

Pradip Kumar Mallik, SALES Management,
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This textbook is undoubtedly a very welcoming edition to the sales management literature. Sales management is a comprehensive textbook designed to meet the requirements of management students at undergraduate and postgraduate specialising in marketing. It openly explores how theoretical and practical aspects of sales practices link with other strategic issues in the complex and dynamic business environment. Pradip Kumar Mallik captures numerous industry examples, cases, exhibits and illustrations to make an easy reading to the students. Apart from these, each chapter has definitions of key terms, conceptual questions, critical review questions and project assignments. All these make a complete revising bundle for students using this textbook. The book comprises four unique features: (a) it provides in-depth coverage and analysis of the approaches to personal selling and the strategies for its implementation, (2) it explains the key concepts with the help of real-life Indian examples, (3) it discusses in details the selection process of sales management team and its relation to other departments in an organisation and (4) it provides a guideline for effective sales performance. At 492 pages, this textbook is divided into five crucial parts, each comprising a set of chapters.

Part 1, “Personal selling” begins with a chapter on introduction to personal selling. The chapter discusses the concept, meaning and objectives of personal selling. It also discusses the role of selling in marketing communication, the importance of salesmanship, tradition and modern selling practices, types of selling, ethical aspects of selling and selling as a profession. Chapter 2 then provides the approaches and strategies of personal selling. It discusses the theoretical perspectives of personal selling, the buyer–seller dyad and its implication in personal selling, and the factors influencing the buyer–seller dyad. Finally, Chapter 3, the personal selling process, deliberates on the process, objectives, problems and solutions in each step of personal selling. It also examines each step’s dos and don’ts and presents a detailed discussion on sales presentation and demonstration of after-sales services.

Part 2, “Organization of sales force functions” with Chapter 4 discusses the basic concepts of sales management, the role of planning in sales management, environmental issues in sales planning, the role of strategic planning in sales management and the role of sales managers in sales. Chapter 5, sales organisation, confers a detailed discussion on the sales organisation.



Its meaning, purpose and type, the process of organising the sales force, determination of sales force size, functional aspects of managing a sales force and a few contemporary issues of the sales organisation. Chapter 6 concludes this part with the exploration of sales territories. It discusses the meaning and definition of sales territory, its objectives and benefits. It also explores insights into the management of sales territories.

Part 3, “Managing the sales team” details human resources issues related to sales management. It features eight chapters, further including insights on salespeople and sales managers (Chapter 7). The chapter discusses the profiles, roles and responsibilities of salespeople and sales managers in an organisation. At the same time, it delves into the discussion of the factors determining the qualities of salespeople and the skills of the sales managers. Chapter 8 then examines the recruitment of the sales force. It discusses the meaning and conception of recruitment in relation to salespeople, job analysis, job description and job specifications of salespeople, along with the sources of sales force recruitment. Chapter 9 gives details of sales force selection and it presents the selection process of salespeople, guidelines for effective selection, interview process, psychological tests, reference checks and socialisation process after induction of sales people into the organisation. Chapter 10 discusses sales training and the objectives and benefits of sales force training, training process and methods. Chapter 11 discusses sales force motivation. It details the objectives and benefits of motivation to the sales force. It also covers strategic issues of sales force motivation, motivation process, the stress in salespeople’s lives and the role of motivation in dealing with stress. Chapter 12 on directing the sales force emphasises the understanding of sales force direction, leadership, qualities of a sales leader, leadership perspectives and their implications in the leading sales force. Chapter 13 stresses sales force compensation, and it elucidates on conceptual and perspectives of compensation, steps and methods of sales force compensation and preparation of compensation plans. Chapter 14 winds up this part with a detailed discussion on sales force performance. It examines the performance and appraisal of sales force along with the criteria and benefits of sales force appraisal. The chapter concludes by discussing the steps in sales force performance appraisal, control and contemporary issues in sales force performance.

Part 4 is organised into two chapters which examine the “Financial aspects of sales”. Chapter 15 is on sales budgeting and forecasting along with their approaches. It further discusses the key steps and methods of sales budget and sales forecasts. Chapter 16 is on sales and costs analysis. It discusses the concept, methods, roles of sales quota in the sales analysis and the cost analysis objectives and methods.

