

Making KAM work: Influencing and resolving conflict

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Agenda

Time	Session
9:30	Welcome and agenda Dr Diana Woodburn, AKAM Chairman & Queen Mary University
9:40	KAM/Sales Stressors: when it frustrates and when it doesn't Prof Stephan Henneberg, School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University, London
11:10	Research: introduction
11:20	Break
11:40	A Case Study in Influencing Kristian Kaas Mortensen, Director, Strategic Partnerships from Girtelka Logistics, Baltic States
12:45	Lunch
13:45	A Case Study in Influencing (continued)
14:15	AKAM 2019 update Dr Diana Woodburn, AKAM Chairman
14:40	Break
15:00	The Catch 22 of KAM – influencing without authority Dr Brit van Ooijen, Leader Coach and Programme Director, Brussels Campus of the Center for Creative Leadership
16:30-17:00	Summary and close

KAM/Sales Management Stressors: When it frustrates...and when it doesn't

Stephan Henneberg, *Queen Mary University of London, Business Ecosystems Research Group*
Alexander Leischnig, *Queen Mary University of London, Business Ecosystems Research Group*
Björn Ivens, *University of Bamberg*

AKAM Workshop “Influencing and Resolving Conflict”, London, British Library, 5th March 2019
Sponsored by the Business Ecosystems Research Group, Queen Mary University of London



School of Business and Management

AKAM Workshop sponsored by BERG at the School of Business and Management

School of Business and Management at QMUL a leading research-intensive Institution

Business Ecosystems Research Group (BERG)

- **Covering inter-organisational and systemic phenomena**
- **Relationships and networks**
- **Supply chain management, business marketing, innovation/ entrepreneurship, strategy**

Wide-ranging company contacts: e.g. Hilti, IBM, American Express, IHG



KAM/Sales Management Stressors: When it frustrates...and when it doesn't

- AKAM workshop on “Influencing and Resolving Conflict”
- I am more interested in ‘dark side’ issues, i.e. this will be more about ‘Conflict’...
- ...while the other presentations will be more about ‘Influencing’



Stress and Frustration in KAM/Sales Management

- Management practice as well as extant research suggests a broad set of factors that KAM and sales managers should consider to improve sales performance.
- Recently, 'well-being at work' has become an important issue in this context, as it has consequences for both KAM/salespersons and their organisations.
- In particular, stress and frustration has been shown to be ever-present in sales and KAM (due to the diverse role requirements). Stress is defined as an emotional reaction caused by an event or situation that interferes with an individual's ability to accomplish his or her day-to-day duties effectively.
- **Thus, the overall purpose of this study was to detect KAM/sales management workplace conditions, which result in experienced frustration.**



