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SALESemen IN THE GROCERY INDUSTRY.
The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1971
Business Administration

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1971
BUYER PERCEPTIONS OF ATTRIBUTES OF SUCCESSFUL
SALESemen IN THE GROCERY INDUSTRY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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1970

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PLEASE NOTE:

Some pages have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has resulted from a long interest in the relationships between salesmen and buyers. This interest began while the author was employed by Procter and Gamble and continued throughout his graduate studies and teaching. This has been an attempt to determine what buyers perceive to be important characteristics of successful salesmen.

Many people have contributed not only to this study, but also have been quite helpful in the earlier portions of this writer's graduate studies. In particular thanks should be expressed to all of the buyer-merchandisers who participated in this study. Their time and interest in the study were greatly appreciated.

Several people with the Procter and Gamble Distributing Company assisted the author in locating the correct buyer-merchandisers at the various chain headquarters. These people were Messers Earl Poole, David Benson, J.P. Brady, Jack Ruppert and Dwight Osenbaugh.

The reading committee for this dissertation, which consisted of Professors Robert B. Miner, Ralph M. Stogdill, and James H. Davis, were quite helpful at all stages of the study from its conception to its com-
pletion. A special word of thanks is given to the last of these three gentlemen, Professor Davis. He served as the Chairman of this committee and his promptness is reading and commenting on each of the many drafts of this dissertation has been greatly appreciated.

Three other individuals remain to be acknowledged. They are Cyrus Wilson, W. Arthur Cullman, and Mardelle Miller Whitmore (my beautiful wife). Cy Wilson provided encouragement at a time when it was greatly needed. Art Cullman has been so helpful for such a long period of time that I shall never cease being in his debt. My wife has never been more beautiful than she has been in these last few months. Her long hours of typing, editing, and correcting gave greater meaning to the words "Love Never Faileth."
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Behavioral Sciences

Quantitative Methods
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A substantial amount of the study of salesmen and salesmanship is characterized by broad generalizations about salesmen in all different types of product categories and types of selling situations. Stevens characterizes the psychological portion of the literature by stating, "... much of this literature has been superficial, trite and sterile." On the other hand, some writers contend that salesmen and salesmanship cannot be studied in a meaningful manner. McMurray comments as follows:

"Now, we all know that selling is qualitatively different from all other aspects of business and industry. It does not lend itself to the empirical quantitative research methodologies of the more exact sciences. Instead, it tends to have a 'mystique' of its own which is peculiarly baffling."

It is believed that the current study will be able to overcome the superficiality, triteness, and sterility objected to by Stevens by using the empirical research techniques which McMurray feels cannot be applied to selling and salesmanship.

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Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to determine, from a buyer's point of view, what characteristics differentiate successful salesmen from less successful salesmen. In order to do this, several hypotheses will be tested. These hypotheses (stated in the null-form) are: (1) There is no relationship between a salesman's ability to develop expert power and his success; (2) There is no relationship between a salesman's ability to develop reward power and his success; (3) There is no relationship between a salesperson's ability to develop referrent power and his success; (4) There is no relationship between the job expectations of the salesman and his success; (5) There is no relationship between the length of association of the salesman and buyer-merchandiser and selling success; (6) There is no relationship between a salesman's company and his selling success; (7) There is no relationship between language ability and selling success; (8) There is no relationship between mental ability and selling success; (9) There is no relationship between dyadic agreement of social class and selling success; (10) There is no relationship between selling success and those success determinant factors previously identified by Evans;\(^3\) (11) There is no relationship between selling success

and several miscellaneous items which the literature indicates causes success. These hypotheses will be further developed in Chapter II of this study.

Some assumptions which are basic to this study are that: (1) the buyer-seller dyad produces results which can be measured objectively; (2) it is possible to identify such dyads in which salesmen have achieved differing levels of personal selling success; and (3) it is possible to develop an instrument which will identify probable causes of this variation in selling success.

The Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in the grocery industry and involved the interviewing of buyer-merchandisers for both corporate and voluntary grocery chains. Interviews were conducted in-person in the offices of the various buyer-merchandisers. These interviews were carried out in six different market areas—Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Louisville. A total of 34 buyer-merchandisers were interviewed regarding the characteristics of 68 different salesmen.

Literature Pertinent to this Study

For the purposes of this discussion, the pertinent literature has been divided into six categories. They are: (1) the trade or popular literature on salesmanship; (2) the scholarly marketing literature; (3) the psychological litera-
ture; (5) the applicable political science literature; and (6) the literature which treats selling as a dyadic relationship. Each of these categories will be discussed in more detail in Chapter II of this study.

Justification of this Topic for Study

In terms of the amount of funds spent on personal selling, this area is quite an important one. Spratlen, as but one example, has pointed out that the expenditures for personal selling are over 150 per cent greater than those for advertising.4

Despite this importance, relatively little effort has been devoted to the scientific study of this area. Montgomery and Webster state:

"Despite the fact that personal selling is the largest item in most firms' marketing budgets, it continues to be one of the most elusive and poorly understood elements of the marketing program."5

Hughes amplifies this point about the dearth of research in this area:

"The area of personal selling has not inspired the research warranted by its importance in the marketing mix of many firms and by the amount of money spent on it. Estimates indicate that selling expenditures are almost three times those of advertising, yet research done on selling is only a fraction of that

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done on advertising."  

Because of the importance of personal selling and because of the lack of study in this area, it is felt that additional research in this area is justified. In addition to the general need for more research on personal selling, it is felt that there is still further justification for the particular type of research done in this project.

This study has attempted to bring to bear on the personal selling function those areas of the behavioral sciences which appear to hold the most promise of helping to determine the characteristics which make some salesmen more successful than others, at least in this one particular type of selling situation in one industry. It is felt that many of the limitations of other studies on selling and salesmanship result from an attempt to be over-inclusive. Often such studies claim that the findings from a study of one type of selling situation, e.g., house-to-house selling to consumers, are applicable even in situations in which salesmen make continuous calls on business buyers. No such claims will be made for this study.

An additional justification for this particular study is the use of buyer perceptions as the method of measuring the characteristics of salesmen. It is hoped that by using this approach it will be possible to gain insights as to

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the probable causes or differential success of the various salesmen in the grocery industry. Very few published studies have been conducted using this dyadic method of analysis. The extent of these studies will be detailed in the next chapter of this study.

Finally, this study should prove of practical value to the members of the grocery industry—an industry which in 1969 had $65 billion in sales.\(^7\) Also, the methodology developed could be replicated in additional industries. It is hoped that the methodologies and findings of this study will serve as useful direction in further attempts to unravel the so-called mistique of salesmanship.

### The Methodology Used

In order to conduct this study it was necessary to resolve three basic methodological problems: (1) the identification of successful salesmen; (2) the development of a suitable questionnaire; and (3) the selection of the sample and the administering of the questionnaire to that sample.

### The Identification of Successful Salesmen

The determination of which salesmen are successful and which are not has always posed a serious problem whether the reason for the determination has been for use in empiri-

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cal studies, such as this one, or to determine the type of compensation plan to be used. Identifying successful salesmen in this study also was quite difficult and complicated. Some contend that a salesman is successful because of various "inputs" which he either possesses or uses. These measures might be the number of calls made, knowledge of products, frequency of calls, personal appearance, or a number of other factors which basically assess a salesman's "paper value."

These various inputs could be measured either from a sales manager's point of view or from a buyer's point of view. The more traditional approach in the literature is to measure these traits or inputs from the sales manager's point of view. Using the dyadic approach, however, it would be logical to substitute the buyer's point of view for the sales manager's point of view.

One limitation of using the buyer's assessment of salesman success would be that this study could be criticized as being merely a "self-fulfilling prophecy." The buyer would be asked to rate the characteristics of the salesmen and then identify the salesman who was the more successful of the two. This would simply be the substitution of the more biased subjective judgments of the sales manager. It is felt that one reason that Tosi's findings were limited was because his study used the subjective judgments of sales managers as a measure of
It was obviously preferable to measure the success of the various salesmen by some type of objective measure of his "output." Objectivity in most cases becomes translated into some quantitative measure. The determination of which quantitative measure to use then becomes a problem. King reported a study in which he gave several sets of quantitative market performance data to three different executives from the same firm. A new product had been introduced by that firm in 55 different markets with varying levels of success. King then asked these executives to classify each of the markets as either a successful market or an unsuccessful market. These three executives agreed on only 30 of the 55 market areas. This agreement is only slightly better than that which could be expected if King had flipped a coin. Such results tend to discourage the use of either sales managers or buyers as interpreters of quantitative data.

An additional factor which restricts the use of sales managers from ranking salesmen on quantitative data is that such data simply do not lend themselves to comparisons of salesmen for several different companies. For these reasons the use of sales managers as raters of salesmen was rejected.

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In attempting to determine the feasibility of using the buyers as raters of salesmen, a preliminary study was conducted with buyer-merchandisers of various grocery chains and rack-merchandisers. In this study, no specific salesmen were mentioned to the buyer-merchandisers. Instead, questions were asked to determine if they perceived characteristics which made any salesmen successful. The responses to these questions led this writer to conclude that such an approach to the subject would simply reinforce all of the conventional wisdoms which presently exist in the personal selling literature. These buyer-merchandisers, in short, made very general answers to these very general questions and they appeared to use ill-defined and inconsistent criteria in selecting successful salesmen.

From personal experience in the grocery industry, it was known that a major goal of grocery product salesmen was to obtain feature advertisements from all of the grocery chains. Such feature ads are sought because they usually result in reduced prices to the consumer, extra display space in the retail stores, and consequently, increased sales of the products and brands featured. It also was known that much of the salesman's effort with the buyer-merchandisers for grocery chains was spent in attempting to persuade these buyer-merchandisers to feature the sales-
It was decided, then, to analyze the grocery ads of each of the grocery chains in a given market area. The grocery product feature ads which each chain used in that market area were recorded by product category and brand. This analysis was conducted for a period of eight weeks in each market area. An eight week period was chosen in order to allow each buyer-merchandiser time in which to decide whether or not to feature these brands in his chain's grocery ads.

One of the difficulties which results from the use of grocery ads as a measure of selling success is that which is created by cooperative advertising agreements between certain manufacturers and grocery chains. These cooperative agreements state that a chain will advertise the manufacturer's brands a certain number of times each year, e.g., nine times per year in space no smaller than one column inch. In order to eliminate the effects of these "contract"

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10 Buyer-merchandisers are those people to whom salesmen make direct presentations in order to obtain features in newspaper ads. The actual titles used in the grocery industry range from buyer to sales manager to grocery merchandiser. It should be noted, however, that the buyer-merchandiser function usually is separate from the function of the buyer. The latter generally decides on the quantity of product to be purchased, and the timing of those purchases. The buyer-merchandiser decides upon the products which will be featured in newspaper ads.

11 Meat products, produce, dairy items, and frozen foods were excluded from the study because these products usually are presented to different buyer-merchandisers within the same chain.
ads" from this study, only "large-space" feature items were analyzed. Large-space ads were those which were at least three square inches.  

In order to identify a successful salesman, the frequency of features was arrayed in a matrix. This matrix was analyzed statistically in order to determine those salesmen who seemed to have unusually high numbers of successes with certain buyer-merchandisers. The basic objective of this analysis was to identify a salesman who obtained proportionately higher numbers of features than he should have received on an "average" basis.

When a situation was discovered in which a specific salesman appeared to be having success with a certain grocery chain beyond that which would be normally expected, this situation was statistically tested by means of a binomial probability distribution. The following is an example of how the successful salesman was determined in one specific instance.

The data from the Cincinnati market area were transformed into a product category matrix. The combined canned fruits, vegetables, and catsup category for this market is presented in Table 1. It can be noted from this table that

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12Most contract ads are either one column-inch or do not specify a size, but instead require only the "mentioning" of the product in the ad. Such contract features are rather easy to identify in a grocery ad. These features are usually found clustered together either at the bottom of the ad or along one of its borders.
TABLE 1
CANNED FRUITS, CANNED VEGETABLES, AND CATSUP FEATURES IN THE CINCINNATI MARKET AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grocery Chains</th>
<th>Del Monte</th>
<th>Heinz Actual</th>
<th>Heinz Theoretical</th>
<th>Hunts Actual</th>
<th>Stokely Actual</th>
<th>Others Actual</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (0.8)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A &amp; P</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 (0.8)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGA-Parkview</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 (2.6)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-Mart</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (0.1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 (1.4)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (0.1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thriftway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (0.9)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7 (7.0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>207</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.4 (3.4)</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These theoretical values represent the number of features which would have been received had each chain devoted 3.4 per cent of their canned fruit, canned vegetable, and catsup features to Heinz.

Theoretical values are not included in the totals.

SOURCE: Survey of Newspaper Advertisements

There were 207 features of these items in the Cincinnati market during the eight week period analyzed. Of the 207 features, Heinz received seven or 3.4 per cent. This 3.4 per cent figure was then used to construct a "theoretical" matrix to determine how many features Heinz "should" have received from each chain had every chain reacted to the Heinz promotional package the same way. The theoretical number of features which Heinz should have received is presented in parentheses beside the actual number of the features received from each chain.
It can be seen that at the Rink's chain in the Cincinnati area Heinz theoretically should have received only 0.1 features, but it received two features. The binomial distribution was then used to calculate the probability of this occurring if the features were distributed on the basis of the brand strength of Heinz. The calculated probability was three chances in 1,000 that a deviation this large would occur on the basis of chance alone. Using the parlance of statistical quality control, then, it can be said that there is some "assignable cause" for a deviation this great. The deviation cannot be explained by chance alone.

This assignable cause could be one of three things: (1) the attractiveness of the particular promotion being offered by Heinz to the Rink's chain; (2) the possibility that the merchandising practices of Rink's might favor the Heinz brand; or (3) the ability of the Heinz salesman to obtain extra feature support from the Rink's buyer-merchandiser.

The "attractive promotion" assignable cause can be rejected as a possible cause because the regulations of the Robinson-Patman Act require that a manufacturer cannot discriminate in his promotional offerings to buyers in the same market area. Since this matrix was composed of only chains in the same market area, Heinz was required to offer

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13 The brand strength as measured by its feature acceptance.
the same promotion to all of those chains. If, in fact, the Heinz promotion had been especially attractive, more of the chains would have featured that brand, and this would have increased the acceptance per cent to more than the actual 3.4.

The second possible assignable cause was that the merchandising practices of Rink's might favor the Heinz brand. It should be noted that in most cases firms give this preferential treatment only to their own private labels. There could be instances, however, where a manufacturer might be able to receive this preferential treatment. In order to measure this, several questions were included in the questionnaire and will be presented in the next chapter under the heading "interaction between the salesman and his company."

The remaining assignable cause is the ability of the Heinz salesman to obtain extra feature support from the Rink's buyer-merchandiser. The Heinz salesman may have a special relationship with the Rink's buyer-merchandiser which could account for this greater amount of success than could be accounted for in other ways. The result of this analysis then produces a salesman who can be labeled "successful" with that particular account. The next task was to select a salesman in the same product category to be compared with this successful salesman.

