

# Effect of first impression at Check-In on Customer Satisfaction

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**Abstract:** First impressions of another person impact the process and result of many different sorts of interpersonal relationships. The first impressions a salesperson gets of a customer form the basis of their exploration of the client's needs and adaption to those needs. The fact that the initial impression a salesman has of a customer is somewhat indicative of the productivity of that first contact suggests a link between the two. This is, to our knowledge, the first study to experimentally investigate the relationship between first impressions, cognitive processes and sales performance in a single first interaction between salespeople. It's a quasi-experiment, the first study of its type. The findings offer an interesting perspective on the challenge salespeople have when trying to accomplish short-term goals (e.g., completing a sale or making sure the customer is satisfied) and set the stage for future success.

**Keywords:** first impression, method, finding, procedure .

## INTRODUCTION

In the past several decades, the hospitality business has seen significant development, and the rivalry is fierce. The forms of competition are also evolving, and there is a greater emphasis placed on providing excellent customer service and ensuring the health and happiness of visitors. Hotels are no longer able to compete just based on who has the most luxurious rooms and facilities; rather, they are required to take into consideration the customer service component as well, since it is of utmost significance for the overall happiness of the client. The study's overarching goal is to find out how much of an effect hotel check-in customer service has on guests' overall impressions of the establishment and how to make a dissatisfied customer feel better before they check out. This article is solely concerned with the customer service element of the procedure of checking in and arriving at the destination. It is considered to be the first face-to-face service experience that a hotel visitor has with the establishment, which is why the check-in process is considered to be so crucial. When a client is given a positive first impression, it is more likely that they will leave the hotel feeling content. This is

because the first impression that a guest receives is frequently the final one that they will have of the establishment.

The check-in procedure is the initial point of interaction between a guest and a hotel, and it is responsible for establishing a fundamental tone that will continue for the duration of the guest's stay. A check-in procedure that is uncomplicated and kind may considerably boost the level of pleasure experienced by guests, therefore generating sentiments of comfort and confidence in the facility or business. Studies have shown that an astounding eighty percent of customers have claimed that their initial check-in experience had an impact on their entire impression of the hotel. The significance of a check-in procedure that is carried out effectively is shown by this figure.

According to the statistics, hotels that have check-in processes that are efficient and staff members who are pleasant can experience a good influence on customer satisfaction rankings, which frequently results in return visits and greater occupancy rates. Studies have revealed that hotels that used expedited check-in methods, such as mobile check-ins or automated kiosks, reported a 25% boost in overall guest satisfaction ratings. This was the case for hotels that implemented these procedures. The fact that guests enjoy ease and efficiency from the minute they arrive is demonstrated by this development.

Negative check-in experiences, on the other hand, can have a substantial impact not only on the level of satisfaction experienced by guests but also on the reputation of a hotel. It is possible for unfavourable internet evaluations to be generated as a result of complaints that originate from long wait times, unpleasant personnel, or technological issues. These reviews may discourage prospective customers from making bookings. According to research, hotels often see a fall in reservations of between 10 and 20 percent after receiving a large number of unfavourable evaluations that are connected to problems with check-in. As a result, it is of the utmost importance that hotels acknowledge the connection between the experiences of check-in and the feelings of guests, and they make a commitment to improving this important part of hospitality.

When these realizations are taken into consideration, it becomes abundantly evident that putting in the effort to optimise the check-in experience may result in considerable returns in terms of the happiness and loyalty of potential guests.

There are a great number of distinct subgroups that make up hotel customers, and each of these subgroups has a somewhat different set of expectations. One of the most significant types of consumers that hotels serve is business travelers, and this article focuses on them. Because business travelers are accustomed to staying in hotels, they are aware of what to anticipate from the establishments themselves, and more importantly, what to anticipate from the staff members working at the reception desk when they check in.

Things that may make up a hotel's initial impression include the location, the design, and the treatment a guest receives. The focus of this essay is only on the staff's influence and the customer service they deliver to the establishment's customers. The results of this research will provide the reader a comprehensive knowledge of the necessity of delivering a high quality customer service experience throughout the check-in process, since this research is being conducted at many hotels in Ostrobothnia, Finland. On the other hand, the research includes both qualitative and quantitative components. In order for front-desk staff to be able to provide the highest possible level of customer service and to be aware of what the clients anticipate from them, the findings of the research will be helpful. Additionally, the research will be valuable for the management of hotels, as it will be of use to them when it comes to the training of their personnel. It is also beneficial for company consumers since, according to the findings of the research, staff have the opportunity to improve their customer service abilities, which in turn allows them to provide even better service to businesses' customers.

## **METHOD**

A sample There were 116 sales dyads included in the sample. Within the context of a simulated sales environment, each dyad was comprised of a salesperson and a consumer pair who acted as the buyer and seller positions, respectively. The customer couples were actual married couples who were on the market. They were licensed life insurance agents who were working as salespeople. Due to the fact that both objective and subjective sales results are commonly pursued, the environment of this study is suited for the investigation of life insurance sales. In the south west there was a big metropolis to attract couples shopping and sales workers. Nine pairings were eliminated because of the low quality of the responses. The removed dyads had no special qualities that separated them from the other 107 sales dyads which were the foundation for the research.

