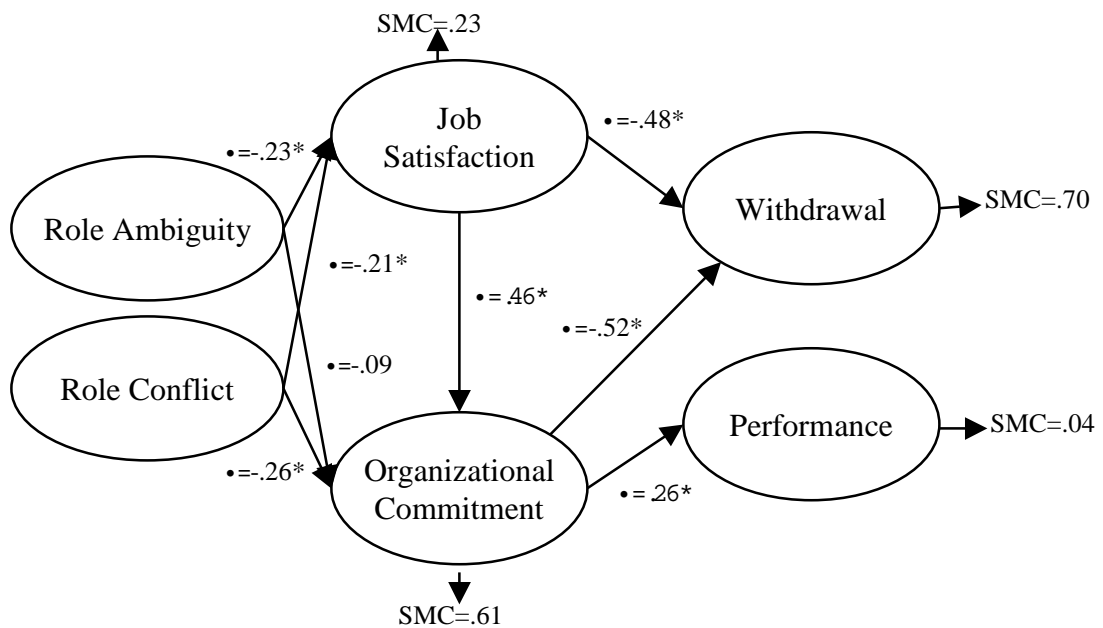


Figure 24. DE Model Path Estimates - Role Experiences.  
 (Note. SMC = Squared multiple correlation.  $*p < .05$ )

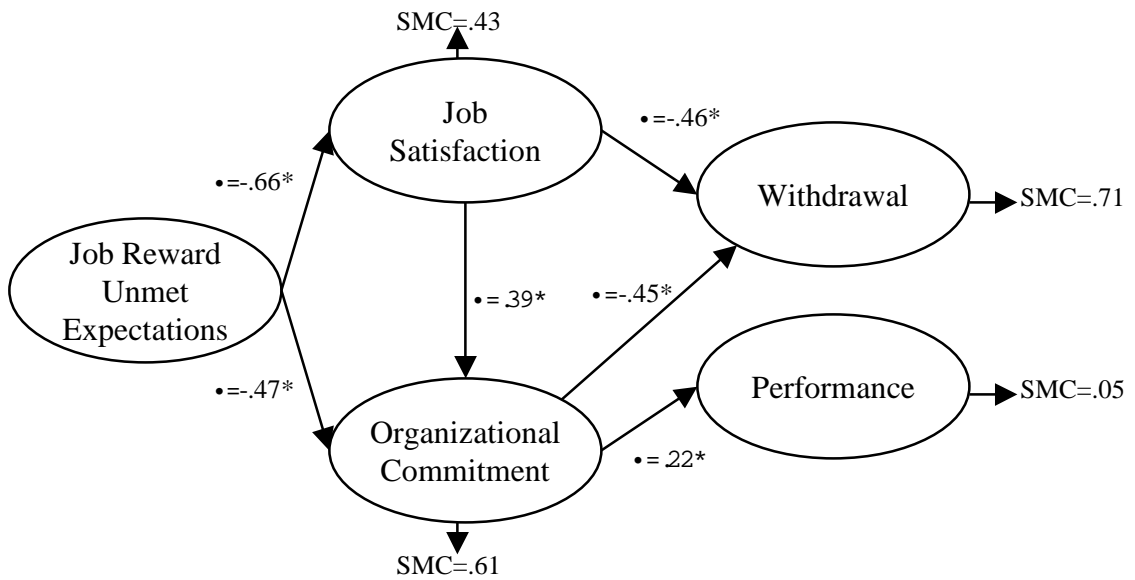


Figure 25. ME Model Path Estimates - Job Reward Met Expectations.  
 (Note. SMC = Squared multiple correlation.  $*p < .05$ )