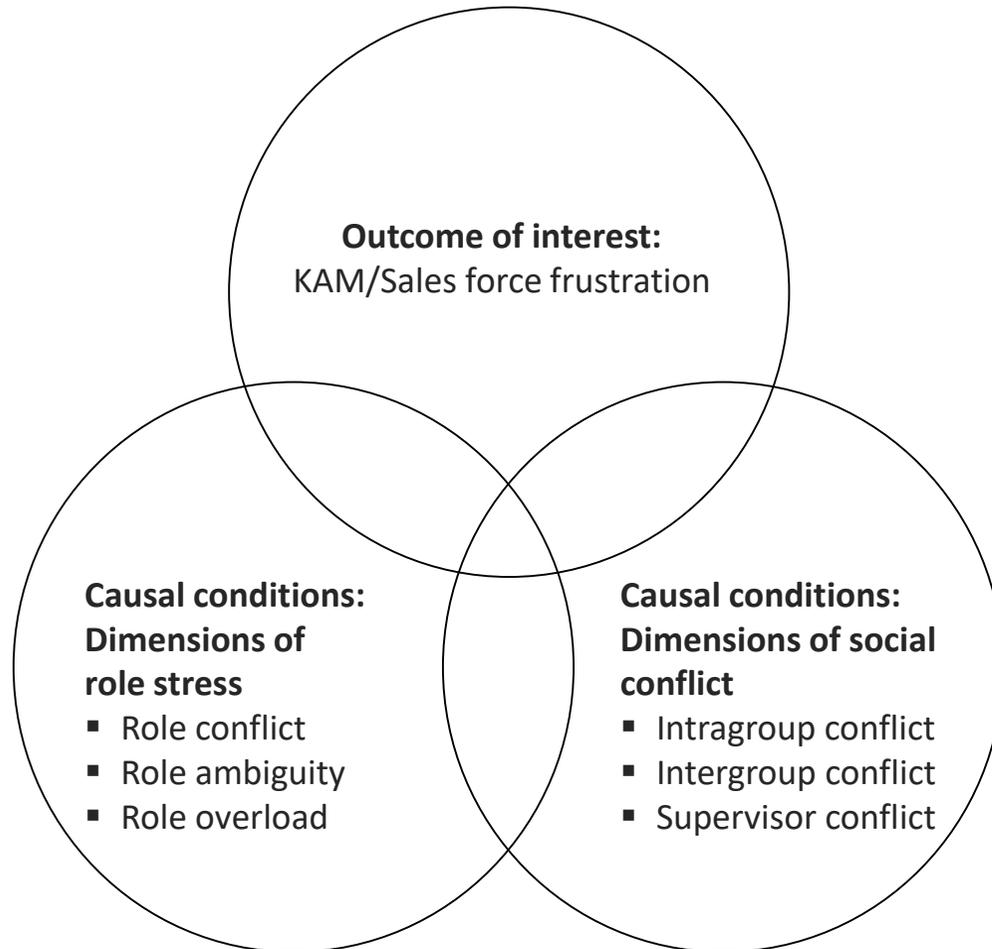
Objectives of our study

Drawing on role theory and social identity theory, this study aims to:

- examine how KAM/salespeople's perceptions of role stress and social conflict influence the development of frustration in the workplace
- detect interrelated situations facilitating the development of sales force frustration
- provide a more holistic view by connecting the previous identified drivers of stress and frustration
 - role stress
 - social conflict issues



Model of KAM/Sales force frustration



- Role theorists and researcher on social conflict argue that stressors may have either positive or negative consequences.
- Single stressors may not be dysfunctional, but their combined effect may exceed a KAM/salesperson's capability to handle stressful workplace situations

Thus, it is important to understand the complex interplay of certain conditions to be able to avoid frustration in KAM/sales



Understanding the Complex Interplay of Different Stressors

Data collection

Online survey with KAM/sales agents from various companies.

- We obtained 118 completely answered questionnaires:
 - Mean age: 38.5 years (SD: 12.3)
 - Mean organizational tenure: 5.5 years (SD: 5.8)
 - Mean occupational tenure: 12.5 years (SD: 8.6)

Measurement instrument

- A standardized questionnaire served as the main data collection instrument. We used scales from previous work as the sources for all construct measures.

Data analysis

- Confirmatory factor analysis using Amos
- Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA)



Results...but not as you know them

<i>Causal conditions</i>	<i>Configurations</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Dimensions of role stress				
Work-role conflict	□	●	●	□
Work-role ambiguity	○	□	○	●
Work-role overload	●	●	□	●
Dimensions of social conflict				
Intragroup conflict	□	□	●	●
Intergroup conflict	□	●	□	●
Supervisor conflict	●	●	●	□
Raw coverage	.48	.37	.36	.35
Unique coverage	.08	.02	.01	.03
Consistency	.88	.90	.92	.92
Overall solution coverage			.59	
Overall solution consistency			.85	

Notes: ● = presence of a core condition; ● = presence of a peripheral condition; ○ = absence of a core condition; ○ = absence of a peripheral condition; □ = subordinate condition.



Results Interpretation: What causes Stress?

<i>Causal conditions</i>	<i>Configurations</i>				
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	
Dimensions of role stress					
Work-role conflict	□	●			□
Work-role ambiguity	○	□			
Work-role overload	●	●			
Dimensions of social conflict					
Intragroup conflict	□	□			
Intergroup conflict	□	●			
Supervisor conflict	●	●			
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Overall solution coverage				.59	
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Different situations (i.e. combinations of conditions) cause stress

Notes: ● = presence of a core condition; ● = presence of a peripheral condition; ○ = absence of a core condition; ○ = absence of a peripheral condition; □ = subordinate condition.



Results Interpretation: What causes Stress?

