Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

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Abstract

A review of the extensive separate literatures on salesmanship and entrepreneurship highlights interesting similarities between the two professions, but there is a lack of studies examining these similarities or explaining the differences. In particular, why do salespeople struggle with image and trust issues and yet society tends to respect and admire entrepreneurs, even though both have something to sell? The author refers to this phenomenon as 'the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic'.

A conceptual framework is developed synthesizing the literature and identifying seven elements of the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic: vocational image; cultural and professional background; assertiveness; control preferences; humanity; characteristics and traits; adaptability. The objective of this thesis is to contribute knowledge in two ways:

> Contribute new perspectives within the seemingly unexplored genre of the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, and

> Expand upon existing knowledge related to selling and entrepreneurship.

Within the realism paradigm, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 highly successful sales people and 11 highly successful entrepreneurs. The research provides a direct comparison, asking the same questions of both groups. This approach has not been reported previously within the literature. Analysis of the findings identifies key behavioral issues, such as those related to work ethic, integrity and humility, which may contribute to the positive and trustworthy image of entrepreneurs, even though many are selling and also contribute to the untrustworthy image of salespeople, even though many are entrepreneurial.

Despite the crossover between these vocations, the variances identified between the groups appear to be connected to their different perspectives in relation to their respective businesses. The entrepreneurs' motivation seemed to be closely connected to the wider success of their businesses. In contrast, the salespeople displayed narrower perspectives related to their own self-interest. This difference manifests itself in behaviours that are more likely to engender trust for entrepreneurs.

Recommendations are made for teaching, practice and further research relating to these findings.

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Introduction

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

1.1   Motivation for this Thesis

This doctoral endeavor was motivated by many factors. As will be discussed in the subsequent section describing limitations and potential bias, the author has been both a salesperson and an entrepreneur. As such, one experiences the disdain and condescension of the former and the admiration of the latter. Many would argue that there are undesirable and untrustworthy individuals representing all vocations. Yet there are few occupations that are generalized and broadly painted by society with the lowly status given to the salesperson.

As the only self-employed post-graduate participant, the author felt some frustration as 20 MBA professors seemed to habitually put down the concept of selling and the people who do it. The class was subsequently influenced to think that selling is distasteful, while being given the impression that customers flock to businesses with strong balance sheets.

Further, the curriculum was overwhelmingly strong on financial analysis and strategic planning, but there was a gap regarding the concept of identifying who specifically would buy a product and how the connection would be made with this entity to ensure that they understood the value proposition. Compounding the issue was the author's view (at that time) that an entrepreneur who starts from nothing and builds a successful business has engaged in 'selling' to some degree. In a personal discourse regarding the topic of this thesis, Dr. Leonard Berry, commonly accepted as the person who coined the term "relationship marketing' agrees:

> *"I think the successful entrepreneur is the ultimate salesperson. Entrepreneurs are selling every day to everyone because to launch and sustain a business they have to persuade others to believe in the concept of the business – investors, customers, employees, lenders, suppliers, real estate developers and so on" (Berry, 2010).*

It was this frustration that planted the seed for the theme of this research project. Why does North American society worship the entrepreneur and generally despise the salesperson, when seemingly both vocations practice the function of selling?

1.2   Framework Based Upon the Literature

Originally, the framework for this research project was to be based upon two literatures:

1. Investigating the traits, habits and characteristics of successful salespeople, and

2. Investigating the traits, habits and characteristics of successful entrepreneurs.

Studies have shown that both vocations (selling and entrepreneurship) have seen functional changes over time. For instance, in the past decade many selling firms have attempted to lessen their risk by creating teams of multifaceted and multi-divisional sellers rather than trust their valuable customer relationships to single individuals (Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Dodds, 2007; Lars-Joha, 2011). This Key Account Management (KAM) strategy reduces the vulnerability which can be felt by stakeholders when boundary spanning sales representatives have self-serving tendencies and are predisposed to high turnover rates (Blau and Boal, 1989; Wotruba and Tyagi, 1991; Williams and Livingstone, 1994; Darmon, 2008; DeConinick, 2009).

The literature indicates that the entrepreneurial dynamic with regards to teamwork has evolved over time as well. As will be explored in subsequent chapters, in the 1970's there were studies that suggested entrepreneurs were non-conformists who were generally dysfunctional non-team players (Kets de Vries, 1977). In the 1980's entrepreneurs were becoming larger than life motivational heroes (Garfield, 1986). And in the new millennium they are seen as team building opportunity seekers (Dodds, 2007).

Critical review of the literature indicates that the vocations of selling and entrepreneurship have many traits and characteristics in common, although previous studies could not readily be found highlighting these similarities. Interestingly, analysis of these two separate literatures also showed that there are differences between these players, especially as they relate to trust, image and prestige in society (Hodge et al. 1964; Tumin, 1967; Swan and Adkins, 1982; Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2009). Therefore, the literature review and the conceptual framework for this thesis will include exploration of

vocational trust. This thesis will both support and challenge past theories, add to previous works and identify new perspectives which may be worthy of future study. Figure 1:1 illustrates the three literatures and their combined relationship which forms the basis of the conceptual framework for this thesis.

