



**A
CRITICAL REVIEW OF
SOCIAL SCIENCES**

THEORY AND PRACTICE

**A Critical Review of Social Sciences
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PREFACE

When it comes to studying science in general, social science needs a special attention and an effort just because of its highly questionable nature. The huge variety in reasoning and reaching conclusions for the same phenomena make social science both challenging and attractive at the same time. Bearing all these in mind, each paper in this title explains, develops, and evaluates its inquiry from a unique point of view. All chapters are aimed to address a wide range of audiences and/or specialists ranging from the fields of economics, business and management, sociology and wellbeing, history, gender and migration, tourism, education sciences, and urbanisation.

The primal impetus for compiling *A Critical Review of Social Sciences: Theory and Practice* was to put forward an interdisciplinary resource book for a wide range of people who are interested in relevant fields of social science. Order of the chapters is planned to be from general to the specific including the articles from both theory and practice of the addressed issues.

The specialists, scholars, students and sociologists who have collaborated on and contributed to this comprehensive resource book deserve our special thanks for their support and dedication. Moreover, we would love to acknowledge and thank Frontpage Publications Limited for the excellent example of collaboration they provided from the beginning. Finally, we wish to thank all anonymous heroes in our lives for their encouragement and support to make this project come true.

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Procurement and Sales Management with Process Management Approach

Ali Sofa AIDINOV, Demet CEYLAN, Işılray Talay DEĞİRMENÇİ

INTRODUCTION

A company's buying and selling departments are primarily focused on responding to the demands which are classified as internal and external demands. Although internal demand comes from other parts of the company, external demand refers to what needs to be answered to the customer. In this case, the company employees assume the role of purchaser and/or seller towards other companies and customers, and the mistakes being made in such negotiations have the serious potential to affect the firm's profit and financial status compared to its competitors.

In this work, our focus will be mainly on business activities in the tourism sector. In Antalya, Turkey, tourism is the main business activity earning majority of the economic revenue for the city. For any company operating in such an environment of seasonal changes and peak demand periods, there is a need to develop successful methods for business-to-business sales and marketing activities. Our research question is based on the types of negotiation and agreement strategies for business-to-business type of sales and purchasing activities used by the companies for either of the two roles, purchasing and sales.

While there are general approaches to negotiation process, such as distributive versus integrative bargaining (Quain, 2018), there are different methods and tactics to approach to the opposite side of the sales negotiation based on the role assumed, sales versus purchasing. Distributive bargaining adopts the idea of one party's gain being the other's loss; thus, the party with this approach tries to lose less than the other party. In integrative bargaining though, the belief to the win-win type of situation exists, and the party adopting this approach considers the opposite side's needs and wants, and tries to make both parties come to a consensus via mutual compromises.

In this work, we will examine the strategies as to how to make an agreement more profitable for one's organisation. There are situational factors to be considered such as future relationship potential with the other party, time available to negotiate, and communication skills; these factors play a major role in choosing whether to apply distributive or integrative type of strategies (Fleming & Hawes, 2016).

The existence of different negotiation styles is a prominent factor to be considered during the preparations for either a sales or purchasing agreement, and the salesperson has to carefully construct a strategy and prepare data for use at the interview. In these cases, rather than following a certain type of single strategy, for instance, distributive negotiation, it is recommended to stay flexible and adapt the strategy based on the data update that occurs during the two-way communication at the interview. Perhaps, the capability of being flexible and adapt to the current position is the most critical factor in these instances for a salesperson, and the adaptive selling approach is one of the mostly discussed topics in sales management (Hawes & Fleming, 2014).

The adaptation capabilities required during a sales interview could have different dimensions. For instance, the salesperson could adapt the information s/he could offer to the other party, s/he could adapt the solutions to be offered to the other party as long as the authority given to her/him allows this. Moreover, the communication could be adapted during the sales negotiations, the way the salesperson influences the other party, the style s/he uses for communication, and even the delivery mode of the communication could be adapted to the needs of the other party due to technological advances. On a broader scale, the whole sales process could be changed as well, such as changes made to the involved personnel and rearranging the length of the sales process. Thus, the adaptive approach to sales and the corresponding principles should be thoroughly studied to obtain the full benefit from the sales process (Eckert, 2006).

While sales side of the process is concerned with these types of topics, the purchasing side of the process has to deal with versatile and comprehensive responsibilities regarding their organisation. Their responsibilities start from the purchasing needs detection, and information gathering from sales people, continues with supplier identification and market studies, and finalise with purchasing orders and related tracking and evaluations (Kaufmann, 2002). Many factors affecting the buying process, such as the product properties and the strategic importance of the purchase, also have to be taken into account by the purchasing party (Weele, 2010).

The differences in the perspectives of sales and purchasing require the alignment of their best interests for the sales to be successful. However, there is not a ready-made solution for this alignment, and moreover, which side of the negotiation is responsible for it is a discussion topic as well. Though the alignment naturally requires attention of both parties in the sales and purchasing relationship, there are studies reporting that the purchasers expect the sales side to take more responsibility for this alignment (Leszczyński, 2012).

All the issues discussed above lead to the importance of mutual communication between both parties of the sales process. For the sales communication timeliness,

content, and style are important factors, and they also could be the source of any miscommunication that could negatively affect the sales process. Indeed, some studies report on the reflections from the aspects of the parties, purchaser and salesperson, on these three factors and other issues related with communication. Leszczyński and Zieliński (2011) report that the purchasers favour informative communication rather persuasive, and timeliness is the most important factor for them. The information should be provided timely, regardless of any incorrectness and incompleteness it preserves. After timeliness, the content quality of the information provided during communication was the next important factor, and finally the communication style was listed as being important but secondary to timeliness and content. Hence, the salespeople have to give great consideration into providing a timely information flow to the purchasers.