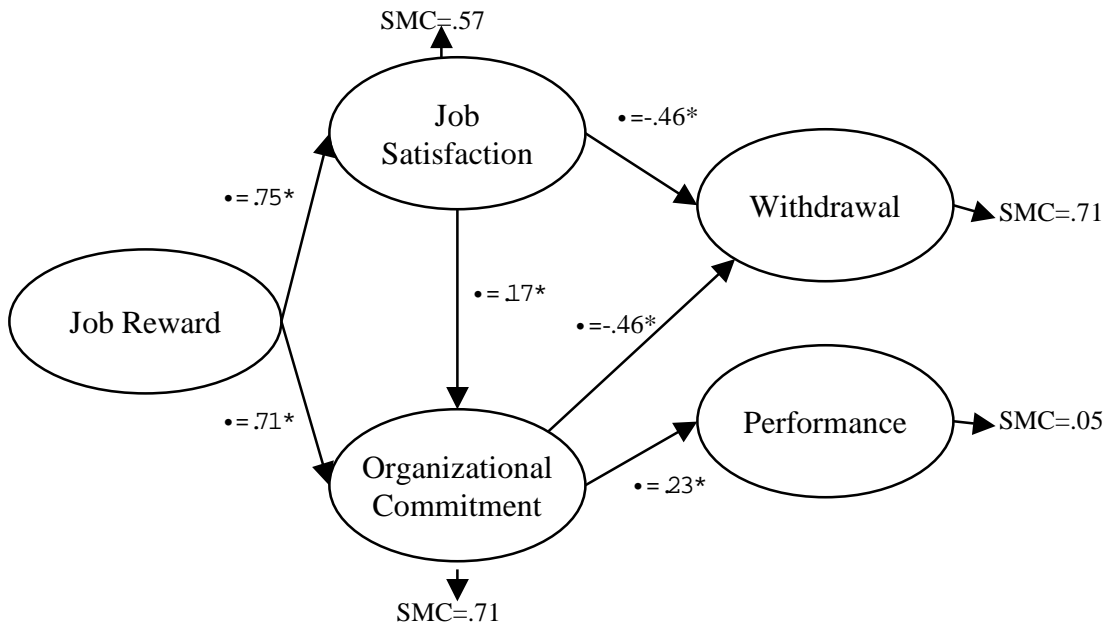


Figure 26. DE Model Path Estimates - Job Reward Experiences.  
 (Note. SMC = Squared multiple correlation.  $*p < .05$ )

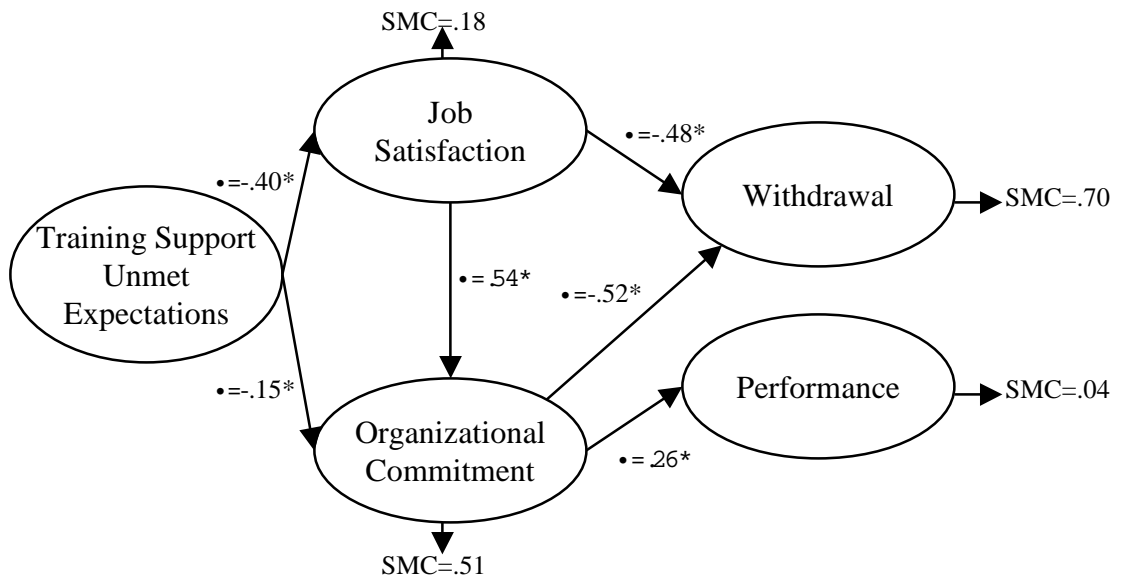


Figure 27. ME Model Path Estimates - Training Support Met Expectations.  
 (Note. SMC = Squared multiple correlation.  $*p < .05$ )