Figure 1-1   Forming the Basis of a Conceptual Framework
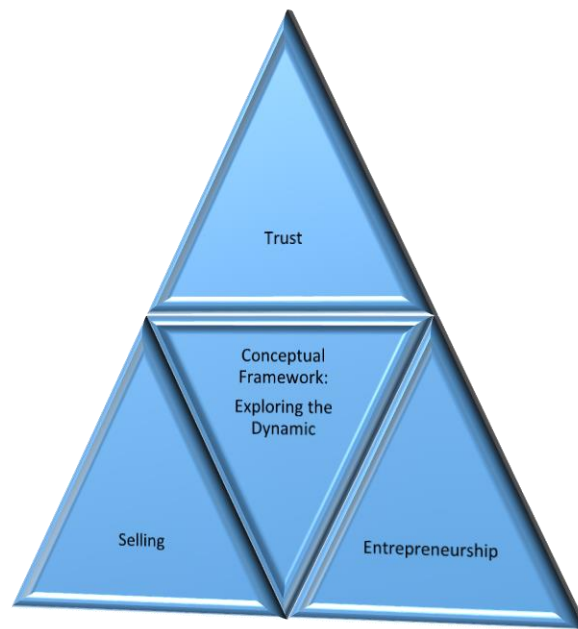
1.3   Relevance: Why is this Work Important?

Research framework which highlights the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, specifically within traits and behavioral theories is important to both academics and practitioners for several reasons:

1. Such an analysis may indicate that, in part, entrepreneurial success and failure is connected to the ability or inability to sell. Given that 75% of new ventures in North America fail (Gilbert, 2009) this information may be of interest to entrepreneurship research and practice.

2. Since entrepreneurs have considerably higher occupational prestige than salespeople (Levitt, 1962; Hodge *et al*. 1964; Steiner, 1976; Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005; Dixon and Tanner, 2012) it is possible that this connection will improve the image of salespeople. Or perhaps, if it is revealed that entrepreneurs display trust-building traits and behaviors that are vastly different to those

of sellers, there may be opportunity for salespeople to adapt accordingly and improve their effectiveness and image in society. This may aid in the development of customer relationships, enhance management's ability to recruit talented individuals and reduce turnover rates.

3. Studies have shown that low image ratings reduce performance because the salesperson feels unequal to the customer (Swan and Adkins, 1980-1). Salespeople with high self-esteem and confidence consistently outperform their more apprehensive counterparts. Therefore, it is possible that if the occupational prestige of salespeople is increased due to an affiliation with entrepreneurial traits, or if strategic differences are highlighted which change salesperson behaviors, performance may be improved.

4. New perspectives linking entrepreneurial success with salesmanship may have an influence on business school curriculum. Consequently, concepts such as personal selling and customer relationship blueprinting might be taught in academic institutions rather than learned primarily 'on the street'. Appendix 1 outlines the curriculum of several highly ranked universities in North America and highlights that none include components of relationship building, customer blueprinting or selling.

1.4   Aims and Objectives

The objective of this thesis is to contribute to knowledge in two ways:

1. Contribute to new perspectives and identify opportunities for future study within the genre of the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, and

2. Expand upon existing knowledge related to selling and entrepreneurship.

Regarding the contribution to new perspectives, the author has found no prior research sample comparing the traits, habits and behaviors of successful sales people with those of thriving entrepreneurs. Further, separate studies of high performing sellers, successful entrepreneurs and vocational trust, show similarities and differences which, to this author's knowledge have not been of interest to researchers to date.

Secondly, due to accessibility issues, salespeople and entrepreneurs represent a challenge to researchers (Walker et al, 1977; Zoltneret al, 2008) and those who are successful have less time for

academic study / contribution than their lesser performing colleagues. Therefore, conducting research using a sampling of highly successful salespeople and entrepreneurs will expand upon the knowledge in the field.

To build upon the foundation of the conceptual framework for this thesis which seeks to understand the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, four more specific objectives have been outlined:

1. To explore the traits, habits and behaviors associated with high performance within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

2. To assess the similarities and differences between high performing sales people and entrepreneurs in relation to their traits, habits and behaviors.

3. To contribute to a stronger foundation for academic research into the sales / entrepreneur dynamic.

4. To provide practical recommendations for improving sales practice and entrepreneurial performance.

The research project will incorporate pre-interview questionnaires and in-person semi-structured interviews. The phenomological paradigm, leaning on constructivist and realism theories of Healy and Perry (2000) will be embraced. Specific paradigmatic guidelines for the chosen methodology will be discussed in Chapter 4. The independent literature indicates a correlation seems to exist, which occurred by asking disconnected questions; both qualitative and quantitative of salespeople and entrepreneurs. This new research seeks to ask similar questions to both groups and to probe deeply to better understand this rather specific dynamic.