There did not appear to be as much accuracy with the
methods used in determining the less successful salesman. Actually, several methods were used during the study. None of them proved to be as certain as was that used in the selection of the successful salesman. In the particular instance of selecting a salesman in the Cincinnati area to be compared with the Heinz salesman, the Hunts salesman was used. This salesman was selected because of a combination of the bi-nominal probability analysis supplemented with some additional knowledge about the distribution structure in the grocery industry in general, and Cincinnati in particular. The Stokely salesman did not appear to be doing as well with the Rink account as he appeared to be doing with several other accounts in the Cincinnati area. This person was not chosen for comparison, however, because it was known that this product was handled by a food broker. Rink's is supplied from the Cleveland area because it is a division of Fisher-Fazio-Costa. Consequently, the Cincinnati area broker did not receive a commission for the Stokely products shipped from the Cleveland area. In this case, it was felt that even if the Cincinnati broker salesman would call on the Rink account, he probably would not spend the time and effort necessary to develop this account as thoroughly as he would an account on which he was receiving a commission.

The Del Monte salesman was not used for comparison purposes because the man representing this account was to be
used in another comparison in the Cincinnati area. The Freshlike salesman was not selected because it was known that the distribution of this brand is not as consistent as with some of the other brands in this product category. Unless the Rink stores were inspected it would not be possible to determine if the Freshlike brand was carried. In planning for the Cincinnati interviews, then, Freshlike was not considered as a possible comparison. By this process of elimination, and in view of the fact that Hunts did not receive any features at Rink's, the comparison salesman chosen was the Hunts representative.

Because of the number of constraints in the selection of the poorer salesman, it was not possible to obtain a matching of the "best" and "worst" salesmen in each product category. It was possible, however, to achieve a comparison between a good salesman with one who was not as good. The best-worst comparison would have been preferred because it would permit the greatest dispersion between the questionnaire values of the people being compared. The good-poor comparison, though, was an acceptable substitute even if the results were not as statistically strong as they would have
been in the former instance. 14

The Development of the Questionnaire

Each item in the forty-two part questionnaire was based upon some specific reference found in the literature pertaining to this study. A seven point Likert-type scale was used for the responses of the buyer-merchandiser.

For example, one question which was included in the questionnaire is, "Which of these two salesmen uses the more colorful, vivid, or picturesque language?" If the buyer responded that salesman #2 used the more colorful, vivid, or picturesque speech, he then was asked if that salesman's speech was "considerable more, somewhat more, or just a little more colorful, vivid, or picturesque?" This process was continued until all of the questions had been answered. The questions were rotated between interviews to avoid order bias. (A detailed discussion of the questionnaire and its development is presented in the next chapter.)

14 The procedure followed in the Detroit area was somewhat different in the selection of the poorer salesman. This was the first market where interviews were taken and it had originally been hoped that the bi-nominal probability would indicate both the good and the poor salesman. The results of the interviews in Detroit indicated, however, that there appeared to be more causes for non-success than there were for success. The bi-nominal probability indications thus were in disagreement with the buyer-merchandiser assessment of selling success by extreme degrees. As a result, in the remaining market areas, the binomial probabilities were augmented by the additional factors discussed above.
Sample Size and Selection

This study was conducted among all cooperating buyer-merchandisers in a six market area. As mentioned earlier these were Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Louisville. Included in this study were the buyer-merchandisers for both corporate grocery chains and voluntary grocery chains.

A target sample size of at least thirty buyer-merchandisers was originally planned, because this traditionally has been considered the cut-off point between statistically large and small samples. Various trade sources have estimated the total population of grocery buyer-merchandisers in the United States as being between 500 and 1,000. This target sample size then represented a sample of between three and six per cent of the total population. This is a considerably larger sample per cent than is used in many marketing research studies.15

The actual number of completed interviews was thirty-seven. Of the thirty-seven interviews, however, three interviews were excluded in the final tabulation because they were considered unacceptable for various qualitative reasons.

In order to obtain as broad a coverage as possible among grocery product salesmen, it was decided to use no

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15 As one example, the A.C. Nielsen Audience Surveys for Television Programs uses a sample of 1,100 sets to estimate the viewership of over 50 million home television sets. This is a sample size of .002 per cent of the population.
salesman more than one time. Thus, the thirty-four usable interviews represent the buyer-merchandiser perceptions of sixty-eight different salesmen.

The buyer-merchandiser who was interviewed at each chain headquarters was the person to whom salesmen actually made presentations. While it was known that certain of these chains did have merchandising committees, no attempt was made to interview other members of these merchandising committees. The most pertinent reason is the composition of many of these merchandising committees. They are typically made up of the buyer-merchandisers for groceries, meat, produce, frozen food, and dairy products. It is unlikely that the meat buyer-merchandiser would have substantial effect on the decisions of the grocery buyer-merchandiser, or vice-versa. Each has the responsibility for his own section of the newspaper ad, and the sole purpose of the committee meetings appears to be for information exchange and longer range ad-planning, such as a decision to schedule separate ads around holidays (e.g., the Fourth of July might fall on a Wednesday, and the chain would therefore prefer to advertise on a Monday or Tuesday for that particular week).

This assessment is borne out by a comprehensive study of such committees made by Borden. He concluded that while these committees were occasionally influential in the decision to adopt or not to adopt new products, they had virtually no influence on other aspects of the grocery opera-
This current study, of course, was not concerned with the new product adoption process, but rather only with the feature decisions made on established products.

Each buyer-merchandiser was interviewed in his buying headquarters. In general terms, he was told of the objectives of the study, the need to ask questions about specific salesmen, and the requirement that the same salesman not be used twice. He was not told, however, of the analysis of grocery ads which had been conducted in order to select the two salesmen about whom questions would be asked.

The buyer-merchandiser was asked to furnish the names of the two salesmen who were chosen. This was done in order to assure that the same salesman was not used twice and also to fix in the buyer-merchandiser's mind the actual salesmen. It was suspected in the drug wholesaler pre-test of the questionnaire that the buyers, in an over-willingness to cooperate, tended to answer questions on the basis of an "average" salesman who had called upon them. By asking that the salesman be identified by name, it was felt that such a practice would be discouraged. If the buyer-merchandiser was not aware of either of the salesmen by name, a switch was made to a back-up pair of salesmen in another product category.

15 Neil H. Borden, Jr., Acceptance of New Food Products by Supermarkets (Boston: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1968), p. 198.
At the conclusion of the formal questionnaire, each buyer-merchandiser was asked if he had any further comments about "what makes a salesman successful." This portion of the interview, in many cases, proved to take longer than the previous 42 question portion and added valuable qualitative data to the quantitative findings of the structured questionnaire responses.

Method of Analysis

The two primary statistical techniques which were used in the analysis of the data were simple correlation analysis and stepwise multiple regression. In both, the success of the salesman was related with the scores from each of the items on the questionnaire. These will be discussed in detail in Chapter III where the questionnaire items are analyzed.

The success of the salesmen was coded by two different methods. In one method, the salesmen were classified merely as successful or non-successful in a zero-one dichotomous classification. The other method of classification depended upon the bi-nominal probability of the successful salesman and the evaluation of the buyer-merchandiser. If the probability value was .01 or less, the successful salesman was assigned a seven on a seven point scale. If the probability was greater than .01 but less than .05, he was assigned a six, and if the probability was greater than .05 he was assigned a five. If, however, the buyer-merchandiser agreed
that the indicated salesman was the better of the two, he was assigned a value of seven, regardless of what his probability value had been. The unsuccessful salesman was assigned the residual value of the successful salesman so that their combined scores totaled eight. Both the dichotomous and the seven-point classification of success were used in the statistical analyses as measures of success.

The General Setting of the Questionnaire

It was felt that the first portion of each interview should be used to explain the general purpose of the study to each buyer-merchandiser. After this was done, a series of innocuous questions followed. These were placed in the beginning portion of the instrument in order to give the buyer-merchandisers some feeling for the nature of the questions to follow and to establish some rapport.

The buyer-merchandiser was asked to compare the salesman for "Company X" with the salesman for "Company Y" on each of the questions asked of him. He was then asked to indicate the names of the two salesmen about whom the questions were to be asked. This was done in order to guarantee knowledge of these salesmen by the interviewees and also to make certain that no salesman was inadvertently included in the study more than one time.

The interviewees were asked to give the "approximate age" of each salesman. This was done in order to provide an input for the correlation of the relative ages of the
salesmen and the buyer-merchandiser. The buyer-merchandiser was not asked to give his own age, but this was estimated by this writer.

**Positioning of Questions at the End of the Questionnaire**

While a preliminary statistical study had been conducted to determine which of the two grocery product salesmen was the more successful, it was felt advisable to also ask the buyer-merchandisers for their impressions of the relative success of these two salesmen. Because of the biasing nature of this question, it was necessary to place this question in the latter part of the questionnaire. Had this been asked earlier, there is the probability that the buyer-merchandiser might have altered some of his answers in order to "justify" his overall evaluation of the salesmen.

After the question about "Which salesman do you feel is the better of the two salesmen," the buyer-merchandiser was asked to "rank all of the salesmen of the particular product category (represented by the two salesmen), that is the (coffee) category." At this point, all of the salesmen from that product category were listed and the buyer-merchandiser was asked to indicate the best of all of those salesmen. He then ranked the second best and so forth until every salesman on the list had been ranked.

The final question asked of each buyer-merchandiser was if he had "any comments in general about what makes a salesman a good salesman?" This question was valuable in that it
provided an opportunity to question these buyer-merchandisers in considerable depth about their general feelings and attitudes toward grocery product salesmen. The question also provided a "release" for some of the buyer-merchandisers who appeared to feel constrained because of the structured nature of the interview to that point.

The Method of Rotating the Questions Within the Instrument

In order to prevent any type of order bias in the instrument, it was necessary to rotate the questions so that fatigue, interest, or dis-interest would not affect some of the questions. The basic purpose of the rotation was to ensure that each question would appear at different points in the interviews with different buyer-merchandisers. While such a technique does not eliminate order bias, it does "smooth" the bias, if any, over all of the questions in the instrument.

It was not desirable, however, to rotate all of the questions. As has previously been mentioned, the purpose of some of the questions was informational or of a rapport building nature, and, therefore, these questions were kept at the beginning portion of each questionnaire. The evaluative questions about the overall ratings of the salesmen and general comments of the buyer-merchandiser also were retained at the end of each questionnaire. As mentioned earlier, this was done in order to prevent any type of "Hawthorne effect" of self-fulfilling prophecies which might occur if these questions had appeared earlier in the questionnaire.
Questions #1 through #41 were deemed to be those which should appear randomly throughout the instrument. The method used to obtain the randomness of these questions was to rotate the five pages on which these questions appeared. Questions #1 through #9 appeared on page two; questions #10 through #18 appeared on page three; questions #19 through #26 appeared on page four; questions #27 through #34 appeared on page five; and questions #35 through #41 appeared on page six.

As each questionnaire was prepared for an interview, page one containing the informational and rapport types of questions was placed first, and then a numbered card was drawn from a container. Each card in the container had a number of the pages two through six. Whatever number was on the first card drawn determined the page which was placed after the beginning page of the questionnaire. The remaining cards were then drawn from the container until all of the cards had been exhausted. The last page of the questionnaire was then added, and the instrument was fastened together. At this point, the cards were shuffled and returned to the container in order to be drawn again for the construction of the next questionnaire.

An alternative method of rotating the questions would have been to draw a number for each individual item and to rotate each of these items within the questionnaire. This method, however, was rejected for two reasons. First, this
method would have required that each instrument be typed individually. Second, and more important, this method would not necessarily have assured that each item would have appeared in a different section of the questionnaire. It had been originally planned to have approximately thirty interviews, and since there were forty-one questions which were to be rotated, it was mathematically possible that the same question would appear in the same position in every one of the instruments. There was a much smaller probability of this occurring when each of the five pages were rotated as a unit.

**Limitations of the Study**

There was a limited amount of time in which to conduct this study, and because of other commitments of the buyer-merchandisers, the length of each interview was restricted. Time and expense limits also precluded the use of a random sample of all possible market areas. In this study, as in most studies, it would have been preferable to have had a larger, more exhaustive sample size, but this was not possible due to the previously mentioned time and expense limitations.

The conclusions of this study cannot be considered to be applicable to all forms of selling. Based on the results of this sample, these conclusions will apply only to one type of selling situation in the grocery industry. The results of this study will be limited to the extent to
which these buyer-merchandisers were willing to respond with their true perceptions of the salesmen involved.

**Method of Presentation**

The remainder of this study is divided into four chapters. Chapter II is devoted to an analysis of the pertinent literature and the development of the questionnaire.

Chapter III is a presentation of the findings of the simple correlation analysis and the step-wise multiple regression analysis. The hypotheses presented in this chapter are further discussed in Chapter III also.

Chapter IV presents a discussion of the items which the buyer-merchandisers volunteered in response to the open-ended question included in the interview instrument. The items which were not statistically significant also are discussed as well as a further analysis of the step-wise multiple regression findings. The major findings of the study are included in Chapter IV.

Chapter V represents a summary of the study and presents recommendations for any future studies in this area.
CHAPTER II

WHAT MAKES A GOOD SALESMAN

"What makes a good salesman" is the first question to be asked in a study such as this. In order to determine some hypothetical answers to this question a review of the pertinent literature was undertaken. This review is presented in this chapter along with a development of the questions to be used in the testing of the hypotheses discussed briefly in Chapter I.

The Literature Background

As was pointed out in Chapter I, the pertinent literature has been divided into six categories. They are: (1) the trade or popular literature on salesmanship; (2) the scholarly marketing literature; (3) the psychological literature which appears to have some application to salesmanship; (4) the pertinent social-psychological literature; (5) the applicable political science literature; and (6) the literature which treats selling as a dyadic relationship.

The Popular Literature on Salesmanship

The distinguishing feature of this type of literature is that it usually is based upon anecdotes or observations made about successful salesman. Typically, it is not documented, and rarely does the anecdote or observation make use of any type of scientific method of analysis. This material, however, should not be disregarded since it does
contain hypotheses which could be tested in studies such as this one which do employ scientific methodology.

This popular literature is quite extensive and a thorough review of it would be far beyond the bounds of this project. The following discussion represents portions which appeared to contain potential hypotheses which could be tested in this study by means of a questionnaire item.

Bender discusses the little things which salesmen do in making their calls, which he feels help to bring about selling success. While it is difficult to label all of these "little things," it appears that Bender is referring to items which can be referred to as courtesy (e.g., being on time for appointments). Bender is quick to point out, though, that courtesies cannot substitute for "...well-planned sales presentations, promotional or merchandising ideas."¹

Dowst uses a slightly different technique in discussing salesmen. He approaches the subject from interviews with purchasing agents. In a cartoon presentation he presents various types of salesmen who seem to be quite obnoxious to these buyers. It can be inferred from Dowst's presentation that they prefer salesmen who are both knowledgeable of their products and also knowledgeable about industry con-

Kahn discusses the biggest mistakes made by various salesmen in a series of ten articles in Sales Management magazine. Two of these articles contained observations which might be used in the study. In the first article he suggests that the more well-rounded individuals are more successful, and he also suggests that buyers prefer to deal with salesmen with whom they empathize. In the second of these articles, Kahn suggests that success is a function of not ignoring the customer's customer.

Burr notes that to be successful, effective presentations must be made. This adds another dimension to the point previously made by Bender about the need for well-planned sales presentations. At this point it should be noted that Burr is concerned primarily with effective presentations, while Bender is concerned with well-planned presentations. There is an obvious distinction between what these two authors mean. The methodology used in this study, however, did not lend itself to the use of a direct question

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5 Bender, op. cit., p. 94.
such as "Which salesman has the more effective presentations?" It was felt that such a question would tend to bias any of the subsequent responses of the buyer-merchandisers.