<i>Causal conditions</i>	<i>Configurations</i>			
	1	2	3	4
Dimensions of role stress				
Work-role conflict	□	●	●	□
Work-role ambiguity	○			
Work-role overload	●			
Dimensions of social conflict				
Intragroup conflict	□			
Intergroup conflict	□			
Supervisor conflict	●			
Raw coverage	.48			
Unique coverage	.08			
Consistency	.88			
Overall solution coverage				
Overall solution consistency				

Configuration 1: no work-role ambiguity, combined with work-role overload, combined with supervisor conflict, causes stress; All other drivers are not important

Notes: ● = presence of a core condition; ● = presence of a peripheral condition; ○ = absence of a core condition; ○ = absence of a peripheral condition; □ = subordinate condition.



Results Interpretation: 4 negative situations?

<i>Causal conditions</i>	<i>Configurations</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Dimensions of role stress				
Work-role conflict	□	●	•	□
Work-role ambiguity	○	□	○	•
Work-role overload	•	•	□	•
Dimensions of social conflict				
Intragroup conflict	□	□	•	●
Intergroup conflict	□	●	□	●
Supervisor conflict	●	●	●	□
Raw coverage	.48	.37	.36	.35
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Notes: ● = presence of a core condition; • = presence of a peripheral condition; ○ = absence of a core condition; ◯ = absence of a peripheral condition; □ = subordinate condition.



Results Interpretation: What causes Stress?

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Work-role overload	●	●	□	●
Dimensions of social conflict				
Intragroup conflict	□			
Intergroup conflict	□			
Supervisor conflict	●			
Raw coverage	.48			
Unique coverage	.08	.02	.01	.03
Consistency	.88	.90	.92	.92
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For KAM/sales, too much role determination is often associated with stress

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Results Interpretation: What causes Stress?

<i>Causal conditions</i>	<i>Configurations</i>			
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Work-role overload	•	•	□	•
Dimensions of social conflict				
Intragroup conflict	□	□	•	●
Intergroup conflict			□	●
Supervisor conflict				□
Raw coverage			.36	.35
Unique coverage			.01	.03
Consistency			.92	.92
Overall solution coverage				
Overall solution consistency		.85		

It is always a combination of role stress and social conflict which drives stress

Notes: ● = presence of a core condition; • = presence of a peripheral condition; ○ = absence of a core condition; ◯ = absence of a peripheral condition; □ = subordinate condition.



Results Interpretation: What causes Stress?

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Empirically, configuration 1 is the most frequent one

Notes: ● = presence of a core condition; ● = presence of a peripheral condition; ○ = absence of a core condition; ○ = absence of a peripheral condition; □ = subordinate condition.



Summary of findings

- Frustration among KAM/salespeople emanates from four primary workplace situations (i.e., combinations of role stressors and social conflicts).
- Each of the situations combines both dimensions of role stress and dimensions of social conflicts, but they differ to the extent to which dimensions of role stress and social conflict are present (absent).
- Configuration 1, including the presence of supervisor conflict, role overload and the absence of role ambiguity, has the greatest empirical relevance.
- Three of the four configurations include the presence of supervisor conflict.



If you want to know more...

Leischnig, A., Ivens, B. S., & Henneberg, S. C. (2015). When stress frustrates and when it does not: Configural models of frustrated versus mellow salespeople. *Psychology & Marketing*, 32(11), 1098-1114.

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When Stress Frustrates and When It Does Not: Configural Models of Frustrated versus Mellow Salespeople

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to elucidate the stress-strain relationship by examining compound causes of frustration in the workplace. Drawing on configuration theory, this article describes stress patterns, that is, configurations of role stressors and social stressors, and underlying frustration and its negation, that is, mellowness. In addition, this article describes potential sources of such frustration-stimulating stress patterns by examining constellations of employee and task characteristics. Based on a sample of 118 salespeople, the authors analyze the data using fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis—an analytic method pertinent to describing configurational patterns of causal factors. The findings from this study indicate the coexistence of alternative patterns of stressors for frustration. In addition, the findings show that configurational patterns for frustrated salespeople are quite different from those characterizing mellow salespeople. In summary, knowledge of these constellations of stressors helps sales managers detect conditions that frustrate, and develop strategies to diminish these conditions in order to improve sales force performance. © 2015 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

Extant research has suggested a broad set of factors that firms should consider to improve sales performance. One of these factors is the salespersons' well-being in the workplace. High levels of well-being enhance salesperson performance in terms of workplace turnover (e.g., Wright & Bonett, 2007). In contrast, low levels of well-being decrease work productivity and quality, and increase disruptive and deviant behaviors such as aggression toward colleagues and absenteeism (e.g., Danna & Griffin, 1999; Spector, 1999).