1.5   Structural Outline of the Thesis

The outline of this thesis is consistent with the basic qualitative research guidelines established by Perry (1998). Specifically:

- Chapter 1   -   Introduction

- Chapter 2   -   Literature Review

- Chapter 3   -   Literature Review Summary – Building a Conceptual Framework

- Chapter 4   -   Methodology

- Chapter 5   -   Research Findings

- Chapter 6   -   Discussion

- Chapter 7   -   Conclusions Summary, Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

- Glossary

- References

- Appendix

Critical Review of Two Literatures: Salesmanship and Entrepreneurship

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

2.1   Introduction

Within this chapter the author will provide a critical review of the existing literature on the concepts of salesmanship and entrepreneurship respectively. This will include:

- Accepted and debated definitions,
- An examination of attribute theory,
- Values and motivators of these vocations, and
- Adaptivity concepts within the professions.

A historical reference will also provide clarity regarding the changes in philosophy and strategy over time for salespeople and entrepreneurs within the independent literatures. This discussion will highlight interesting similarities and differences between these vocations. The dynamic within the separate literatures on salespeople and entrepreneurs will form the basis of a conceptual framework for this thesis.

2.2   Salesmanship and Entrepreneurship: Exploring Definitions

2.2.1   Defining Salesmanship

Defining the concept of selling requires one to recognize the overlap with other disciplines such as marketing. While the role of marketing is to fulfill buyer needs, the main objective of 'sellers' is to convert existing products into revenue, which is not always conducive to building and maintaining customer relationships (Kotler and Keller, 2007).

Marketing is considered a longer term, big picture phenomenon focused on products, while sales represents a shorter term and customer focused effort (Cespedes, 1994). Selling strategies are often more suited to spontaneous offerings (Kotler and Keller, 2007). Rather than compare the definition of selling to that of marketing, the goal within this chapter is to explore the concept of personal selling. Sales is defined as a conversion of material goods or services for an agreed upon sum or other worthy return (Armbruster, 2006: Merriam-Webster - Sales 2009).

Perhaps more specifically suited to the business to business (B2B) selling phenomenon, selling is the forging of customer relationships; thus strengthening the levels of mutual cooperation between selling and buying firms (Hunter and Perreault, 2007). Such repeatable activity requires effective development, management, enabling and execution (Lambert, 2008; Tanner and Raymond, 2010). This is not always a linear process, but rather a relational collaboration of people and firms creating value (Dixon and Tanner, 2012).

Interestingly, it will be shown within the 'Effectuation' section of this chapter that like the successful salesperson, entrepreneurs also engage in transactional exchanges and rely heavily on their ability to forge and maintain strong customer relationships (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). Further, modern sales strategies should reflect the individual nature of each selling opportunity, likening the process to that of an architect, who must research the problem or need, intimately understand the customer's functionality within the space and then partner with the client to tailor a customized solution (Dixon and Tanner, 2012). It will be shown that the authors are describing a very 'entrepreneurial' approach to dealing with customer needs which highlights the opportunity for crossover analysis of the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic within the literature.

It has been noted that rigorous research and data on successful salespeople is somewhat limited. Many academics dismiss the concept of sales because it typically overlaps with other disciplines, such as marketing. It can also seem mystifying and devious, and it can be difficult to gain objective access to sales teams as they tend to be results oriented, driven individuals who are often protective of their methods and customers (Walker *et al.* 1977; Zoltner *et al.* 2008).

For many firms, the ultimate measure of success is trading the offering with a customer for monetary compensation (Comer and Drollinger, 1999). It might be argued that this is a common goal for both entrepreneurs and salespeople, and rather than being considered a manipulative deed, the closing of a sale is an inherent conclusion of the selling interaction (Rackham, 1988; Daley and Wolfe, 1996; Comer and Drollinger, 1999).

Although some sales people prefer to measure success in smaller steps such as simply reaching the goal of a second meeting with a prospective customer, or securing a test with their products in selected locations, success can also be assessed by the ability to foster continued growth through consumer retention and expansion (Dawson, 2008). Success can have the ability to breed success in sales people who ride the wave of positive experience, which creates job satisfaction and commitment to their employer. This is important, as reduction in turnover rates is a goal of many sales managers (MacKenzie *et al*. 1998).

However, success is relative as most firms never exceed what has been referred to as the '6% barrier' which means that 94% of potential business with specific customers remains untapped (Dawson, 2008). Most firms spend resources to squeeze an extra point or two of profit while continually pursuing growth through the generation of new customers. This 'one-off' approach to fulfilling customer needs represents an underperformance issue for many firms.