They were recruited as paid volunteers from a panel sponsored by a major market research organization. The buyers were couples who were buying items. The life insurance variable was created by screening married couples who satisfied the following conditions: a male head of household between the ages of 25 and 45, children in the household if the head of household was under 30 years of age, both spouses had completed high school, and the household income was between \$20,000 and \$120,000. Quotas for sociodemographic categories within these constraints were created based on the population distribution of the local region.<sup>4</sup> The ultimate consumer sample is a representative cross-section of the target demographic.

Participants needed to have sold automobile insurance in the prior several years to be eligible for the research. Members of the largest national trade group representing agents asked agents to volunteer. Most of our salesmen are found there. The other sales positions were filled through recruitment efforts aimed at the Yellow Pages Directory. Nearly half of the salespeople surveyed had no experience at all; over 20% had six to ten years in the sector, 17.2% had eleven to twenty years and 16.4% had twenty years or more. The agents that participated in the survey had different titles including life insurance agent (46.3%), independent agent (3.4%), insurance broker (6.0%), financial planner (13.8%), and other titles (28.5%).

## **PROCEDURE**

The decision to employ a simulated sales setting was impacted by considerations such as the presentation of referral data, the uniformity of learning the knowledge structures of salespeople and the assessment of likelihood, and the adaptation of client scripts, particularly regarding insurability. These inherent trade-offs were carefully evaluated in the perspective of external validity and the potential change to the insurance sales process. Thus the research was designed to include a range of tasks to assess how realistic the sales interaction was perceived to be by the participants. The post-interaction ratings indicated that both the sales representative and the consumer in the simulated sales meeting considered the matched situation to be real.

- 88% of customers and 86% of salespeople found it simple to see themselves in a “real life” interaction comparable to what happened in the research.
- 99% of buyers and 81% of sellers believed the research was highly realistic, whereas 68% of buyers and 58% of sellers thought it was a manufactured study.

- 62% of buyers and 75% of salespeople forgot the event was a “just pretend” deal. Figure 1 provides an overview of the procedures employed in this quasi-experimental investigation. For more details on the technique of the experiment, see Appendix A. A simulated sales setting was employed to establish the internal validity of the investigation. Make careful to check the controls.

## **MEASURES**

Multiple-item measures that were accessible from the current body of literature were utilised wherever it was feasible to do so. In order to make certain goods suitable for the study setting, modifications were made to them. In addition to conducting pre-tests and in-depth interviews with salespeople and customers, all of the questions that measure each component were subjected to context testing and modifications. On average, responses to items were recorded using seven-point scales, with seven indicating strong agreement and one indicating disagreement. Factor analysis was performed to assess the validity of all multiple-item exams. You may discover the items that stand for the multi-item structures in app. B. To find the category structures of the salesmen reinteraction measurements were needed.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

Other studies have shown statistically significant relationships between the salesperson's knowledge structure and the overall sales success of the firm (e.g., Sujan et al. 1988; Weitz et al. 1986). In light of the prospective implications of an adverse outcome, the study found no evidence of a relationship between the characteristics of a salesperson's overall customer knowledge structure and his/her efficiency in a particular sales context. The findings of the present study indicate that neither the number of customer categories in a complete knowledge structure nor the criteria employed to identify these categories had a significant influence on either the process of making a sale or the subjective sales outcomes.

This finding confirms hypothesis 1a. From what we observe, there is no correlation between the properties of the aggregate knowledge structure and the success of a single first contact sales proposal. In contrast, the results supported the hypothesis that a salesperson's early perceptions of a prospect, the customer types that salesperson feels are relevant to a prospect before to a sales contact, might predict the success of that meeting's sales. This is consistent

with Hypothesis 1b. The evidence supports the hypothesis that personal selling in some sales episodes is better explained by ill-structured problem solving than by cognitive complexity. This is because of a greater degree of congruence between the two in the former. The findings of the study show, among other things, the dynamics of a single sales interaction and initial impressions a salesman obtains of a customer before selling.

The structure of the salesperson's cognitive structure about the consumer is the key to a good first contact with a product or service to face the specific issues of each client, and everyone agrees on this. "Salespeople respond to a given sales event and use their customer knowledge structures. There appears to be some ambiguity in the prospect classification process." Based on the category classifications, the results may be expected, hence sales encounters can be seen as unstructured problems. When salespeople separated their leads into two groups, one group having traits highly associated with happiness and connection building, the other not at all.

Before this research, the only clue from sales literature thus far was that initial impressions count so much in personal selling success. Our research demonstrates that salespeople have biases that prevent them from objectively evaluating whether reclassifying clients is a smart idea. The results of this study suggest that there are some first impression qualities that may lead to activities that serve to confirm, rather than objectively analyze, the salesperson's initial view of the sales prospect. That may be the truth and it may be a surprise, but customers asking for confirmation may actually help to generate a favorable first impression.