Part 5, “Strategy and modern approaches”, is covered by two chapters whereby Chapter 17 stresses on sales strategy. It begins with a strategic orientation of selling, environmental analysis and sales strategy formulation. It also covers steps in strategic sales management, impacts of competition on sales strategy, social responsibility issues in sales strategy, customer relationships and retention. Chapter 18 delves into modern approaches to selling, linking them with globalisation, application of e-commerce in contemporary selling, web-based selling, social media and its contribution to modern selling.

This text has made an extensive contribution to the body of knowledge of sales management, conceptual, literature and practical guidance to marketers, students, lecturers, scholars and professionals in the field of sales management. This text is a stand-alone resource in sales management as it orients the reader(s) to the basics of sales management. It is mainly an Indian-specific, notwithstanding the concepts, principles and practices deliberated in it are commonly and widely used globally. Pradip Kumar Mallik has made a substantial contribution through the respective examples and cases from several industries in India. This industrial-blend marks this textbook as exceptional and draws the interest of the readers as it helps them to simply relate to different contexts.

The salient discussions in this text bring in the predominant linkage between management aspects of marketing management, human resource management and financial management. This helps reader(s) to attain an understanding of the strategic practices of sales management. Furthermore the details of the application of e-commerce, web-based selling and social media will contribute significantly to modern selling practices.

Equally, an increasing environmental concern among consumers and legislative powers has led to the emergence of green sales efforts. This has opened up wide prospects not only for large retail businesses but more essentially for micro-retail enterprises. For that matter, producers and retailers are pushed into adapting their activities to produce and distribute greener products. A chapter on green sales will be of interest in this era of increased consumption of more environmentally friendly products and a paradigm shift to greener processes. The chapter among other things will show how retailers can instrument various programmes related to green sales efforts in a way that will motivate customers to purchase green products in place of non-green items. By doing so, sales managers and their sales teams will be able to largely transform the demand for non-green into green demand and realise a protected environment across the globe (Heydari, Bineshpour, Walther, & Ülkü, 2022).

The inclusion of a chapter on the evolution of sales management would have made a remarkable contribution to the historical development of the retail sector. It is imperative to understand various developments that sales have undergone from post-Second World War (1945) famously known as the period of recovery (production-orientation) where the focus was on production and not selling. This was then followed by the evangelical period for marketing (1955–1965) (market orientation) where whatever is being made would appeal to customers; thus, it could be sold. Between 1965 and 1975, marketing became professionalised, and in the mid-1970s, research-based approach to sales emerged, selling was taken more seriously and the customers' needs were the focus. From the late 1970s, different consumer groups and their needs were taken on board and consumers formed buying groups (Chunawalla, 2021). This led to increased costs related to selling; thus, various strategies were evolved in efforts to cut such costs. Furthermore, a discussion on sales initiatives such as the development of call centres and e-commerce, customer relationship management (CRM) and electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM) would have made an extreme contribution to this chapter.

A sales organisation audit is one of the most comprehensive evaluations of sales organisation effectiveness. The audit usually assesses the sales organisation environment, sales management evaluation, sales organisation planning system and sales management functions. This review proposes the inclusion of a chapter on sales organisation audits. Although the term audit is most often used in reference to financial audits performed by accounting firms, the audit concept has been recently extended to sales management functions. In sales management, a sales organisation audit is used to assess the adequacy of a firm's sales management process and to provide direction for improved performance and prescription for needed changes. A sales organisation audit is the most comprehensive approach for evaluating sales organisation effectiveness. According to Ingram, LaForge, Avila, Schwepker and Williams (2006), the audit addresses four major areas: sales organisation environment, sales management evaluation, sales organisation planning system and sales management functions. The audit investigates, systematically and comprehensively, each of these areas to identify existing or potential problems, determine their causes and take the necessary corrective action.

In conclusion, this book is of exceptional reference and excessive interest to sales managers, marketing researchers, university lecturers and students especially those pursuing sales management at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It will also be of great assistance to policymakers both locally and internationally and to other with an interest in recent developments in sales management. Specifically, the book opens up unique research prospects, managerial, policy and practical implications to sales practices.

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