A National Industrial Conference Board publication discussed various methods which should be used in the training and evaluation of salesmen. A number of these suggestions provided the seed for items used in the questionnaire. They included a salesman's: (1) knowledge of products, prices and company policies; (2) judgment and common sense; (3) ingenuity and creativeness in the presentation of products to the trade; and (4) interest and attitude toward the job.  

There also is a great deal of popular literature which is not attributed to a specific author, but written instead by the editorial staffs of such periodicals as Sales Management. These writings can be viewed as the "conventional wisdoms" of good salesmanship. Some of this material, however, was considered of such marginal value that it was not included in this study. An example of this is the suggestion that the better salesmen are the better dressed salesmen.  

Other articles of this unauthored nature do provide usable factors which might differentiate salesmen. These

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include: intelligence, education, etiquette, and the presentation of ideas to customers (not necessarily new or original ideas but not tried by a buyer's firm).  

A recurring theme throughout this type of literature is that two problems exist in sales management. These are the recruiting of salesmen on the one hand, and the training of salesmen on the other. It is necessary that sales management be able to differentiate between those factors contributing to the success of salesmen which can be "developed" once the salesman has joined the staff as contrasted with those factors which must be present in the salesman before he is hired by the firm. There appear to be certain characteristics which either cannot be acquired through training, or whose acquisition would be quite expensive and time consuming. The possession of these factors, therefore, must be used as a criteria in an adequate selection procedure.

The Scholarly Marketing Literature on Salesmanship

The distinguishing feature of this type of writing as compared with the popular literature on salesmanship is that

it usually is based upon primary research conducted in selling organizations. Another feature is that this is documented much more extensively. This type of research also was a source of hypotheses which were used in the development of the questionnaire used in this study. In many cases, these hypotheses had been tested by the authors, but their inclusion in this study provides an opportunity to further test their validity.

There are basically two types of scholarly marketing literature on salesmanship—experimental and non-experimental.

*Experiments in marketing on salesmanship.* While there has been a considerable amount of scholarly research in the area of personal selling, there have been relatively few experiments in this area. An experiment differs from other research primarily because it attempts to change some variable or variables in an otherwise stable or controlled situation. The objective of the experiment then is to determine the effect of that changing variable or variables upon alternative outcomes.

Holloway developed a bibliography of various experiments which had been conducted in marketing. In this bibliography he listed only four experiments which had been conducted in the area of personal selling. Of the four, one dealt with the "behavior of purchasing agents in various ethical situations." Of the remaining three
experiments, two will be discussed in this section (Hughes and Levitt) and the third (Pace) will be discussed in the section dealing with the psychological literature which relates to personal selling.  

Hughes attempted to measure the effectiveness of adding machine salesmen even when these salesmen did not complete a sale. He did this by developing a scale to measure prospective buyers' awareness of and attitudes toward adding machines. Items included in the scale were: (1) perceived need for this equipment; (2) perception of product features; (3) image of four leading adding machine manufacturers; and (4) the general attitude held toward adding machine salesmen.

The adding machine salesmen then made two sales calls upon the members of the experimental group. On the first call, the salesman estimated the needs of the prospective buyers and left promotional literature which described the equipment which was to be presented later. On the second call, the salesman presented the adding machines to the prospective buyer. After the second call, the customers were again asked to complete the questionnaire items. The questionnaire also was re-administered to a control group of prospective buyers who did not receive either of the two sales calls. The differences between the attitudes of the

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control and experimental groups was attributed to the salesmen. His study involved a sample of 33 buyers. This is slightly fewer instances than were used in the present study.

Levitt exposed various groups of people to filmed sales presentations. Some of the people were exposed to a "good" presentation, while the remainder were exposed to a "poor" presentation. Among other things, Levitt concluded that "...poor presentations in particular reduce trust in the message transmitter (salesman)."

Non-experimental research on salesmen. Cash and Crissy discuss the various approaches to selling. They label the three basic approaches as: (1) the stimulus-response approach, (2) the selling formula approach; and (3) the need satisfaction theory. These different approaches could be viewed as positions on a continuum of selling presentations. The stimulus-response method is a very simplified sales presentation where the salesman commits to memory one particular presentation and then uses it with every customer, regardless of differing requirements of the various customers on whom this "canned" presentation is used. This technique is viewed as the lowest level of sales presentation.

The selling formula approach differs from the stimulus-

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response method in that in this case the salesman learns several variations to one basic presentation. Depending upon the responses of the customers, the salesman would branch off in another direction from this basic presentation.

The need satisfaction theory differs from the selling formula approach in that the salesman must first determine the unique set of needs of each customer. If necessary, Cash and Crissy indicate that this need determination phase could consume several calls. The salesman would then develop a special presentation which would be able to satisfy these unique customer needs. This is presented as a very sophisticated approach to selling. In many cases, however, salesmen may lack either the time or the skills required to perform such a detailed analysis of the needs of each of the customers. This might explain why some salesmen prefer to call on certain "types" of customers. They may have developed an elaborate presentation which could be classified in the selling formula portion of the continuum, but to a particular set of customers, this approach may represent a thorough analysis of these customers' "individualistic" needs.

Several authors have criticized ultra-simplified

approaches to the problem of recruiting and training better salesmen. Belasco feels that many selection errors result because of an over-emphasis on the intellectual demands of the salesman's job. He feels that in addition, the interactional requirements of the job should be analyzed. Among these Belasco includes flexibility, persistence, the ability to manage high levels of stress, and the tolerance for intense social contact at times and at other times the ability to tolerate periods of social isolation. He also points out that "...with the possible exception of the president (of the organization), the salesman's role is perhaps the most independent role in (that) organization."17

Bennet enumerates the many different "roles" which he sees the salesman being forced to play. He includes in this role repertoire: communicator, problem solver, planner, persuader, public relations specialist, diagnostician, small business consultant, trainer, educator, display man, technical expert, market analyst, and negotiator.18

Because of the many different characteristics which a salesman must possess, Easton emphasized the need for the ranking of salesmen on multiple criteria rather than upon

just one factor such as the volume of sales attained. Such
a ranking procedure, of course, has dysfunctional conse-
quences such as the distortion of salesman behavior and the
shortening of a salesman's time horizon.  

Stidsen criticizes the view that some people have of
a salesman as being a "...sort of wandering loudspeaker..."
who needs merely to be "...carefully programmed and...have
clean fingernails." He points out the need for inter-
communication between customers and salesmen. He draws
upon cybernetics and cites the "law of requisite variety"
developed by that discipline.

"With respect to marketing strategy the law of
requisite variety indicates that the more unpred-
dictable the behavior of customers with respect
to the intentions of sellers, the less effective
it is to attempt to reach them by means of mass
communications."  

He is quite concerned about the use of a mass communications
approach to salesmanship rather than the use of an inter-
communications approach which he advocates.

Montgomery and Webster add another dimension to the
complexity of salesmanship. They indicate that many of the
failures of attempts to apply operations research techniques
to personal selling strategy problems result because of the

20 Allan Easton, "A Forward Step in Performance Evalua-
tion: A Model for Rating the Sales Force," Journal of
21 Bent Stidsen, "Interpersonal Communication and Per-
sonal Selling," in John M. Rathmell (ed) Salesmanship:
Selected Readings (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.,
1968), pp. 69-82.
elusiveness of the characteristics of personal selling. Too many operations researchers naively attempt to apply standard OR techniques to selling problems without a detailed analysis of the nuances in this area. Montgomery and Webster refer to this type application as the "...have model, will travel approach." 22

The Psychological Literature on Salesmanship

There has been much hope held out for the findings of the behavioral sciences in general and psychology in particular to help solve the problems of marketing. 23 There have been relatively few articles, however, which have presented examples of the actual applications of these findings to marketing problems.

Stevens indicates that most of the contributions of psychology and the behavioral sciences toward salesmanship have been to refute many of the conventional wisdoms in this area. He contends that there is no significant relationship between selling success and: (1) intelligence test scores; (2) personality traits; (3) age; or (4) the level of education. He indicates, however, that while age is not related to sales success, maturity may well be

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related to that success. It should be noted that Stevens is talking about these factors as measured from the point-of-view of sales management. The emphasis of the current study is upon the buyer-merchandiser's perception of various intelligence, age, maturity and personality factors of the salesman.

Mayer and Greenberg feel that the success of salesmen depends upon the possession of at least two basic qualities: (1) empathy; and (2) ego drive. Ego drive is a trait which makes a salesman

"...want and need to make the sale in a personal or ego way, not merely for the money to be gained. To the top salesman, the sale—the conquest—provides a powerful means of enhancing his ego. His self-picture improves dramatically by virtue of conquest, and diminishes with failure."

Mayer and Greenberg described their methods as they had been applied to the prediction of which salesmen would be successful with their companies. Analysis of that information, however, indicated that they were able to predict more accurately the salesmen who would not be successful rather than the ones who would be successful. Ego drive and empathy, then, appear to be necessary conditions for selling success, but not sufficient by themselves to guarantee the success of salesmen.

24 Stevens, op. cit.
Pace conducted personal interviews with both successful and non-successful salesmen. He was particularly interested in observing any differences or similarities between these two sets, and was able to differentiate among the salesmen rather accurately on the basis of what he referred to as their "use of language." He described the successful salesmen as those who possessed the more "...colorful, vivid, picturesque language." 26

In a review article of some of the more fundamental types of psychological and behavioral research which might have application to personal selling, Webster states that what makes a successful salesman "...has been one of the most frequently asked and incompletely answered questions in marketing." Webster points to the advisability of investigating buyer perceptions of salesmen when he states that "...just as (the salesman) 'sizes up' the prospect, so does the prospect 'size up' the salesman. The prospect's perception of the salesman is an important determinant of the salesman's effectiveness." 27

The Pertinent Social-Psychology Literature

Much of the social-psychology literature is devoted to

an analysis of power, power relationships, and the sources of power. Schopler feels that not much can be said for what has been contributed by research on power as an explanatory variable. He does mention referrent power, though, which appears to be a possible source of power in a buying-selling relationship. "Referrent power" is that power a person has because another person identifies with him.  

French and Raven point out that it is rare when a given empirical case of power is limited to only one source. They identify five sources of power which they believe to be important and common in various studies of power. These sources are: (1) reward power; (2) coercive power; (3) legitimate power; (4) referrent power; and (5) expert power. Coercive power and legitimate power, however, do not appear to be pertinent to this current study. There probably are few situations in which salesmen are able either to coerce or to threaten to coerce buyer-merchandisers. Likewise, there also are few situations in which buyer-merchandisers would view the salesman as their "legitimate" organizational superior.  

Salesmen might well possess reward power, referrent

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power and expert power. Rewards might come by means of premiums, gifts or extra selling services. Referent power, which was discussed above, could be achieved by the development of rapport between a salesman and a buyer-merchandiser. Expert power could be developed by a salesman through his knowledge of products, his knowledge of market conditions, or his knowledge of merchandising ideas which could be used by a buyer-merchandiser.

The guiding principle of much of Stogdill's research lends support to the method used in this study to evaluate salesmen. Stogdill and Shartle state:

"One of the primary aims of the research was the development of methodology. It was decided at the outset to make a marked departure from traditional methods (of studying leadership), not because there is any merit in meaningless innovation, but because theoretical and methodological developments in industrial psychology and social psychology were pointing toward a new approach to the study of leadership. Leadership was no longer being regarded as a characteristic of isolated individuals. It was being viewed instead as a relationship among the members of a social group."30

The method used in this study, that of obtaining buyer-merchandiser perceptions of salesmen, tends to view sales "leadership" as a relationship between two members of a social group, the salesman and the buyer-merchandiser.

The Applicable Political Science Literature

While the literature of political science also discusses power, the focus of this literature is somewhat different from that of social-psychology. The works in political science deal with the analysis of community power structures. The technique used in most of these analyses involves the listing of people perceived to be in power in various communities. These lists are obtained either by observational means or by asking respondents to list people who, they feel, are influential in making specific community-wide decisions.

One type of question which is often used in these studies is what Walter refers to as a "Mr. Big question." Such questions in community power structure studies are used in order to determine leaders in whom people have confidence. Typically people are asked what person they would prefer to see heading the local government, or some community committee.

A number of review articles on power studies have been examined but do not yield any approaches which are deemed

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of high value for this particular study. Two discussions, however, did lend support to certain directions for questioning. Dahl indicates the desirability of the use of a question regarding shared political beliefs. Gamson cites the general importance of "shared backgrounds" in the avoidance of conflict situations. This shared background was operationally defined as the similarity of politics, religion, and length of community residence.

**Selling as a Dyadic-Relationship**

This specific category of literature has been separated from the other literature on selling and salesmanship because of its special relevance to this particular study. A "dyad" is basically a two person interaction.

Early research of selling as a dyad was conducted by Lombard. Lombard's study dealt with the interactions of

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sales supervisors and sales girls in department stores, and also with the interactions between the sales girls and the customers of the department store. The Lombard study, however, viewed the sales girl-customer interaction only from the point of view of the sales girls.\footnote{George F. F. Lombard, *Behavior in a Selling Group* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1955).}

The seminal research in the dyadic area as it applies to selling was conducted by Evans. His study took place among insurance salesmen and their prospective customers. Evans interviewed the prospects who had been approached by these insurance salesmen in an attempt to obtain the perceptions the prospects held of the salesmen. These responses then were analyzed on the basis of whether or not the prospects subsequently purchased insurance policies from these salesmen. Evans found that salesmen tended to have greater success when: (1) a prospect perceived a salesman to have the same political party as his own; and (2) the prospect perceived the salesman's religion to be the same as his own. The probability that the salesman was successful was greater in those instances where there was perceived agreement than in those cases in which there was actual agreement of political parties and religion.\footnote{Franklin G. Evans, "Selling as a Dyadic Relationship--A New Approach," *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 6, No. 9 (May, 1963), pp. 76-79.}

Tosi used the dyadic method in attempting to determine
the success of various salesmen for drug wholesalers. He was concerned with the role consensus between buyers and salesmen, the role consensus between buyers and salesmen, the role consensus between salesmen and sales managers, the expectation levels of the buyers and the expectation levels of the salesmen. He found no significant relationships between the role consensus of the buyers and salesmen either as it related to the percentage of business obtained from the customer or the number of suppliers a customer had. He did find significant relationships, however, between expectation levels and the number of suppliers of a given customer. He concluded, "This study shows that the salesman who is perceived by the customer as meeting the customer's expectations is more likely to have less competition from other salesmen." It is felt that one reason for the paucity of significant relationships found by Tosi is because of the measure of success which he used for salesmen in his study. This point was previously discussed in the Methodology Section of Chapter I.

Development of the Questionnaire

This section discusses the hypotheses to be tested in the study and the items used in the questionnaire in order to test the hypotheses. Eleven groups of hypotheses

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are discussed.

Expert Power Hypothesis

Using the null-form of the hypothesis, it was stated in Chapter I that there would be no relationship between a salesman's ability to develop expert power and his success. Eleven questions were used to measure the various aspects of expert power.

French and Raven identified expert power as one of the possible sources of influence in social situations. These authors stated that the "...extent of knowledge or perception..." held by individuals helps to determine the ability of one person to influence another person. The first of the questions used to test this hypothesis was, "Which of these salesmen offers you more new or novel merchandising ideas?" A Sales Management article indicated that this was one of the factors which purchasing agents desired among the traits of salesmen who called upon them.