This approach of answering only the specific need identified by the customer, rather than diving deeper to understand the entire opportunity within the client's needs universe is 'reactive selling'. Such firms are but 'order takers' and often succeed even though they lack sound strategy (Dawson, 2008). As will be shown, many selling professionals engage in creative, driven and innovative behaviors to advance their business (Terho et al. 2012) which will be shown to be in line with entrepreneurial strategies, but Dawson's (2008) 'order taker' phenomenon may represent the opposite end of the salesmanship scale.

In line with these themes, Novartis Pharmaceuticals grew their top line by no less than 10% annually from 2000 to 2006 with a 'distillation of accounts'. Specifically, they concentrated their sales activity on 35% of their highest valued physicians, which not only increased top line sales significantly, but improved sales productivity immensely (Zoltner *et al*. 2008). In essence, they used a 'deeper penetration' strategy such as that described by Dawson (2008) on their key customers while pulling back

resources from the poor performers. Such strategies may draw comparisons to effectual entrepreneurship (Saravethy and Dew, 2005, 2008) which further highlights the opportunity for crossover analysis. It should be noted that Zoltner et al.'s (2008) work was limited to the pharmaceutical industry which successfully recruits sales representatives with a college or university degree (Hanson, 2012), and who call upon highly educated customers (doctors). Further, the industry has a turnover rate of just 15% which is half that of the general population of sellers in North America (Darmon, 2008). Future study may seek to explore whether deeper penetration selling strategies are well suited to the less educated masses of the profession. It should also be noted that the work of Zoltner et al. (2008) incorporated triangulation methods to correlate the selling strategies against performance, which has not been common within the work reviewed for this thesis.

Expanding on the theme of depth and distribution of performance, there is evidence that a minority of sales people significantly outperform their peers. An examination of over 75 companies in the "Manual of Excellent Management – 1957", identified that 33% of sales people drive 62% of the business that the teams are targeting (Weitz, 1978). More recent data indicate that as few as 8% of sales personnel are responsible for as much as 80% of the sales targeted (Kahle, 2010). Such variance in performance is of concern for many firms.

It is perhaps with this performance variance in mind that practitioners and academics have attempted to understand the traits and characteristics of the talented minority of sellers who drive the majority of volume. Within this study, it will be shown that these high performers exhibit traits and characteristics that are entrepreneurial.

For the purposes of this research, the author has adopted a definition of salesperson primarily based upon the literature and slightly influenced by personal preferences and experience.

Salesperson: Someone who is employed to convert existing products into revenue (Kotler and Keller, 2007). That is, a person who promotes, encourages and enables the transference of products or services for monetary returns (Armbruster, 2006) or "*other valuable consideration*" (Merriam-Webster - Sales 2009). For the purposes of this thesis, selling participants were chosen based upon their capacity as full time gainfully employed 'business to business' salespeople who engage in forging relationships (Hunter and Perreault, 2007) to encourage "*the holistic business system required to effectively develop, manage, enable, and execute a mutually beneficial, interpersonal exchange of goods and / or services for equitable value*" (Lambert, 2008, p1).

2.2.2   Defining Entrepreneurship

The word 'entrepreneur' originated from the German verb 'unternehem', meaning to undertake, which the French later adopted as 'entrependre' (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991). Literally, the word entrepreneur translates into between-taker (Wolf-Does, 2015). Those considered entrepreneurs often led early 16th century expeditions and by the next century the label broadened to include building contractors. It was at this time that economists began using the word to describe those who took on risk in order to improve the status quo (de Farcy, 1973).

In the late 1800's the Oxford Dictionary started to confuse the definition of the entrepreneur by describing it as the manager of a musical institution or a contractor functioning as an arbitrator between business owners and workers (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991). This definition suggested that completing a business task was more important than owning a business. Interestingly, the definition completely excludes the element of risk, which both historical and contemporary scholars attribute to entrepreneurship. Decades later, entrepreneurship was evolving to include concepts of creativity, discovery and innovation (Schumpter, 1934) with or without the prerequisites of ownership and risk (Cunningham and LIscheron, 1991).

Many feel that entrepreneurial behaviors can exist without financial risk. For instance, the identification of gaps within new or existing markets does not require ownership (Ireland et al. 2009). Further; proactively engaging in creative and innovative behaviors to capitalize on opportunities is considered entrepreneurial (Vesper, 1984); with or without ownership and with or without personal or financial risk (Lau et al. 2012). It will be shown that this is reflective of the behaviors of highly successful salespeople.

Most scholars seem to agree that entrepreneurship is a difficult concept to define (Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). While some authors are comfortable with the simplicity of considering all self-employed individuals entrepreneurs, others challenge the concept of the family farm or a refreshment vendor outside a sporting event as representing entrepreneurship (Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). One of the most frequently cited perspectives used to define the entrepreneur evidently revolves around being the founder of a new enterprise (Davids, 1963; Boyd, 1987) and continued

ownership that extends beyond self-employment (Hornaby and Abound, 1971; Howell, 1972). That is, an individual who has a stake in ongoing gainful employment within their community.