The purpose of this article is to advance current knowledge by examining the negative consequences that may emanate from employees' work experiences. Specifically, this article aims to detect workplace conditions that lead to perceived frustration in the sales force. Frustration is defined as an emotional reaction caused by an event or situation that interferes with an individual's ability to accomplish his or her day-to-day duties effectively (Keenan & Newton, 1984; Spector, 1999). Drawing on configuration theory and on previous empirical research from occupational psychology and organizational behavior, this article focuses on two major sets of factors to explain conditions of frustration

in the sales force, namely, role stress and social stress.

A considerable body of research indicates that salespeople's role stress relates to job attitudes and job-related behaviors (e.g., Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2011; Johnson & Sohi, 2014). In addition, several studies emphasize that factors of the social work environment influence the manner in which employees can achieve daily duties (e.g., John & Mannix, 2001; Liu, Spector, & Shi, 2007). However, little is known about how these factors work together and combine into workplace situations that lead to frustration experiences among salespeople. Existing research in the field of frustration has primarily focused on causal linear relationships between variables, thereby assuming that the size of the effects is proportional to the size of the causes, that relations among variables are additive, and that one single model fits best with the empirical data. While this perspective provides valuable insights into the magnitude of effects of single stressors and enables the identification of critical facilitators (and inhibitors) of frustration, it neglects the nonlinear relationships inherent in several types of psychological and social phenomena (e.g., Vallacher & Noval, 1997; Vallacher, Read, &

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Points for discussion

- Any implication for how you/your company 'manages' KAM roles/positions?
- How can one avoid KAM/sales managers to experience any of the four situations (and the associated performance implications)?
- Drivers of problems are often not based on single causes, but on the (often counter-intuitive) combination of causes. How can KAM management deal with this complexity?



MANY THANKS

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Theoretical background: role theory

- Role theory suggests that job-related role stress is composed of three major related components (e.g., Singh, Goolsby, & Rhoads, 1994):
 - *Role conflict* is reflected in an employee's feeling that the expectations of some job requirements are incompatible with the expectations of other job requirements.
 - *Role ambiguity* refers to the degree to of uncertainty as to which job behaviors are most appropriate in a given situation.
 - *Role overload* reflects a situation where role expectations exceed the individual's abilities and motivation to perform a task.
- Role theorists argue that these role stressors may have either positive or negative consequences.
- Single role stressors may not be dysfunctional, but their combined effect may exceed a salesperson's capability to handle stressful workplace situations (Singh, Goolsby, & Rhoads, 1994)



Theoretical background: social identity theory

- Social identity theory contends that an individual's self-concept comprises two components—a personal identity and a social identity, whereas the latter is represented by the groups to which the person belongs (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). When individuals perceive their social environment favorably, social identity and the individual's self-concept enhance. In contrast, when an individual perceives his/her social environment unfavorably due to social conflicts, social identity can diminish, and psychological tension is likely to occur.
- Social conflict represents the degree to which an employee has negatively charged social interactions with co-workers (Spector, 1987).
- Social conflict may exist between members of a KAM/sales team (i.e., *intragroup conflict*), between different KAM/sales teams in a company (i.e., *intergroup conflict*), as well as between supervisors and their subordinates (i.e., *supervisor conflict*).



Measurement Model Results

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>No. of items</i>	<i>Exemplary item</i>	<i>CA</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Frustration	Peters, O'Connor, and Rudolf (1980)	3	Being frustrated comes with this job.	.83	.86	.67
Role conflict	Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970)	3	I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	.83	.84	.64
Role ambiguity	Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970)	4	I know exactly what is expected of me. (rs)	.84	.86	.60
Role overload	Dubinsky, Dougherty, and Wunder (1990)	3	I often feel rushed in trying to do my job.	.78	.78	.55
Intragroup conflict ¹	Labianca, Brass, and Gray (1998)	1	How much conflict is there between the members of your sales team?	-	-	-
Intergroup conflict ¹	Labianca, Brass, and Gray (1998)	1	How much conflict is there between your sales team and other sales teams of your company?	-	-	-
Supervisor conflict ¹	Labianca, Brass, and Gray (1998)	1	How much conflict is there between your boss and you?	-	-	-

Notes: CA=coefficient alpha; CR=composite reliability; AVE=average variance extracted; (rs)=reverse scored.

¹ Owing to single-item operationalization CA, CR, and AVE cannot be computed.