The second question used was "Which of these salesmen appears to be better trained as a salesman?" This question was included in order to determine if there was a difference in the training levels of the salesmen which was apparent to the buyer-merchandisers. Since so much of the selling

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38 French and Raven, op. cit.
literature is concerned with training, it was felt that "better training" would be a potential source of expert power.

The third and fourth questions were based upon the comments made by Kahn who had indicated that one of the biggest mistakes made by salesmen was "...ignoring the customer's customer." In the situation involved in this study, the customer's customer could be either the retail stores of the grocery chain or the consumers. The third expert power question asked "Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the market conditions of his brands?" This was included to determine to what extent this type of information which would be useful to chains was provided by the salesmen to the chain-headquarters. The fourth question asked "Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the types of consumers who use his brands?" This was used to measure the extent to which useful consumer information was provided. It was felt that the salesman who provided more of this type of data would also be the one who was considered to be the more "expert" of the salesmen.

"Which of these salesmen would you contact in order to get some information about a rumor in the grocery industry?" was the fifth question. It was included as another possible source of expertness on the part of salesmen. The response

40 Kahn, op. cit.
to this question would indicate a certain type of knowledge on the part of one of these salesmen. The sixth question used to test the expert power hypothesis was "Which of these salesmen used more high pressure sales tactics?" This question was worded in this way because it was felt that the buyer-merchandiser would prefer to deal with the salesman who was not a "high-pressure type." This was based upon the findings of the same Sales Management article mentioned above. It seemed reasonable that the non-use of high pressure tactics might be perceived as a type of expertness on the part of the salesman.

Another aspect of expertness was considered to be the ability of a salesman to understand the problems of the buyer-merchandisers. The seventh question asked, "Which of these salesmen seems to have a better understanding of your problems?" Another source of expertness on the part of a salesman could be derived from his knowledge of industry conditions. The eighth question asked, "Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about the grocery industry in general?" This was used as an attempt to determine the perceived differences in the levels of knowledge these salesmen had of industry conditions.

Product knowledge on the part of the salesmen was considered to be an additional source of expert power. The ninth question, therefore, asked, "Which of these salesmen

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41 Sales Management, op. cit.
has more knowledge about his own products?" Product knowledge was indicated by Burr (and many others) to be one of the important elements in the training of salesmen to achieve greater selling success.\(^{42}\) A number of authors had indicated the importance of well-prepared sales presentations in achieving sales. Among these authors are Burr\(^{43}\) and Bender.\(^{44}\) The tenth question asked very directly, "Which of these salesmen has the better prepared presentations of his merchandising ideas?" As a final measure of the expertness of the salesmen, the eleventh question was included. This question was based in part on the comments of Kahn in one of his series of articles in Sales Management.\(^{45}\) This question was "If you were to become a salesman, which of these salesmen would you rather be like?"

**Reward Power Hypothesis**

The second major hypothesis presented in Chapter I was that there would be no relationship between a salesman's ability to develop reward power and his success. Three questions were used in order to measure the various aspects of reward power.

It was felt that there were two basic forms that these rewards could take. The first type would be in the form of

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\(^{42}\) Burr, in Vizza (ed), *op. cit.*  
\(^{43}\) Ibid.  
\(^{44}\) Ibid.  
\(^{45}\) Bender, *op. cit.*  
\(^{46}\) Kahn, *op. cit.*
better service to the buying firm. This was measured by asking two questions, one of which was "Which of these salesmen is better able to help you when you have problems such as late deliveries, stock shortages, or other difficulties in maintaining an adequate supply of his products?" The other question was "Which of these salesmen is easier to get in touch with when you need him?"

The second form that rewards could take would be gifts or other types of premiums given either directly to the buyer-merchandisers or to the grocery chain headquarters. An attempt to determine this was made by asking, "Which of these salesmen gives more premiums or gifts, either to you or to your company?"

Referent Power Hypothesis

Another major hypotheses presented in Chapter I was that there would be no relationship between a salesperson's ability to develop referent power and his success. French and Raven had defined referent power as the "identification" with another individual. They went on to further define identification as a "feeling of oneness."46

Two questions were asked in order to measure referent power. One was "Which of these salesmen do you personally like better?" The other was "Which of these salesmen would be more acceptable to you as the local leader of some

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46 French and Raven, op. cit.
industry-wide project such as a 'Food is a Bargain' campaign, or an anti-shoppers boycott campaign?" It will be noted that this second question is also a version of the "Mr. Big" question used in political science studies of community power.\textsuperscript{47}

**Job Expectations Hypothesis**

It was indicated in Chapter I that there would be no relationship between the job expectations of the salesman and his success. To test this hypothesis three questions were adapted from Stogdill's job expectations scale.\textsuperscript{48} It should be noted, however, that these questions had been intended by Stogdill to be asked of the individual employees. In this study, the buyer-merchandisers were asked for their perceptions of the job expectations of the salesmen.

The three questions used were: (1) "Which of these salesmen appears to be more satisfied with his present job?"; (2) "Which of these salesmen appears to have a better chance of being promoted by his company?"; and (3) "Which of these salesmen has a better chance of keeping his present job as long as he wants it?"

**Length of Association Hypothesis**

An additional major hypothesis was that there would be

\textsuperscript{47}Walter, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{48}Ralph M. Stogdill, \textit{Managers, Employees, Organizations}, (Columbus, Ohio: Bureau of Business Research, Division of Research, College of Commerce and Administration, The Ohio State University, 1965), p. 311.
no relationship between the length of association of the salesman and the buyer-merchandiser and selling success. This hypothesis was included in the study as a result of a preliminary study conducted with grocery product salesmen. Several of these people indicated that the longer they called on a buyer the better their sales results were.

Questions used to test this hypothesis included the previous length of association, the anticipated length of association, and the frequency of the association. The specific questions used were: (1) "Which of these salesmen has called upon you for a longer period of time?"; (2) "Which of these salesmen do you feel will continue to call upon you for a longer period of time?"; and (3) Which of these salesmen calls upon you with the better frequency, i.e., as often as you want him to?"

**Company Interaction Hypothesis**

While the design of this study attempted to eliminate statistically a number of assignable causes of salesman success other than the salesman's own ability, it was recognized that it would not be possible to eliminate a buyer's preference for a particular company. As stated in Chapter I, this hypothesis was that there would be no relationship between a salesman's company and his selling success. To test this hypothesis a series of questions were included to determine the relationship between preference for a company and ad feature success. These questions were: (1) "Which
of these salesmen works for the company which is more cooperative?"; (2) "Which of these salesmen works for the company which appears to be better managed?"; and (3) "Which of these salesmen works for the company which is more reliable in meeting its commitments?"

Language Ability Hypothesis

Another major hypothesis of this study was that there would be no relationship between language ability and selling success. Two questions were included in the instrument to measure this. The first of these questions was "Which of these two salesmen uses the more colorful, vivid, or picturesque language?" This question was based upon a study by Pace who found that the better salesmen had a significantly higher score on their "use of language" which he later described as those who had "...colorful, vivid, picturesque language."49

The second question used to measure language ability was "Which of these salesmen is a better general conversationalist?" The conventional wisdom of salesmanship indicates that this is a skill which should be possessed by all successful salesmen.

Mental Ability Hypothesis

An additional hypothesis presented in Chapter I was

49Pace, op. cit.
that there would be no relationship between mental ability and selling success. The nature of this study, however, precluded the administering of IQ tests to the salesmen. It also was not important what the IQ's of these people were. It was more crucial what a buyer's perception was of different levels of intelligence. One question asked to measure mental ability, therefore, was "Which of these salesmen has the greater common sense or intelligence?" This question was based upon the research of Stevens who investigated the relationship of intelligence test scores and sales success.\textsuperscript{50} Stevens reached his conclusions on the basis of actual test scores and not intelligence which might manifest itself in a person to person interaction.

Stevens also found no relationship between sales success and the level of education.\textsuperscript{51} His conclusion was reached on the basis of actual formal educational data rather than the buyer's perceived level of a salesman's education. The question asked to measure this was "Which of these salesmen has more formal education?" The word "formal" was added to this question in order to make certain that the respondents were distinguishing between education received as a part of schooling and "education" which was received from experience. It was necessary to make this distinction in order to provide a more adequate test of the accuracy of

\textsuperscript{50}Stevens, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{51}Ibid.
Stevens' conclusions.

Agreement of Social Class Hypothesis

Social class has been found to be a major factor in determining the behavior patterns of people.\(^{52}\) While no previous studies were uncovered which attempted to measure the influence of social class in selling situations, it was felt, none the less, that it should be included in the study. The hypothesis stated in Chapter I was that there would be no relationship between dyadic agreement of social class and selling success. It was considered likely, however, that the more successful salesman would be the one who was perceived as being in about the same social class as the buyer-merchandiser.

Rather than ask directly about the relative social classes, it was considered better to ask about this indirectly. It was not anticipated that many buyer-merchandisers thought explicitly about social classes as they related to salesmen. Perhaps, though, it would be possible to determine if one of these salesmen was more socially acceptable to the buyers. The questions used for this purpose were "Which of these salesmen would you prefer to invite to your home for a dinner party with some of your best friends?" and "Which of these salesmen would you more enjoy eating lunch

with?"

**Evans' Hypotheses**

Another hypothesis was that there would be no relationship between selling success and those success determinant factors previously identified by Evans. It will be remembered that Evans, in his study of the buyer-seller dyad, had concluded that selling success was predicted by the perceived agreement of political and religious views of the customer and salesmen. The Evans study was conducted among consumers and life insurance salesmen. It was decided to test these conclusions in a situation which involved professional buyers rather than consumers. To test this hypothesis, buyers were asked, "Which of these salesmen appears to hold political views which are more similar to your own political views?" and "Which of these salesmen appears to hold religious views which are more similar to your own religious views?"

**Miscellaneous Hypotheses**

Several items were included in the questionnaire to test what will be referred to as minor hypotheses. These items were based upon either a specific literature citation or upon a preliminary study done by this writer.

Belasko suggested that salesmen must be able to "... tolerate and manage a large number of conflicting expecta-

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53 Evans, op. cit.
tions..." in the conduct of his job. It was felt that the inability to tolerate or manage these conflicts would be perceived by the buyer-merchandisers as an inability to withstand pressure. Therefore, the question was asked, "Which of these salesmen is more affected by the pressures of his job?"

It will be remembered that Mayer and Greenberg stated that one of the necessary conditions for selling success was ego drive. Buyer-merchandisers were asked "Which of these salesmen has more drive?" The "ego" portion of the phrase was dropped in this question because it was expected that its inclusion would merely elicit a question from the interviewees as to the meaning of "ego drive." The buyer-merchandisers' perception of drive was considered to be a reasonable substitute for Mayer and Greenberg's "ego drive."

Stevens had indicated that there was no significant relationship between age and selling success, but he felt that there might be such a relationship between maturity and selling success. The question asked to test this conclusion was "Which of these salesmen appears to be more mature?"

In a previous discussion between this writer and a buyer, a comment was made to the effect that there were very few salesmen whom he would hire. This discussion was

54 Belasko, op. cit.
55 Mayer and Greenberg, op. cit.
56 Stevens, op. cit.
part of a pilot study conducted prior to this current one. Consequently, a question was included which asked, "If you were to hire one of these salesmen to act as a salesman for you, which one would you hire?"

During this same pilot study, a number of buyers indicated that it was quite important to them that salesmen keep their promises. The question used to measure this attribute was "Which of these salesmen is better at keeping his promises?"

Kahn has expressed his feelings that a successful salesman was one who was a well-rounded individual. The question, "Which of these salesmen is the more well-rounded individual?", was asked in order to measure the accuracy of these feelings.

A common complaint about salesmen is that they waste the time of the buyers. One early study which indicated this was conducted by Davis. To determine if this also were the case in the grocery industry, the interviewees were asked, "Which of these salesmen appears to be more willing to waste your time?"

The writings of Bender indicated that courtesy was an important determinant of selling success. To test this, buyers were asked "Which of these salesmen is more courteous?"

57 Kahn, op. cit.
58 James H. Davis, Increasing Wholesale Drug Salesmen's Effectiveness. (Columbus, Ohio: The Bureau of Business Research, College of Commerce and Administration, The Ohio State University, 1948).
A final minor hypothesis which was included in this study dealt with the similarity of ages between the buyer-merchandisers and the salesmen. At the beginning of each interview the respondents were asked to approximate the ages of the two salesmen to be compared. This writer then approximated the age of each buyer-merchandiser. These ages were later tabulated and included in the statistical analysis in order to determine if there was a relationship between age similarity and selling success.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This chapter contains the findings of the study from a quantitative point of view. These findings represent a statistical analysis of the responses to the questionnaire items. The statistical methods used were (1) simple correlation analysis and (2) multiple regression analysis.

Simple Correlation Analysis

The basic purpose of correlation analysis is to measure the relationship between two variables.¹ In this study, one of these variables was the success of the various salesmen. The other variable is each one of the items in the questionnaire. The success of the salesmen was coded by two different methods. The one method was simply to classify the salesman as successful or unsuccessful. The successful salesman was coded as a one and the unsuccessful salesman was coded as a zero. The second method of classifying the salesmen was on a seven point scale. The successful salesman received either a five, six, or seven score while the unsuccessful salesman received the differ-


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ence between the successful salesman's score and eight.  
A successful salesman received the score of seven when the bi-nominal probability of his success was .01 or less, or when the bi-nominal probability indicated merely that he was more successful and the buyer-merchandiser agreed that he was the more successful of the two (regardless of what the actual bi-nominal probability score had been). When the buyer-merchandiser's perception did not agree with the bi-nominal probability indications, the successful salesman received a score of six when the bi-nominal probability was greater than .01 and less than or equal to .05. This salesman received a five if the bi-nominal probability was greater than .05.

Conceptually there appears to be a considerable difference in the two methods of indicating salesman success. The dichotomous classification is less arbitrary but has very little dispersion among the alternative scores. The converse is true in regard to the seven point scale of success. But while there is a substantial conceptual dif-

**The total eight represents the sum of the other items in the questionnaire when both the successful and the unsuccessful salesmen's scores were coded. The successful salesman might have received a "considerably more" designation on an item which would indicate a seven score. The unsuccessful salesman would thus receive a "considerably less" designation of a one. The respective "quite a bit more" or "quite a bit less" scores would be a six and a two. The "little more" or "little less" designations would receive fives and threes, while the "neither" would receive two fours. It will be noted that in all situations, the sum of the scores was eight.**
ference between the two coding techniques, the results of a correlation analysis indicated that the actual difference is quite small at least in this study. The correlation index between the dichotomous and the seven point success rating was .948. This was the highest correlation index generated in the study.