Others see entrepreneurship as a process of persistently seeking opportunity and the ongoing effort to manage the resources required to exploit same; driven by innovation, the desire to change the status quo and a degree of tolerance for risk (Hill and McGowan, 1999). Throughout this process, the entrepreneur struggles to thrive, often within the ongoing pandemonium of unstructured business plans and emotionally based decision making, and therefore cannot be "amassed as one homogeneous group" (Hill and McGowan, 1999, *p*7). Thus choosing a definition for a concept that is almost always unique in its specific nature is a daunting task. There is possibly more debate than consensus within the literature regarding themes related to forms of the word entrepreneur.

> *"My own personal experience was that for 10 years we ran a research center in entrepreneurial history, for 10yrs we tried to define the entrepreneur. We never succeeded. Each of us had some notion of it – what he thought was, for his purposes, a useful definition. And I don't think you're going to get much further than that!" (Cole, 1996, p17).*

The literature indicates that there have been many theoretical models used to understand tendencies that lead to entrepreneurship. Table 2-1 provides three distinct examples.

Table 2-1   **Models of Definition for the Entrepreneur**

Model / Theory	Principle Description	Example of Authors Supporting the Theory
Psychodynamic	Freudian Theory: • Primarily concerned with internal psychological processes • Importance of early childhood experiences • Existence of unconscious motivation • Existence of ego (rationality) & superego (morality) • Existence of defense mechanisms	• Collins *et al*. (1964) • Smith (1967) • Lynn (1969) • Kets de Vries (1977) • Chell (1985)
Social Development Model	• Stresses social influences over time • Significant happenings at important life junctions	• Gibb and Ritchie (1981)
Traits Theory	• Personality traits such as impulsiveness, internal locus of control, and propensity to take risks, differentiate entrepreneurs from others	• McClelland (1961) • Collins and Moore (1964) • Litvac and Maule (1974) • McGrath *et al*. (1992) • Katreiel (1995) • Cromie (2000)

Source: derived by the author, summarized from the literature.

The definition of entrepreneur is both subjective and ever-changing. For the purposes of this research, the author has adopted a definition of entrepreneur primarily based upon the literature and slightly influenced by personal preferences and experience.

Entrepreneur: A creative innovator (Lau et al. 2012) who has taken on financial risk as the founder of a new enterprise (Davids, 1963; Boyd, 1987) which has thrived and grown over time (Hornaby and Abound, 1971) and which extends beyond self-needs, thus affecting the gainful employment of others (Howell, 1972). Entrepreneurship represents the act or practice of being an entrepreneur.

It is important to note that many authors feel that 'entrepreneurial' traits and characteristics can exist without ownership or financial risk, as will be shown to be the case with highly successful salespeople.

Entrepreneurial: Behaviors and traits related to identifying gaps within new or existing markets (Ireland et al. 2009) and taking initiative to proactively apply creativity and innovation (Vesper, 1984) to capitalize on opportunities; with or without ownership and with or without personal or financial risk (Lau et al. 2012).

These definitions will be relevant to several discussions within this thesis and will be revisited within the Methodology Chapter. The definitions are also listed within the Glossary. In the next section, this work will delve more deeply, exploring traits, characteristics and behaviors of these players.

2.3   Traits, Characteristics and Behaviors

2.3.1   Traits Characteristics and Behaviors of Salespeople

Reflecting the historical theory that the few highly successful sales people carry the lesser performing masses, in 1961 the Harvard Business Review published a commonly cited article by Robert N. McMurray (1961) in which he describes the role of the salesman (person) as a lonely, deprecated existence well suited to "neurotics". It is of great interest to this thesis that McMurray's (1961) comments on salespeople so closely mirror work on entrepreneurs. Neuroticism and anxiety are underlying traits of the entrepreneur (Lynn 1969), who is "a misfit… loner… reject" (Kets de Vries, 1977, p35). Within certain selling fields, there is an expectation to make no less than 36 cold calls weekly with a quota to close four of them. This equates to 32 rejections; or spending 89% of one's time in an unreceptive, inhospitable environment (McMurray, 1961). Unless an individual has an aptitude for abuse, it would be difficult to endure such an existence.

Consequently, many people who lack the specialized demeanor for such constant refusal become incapable of asking for the business as they would prefer to avoid rejection. Yet surprisingly, many of these individuals find themselves pursuing a career in sales.

Over time, the 'numbers game' (author unknown) has become less prevalent as the role of the salesperson has evolved. Since 1961 the literature reflects that the sales role has transitioned from an independent, abrasive approach to something that is more team based and trustworthy. Further, there

appears to be a transition over time as individual traits and characteristics are becoming less important than having the ability to adapt to situations and opportunities (Sujan, 1999). This behavioral transition is reflected throughout this chapter and is summarized at the end of this section in Table 2-3.

