

ESSAYS ON IMPROVING SALES PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This research is a result of a collaborative effort with Shelter Insurance Companies in Columbia, Missouri. The first essay focuses on sales team design. Based on an effect called Group Motivation Gain, previous research has focused on weaker team members in social psychology lab settings. This research extends the findings to stronger and weaker performers in a sales setting. The findings suggest that stronger and weaker sales team members perform better when paired with someone moderately different in ability.

The second essay focuses on the value of customers attained during sales contests as opposed to the value of customers attained at other times. The findings suggest that initial purchases are lower for customers attained in the sales contest. However, contrary to suggestions in literature, sales contests seem to have no negative long-term effects on customer value.