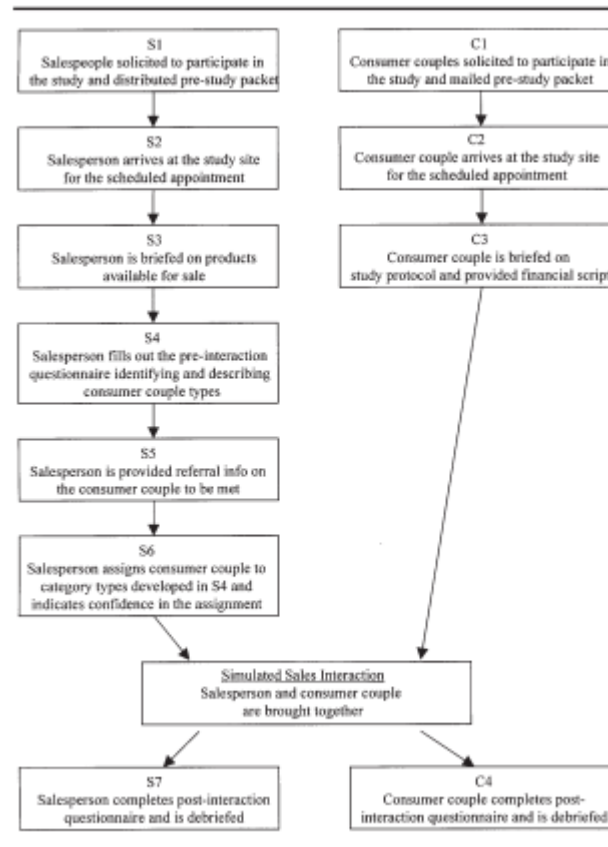


Figure 1: study design flowchart

## RESULTS

The suggested theory answers two important problems. We initially need to test if the full knowledge structures are connected to sales success at first encounter (Hypothesis 1a). Second, the characteristics of the initial impression made on the first sales contact are a factor in sales success.

## Implications

The study's findings underscore the implications for future research on the influence of cognitive structure on salesperson attitudes about sales encounters. The diverse confidence levels employed to categorize consumers, together with the extensive array of categories utilized in the client evaluation process, indicate that the sales interaction lacks structure. The nature and presentation of referral material given to prospects may undoubtedly affect the creation of precontact orientations. For instance, when sales representatives assess potential clients prior to engagement, the degree of assurance they exhibit may be affected by the origin of the referral information, thereby introducing bias into the evaluation of prospect data. What

referral indications do salespeople prioritize when evaluating new customers, and how does the significance of each element in their knowledge structure influence those signals? Further study is necessary to comprehend the evident trade-offs between short-term and long-term sales effects. Creating a favorable initial image prior to reaching out to an individual enhances the probability of securing a particular transaction, although appears to diminish the hopes for establishing a relationship. Further study may be required to assist scholars and practitioners in comprehending this phenomena and its contributing causes.

Extensive study in the marketing industry has focused on the traits of salespersons or sales organizations that enhance long-term sales effectiveness. The traits of the salesperson, the context, and the interpersonal interactions that contribute to successful subjective and objective sales encounters are less apparent, however. To comprehend the buyer-seller dynamic, we must examine the customer-centricity of salespeople and the traits of exchanges that distinguish novice from experienced sales interactions. Sales events, especially first interactions, are essential for developing rapport and laying the groundwork for the connection. To determine the compatibility of two individuals as long-term partners, it is essential to delineate and discuss responsibilities. The confusion over duties in the relationship and the degree of role consensus among buyers and sellers may be affected by the management of these roles at the outset of the partnership. Further investigation is necessary to comprehend the mechanisms at play during an individual sales encounter and their evolution across multiple sessions.

### **Limitations**

The study conducted through simulated sales contacts is exposed to the dangers of loss of external validity since the simulated contacts are deliberately created as approximate approximations of genuine sales contacts. But, as shown above, the research participants believed the simulated sales encounter to be real. A handful of clients talked to each and every salesperson. To find out how each pair felt about the sales experience we asked the husband and wife individually. The study methodology called for little spousal contact following the sales encounter until both spouses had completed the post-interaction questionnaire. But they talked to the same salesmen therefore the freedom assumption of the MANOV they assert is false. Groups violate both as and canonical correlation analysis, Kenny and Judd (1986) claim, because of nonindependence. Several analyses were not divulged, such as one by Scarano and

Davenport (1987), which indicated that the reported results were mostly free of bias resulting from lack of independence.

## **CONCLUSION**

The association between salesperson knowledge structures and sales performance has been studied in the personal selling literature, but no one has been able to determine how a salesman's knowledge about the consumer impacts his conduct in a particular sales encounter. This paper investigates the impact of the first classification of customers on the subjective and objective results of sales. The conclusions have ramifications, for research and management, for many major concerns. The direction that these concerns give can be of tremendous help to academics and practitioners alike.

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