Some practitioners measure success subjectively based on the manager's opinions of sales 'behaviors', rather than on generating sales 'revenue' (Anglin et al. 1990). However, it has been shown that fulfilling management expectations is not a priority for successful sellers (Winer and Schiff, 1980). Further, most equity stakeholders feel that if effort does not eventually result in some form of revenue, time and expenditures are wasted (Dawson, 2008). While other elements of performance are relevant, the 'outcome' should not be excluded. Further, some might argue that the opinions of sales management regarding selling behaviors may be less relevant than those of actual buyers or customers. It is rare to find such triangulation that incorporates the feedback of buyers within the literature on salesmanship.

Academics and practitioners vary regarding how they define successful behaviors in a selling capacity and one should caution against defining success in sales as merely a reflection of short term revenue gains. Consequently, this work shall embrace the theory that success in sales is not realized unless the effort has contributed to long term (sustainable) growth in revenue and profit (Dawson, 2008; Zoltner *et al*. 2008). These concepts will strongly influence participant selection for this work and will be examined further in the Methodology Chapter. Supporting the crossover objective outlined for this research, it is worthy of mention that many scholars include long term sustainable growth within their definition of successful entrepreneurs (Hornaby and Abound, 1971; Howell, 1972).

It can be challenging for researchers to correlate traits and characteristics of individuals with sales performance and achievement because such triangulation necessitates deep, multi-level accessibility (Spiro and Perreault, 1979). Isolating such traits within a recruiting strategy is also daunting for practitioners, as individuals behave differently in alternating environments and situations.

Delving more deeply, triangulation was used to investigate the relationship between specific humanistic traits and sales results. This is of specific interest to this author because this research concentrates only on highly successful salespeople and much of the literature makes no reference to performance. Sales representatives who earn greater financial compensation, especially in commission situations, were generally "taller, less educated and higher scorers on the endurance scale" *(*Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977, *p*524). Family and community values also affect performance. Community involvement and interests outside the home and work had a positive relationship with converting brand new accounts,

but actually had a slightly negative effect with ongoing sales performance. This may be a direct result of networking in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Higher education related negatively with earnings, especially when financial incentives were offered (Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977). This may be due to an assessment that the reward did not suitably compensate the effort required. However, as will be subsequently discussed, the literature clearly indicates that there are image issues within the vocation of selling and it may be worth testing if those with higher education levels feel above such hustling tactics and / or perhaps would prefer to be perceived as disinterested rather than as failures. This represents a difference within the salesperson / entrepreneurial dynamic within the separate literatures as successful entrepreneurs have been shown to generally have higher education than non-entrepreneurs (Robinson and Sexton, 1994).

Combining cultural background and humanistic theories, it has been argued that most highly successful salespeople have attractive physical characteristics, good work habits, are intellectually capable, adaptable and not overly sensitive (Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977). Yet, characteristics of success are not always accurate and are often inconsistent predictors of behavior, as evidenced when correlated against motivation levels and emotional responses to successes and failures. For example, if a participant feels humiliation following a failure to perform, they are unlikely to improve, yet those who feel guilt are highly likely to perform better in subsequent situations (Badovick *et al*. 1992). However, some may argue that assessment of participants' mood or state of mind is difficult to measure objectively. Mood can affect future circumstances or experiences that have no relation to the mood altering event either positively or negatively, validating the claim that specific characteristics do not necessarily equate to success (George, 1998). A sales person feeling positively because of a pleasant event or news may treat buyers more positively and be more enthusiastic about product features and benefits, while negative moods at work lead to poorer customer experiences and lesser sales (Churchill *et al*. 1985).

The ability to view events as having explicit, incidental and outlying origins, points to a level of optimism that is conducive to selling performance (Maxwell *et al*. 2005) as optimists sell 35% more than pessimists (Sujan, 1999). This is due in part to the fact that optimists see things through a larger perspective and understand the 'big picture' rather than concerning themselves with what they perceive to be urgent and important burdens.

Expanding upon the humanistic theories of mood and dreams, a high level of playfulness and optimism

coincides with superior selling ability. Creative task redefinition enhances job enjoyment and enables the sales person to better cope with problems and rejection (Glynn and Webster, 1992). It may be of interest for future study to test how high playfulness scores interact with more serious performance criteria such as customer blueprinting, business reviews and strategic planning. It is also worth noting that the authors did not quantify their study by triangulating their findings against actual customer perceptions or firm performance. For instance, reflecting adaptability theories which will be subsequently explored (Jolson, 2000) there may be a conflict if playful sellers interact with more serious buyers, as this may hinder performance and harm the image of the salesperson and his / her firm.

Understanding optimism levels of maturing salespeople is important to practitioners. Currently, firms are turning over sales representatives at roughly double the rate seen during the 1980s (Fournier *et al*. 2010). In fact, more than half of the sales people leaving a firm do so voluntarily, suggesting that there may be an opportunity for firms to review their offerings and opportunities for employees.