Some further comments should be made about the techniques of correlation and regression analysis. Correlation analysis and regression analysis are very similar statistical techniques. Ferber has pointed out that the purpose of regression analysis is to identify numerical relationships between two variables. He states:

"The derivation of such numerical relationships is known as regression analysis, and the measurement of the degree of relationship between the variables under consideration is known as correlation analysis. In practice, both of these subjects are generally combined under the single heading of correlation, and are presented in conjunction with each other."\(^3\)

It should also be noted that there is an assumption of a linear relationship between the variables involved in both correlation and regression analysis. This assumption is necessary in order to use these statistical techniques, but does not appear to be a very restrictive assumption in that most marketing research studies are willing to accept this assumption without discussion. The methods used to calculate these statistical measures are presented in

The Results of the Correlation Analysis

There were sixty-eight observations included in the correlation analysis of each of the variables. Thirty-four observations were of successful salesmen and thirty-four were of unsuccessful salesmen. Since there were sixty-eight observations, there were sixty-seven degrees of freedom in this analysis (n-1). Ferber indicates that if there are between sixty and sixty-nine degrees of freedom the .01 significance points for the correlation index is .325. Thus, in instances in which there is a correlation index where the absolute value of the correlation index is greater than this value, there is a likelihood of a Type I error of only one per cent. A "Type I error" results when a true hypothesis is rejected. In this situation, if the correlation index is .325 or greater, there is only a one per cent chance that a hypothesis which is true will be incorrectly rejected.

In cases in which there is a correlation index with an absolute value greater than .250 but less than .325, there is a .05 probability of a Type I error. In this study, there was considered to be a significant relationship between the two variables when the absolute value of the correlation index exceeded the .05 probability level.

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4Ibid.
This .05 level appears to be the level most commonly used in marketing research studies.

Table 2 presents the variables which had a correlation index which was significant at the .01 level. The seven point scale of success was used in this and subsequent tables. It was preferred due to its greater dispersion. Table 3 presents those variables which are significant at the .05 level. Table 4 presents those variables which were not statistically significant at either of these levels.

**Statistical Interpretation of These Findings**

Technically it cannot be said that any of these characteristics will tend to cause salesmen to become successful. In correlation analysis there is no designation of one variable as the dependent variable and one as the independent variable. Statistically speaking, the correlation index for each pair of variables can be said to merely represent association but not causation. While this is true in a statistical sense, certainly the marketing literature plus the logic of the situation would appear to indicate that these variables cause success rather than success causing the existence of each of these other variables.

It is interesting to note that none of the statistically significant variables, either those which are significant at the .01 level or those at the .05 level, are negatively correlated with selling success. This would tend to indicate that the possession of any of these characteristics
TABLE 2
SIMPLE CORRELATION INDICES OF INDICATED VARIABLES WITH THE SEVEN POINT STATISTICAL MEASURE OF SUCCESS, SIGNIFICANT AT THE .01 LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description</th>
<th>Simple Correlation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buyer-merchandiser assessment of success</td>
<td>.556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were to hire one of these people to act as a salesman for you, which one would you hire?</td>
<td>.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would be more acceptable to you as the local leader of some industry-wide project such as a &quot;Food is a Bargain&quot; campaign, or an anti-shoppers boycott campaign?</td>
<td>.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be better trained as a salesman?</td>
<td>.524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about his own products?</td>
<td>.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you contact in order to get some information about a rumor in the grocery industry?</td>
<td>.463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is better able to help you when you have problems such as late deliveries, stock shortages or other difficulties in maintaining an adequate supply or his products?</td>
<td>.434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more drive?</td>
<td>.392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has greater common sense or intelligence?</td>
<td>.385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the market conditions of his brands?</td>
<td>.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen do you personally like better?</td>
<td>.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you prefer to invite to your home for a dinner party with some of your best friends?</td>
<td>.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were to become a salesman, which of these salesmen would you rather be like?</td>
<td>.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about the grocery industry in general?</td>
<td>.359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen offers you more new or novel merchandising ideas?</td>
<td>.358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen works for the company which appears to be better managed?</td>
<td>.344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Buyer-Merchandiser Questionnaire
TABLE 3
SIMPLE CORRELATION INDICES OF INDICATED VARIABLE WITH THE SEVEN POINT STATISTICAL MEASURE OF SUCCESS, SIGNIFICANT AT THE .05 LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Question</th>
<th>Simple Correlation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has the better prepared presentations of his merchandising ideas?</td>
<td>.311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is the more well-rounded individual?</td>
<td>.276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Buyer-Merchandiser Questionnaire

would help to ensure the increased success of a salesman; none would seem to detract.

Expert power hypothesis. There were eleven items which were included in the questionnaire in order to measure expert power. Of these eleven questions, seven were significant at the .01 level, one was significant at the .05 level, and three were not significant. The seven items which were significant at the .01 level were: (1) the salesman who appeared to be better trained \( (r = .524, r = \text{correlation coefficient}) \); (2) the one with more product knowledge \( (r = .494) \); (3) the person who would be contacted for information about a rumor \( (r = .463) \); (4) the salesman who provided more information about the market conditions of his brands \( (r = .372) \); (5) the one the buyer-merchandiser would prefer to be like if he were to become a salesman \( (r = .362) \); (6) the person with more knowledge about the grocery industry in general \( (r = .359) \); and (7) the one who presents
### TABLE 4
NON-SIGNIFICANT SIMPLE CORRELATION INDICES OF INDICATED VARIABLES WITH THE SEVEN POINT STATISTICAL MEASURE OF SUCCESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Question</th>
<th>Simple Correlation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is better at keeping his promise?</td>
<td>-.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen uses more high pressure sales tactics?</td>
<td>.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is a better general conversationalist?</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen works for the company which is more cooperative?</td>
<td>.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen seems to have a better understanding of your problems?</td>
<td>.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen calls upon you with the better frequency, i.e., as often as you want him to?</td>
<td>.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be more mature?</td>
<td>.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the types of consumers who use his brands?</td>
<td>.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has a better chance of keeping his present job as long as he wants it?</td>
<td>-.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is easier to get in touch with when you need him?</td>
<td>-.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you more enjoy eating lunch with?</td>
<td>.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to have a better chance of being promoted by his company?</td>
<td>.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to hold religious views which are more similar to your own religious views?</td>
<td>-.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is more affected by the pressures of his job?</td>
<td>-.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these two salesmen uses the more colorful, vivid, or picturesque language?</td>
<td>-.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen do you feel will continue to call upon you for a longer period of time?</td>
<td>-.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarity of ages</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has called upon you for a longer period of time?</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen works for the company which is more reliable in meeting its commitments?</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be more willing to waste your time?</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more formal education?</td>
<td>.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is more courteous?</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen gives more premiums or gifts, either to you, or to your company?</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be more satisfied with his present job?</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to hold political views which are more similar to your own political views?</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Buyer-Merchandiser Questionnaire
more new or novel merchandising ideas \((r = .358)\).

The item significant at the .05 level was the salesman who had the better presentation of his merchandising ideas \((r = .311)\). The three items not statistically significant were: (1) the salesman who used the most high pressure sales tactics \((r = .246\), just below the .05 alpha level cut-off\); (2) the one who had a better understanding of the problems of the buyer-merchandiser \((r = .225\); and (3) the person who presented more information about the types of consumers who used his brands \((r = .191)\).

**Reward power hypothesis.** There were three items which were used to measure the reward power hypothesis. One of them was statistically significant while the other two were not. The salesman who was better able to help out when his product was in short supply \((r = .434)\) was significant at the .01 level. The two items which were not significant were (1) the salesman who was easier to contact \((r = -.155)\) and (2) the salesman who gave more premiums or gifts \((r = .032)\).

**Referent power hypothesis.** Two questions were used to measure the referent power hypothesis. Both were statistically significant at the .01 level. These items were (1) the salesman who would be more acceptable as a local leader of an industry wide project \((r = .527)\) and (2) the one who was better liked by the buyer-merchandiser \((r = .370)\).
Job expectations hypothesis. Three questions were used to measure the job expectations hypothesis. None were statistically significant. These items were: (1) the salesman who had a better chance of keeping his present job as long as he wanted it \((r = -0.157)\), (2) the one more likely to be promoted by his company \((r = 0.123)\), and (3) the one who appeared to be more satisfied with his present job \((r = 0.022)\).

Length of association hypothesis. There were three items used to measure the length of association hypothesis. None were statistically significant. These three items were: (1) the salesman who called with the better frequency \((r = 0.218)\), (2) the one who was expected to continue to call on the buyer-merchandiser for a longer period of time \((r = -0.102)\), and (3) the one who already had called on the buyer for the longer period of time \((r = 0.075)\).

Company interaction hypothesis. Three items were used to measure the interaction between the salesman, his company, and selling success. One was statistically significant. This item was the salesman who worked for the better managed company \((r = 0.344)\). The two questions which were not significant were (1) the salesman who worked for the more cooperative company \((r = 0.237)\), and (2) the one who worked for the company that was more reliable in meeting its commitments \((r = 0.075)\).
Language ability hypothesis. Two items were used to measure the relationship between the language ability of the salesman and his selling success. Neither was significant. These items were (1) the salesman who was the better general conversationalist \( r = .239 \) and (2) the one who had the more colorful, vivid, or picturesque language \( r = .098 \).

Mental ability hypothesis. Two questions were used to measure the mental ability hypothesis. One was significant. This was the salesman who appeared to be more intelligent \( r = .385 \). The item which was not significant was the person who had more formal education \( r = .049 \).

Agreement of social class hypothesis. Two questions were used to determine the agreement of social class and selling success. One was significant. This was the person whom the buyer would prefer to invite to a dinner party with some of his best friends \( r = .362 \). The other item was the one whom the buyer would prefer to have lunch with \( r = .148 \). This was not significant.

Evans' hypothesis. Two items were used to test the findings in an earlier study conducted by Evans.\(^5\) Neither was significant. These questions were (1) the salesman

who appeared to hold more similar religious views \( (r = -0.117) \), and (2) the one who appeared to hold more similar political views \( (r = 0.000) \).

**Miscellaneous hypotheses.** There were nine miscellaneous or minor hypotheses tested during this study. Two were significant at the .01 level, one was significant at the .05 level, and six were significant at neither of these levels. The person who would be hired as a salesman had the highest correlation coefficient of any single question in the instrument \( (r = 0.546) \). The second item significant at the .01 level was the salesman with more drive \( (r = 0.392) \). The question which was significant at the .05 level was the salesman who was more well-rounded as an individual \( (r = 0.276) \). The six items which were not significant were: (1) the salesman who kept his promises better \( (r = -0.247) \); (2) the more mature person \( (r = 0.206) \); (3) the one who was more affected by the pressures of his job \( (r = -0.116) \); (4) the similarities of ages among the salesmen and the buyer-merchandisers \( (r = 0.080) \); (5) the person who was more willing to waste the buyer's time \( (r = 0.063) \); and (6) the more courteous of the salesmen \( (r = -0.032) \). All of these hypotheses are discussed further in Chapter IV.

**Multiple Regression Analysis**

The purpose of multiple regression analysis is to determine the relationship between one variable (the depen-
dent variable) and a set of other variables. As pointed out earlier, regression techniques are similar to simple correlation analysis in that the basic purpose of both sets of techniques is to measure the degree of association between variables.

Unlike simple correlation analysis, however, in regression analysis one of the variables is designated as the "dependent" variable. That is, the value of this variable is dependent upon the values of the other variables, the independent variables. In correlation analysis it was not necessary to designate one of the variables as a dependent variable.

A difference between "multiple" regression analysis and simple correlation analysis is in the number of variables involved in the analysis. In the simple correlation technique, only two variables are associated with one another. In multiple regression analysis two or more independent variables are associated with the dependent variable.

Ferber points out:

"The advantage of multiple (regression) is obvious, for rarely is it ever true that a variable is influenced solely or predominantly by only one other factor." 6

It should be noted that the technique of multiple regression analysis is not without its limitations. Bryant states:

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6Ferber, op. cit., p. 346.
"It must be obvious that linear-regression methods will be of use only in those cases in which the linear model is a reasonable close approximation to reality, for there can be little meaning in 'assuming' a statistical model if that model has no correspondence to reality."7

Bryant's comments are equally true both in regard to the simple correlation model and the multiple regression model. Since it was reasonable to assume a linear relationship in the case of the simple correlation analysis, then it should be as reasonable to assume that same linear relationship in the case of multiple regression analysis.

The calculations of the multiple regression analysis which was performed on the data from this study were completed by the use of the Burroughs Corporation's Advanced Statistical Inquiry System (BASIS). The program used was the SEPR program (Multiple Step Regression). The following is a description of that program:

"This program computes a set of stepwise multiple linear regressions. At each step of the analysis, a variable is added that results in the greatest reduction in the error sums of squares. F levels for inclusion and deletion may be set by the user."8

This multiple step regression program first calculated the independent variable which best explained the values of the dependent variable which was salesman success. At the next step in the program, another independent variable was added which contributed the most towards the more complete expla-

7Bryant, op. cit., p. 212.
nation of that dependent variable. This process was continued until all of the variation of the dependent variable was explained.

The Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis

The program which was used in this analysis began by selecting the one variable which best explained the success of the salesmen. The first variable thus selected was Question #24 ("If you were to hire one of these people to act as a salesman for you, which one would you hire?"). This variable is the same one which had the highest simple correlation index with salesman success. The multiple regression coefficient for this variable was .546, just as it had been in the case of the correlation analysis.

After this variable had been selected, all of the remaining variables were analyzed in order to determine which variable would explain the most of the equation which had not already been explained. It was known that there was a considerable amount of inter-correlation among the items in the questionnaire. This was true because many of the items had been designed to measure the various shades of some of the same basic characteristics.

This statistical program took into account the inter-correlation of variables and as a result did not next select the variable which had received the second highest correlation index. Instead, the second item selected in the step-wise regression model was Question #17 ("Which of these
salesmen has more knowledge about his own products?"). The combined multiple regression coefficient of these two variables was .652. The marginal contribution by Question #17 to this coefficient was, therefore, .106.

Both the contributions of Questions #24 and #17 were statistically significant. None of the items which were subsequently added to the multiple regression coefficient, however, were statistically significant at either the .01 level or the .05 level. This tends to support the observation that there was a considerable amount of inter-correlation among the various items in the questionnaire.

The multiple regression coefficient eventually reached 1.000 after 33 variables had been added to the equation. The incremental contributions to the multiple regression coefficient were so small in each case, though, that none of these subsequent variables contributed significantly to the regression coefficient. An interpretation of the findings of the stepwise multiple regression is presented in Chapter IV along with a further discussion of the correlation analysis and the buyer-merchandiser responses to the open-ended question about what makes a salesman a good salesman.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze, interpret, and evaluate the results of the study as presented in Chapter III. This chapter is divided into four major sections: (1) a discussion of the hypotheses as they related to factors other than the simple correlation analysis; (2) an analysis of the two factors identified by the stepwise multiple regression; (3) a summary of the responses of the buyer-merchandisers to the open-ended item in the questionnaire; and (4) some observations on the complexity of the buyer-seller dyad.

A Further Discussion of the Hypotheses

The hypotheses which were presented in Chapter I and further developed in Chapter II were used primarily for organizational purposes. The hypotheses concerned with expert power, referrent power, and reward power were new to the study of salesmanship. Since the questions used to measure these hypotheses were developed from the existing literature without the benefit of any previous empirical testing, it would have been quite surprising had the tests of these hypotheses been conclusive enough to either accept or reject them outright. The purpose of this section of the chapter is to point out some possible reasons for the statistical findings and to discuss some of their impli-
Expert power hypothesis. It has been pointed out that three of the eleven items used to measure the expert power hypothesis were not statistically significant. These three items were: (1) the salesman who used more high pressure selling tactics; (2) the one who had a better understanding of the buyer's problems; and (3) the one who provided more information about the consumers who used his brands. During the course of the interviews it became apparent that there were other possible causes for these three items not receiving higher correlations scores.