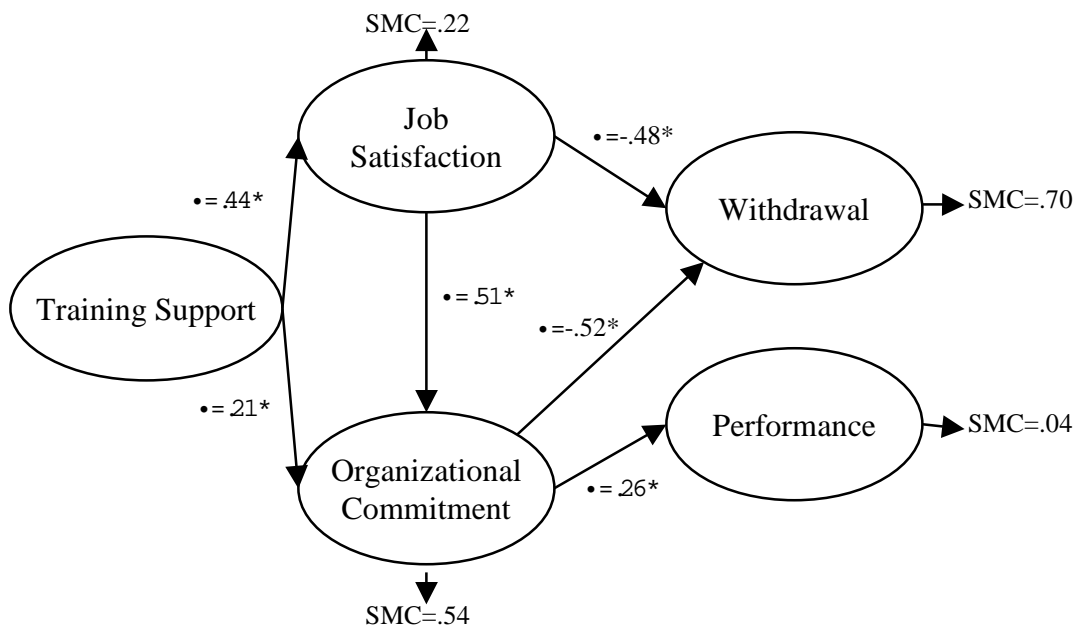


Figure 28. DE Model Path Estimates - Training Support Experiences.  
 (Note. SMC = Squared multiple correlation.  $*p < .05$ )

APPENDIX C  
SURVEY ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

**Tracking Study of New Sales Representatives  
University of North Texas (David Rylander and Dr. Jeffrey Sager)**

**Survey administrator should make the following points prior to handing out the Phase One survey:**

1. I am \_\_\_\_\_ from UNT. This research study is being developed and administered by a research team from UNT. General results from the survey will be used to support a dissertation.
2. The information obtained will also enable (the Company) management to improve training, employee retention and performance.
3. All individual responses from this and future UNT surveys will be **completely confidential**. Names and social security numbers are needed for matching purposes, but (Company) employees will not see any names - only summarized data.
4. This is not a test. There are no right answers - just respond honestly and thoughtfully. You will notice that some items on the survey seem repetitive. This is necessary to measure the reliability of our measures. Also, it may seem too early to know responses to some questions – just give your best impression.
5. Participation in the survey is voluntary. However, your honest responses are important, encouraged, and greatly appreciated. Your individual responses will in no way affect any aspect of your employment status.
6. The purpose of this survey is to better understand the attitudes, characteristics and expectations of new employees as they enter C2V training.
7. You will receive a second survey after your first 6 months on the job. That survey will measure more of your attitudes and perceptions after being on the job for a while. You will be asked to return the survey directly to the researchers at UNT so we can maintain confidentiality.
8. (Company) management will distribute summary information obtained from this research study in whatever way they deem appropriate.
9. Now please respond to today's survey as honestly and completely as you can. It will take about 15 to 25 minutes, and you can return it to the survey administrator when you are finished. Feel free to write any comments about the survey or about your (Company) experience in the space at the end of the survey.

\* Ask (Company) managers/trainers to leave the room (if still there).

\* Thank you again for your cooperation. If you have any questions, feel free to ask me.

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