Nevertheless, targeting and recruiting successful sales people remains a daunting task. Practitioners seek to flush out their traits, characteristics and behaviors in the hopes of encouraging performance and retention (MacKenzie et al. 1998; Darmon, 2008; Fournier et al. 2010). As will be identified within this thesis, many of these traits and characteristics coincide with those exhibited by the successful entrepreneur. Further, exploration of interaction themes indicates that selling strategies are evolving to include more adaptive behaviors, which is in line with effectuation (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005) and bricolage (Baker, 2007) entrepreneurship theories. Supporting the objectives outlined for this thesis, most agree that adaptability requires understanding of situational needs; which necessitates high level interpersonal skills.

2.3.1.1   *Interpersonal 'Listening' Skills*

The literature clearly recognizes the importance of building relationships, which many feel is an outcome that can be reflective of good listening ability (Lweis and Reunsch, 1988; Hennings, 1992; Yrle and Galle, 1993; Comer and Drollinger, 1999). There are a variety of theories that explore the complexity and intricacy of this skill. Active listening means hearing the detail while engaging with the speaker in a way that makes it evident that there is interest in the message (Yrle and Galle, 1993). It is the rational manner of combining sense and interpretation in response to audible and visual messages (Lweis and Reunsch, 1988; Hennings, 1992; Castleberry and Shepherd, 1993).

Because a majority of firms engaging in business to business selling strive to secure ongoing, repeat business with their customers, research has confirmed that a customer's positive view of the seller's listening skills has a positive correlation with the maintenance of future business (Ramsey and Soni, 1997). Moreover, deficient listening skills negatively affect the American economy on a scale exceeding billions of dollars, and is reported as one of the principle reasons many sales people do not succeed (Ramsey and Soni, 1997). As such, the primary driver of failure for many sellers is an inability to actively listen (Comer and Drollinger, 1999).

Listening requires three cognitive processes that include sensing, evaluating, and responding to both verbal and non-verbal cues (Castleberry and Shepherd, 1993; Ramsey and Soni, 1997). Such abilities are important to those engaging in 'adaptive selling' strategies (Leigh, 1987; Jolson, 2000). It is suggested that the sales person must engage in all three processes in order to be successful (Ramsey and Soni, 1987) and those who engage in superior listening habits enjoy superior performance (Comer and Drollinger, 1999).

It is of interest to this thesis that 1500 graduates of full time MBA programs in the USA ranked 'one on one communication' and 'listening skills' as the most crucial attributes in their daily business lives (Andy Raskin, 2002). However, only 12 and 6 percent of schools, respectively, taught these crucial skills. The findings indicated that 'business theory', which is the primary focus of most MBA programs, was the aptitude that ranked last or nearly last in most cases regarding its usefulness in the real business world.

2.3.1.2   *Probing for Opportunities and Diverting Objections*

Like the necessity placed on listening, probing or asking questions is a technique often used by successful sales representatives since customer needs cannot be properly fulfilled unless they are fully understood. Needs exist in a continuum and rather than creating or arousing a customer need, sellers should simply seek out the most powerful existing needs that may instigate an action to purchase the firm's solution, (McMurray, 1961). Knowing when and how to ask suitable questions enables conversation and relieves tension (Schuster and Danes, 1986). Both open and closed questions allow the seller to gather facts and create conversational flow. In addition, non-verbal communication, such as nodding or enjoying a customer's joke all aid in building a buyer-seller relationship and due to triangulation methodology have been shown to increase performance (Schuster and Danes, 1986).

Interestingly, it is ultimately the closed question that prompts the culmination of the sale in many cases because it facilitates one's ability to "exert control" (Schuster and Danes, 1986, *p*24). As an example:

> *"If I understand the problem correctly Mr. Customer, your primary concern is that your chosen vendor must be capable of delivering 10,000 widgets by the proposed date. Is this correct?" (Example derived by the author).*

Exertion of control, which has been shown to be a characteristic of entrepreneurs (Gray and Howard, 2006) can be a sensitive issue. Salesperson sharing of opinions can hinder the outcome of sales encounters. Customers want advice but do not want to be 'told what to do'. As will be subsequently demonstrated, sellers are generally held in low regard by society and this may be a contributing factor of this phenomenon (Swan and Adkins, 1980-2).

Failure to effectively probe and adjust one's approach to the selling process based on customer feedback is all too common. In fact, it has been shown that 78% of sales people fail to adapt to the physical and even verbal cues of buyers (Anglin *et al*. 1990). Rather than adjusting their approach to address the communicated need, many sales people continue to 'sell' and subsequently miss out on the actual opportunity altogether. While many would agree that this is unproductive behavior, some practitioners may argue that this behavior is inaccurately described as 'selling', which is not the act of convincing someone against their wishes to give money for something they don't need. Rather, reflecting the literature on entrepreneurship, and therefore supporting the crossover opportunity for this research, selling is ideally an ongoing relational process which facilitates the interchange of resources to the benefit of all parties (Lambert, 2008).