In the case of the salesman who used the more high pressure sales tactics, it had been anticipated, as a result of the marketing literature analysis, that there would be a negative relationship between this item and selling success. Instead the correlation coefficient (.246) was positive and was just below the .05 alpha level of .250. It is felt that the reason this question did not receive a higher value was due to the different types of buyers interviewed. Some were rather quiet and soft-spoken. They appeared to conform to a stereotype of a judge, i.e., someone who gathered the facts, analyzed them, and reached his decision. This type of person recognized that he was being pressured, but appeared to feel that it was part of the salesman's job to apply pressure, and part of a buyer's job to accept such pressure within reasonable bounds. At
the other extreme was encountered the type of buyer who would more reasonably have been expected to be a salesman rather than a buyer. This type, in general, was more aggressive in the interview. He would state his attitudes more forcefully and tend to punctuate his remarks with gestures. This type of buyer usually stated that "no salesman ever pressured me." Often, this statement was followed by a fist thumping the desk. It is felt that with this type of buyer-merchandiser, the pressure "threshold" is substantially higher than with the more judge-like type. Any high pressure tactics probably would not be perceived as such unless they were applied at very high levels. Thus, these more aggressive buyers tended to say that "neither" of the salesmen applied high pressure tactics. The correlation analysis of this item was lower than it could be expected to be as a result of these neutral responses. It should be noted, however, that the attitude of the more judge-like type of buyer appeared to be that high pressure was merely a part of his job.

In the situation involving the salesman who had a better understanding of the problems of the buyer-merchandiser, it should be noted that a substantial number of the interviewees indicated that "neither" of the salesman had an understanding of the buyer's problems. As one stated, "Most salesmen don't have the slightest idea what our problems are. They just come in to ask us to push their pro-
ducts, and they give us no good reasons for doing it." As a result of the large number of neutral responses, the correlation index was below the significance level.

Also in the case of the salesman who provided more information about the consumers who used his brands there were many "neither" answers. One buyer-merchandiser asked "What type of consumer information do you mean?" The reply was to the effect that this referred to demographic information about consumers. The buyer-merchandiser then replied, haltingly, "You mean like young housewives use quite a bit of a certain brand. (pause) If I had information like that I could construct an ad which appealed to different types of shoppers. (pause) Hmmm! I wonder why they don't provide me with that kind of information?" It appears that while not many salesmen provide this information, it would be quite helpful to their sales cause if this information were provided. This could help to develop a differential advantage for the salesman.

As a result of this previous discussion, there is reason to believe, from the simple correlation results alone, that expert power appears to be an item which distinguishes the successful salesman from the unsuccessful one. There was a considerable probability that each of the eleven items could have received a statistically significant correlation coefficient. While the selling literature has long indicated that a successful salesman should be very
knowledgeable, there have been few instances in which this homily was expanded upon in a manner which would make it operational. The expert power hypothesis appears to be a step in this direction—at least in the grocery industry.

**Reward power hypothesis.** Only one of the three items used to measure the reward power hypothesis was significant. The two which were not significant were (1) the salesman who was easier to contact, and (2) the one who gave more premiums or gifts.

An unusual aspect of the item about the salesman who was easier to contact is the negative direction of the relationship. This appears to have been caused by a few buyers who gave extreme answers to this question, i.e., that one salesman was considerably easier to contact than another. These extreme answers occurred when one of the salesmen in the comparison was either a district sales manager or a principal in a food brokerage firm. The reason given for these responses was that these salesmen had an office and a secretary to answer the telephone and relay messages. One buyer implied, however, that some salesmen were easier to get in touch with because they never left the house or office. This also may have been the way in which other respondents interpreted the question. This might help to explain the negative coefficient.

The item which asked about the giving of premiums or gifts was included because it was widely indicated that
the reason for any differential sales success is some type of a pay-off to the buyer. The correlation coefficient of this item, however, indicates that the giving of gifts has little impact on selling effectiveness in the grocery industry. It had originally been expected that this would be a delicate area to probe. As a result, the question was asked in such a way that the buyer could indicate that the gifts were given either to him or to his company. He did not have to specify which. Not only was the correlation coefficient low with this question, however, one buyer went so far as to say, "If they are going to try to bribe me, they had better make a big offer, because if I am caught, I'll lose my job over it. You can't keep something like that a secret in this business." And even the common belief held among salesmen in the grocery industry that broker salesmen give more premiums or gifts than direct company employees did not appear to be justified. In situations where company salesmen were compared with broker salesmen, the replies were still that neither person gave premiums or gifts. But judging from the comments of several buyers gift giving may have been an important factor at one time. In several cases, when asked this question the buyer would shake his head no and reply, "There isn't much gift giving anymore." This answer implies that there once was quite a bit of gift giving in the industry. In addition to all of these other factors discussed, it is felt that there are
relatively few instances in which the actions of one buyer in one chain are important enough to either the supplier or the salesman to warrant the offering of substantial bribes, premiums, or gifts. The monies involved in such substantial inducements could probably be more effectively spent on advertising or direct price reductions.

It should be noted that the one item which was statistically significant of the three questions used to measure the reward power hypothesis was related to service. Based on the results of this study, it appears that in the grocery industry extra service generates more sales than extra gifts.

**Referrent power hypothesis.** While both of the questions used to measure the referrent power hypothesis were statistically significant, it should be pointed out that, on reflection, there appear to be a number of other items which could have been included as a part of this hypothesis. More will be said about this in the section of this chapter which discusses the results of the stepwise multiple regression.

**Job expectation hypothesis.** None of the three items used to measure the job expectation hypothesis were statistically significant. It has been pointed out in Chapter II that these questions had been adapted from a scale developed
by Stogdill to be asked of a job incumbent.\textsuperscript{1} As these ques-
tions were used in this study, however, the buyer-merchan-
disers were asked to give their evaluation of the job
satisfaction of the salesmen. It may have been too much
to have asked the buyer-merchandisers to assess the sales-
man's job satisfaction. They did not appear to have given
a thought to the relative job satisfaction of salesmen.

Some additional comments should be made about the
negative direction of the correlation coefficient associated
with the question about the salesman who has a better chance
of keeping his present job as long as he wants it. The
negativity may be explained by the number of situations in
which one of the compared salesmen was a part owner of a
food brokerage firm and the buyer did not react favorably
toward him. The buyer response rationale appears to have
been that since the salesman was a part owner of the firm,
it would be quite difficult to "fire" him. This apparent
rationale also points to the wide degree of misinterpreta-
tion buyer-merchandisers can make about the questions used
to measure this hypothesis.

\textbf{Length of association hypothesis}. None of the three
questions used to measure the length of association hypoth-
esis were statistically significant. The item in regard

\textsuperscript{1}Ralph M. Stogdill, Managers, Employees, Organizations.
(Columbus, Ohio: Bureau of Business Research, Division of
Research, College of Commerce and Administration, The Ohio
State University, 1965).
to the salesman who would continue to call on the buyer had a negative correlation coefficient which appears to need further explanation. This, again, relates to the situation of the part owners of brokerage firms. The buyer-merchandisers seemed to feel that a part owner would continue to call on them until he retired, but there was some possibility that the other salesman would be transferred, promoted, or would quit.

**Company interaction hypothesis.** The items used to measure the company interaction hypothesis were included in order to test what was feared to be a gap in the design of the study. This was that the buyer-merchandisers would have an advertising feature preference for a company's products rather than for a salesman. Two of the three questions used in this hypothesis were not statistically significant. These questions involved the more cooperative company and the more reliable company. On the basis of some preliminary interviews with buyer-merchandisers, it had been anticipated that the more cooperative company might be the one to receive preferential treatment from the buyers. This anticipation was based on the number of times that these people indicated that they preferred to deal with the "cooperative" companies. This preference, however, does not appear to result in more advertising features.

It is suspected that the correlation between the better
managed company and selling success is spurious.² It is spurious in that it is considered likely that selling success and the better managed company are both related to another variable—the ability of the salesman. The better managed company hires the salesman with more ability and trains him better so the result is greater sales success. The causality appears to be in the other direction. As a result of this previous discussion, it is believed that the interaction between the company and the salesman has even less effect on selling success than would be indicated by the results of the correlation analysis.

Language ability hypothesis. Neither of the two questions used to measure the language ability of the salesmen was significant. This is in considerable contrast with the long propagated assertions that salesmen should be glib tongued, fast talking, and highly articulate. It is felt that one reason for the findings of this study result because this analysis was made of an on-going selling situation. It may well be that in an interaction which occurs infrequently or only once (e.g., the door-to-door salesman

²"An apparent relationship between two variables, X and Y, is said to be spurious if their concomitant variation stems, not from a connection between them, but from the fact that each of them is related to some third variable or combination of variables that does not serve as a link in the process by which X leads to Y," in Claire Sellitz, et. al., Research Methods in Social Relations: Revised Edition. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), p. 424.
and the consumer) that language ability may be more important. But since the salesmen in this study see the buyers many times over a long period of time, any temporary advantages one salesman might gain because of his language ability can be off-set by a number of additional factors in the selling situation.

**Mental ability hypothesis.** One of the two items used to measure this hypothesis was statistically significant. This was the item which asked buyer-merchandisers to identify the salesman who had "more common sense or intelligence." Earlier, Stevens had contended that there was no relationship between intelligence test scores and selling success. There does, however, appear to be a relationship between the buyer-merchandiser's perceptions of common sense (or intelligence) and sales success. Perhaps selling organizations would be aided in their salesman selection if they were to test "common sense" as well as intelligence.

**Agreement of social class hypothesis.** One of the two questions used to test the agreement of the social class hypothesis was statistically significant while the other was not. The item which was significant referred to the salesman who would be invited to a dinner party with some of the

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buyer's best friends. This appeared to be a more discriminating question than the one which asked which salesman the buyer would prefer to have lunch with. A number of buyers said that they did not like to go to lunch with salesmen. One stated, "I would just prefer to go to lunch with some of the other people from the office. I must get five to ten invitations to lunch a day, but I just turn them all down." It did not appear that these buyers extended many invitations to salesmen, so the responses to the dinner party question did not receive an "automatic" answer. The buyers appeared to reflect more prior to answering this question. It may well be that this item is a better indicator of the agreement of social classes, and because of the significance of the correlation coefficient, it could be that social class agreement is a determinant of selling success. This should be further tested, though, in additional studies.

**Evans' hypotheses.** While neither of the questions used to test the conclusions reached by Evans\(^4\) was significant, there is a feeling that these items are more important than their meager correlation coefficients would indicate (religious views = -.117 and political views = .000). It appeared that the buyer-merchandisers might be rationalizing in their

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responses to these questions. These are somewhat sensitive matters to discuss with "professional" buyers who are not supposed to let such things enter into their decisions. Because of the apparent tendency to rationalize on these answers, the Evans' findings should not be rejected on the basis of this study. If a similar study were to be conducted at a later date, it is suggested that these questions might be followed by a question such as "Do you think that the similarity of these religious and political views affect the decisions made by other buyers?" It might be possible to obtain more insight into this issue if respondents were asked to "project" themselves into the roles of other buyers.

Miscellaneous hypotheses. Three of the nine miscellaneous hypotheses were statistically significant. Of the six which were not significant, there are four which further discussion. They are: (1) the salesman who keeps his promises better; (2) the age similarities of the buyers and the salesmen; (3) the one who wastes more time; and (4) the more courteous of the two salesmen. The correlation coefficient between success and the salesman who better kept his promises was the highest of the non-significant items with a correlation of -.247. The negative sign of the coefficient, however, is contrary to what might be expected. Part of the explanation of this is due to the number of neutral responses to the question. As one buyer stated,
"There is no such thing as a promise in this business. We expect all salesmen to keep their word with us." In a few other instances, however, some interviewees appeared to interpret this question as meaning not only the salesman, but also the company. One buyer-merchandiser objected to a salesman's company which had a particularly obnoxious habit of not being able to predict when its product would arrive. In another instance, objection was made to a firm's inability to reimburse quickly on certain types of promotional allowances. The respondent felt that the salesman had been unable to change this practice when he had "promised" that he would.

The negative sign of this correlation coefficient, then, can be explained by the combination of neutral responses and a few instances in which buyer-merchandisers objected to practices more inherent to a firm than to its salesman. It should be noted, however, that these objections to the firm's actions did not keep these salesmen from being successful with that account. In such instances the salesman was able, in fact, to overcome some of the inefficient practices of his firm. This helps to point out the importance of selling in this industry.

The question used to test the age similarity hypothesis had a very low coefficient of .080. In the coding of the ages, salesmen received a 1, 2, or 3 if they were younger than the buyer (1 if the salesman was more than ten years younger than the buyer, 2 if he was between five and ten
years younger and a 3 if he was less than five years younger). If he was the same age as the buyer he received a 4, and if he was older he received a 5, 6, or a 7 (using the same increments as on the younger side). In the vast majority of the cases, both salesmen were either younger or older than the buyer. There were not many situations in which one salesman was older and one was younger. Had this occurred, there probably would have been a higher correlation coefficient between success and age similarity.

The salesman who wasted more time also had a very low correlation coefficient (.063). This appears to be somewhat contradictory as it will be pointed out later that thirteen buyer-merchandisers stated that salesmen's presentations were too long. The explanation of the low coefficient is that there was a general feeling that both salesmen wasted the buyer's time. The response "both" or "neither" were coded as neutral responses and helped to generate a low correlation. As one individual stated, "Both of these guys would stay here all day if I let them." This time-wasting observation is in line with a number of other studies conducted about buyer-salesman relationships.

The responses to the question about the comparative courtesy of the salesmen also tended to be that "both" salesmen were courteous. One of the comments made in relation to this question was, "There is too much at stake for these salesmen to be anything but courteous." Another reply
was, "All of the salesmen come in here with hat-in-hand."
The large number of neutral answers thus caused the low
correlation coefficient, (-.032).

The Stepwise Multiple Regression Factors

It has been pointed out in Chapter III that only two
items contributed to the multiple regression equation in
statistically significant amounts. Those two questions
were "If you were to hire one of these people to act as a
salesman for you, which one would you hire" and "Which of
these salesmen has more knowledge about his own products?"
The first question has been labeled the "would-hire" factor
while the second has been labeled the "product knowledge"
factor.

The multiple regression coefficient was .546 when only
the "would-hire" item was included in the equation. This
is obviously the same as the correlation analysis and the
multiple regression, and correlation coefficients between
this item and the measure of salesman success were identical.

After the product knowledge factor had been added to
the equation, the resulting multiple regression coefficient
was .652. Thus, there was a marginal contribution to the
regression equation of .106. The F ratios of both of these
items were statistically significant at the .01 level. No
subsequent questions contributed to the equation at even
the .05 level.

A number of questions had significant relationships
with both of the factors identified by the stepwise multiple regression analysis. Table 5 identifies those items which were significantly correlated with the would-hire factor. Table 6 presents those items significantly related to the product knowledge factor.

The items presented in Table 5 appear to be related to referrent power. Some, in fact, appear to be a better measure of referrent power than those developed for this study a priori. Table 6, likewise, seems to point toward the expert power hypothesis. It is felt that this analysis of the items related to the would-hire and product knowledge factors lends some additional support to the referrent power and expert power hypotheses. The items in Tables 5 and 6 also point toward the things which might be included in a training program aimed at the development of referrent and expert power. However, there is considerable duplication of items in these tables.