Many factors that are discussed in procurement and sales management with the process management perspective require studies conducted to analyse important factors related with smooth orientation of the sales process. Our study answers this need by obtaining data through interviews on procurement and sales management and important tactics from either perspectives for the tourism sector. With this motivation, our research questions aim at description of the items listed below:

- ♦ The main roles played by both parties during the sales agreement process,
- ♦ The helpful tactics and strategies useful to either sides of the sales agreement process,
- ♦ The main points either party should consider while making any agreement.

In the remainder of the study, we will first describe our methodology, then present and discuss our results; finally, we will end the chapter by stating our conclusions.

METHODOLOGY

We have conducted an exploratory search for answers to the research questions above, particularly for the tourism sector. Since the tourism sector works with peak demand during the tourism season, any mistakes made during the sales negotiation processes are going to be more costly for this sector compared to others. We have chosen to conduct an empirical study, where we aim to prioritise the roles and steps that have gained importance in the current environment for both sides of the sales negotiations in the tourism sector. Thus, for an ultimate aim of modelling the decision process during sales negotiations, we conducted face-to-face interviews to find the main principles that would help in having smooth sales processes. The interviews were conducted with the tourism professionals and firm owners

in Antalya, Turkey within a convenience sample and with open-ended questions listed as research questions at the end of the introduction part.

RESULTS

In this section, we present the results we obtained through the data from our interviews. We will present the main principles we have compiled for purchasing and sales separately.

Successful Sales Process for the Purchasing Party

In the sales negotiations, the buyer is considered to be the stronger side in the negotiations and s/he should use it as an advantage. However, to fully benefit from this advantage, information on all vendor businesses should be gathered, strengths and weaknesses should be investigated. Otherwise, without enough data gathered and made ready for the sales interview and negotiations, this advantage could not be fully utilised.

Attention should be paid to the fact that the sellers come on time; this is an important factor severely emphasised by the purchasers we have met for the interviews. It is also recommended to the purchasers to keep the salesperson waiting for a little while before accepting the salesperson to the negotiation venue. This finding is compatible with the study of Leszczyński and Zieliński (2011). Moreover, it is recommended to have the negotiations conducted at the purchaser's office. It has been concluded that this way it will be easier to put pressure on the salesperson for discounts and make her/him lose confidence to become persuaded more easily.

During negotiations, the buyer must try his/her best to read the body language of the salesperson through observation. The buyer must ask for the discounts by considering the needs of his/her organisation, rather than asking for random discounts on a whim. The price to pay is important as well as the quality of the purchased product, and if a clear discount from the seller is requested with justification, then, the salesperson can also offer a clearer answer.

To summarise, the principles recommended to the purchasers for a smooth sales process in the tourism industry are as under:

- 1 Get all the information about products and discount rates,
- 2 Perform all calculations,
- 3 Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the sales company,
- 4 Observe the salesperson's actions during the interview,
- 5 Put pressure as much as possible to convince the salesperson for discounts,
- 6 Remind the salesperson of the vendor company's weaknesses, and
- 7 Finalise the agreement.

Successful Sales Process for the Selling Party

Before negotiating, the salesperson must have knowledge of both his own firm and the strengths and weaknesses of the client firm. The seller must make detailed calculations of the monetary amounts for which the different discount rates fall within, and develop mathematics, body language, and speech skills. The seller must make an appointment first and then go to the interview. On the day of the interview, the seller must come on time and wait until the buyer accepts him/her.

The salesperson should remain calm during the interview and should not forget about the calculations made in preparation before the interview under the pressure of the buyer. If the buyer is allowed to make an emphasis on the weaknesses of the seller firm, s/he can make a deal with an appropriate discount rate. The salesperson should not only make sales but also plan to sell smoothly. For this, before negotiating, the salesperson should investigate the strengths and weaknesses of the client firm, as well as the fact that can attract the buyer's attention. Again, we summarise these principles as below:

- 1 Develop mathematics and speech skills,
- 2 Investigate the strengths and weaknesses of your own company and your competitor as the other sales companies,
- 3 Must be punctual,
- 4 Must be resourceful at solving problems, and
- 5 Must be self-confident.

CONCLUSION

In this section, we summarise our findings and provide some suggestions regarding procurement and sales management. With carefully made preparations and examining the other party's strengths and weaknesses, any manager can easily be a winner in an agreement even the brand is not so well-known. The right strategy and tactics would bring a firm high profit.

According to the results obtained, it is very important to collect data for people in two different roles before an interview and to investigate the interviewee and the firm as well as the market, especially the weak points of the other party at the negotiation. The most important advantage of this approach is that the seller has a ready-made satisfactory answer to the question of why the product is needed by the purchasing company. Hence, it is also emphasised in tourism that data-oriented approach and systematic field research are important for purchasing and sales negotiations.

The majority of managers are still using old tactics while attending to the sales meetings. It is obvious that business environment is getting more innovated and

the technics are becoming different that it is used to be. To run a business, each manager, while attending to make an agreement, should consider the discussed monetary amounts carefully. Development of skills such as body languages, mathematics and persuasion skills are also very important and could bring a firm great success.

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