**Comments of the Buyer-Merchandisers**

Table 7 represents a summary of the responses made to the question "...do you have any comments in general about what makes a salesman a good salesman?" This question was intended to permit the interviewees to respond with any type of comment in regard to the salesmen who called on them. The replies to this question were recorded in note fashion and later classified and tabulated. It should be realized that these responses were of an unaided type recall and thus
TABLE 5

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS SIGNIFICANTLY CORRELATED WITH THE WOULD-HIRE FACTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which one of these salesmen is better able to help you when you have problems such as late deliveries, stock shortages, or other difficulties in maintaining an adequate supply of his products?</td>
<td>.675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you contact in order to get some information about a rumor in the grocery industry?</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen do you personally like better?</td>
<td>.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has the greater common sense or intelligence?</td>
<td>.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buyer's assessment of salesman success</td>
<td>.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were to become a salesman, which of these salesmen would you rather be like?</td>
<td>.582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about the grocery industry in general?</td>
<td>.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical measure of salesman success</td>
<td>.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you enjoy eating lunch with?</td>
<td>.537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen seems to have a better understanding of your problems?</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be better trained as a salesman</td>
<td>.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would be more acceptable to you as the local leader of some industry-wide project such as a &quot;Food is a Bargain&quot; campaign, or an anti-shoppers boycott campaign?</td>
<td>.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you prefer to invite to your home for a dinner party with some of your best friends?</td>
<td>.524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is a better general conversationalist?</td>
<td>.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is a more well-rounded individual?</td>
<td>.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen calls on you with the better frequency, i.e., as often as you want him to?</td>
<td>.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is more affected by the pressures of his job?</td>
<td>-.359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen works for the company which is more reliable in meeting its commitments?</td>
<td>.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has the better prepared presentations of his merchandising ideas?</td>
<td>.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more drive?</td>
<td>.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen works for the company which appears to be better managed?</td>
<td>.317**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen offers you more new or novel merchandising ideas?</td>
<td>.288**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the market conditions of his brands?</td>
<td>.282**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about his own products</td>
<td>.278**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be more mature?</td>
<td>.252**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**These items are significant at the .05 level. All other items are significant at the .01 level.

SOURCE: Buyer-Merchandiser Questionnaire
TABLE 6
QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS SIGNIFICANTLY CORRELATED
WITH THE PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE FACTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would be more acceptable to you as the local leader of some industry-wide project such as a &quot;Food is a Bargain&quot; campaign, or an anti-shoppers boycott campaign?</td>
<td>.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen would you contact in order to get some information about a rumor in the grocery industry?</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be better trained as a salesman?</td>
<td>.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the market conditions of his brands?</td>
<td>.581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen works for the company which appears to be better managed?</td>
<td>.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical measure of success</td>
<td>.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the types of consumers who use his brands?</td>
<td>.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about the grocery industry in general?</td>
<td>.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has the greater common sense or intelligence?</td>
<td>.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen uses more high pressure sales tactics?</td>
<td>.449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen offers you more new or novel merchandising ideas?</td>
<td>.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen is better at keeping his promises?</td>
<td>-.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has more drive?</td>
<td>.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen appears to be more willing to waste your time?</td>
<td>.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which one of these salesmen is better able to help you when you have problems such as late deliveries, stock shortages, or other difficulties in maintaining an adequate supply of his products?</td>
<td>.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen has the better prepared presentations of his merchandising ideas?</td>
<td>.332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these salesmen do you personally like better?</td>
<td>.319**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were to hire one of these people to act as a salesman for you, which one would you hire?</td>
<td>.278**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**These items are significant at the .05 level. All other items are significant at the .01 level.**

SOURCE: Buyer-Merchandiser Questionnaire
TABLE 7
SUMMARY OF BUYER-MERCHANDISER COMMENTS ABOUT GROCERY PRODUCT SALES MEN WHO CALL ON THEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Comment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of the salesmen</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of the presentations</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing of information desired by buyers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Canned&quot; nature of the presentations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability of salesmen</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to retail stores</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on the details of shipments</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional attitude</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility of promotions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptness of presentations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingratiating attempts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant personalities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begging for orders</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge about the grocery industry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Buyer-Merchandiser Questionnaire

represent the types of things which disturb buyers enough that they mentioned them in this portion of the interview.

The most common types of comments were classified into these four categories: (1) the preparation of the salesmen; (2) the length of the presentation; (3) the type of information provided; and (4) the appearance that the presentations were "canned." It should be noted that when a buyer mentioned one of these items, he frequently mentioned all four of them.

Salesman preparation. Fourteen buyer-merchandisers commented about the lack of preparation on the part of salesmen. As one stated, "What I want in a presentation are the facts about their promotions, their deliveries,
etc...They should eliminate the idle chit-chat and make the presentations short rather than too long. Too many salesmen over-prepare on meaningless information." Another respondent stated, "It is very important for a salesman to be well-prepared and know the buyer's needs rather than just his own needs. So many salesmen come into an interview with a pre-determined point-of-view. They are all pre-sold on their own pitches...They should understand the informational needs of the buyers such as their share of market, the shares of competitive products, and their own product's costs and profit margins."

Length of presentations. Thirteen buyers made comments about the length of the presentations. All indicated that the presentations tended to be longer than necessary and unduly time consuming. One interviewee stated, "Too many presentations are extremely time consuming. There is too much non-productive time. The presentations which are made-up at 'headquarters' are especially bad. They contain far too much information. One guy was in here and spent ten minutes telling me what a sweepstakes promotion was. Procter and Gamble has been using sweepstakes for years. I'm not new in the business. I know what a sweepstakes is. He should be spending his time giving me suggestions as to times when we can tie-in their promotion, prices, and profits that we would make."
Pertinent information. An interesting type of complaint from buyer-merchandisers had to do with their feeling that salesmen do not provide them with enough pertinent information. This complaint is somewhat paradoxical in that this condition persists despite the sense that too much time was consumed in the interviews with salesmen. In those situations in which such complaints were registered, buyers indicated that price information, promotional dates, and promotional alternatives were the items most frequently omitted.

Canned presentations. Ten people stated that sales presentations appeared to be too "canned," i.e., prepared by someone else and just repeated by the salesman. The reaction of the buyer-merchandisers to such presentations was quite negative. It is quite obvious to them that no effort was made by the salesman to tailor the presentation to the idiosyncracies of each account. As an example of the type negative reactions, one person stated, "I don't let salesmen use flip-charts with me. The first time they try to use one, I tell them very nicely not to use them. If they use one a second time, I knock it off my desk." Another interpretation placed on the use of canned presentations was that this type of salesman was not really working very hard. One individual stated, "These guys are just going through the motions. They don't really work at their jobs. This type of employee is just wasting his company's money."
Dependability. Seven interviewees indicated that salesmen were not as dependable as they should be. This type of comment can be related to the negative direction of the correlation index for the question: "Which salesman is better at keeping his promises?" There appeared to be a tendency not to follow-through on all aspects of the selling situation. In many cases this referred to items of cooperation with retail stores.

Retail store services. This coincides with the comments made by six buyers that not enough services were provided to retail stores. This specific comment about retail services was found among cooperative chains where the sponsoring wholesalers do not usually have an extensive field selling force of their own. This complaint also was prevalent with divisions of the Kroger Company. It is felt that the reason for the Kroger complaints were made because of the structure of responsibilities at that corporate chain. At Kroger, the "merchandising" function is assigned to a different set of people from the "buying" function. These merchandisers were quite anxious to receive any type of additional support such as display building or the placing of other in-store promotional devices such as pole-piece displays which would help the stores.

Other comments. Three different people indicated that salesmen did not provide accurate information in regard to
shipments. A number of other buyers acknowledged difficulty in this area but felt that this was not the fault of the salesman. Thus when dates of deliveries appear to be a problem, it was also indicated, however, that salesmen do not provide information about delivered costs (as opposed to F.O.B.-origin prices), case weights, pallet sizes, and the number of items per case in special promotion merchandise.

Another complaint listed by three people was that salesmen did not appear to have a very professional attitude toward their jobs. These people also indicated that they felt that the quality of salesmen was deteriorating.

Some comments were made also about the lack of flexibility in promotions. Three buyers indicated that they would prefer it if performance dates could be extended from time to time. While this does not appear to be a complaint about salesmen, it was felt that some salesmen are better able to accommodate the buyers on this subject.

One chain displayed prominently in its lobby a sign which stated: "We are the leading chain in this market. Are we also first to see your new items and promotions?" In each of the three offices where this sign was displayed, the buyer-merchandisers volunteered that they did appreciate it when salesmen informed them quickly about these items and promotions.

Three other buyer-merchandisers indicated that they
were less than enthusiastic when it came to attempts by the salesmen to become ingratiating. As one interviewee commented, "I want information or ideas from these salesmen, but I don't want a buddy." Another individual stated, "I must get at least a dozen offers a day to go to lunch. I usually turn them all down. I don't want to go out to lunch and talk business with a salesman. I would just rather pay for my own lunch and go with some of the other people in the office."

Another comment made relates to both ingratiating attempts and to the observation made earlier that premiums and gifts were not an important factor in determining sales success. One buyer said, "I am not about to be bribed for a free lunch."

Two people indicated that they greatly preferred to deal with salesmen who had a pleasant personality. This type of reply was not pursued by the interviewer, but it appears that this means individuals on the pleasant side as opposed to the dour side. This writer was surprised at the number of sad expressions on the faces of salesmen in the waiting rooms which were visited. Perhaps these salesmen were in preparation of an appeal to the buyers that things were not going well for them and they really needed this order. Two respondents stated that many salesmen use the begging technique with them. Both indicated that they did not like this approach, but that it was probably far
more successful than it "should" be. "A salesman is supposed to tell us how his product will help us. Instead, they tell us how we can help them."

Somewhat surprisingly, only one buyer said that salesmen were not knowledgeable about industry conditions in general. This does not mean that the other buyers were satisfied on this point, however. It is suspected that the expectation levels are quite low among buyers. As a result of the general type of comments made, it is suspected that it comes as a surprise when a salesman does exhibit general knowledge about the grocery industry.

Additional General Observations

The impression was received that buyer-merchandisers were not exposed to many truly proficient salesmen. The nature of the comments made during the interview led one to believe that most of the salesmen are not genuinely working hard at their jobs or that the salesmen simply do not have the required capacity to perform effectively.

Much has been written about the general low status of selling. It may well be true that the general public does not respect salesmen the way they do some of the other occupations in society. The feeling was received by this researcher, however, that the buyers respect the good salesmen. If a salesman is concerned about his status, all he need do is improve his selling ability. He will then receive the respect of his customers. While this is
not the entire public, it is his most important public.

It was noted earlier that buyer-merchandisers complained about the lack of information provided to them by salesmen. Several chains had become concerned enough about this situation that they have developed information questionnaires. These were to be filled out by salesmen either when introducing a new item, new promotional merchandise, or both. These questionnaires had been developed because salesmen were not providing all of the information needed to make decisions. This further points out the importance placed upon salesmen as information sources. It also reinforces the observations made that salesmen are not doing an adequate job of providing this information on their own. The result is that buyers are being forced to make salesmen do their jobs properly.

Summary

In summarizing this section it can be said that buyer-merchandisers object to the fact that salesmen do not come to them well-enough prepared with the information which buyers feel is important. These salesmen take too much time in their sales presentations and tend to use canned presentations too often. Many salesmen are not dependable in following through with promotions. This is especially true in regard to services to retail stores. They do not provide enough pertinent information in regard to the shipment of their products, do not appear to have a professional
attitude toward their jobs and do not do all they can in order to make their promotions flexible enough to accommodate the individual needs of certain accounts. Some buyers appreciate being informed quickly on new products and new promotions. There is a tendency for salesmen to spend too much time ingratiating themselves with buyers at the expense of providing adequate information to them. Buyers prefer to deal with salesmen who are pleasant and who do not tend to beg for orders. Knowledge of the grocery industry in general does not appear to be a common characteristic of salesmen.

The Complexity of the Buyer-Seller Dyad

Most studies of salesmanship pre-suppose constancy on the buyer side of the interaction. During the course of collecting the data for this current study, however, it became apparent that there might be at least three different types of variation among the buyers interviewed. These were: (1) the response characteristics of various types of buyers; (2) the age distribution; and (3) the organizational responsibilities of the interviewees.

Response types. It has been mentioned earlier that certain types of buyers appeared to conform to the "judge" stereotype while others appeared to conform to the salesman stereotype. The latter were more aggressive in stating their opinions during the interviews while the former were
less aggressive. After the computer analysis had been completed, the responses of five of the more aggressive and five of the less aggressive buyers were hand tabulated. It is recognized that this is an extremely small sample, but the results of this tabulation are presented as an indication of some possible variations on the buying side of studies primarily aimed at the investigation of salesmanship.

The more aggressive buyers seemed to have greater perceptibility in regard to seven items. These were: (1) the more cooperative companies; (2) the better managed companies; (3) the more reliable firms; (4) the salesmen who had a better understanding of their problems; (5) those who appeared to be more satisfied with their present jobs; (6) those they would prefer to hire to act as a salesman for them; and (7) those with more common sense or intelligence.

The less aggressive buyers seemed to be more perceptive in regard to six items. These were: (1) the salesmen with more drive; (2) those who were more affected by the pressures of their jobs; (3) those who wasted more time; (4) those who used more high pressure selling tactics; (5) those who provided more information about the market conditions of their brands; and (6) those who provided more information about the types of consumers who used their brands.

Age distribution. Another possible variable which became noticeable as the study progressed was the age distribution of the buyers. There were a number of buyers clus-
tered at both ends of the age continuum. Again, the responses of five of the younger buyers were compared with five of the older ones. The older buyers appeared to be more perceptive of seven items. These were: (1) the salesmen who had more knowledge of their own products; (2) those who were more aware of the market conditions of their brands; (3) those with more common sense or intelligence; (4) those who provided more information about the consumers who used their brands; (5) those who might be more acceptable as a local leader of some industry-wide project; (6) those who worked for the more cooperative companies; and (7) those who worked for the more reliable companies. On the other hand, the younger buyers appeared to be more aware of two items. These were (1) the salesmen with more drive and (2) those who called on them with a better frequency. A tentative conclusion (reached as a result of the above analysis combined with impressions received while conducting the interviews) is that the older buyers were more receptive to those salesmen who made their jobs as easy as possible. The objective of these older buyers may well have been to minimize the number of disruptions in the buying process.

**Organizational responsibilities.** A third possible variable on the buying side appeared to be the nature of the duties or responsibilities of the different buyers. In organizations where the merchandising function was completely separated from the buying function, the interviewees
appeared to be more interested in the services provided to individual retail stores. Where the buying and the merchandising functions were combined, the interviewees appeared to be more interested in the coordination of buying and delivery than they were in the servicing of retail stores. In one situation in which the respondent was primarily in charge of buying and only peripherally concerned with merchandising, his responses were so biased toward the salesman who provided "ordering services" that the interview results had to be disregarded. These ordering services consisted of computing average movement figures on a weekly basis and keeping track of all the merchandise which was in transit.

Conclusions. These three types of potential variables on the buying side of the study lead to the conclusion that selling success is situationally determined as well as being determined by the characteristics of the salesmen. This conclusion will not come as a surprise to students of organizational behavior. Some time ago these scholars concluded that leadership was not a function of individual characteristics of leaders, but was instead "...a relationship among the members of a social group." In the future, the study of salesmanship might well be enhanced if it were viewed as

a relationship among the members of a social group, e.g., various salesmen and the personnel at the grocery chain headquarters.

One further comment must be made about the selling situation and selling in general. It is now considerably easier for this writer to understand why few definitive statements have been made about selling. The reason is that it is very difficult to generalize accurately about selling. There are many variables in the selling situation: on the buyer side, on the salesman side, and on the product side. These variables make it quite difficult to make precise statements on the subjects. It is hoped, however, that the findings of this study might provide some insights into methods of better examining the selling phenomena.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

This portion of the study represents a summary of the objectives and the major findings of the study. It also presents the over-all conclusions and suggestions for further research in this area.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to determine, from a buyer's point of view, what characteristics differentiated successful salesmen from less successful salesmen. Ten major hypotheses were tested. Using the null-form or the hypotheses it was stated that there would be no significant relationship between selling success and: (1) a salesman's ability to develop expert power; (2) his ability to develop reward power; (3) his ability to develop referrent power; (4) the job expectations of the salesmen; (5) the length of association between the salesman and the buyer; (6) the salesman's company; (7) his language ability; (8) his mental ability; (9) the dyadic agreement of social class; and (10) the agreement of political and religious values of the salesman and buyer. In addition to these major hypotheses there were nine minor hypotheses. These hypotheses, as stated in the null-form, were that there would be no relationship between selling success and (1) the ability of a salesman to withstand the pressures of his

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job; (2) the salesman with more drive; (3) his maturity; (4) the salesman that the buyer-merchandiser would prefer to hire; (5) the one who was better as keeping his promises; (6) the one who was more well-rounded as an individual; (7) the one who was more willing to waste the buyer's time; (8) the one who was more courteous; and (9) the age similarity of the salesmen and buyer-merchandisers.

**Major Findings**

Eighteen questionnaire items were significantly related with selling success. In terms of major hypotheses the distribution of significant items was as follows: (1) eight of the eleven items used to measure expert power were significant (better training, more product knowledge, information about rumors in the grocery industry, providing information about the market conditions of brands, the salesman the buyer would prefer to be like if he were to become a salesman, more knowledge of the grocery industry, more new or novel merchandising ideas, and the better prepared presentations); (2) one of the three used to measure reward power (the salesman who is better able to help out when the buyers have difficulty in maintaining stock); (3) both of the two used for referrent power (the one whom the buyer liked better, and the one preferred as the local leader of an industry-wide project); (4) none of the three used for job expectations; (5) none of the three used for the length of association between salesman and buyer; (6) one of the
three used for the interaction between the salesman and his company (the salesman who worked for the better managed company); (7) neither of the two used for language ability; (8) one of the two used for mental ability (the one with more common sense or intelligence); (9) one of the two used for the dyadic agreement of social class (the salesman the buyer would prefer to invite for dinner at the buyer's home); (10) neither of the two items used for the agreement of political and religious values; and (11) three of the nine minor hypotheses (the salesman the buyer would prefer to hire as a salesman, the one with more drive, and the one who was more well-rounded as an individual).

The stepwise multiple regression analysis identified two items which contributed significantly to the multiple regression coefficient. These items were labeled the would-hire factor and the product knowledge factor. An analysis was made of the questionnaire items which were correlated with these two factors and it appeared to indicate that the would-hire factor might be interpreted as referent power and the product knowledge factor might be interpreted as expert power.

The buyer-merchandisers registered a number of complaints about the salesmen who called on them. The four types of complaints which occurred most frequently were: (1) the salesmen were not well enough prepared when they made their calls; (2) the presentations were longer than
they needed to be; (3) despite the length of the presenta-
tions, the salesmen did not provide the information which
was needed by buyers to help make decisions; and (4) too
many of the presentations were "canned" or appeared to have
been developed by the salesman's headquarters. In many
cases the buyers expressed all four of these complaints.

Profile of the Successful Salesman

On the basis of the findings of this study and other
impressions received while conducting this study, the fol­
lowing is presented as a profile of a successful grocery
product salesman. The successful salesman truly appears to
enjoy his job. He likes to interact with the buyer and
other personnel of the grocery chain. He is friendly, but
does not spend a great deal of time attempting to ingratiate
himself with the buyer. He is quite willing to pressure
a buyer, but applies that pressure with some discretion.
He wastes little time in a sales presentation. He comes
to the interview well-prepared with the types of information
that this particular buyer thinks is important, but not
necessarily what the central office thought this buyer would
feel was important. His attitude is probably best summed
by saying that his job is to help a grocery chain sell his
product. He tries to help by presenting merchandising ideas,
providing information about his brands, the consumers who
use his brands, and additional information the buyer wants.
He also takes the buyer's part when problems arise such as
late deliveries from his firm. Above all, he is flexible. If he does not succeed with the buyer using one approach, he attempts another. He does not view all buyers as though they were the same. He uses different presentations, ideas, and presents different types of information. When a salesman has all of these characteristics, not only is he successful, but buyers look forward to his calls on them.

Over-All Conclusions

It is felt that it would be quite difficult for a study such as this one to generate anything which would approach "perfect" correlations. There are too many variables on the selling side, the buying side, and the product side which confound the situation to be studied and result in lower correlation coefficients. The coefficients in this study which were significant should therefore be interpreted as meaningful indicators of selling success.

In many studies, the assumption is made that the characteristics of a successful salesman in one situation are the same ones which would determine his success in a different situation. Some writers have contended that the door-to-door type of salesman develops the characteristics which would make him successful in any type of selling. In this study, however, it was never intended to develop a list of characteristics which would be universally applicable. Instead, it was the objective to identify success determi-
nants in only one industry, the grocery industry.

It should be noted that there appeared to be a considerable amount of variation on the buying side of this study. An implicit assumption made by this study and most others is that the variability would be on only the selling side. Three types of buyer-variables which became apparent during this study were (1) the age differences of buyers, (2) the general type of buyer as indicated by the nature of his responses, and (3) the varying organizational responsibilities of these buyers. These three items and perhaps others work together to produce a somewhat unique set of needs for each buyer. The successful salesman appears to be the one who can best satisfy that buyer's set of needs. These needs seem to center on informational and service requirements.

The correlation and stepwise regression results point to expert power as an important determinant of selling success. Referrent power appears to have been identified by the stepwise multiple regression as another important factor in determining selling success. The results of the stepwise regression also point to a number of items which would help to develop expert and referrent power.

The buyer-merchandisers themselves provided valuable feedback about their impressions of the salesmen who called on them. Salesmen probably would be more successful if they were to identify the individualistic needs of the buyers and attempt to satisfy them in their sales calls.
This could be accomplished through more detailed preparation in regard to the actual needs of the buyers and might actually result in less time consuming presentations.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

One possible variation of this study which would provide some interesting additional insights on the causes of selling success would be to interview a number of buyers about the same successful salesmen. This would supply a measure of how well successful salesmen were able to adapt to the individualistic needs of the buyers.

Another variation would be to devote more attention to the variables on the buying side. This could be done by gathering a larger sample of older buyers and younger buyers and comparing their answers on a set of similar questionnaire items. These comparative answers also could be tested in regard to the response types (or perhaps personality types) of buyers and in regard to the organizational responsibilities of different buyers.

A study could also be made of only the buying side of the situation. This could be done by applying the responsibility-authority-delegation scales and other types of instruments developed in the study of leadership in organizations. Of course, the findings of this study could be tested by applying the basic methodology to an industry other than the grocery industry.
APPENDIX A

GROCERY BUYER-MERCHANDISER QUESTIONNAIRE
GROCERY BUYER-MERCHANDISER QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Interviewee______________________________
Name of Firm____________________________________
Location________________________________________
Zip Code___________

In answering the following questions, please compare the salesman for ______________________(1) with the salesman for ______________________(2).

Name of salesman #1: ___________________________ Age_____
Name of salesman #2: ___________________________ Age_____

Do you have an impact system, or an impact-type system?_____

p = _______ (bi-nominal probability value)

ba = _______ (buyer's age)
1. Which of these two salesmen uses the more colorful, vivid, or picturesque language?


[Blank] Considerably more; [Blank] Quite a bit more; [Blank] A little more

2. Which of these salesmen has the greater common sense or intelligence?


[Blank] Considerably greater; [Blank] Quite a bit greater; [Blank] A little greater

3. Which of these salesmen is more affected by the pressures of his job?


[Blank] Considerably more; [Blank] Quite a bit more; [Blank] A little more

4. Which of these salesmen has more drive?


[Blank] Considerably more; [Blank] Quite a bit more; [Blank] A little more

5. Which of these salesmen has more formal education?


[Blank] Considerably more; [Blank] Quite a bit more; [Blank] A little more

6. Which of these salesmen appears to be more mature?


[Blank] Considerably more; [Blank] Quite a bit more; [Blank] A little more

7. Which of these salesmen do you personally like better?


[Blank] Considerably better; [Blank] Quite a bit better; [Blank] A little better
8. Which of these salesmen would be more acceptable to you as the local leader of some industry-wide project such as a "Food is a Bargain" campaign, or an anti-shoppers boycott campaign?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably more; _____ Quite a bit more; _____ A little more

9. Which of these salesmen offers you more new or novel merchandising ideas?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably more; _____ Quite a bit more; _____ A little more

10. Which of these salesmen appears to be better trained as a salesman?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably better; _____ Quite a bit better; _____ A little better

11. Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the market conditions of his brands?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably more; _____ Quite a bit more; _____ A little more

12. Which of these salesmen provides you with more information about the types of consumers who use his brands?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably more; _____ Quite a bit more; _____ A little more

13. Which of these salesmen would you contact in order to get some information about a rumor in the grocery industry?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably more; _____ Quite a bit more; _____ A little more

14. Which of these salesmen uses more high pressure sales tactics?

____1 _____2 _____Neither _____Both

_____ Considerably more; _____ Quite a bit more; _____ A little more
15. Which of these salesmen seems to have a better understanding of your problems?

[Blank lines for responses]

16. Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about the grocery industry in general?

[Blank lines for responses]

17. Which of these salesmen has more knowledge about his own products?

[Blank lines for responses]

18. Which of these salesmen has the better prepared presentations of his merchandising ideas?

[Blank lines for responses]

19. If you were to become a salesman, which of these salesmen would you rather be like?

[Blank lines for responses]

20. Which of these salesmen is better able to help you when you have problems such as late deliveries, stock shortages, or other difficulties in maintaining an adequate supply of his products?

[Blank lines for responses]

21. Which of these salesmen gives more premiums or gifts, either to you or to your company?

[Blank lines for responses]
22. Which of these salesmen is easier to get in touch with when you need him?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably easier;  Quite a bit easier;  A little--easier

23. Which of these salesmen would you prefer to invite to your home for a dinner party with some of your best friends?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably prefer;  Quite a bit prefer;  Prefer a--little

24. If you were to hire one of these people to act as a salesman for you, which one would you hire?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably;  Quite a bit;  A little

25. Which of these salesmen has called upon you for a longer period of time?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably longer;  Quite a bit longer;  A little--longer

26. Which of these salesmen do you feel will continue to call upon you for a longer period of time?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably longer;  Quite a bit longer;  A little--longer

27. Which of these salesmen calls upon you with the better frequency, i.e., as often as you want him to?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably better;  Quite a bit better;  A little--better

28. Which of these salesmen is better at keeping his promises?

1  2  Neither  Both

Considerably better;  Quite a bit better;  A little--better
29. Which of these salesmen appears to be more satisfied with his present job?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably more;} & \text{Quite a bit more;} & \text{A little more}
\end{array}\]

30. Which of these salesmen appears to have a better chance of being promoted by his company?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably better;} & \text{Quite a bit better;} & \text{A little--better}
\end{array}\]

31. Which of these salesmen has a better chance of keeping his present job as long as he wants it?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably better;} & \text{Quite a bit better;} & \text{A little--better}
\end{array}\]

32. Which of these salesmen is the more well-rounded individual?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably more;} & \text{Quite a bit more;} & \text{A little more}
\end{array}\]

33. Which of these salesmen appears to be more willing to waste your time?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably more;} & \text{Quite a bit more;} & \text{A little more}
\end{array}\]

34. Which of these salesmen is a better general conversationalist?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably better;} & \text{Quite a bit better;} & \text{A little--better}
\end{array}\]

35. Which of these salesmen is more courteous?

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\_1 & \_2 & \text{Neither} & \_\text{Both} \\
\text{Considerably more;} & \text{Quite a bit more;} & \text{A little more}
\end{array}\]
36. Which of these salesmen would you more enjoy eating lunch with?

___1 ___2 ___Neither ___Both

Considerably more; Quite a bit more; A little more

37. Which of these salesmen works for the company which is more cooperative?

___1 ___2 ___Neither ___Both

Considerably more; Quite a bit more; A little more

38. Which of these salesmen works for the company which appears to be better managed?

___1 ___2 ___Neither ___Both

Considerably better; Quite a bit better; A little better

39. Which of these salesmen works for the company which is more reliable in meeting its commitments?

___1 ___2 ___Neither ___Both

Considerably more; Quite a bit more; A little more

40. Which of these salesmen appears to hold political views which are more similar to your own political views?

___1 ___2 ___Neither ___Both

Considerably more; Quite a bit more; A little more

41. Which of these salesmen appears to hold religious views which are more similar to your own religious views?

___1 ___2 ___Neither ___Both

Considerably more; Quite a bit more; A little more
42. On an overall basis, which of these salesmen do you feel is the better of the two salesmen?

   __1  ___2  ___Neither  ___Both

   Considerably better;  __Quite a bit better;  ___A little—better

43. I would like to have you rank all of the salesmen of this particular product category, that is the ____________ category.

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<tr>
<th>SALESMAN</th>
<th>RANK</th>
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(1 = Best Salesman; 2 = Next Best, etc.)

44. One final question, do you have any comments in general about what makes a salesman a good salesman? (Summarize responses)
APPENDIX B

STATISTICAL PROGRAMS
Simple Correlation Analysis

Program Name

Linear Correlation Analysis (CORREL)

Program Description

This program correlates coefficients for all combinations of a list of variables.

The output from this program consists of two reports:

a. MATRIX - is a triangular matrix of the correlation coefficients.

b. DETAIL - for each pair of variables, this report contains:
   1) the sum $x_i$, $x_j$.
   2) S.D. $x_i$, $x_j$.
   3) N.
   4) $R_i$, $j$.
   5) t statistic of $R_i$, $j$.

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

Program Name

Multiple Step Regression (STEPR)

Program Description

This program computes a set of stepwise multiple linear regressions. At each step of the analysis, a variable is added that results in the greatest reduction in the error sums of squares. F levels for inclusion and deletion may
be set by the user.

The output from this program consists of the following three reports:

a. STEPS - At each step of the analysis, the report contains:
   1) Regression coefficients of variables in equation, standard error, and F to remove.
   2) For those variables not in equation F to enter, partial correlation coefficient.
   3) Multiple R.
   4) Standard error of the estimate.

b. TABLE - This report contains means, standard deviations, covariance matrix, and correlation matrix.

c. RESIDUALS - This report includes a point listing of x values, y observed values, computed y values, residual, and Durbin-Watson D statistic.

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