2.3.2   *Traits, Characteristics and Behaviors of Entrepreneurs*

While similarities have begun to be highlighted within the separate literatures on salesmanship and entrepreneurship, the study of gender, background and culture represents a gap within this dynamic. Such themes have not been extensively explored within the selling literature reviewed for this work. Contrarily, the literature on entrepreneurship is quite attentive to these themes.

By comparing the similarities and differences between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, it becomes apparent that gender has little effect on entrepreneurship. For instance, female managers have more in common with male managers than with female entrepreneurs (Fagenson, 1993). Although men are likely to score higher on scales measuring for innovativeness, there is no significant difference between males and females when it comes to internal locus of control (Watkins and Watkins, 1984). The authors suggest this is a prominent trait seen in a majority of entrepreneurs. Moreover, women are equally influenced by an entrepreneurial father as men.

On a more macro level of gender research, USA is an example of a masculine nation, valuing independence and personal growth, while a country such as Hungary has a more family or feminine leaning culture, which values the collective (Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005). Entrepreneurs have a propensity to value the more masculine: individual, financial and ego rewards over the more feminine: mutually shared team recognition (McGrath *et al*. 1992).

To suggest that a masculine culture is more likely to be supportive of entrepreneurial activities is not to say that men are necessarily more likely to be entrepreneurial than women. Male and female entrepreneurs have similar value systems, which is interestingly in contrast with male and female managers (Fagenson, 1993). The only value that varies to any large degree is that of equality, which is understandably rated much higher in importance by women entrepreneurs

While gender seems to have minimal influence over entrepreneurial activity, culture on the other hand has been found to have a profound effect. Accordingly, certain cultures achieve more due to the value systems prevalent in the population (Cunningham and Usheron, 1991). American culture is more encouraging of entrepreneurs than many other nations (Dodd, 2007). An American citizen is five times more likely to become an entrepreneur than someone from Finland. It is frequently argued that countries in Eastern Europe could be more prosperous if they maintained a culture that supported entrepreneurship through government policies, which should include the reduction of barriers to 'start-up' (Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994).

Personal background also plays an important role in determining who is more likely to become an entrepreneur. Those entering the realm of self-employment are 66% more likely to come from the ranks of the employed rather than the unemployed (Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994). In addition, those who

exhibit a great deal of hard work and come from industrious families are more likely to move into entrepreneurship in adulthood (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991). In fact, 36.5% of self-employed respondents indicated that their fathers were self-employed during their youth (Goldthorpe *et al*. 1987) or at the very least had one parent who was self-employed (Stanworth *et al*. 1989; Senyard et al. 2013). This theory supports the 'self-efficacy and observational learning' concepts put forth by Boyd and Vozikis (1994).

Delving more deeply within themes of cultural upbringing, Kets de Vries (1977) argues that entrepreneurs are actually deviants with deprived childhoods who are unprepared to function normally in society. The author's description is bold:

> *"A misfit in his particular environment… a loner, isolated and rather remote from even his closest relatives… a reject" (Kets de Vries, 1977, p35).*

This position of Kets de Vries (1977) on entrepreneur disposition is reflective of insights on salespeople as being lonely and deprecated individuals (McMurray, 1961). Over time, neuroticism and anxiety have been shown to be underlying traits of some entrepreneurs (Lynn, 1969) who tend to be "hostile, aggressive and impulsive" *(*Chell, 1985, *p*44). However, these comments may be entirely too pessimistic as it is often essential for entrepreneurs to possess extraordinary self-assurance and strength when confronting uncertainty and tension (Zhao and Seibert, 2006) which are traits traditionally associated with a very low level of neuroticism. The entrepreneur is often of a character that is unwilling to submit to regulators or authority figures and rather, is driven to escape from such (Mintzberg, 1973). Interestingly, an authority complex is a stronger motivator for a degree of autonomy than it is for actual independence (Caird, 1991).

It is clear within the literature that understanding the entrepreneur is a daunting task. Cultural backgrounds have an effect in some cases but not all. The micro and macro environmental factors also have bearing in some, but not all cases. In an attempt to understand the types of people who are likely to be involved in a new business venture, five likely candidates have been identified for entrepreneurial start-ups:

1. Children of self-employed or who have experienced self-employment themselves in the past,

2. Those with personality traits that suit uncertainty and self-reliance,

3. Those with low organizational commitment,

4. Those who perceive their careers as impeded or less than gratifying, and

5. Those who feel that success in the corporate world is dependent on factors not in their control, such as good fortune, tenure or prejudice rather than performance (Cromie *et al*. 1992).

Researchers seeking to understand the motivators or drivers of entrepreneurs explored the cultural and familial background of these players. Although some studies have shown that higher education levels reflect a higher propensity for entrepreneurship (Robinson and Sexton, 1994; Gray and Howard, 2006) there is no substantial evidence suggesting that increased education levels result in success (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982). Each year of formal education increases the probability of becoming self-employed by 0.8%.

Interestingly, in the 1990's the compensation for self-employed people increased by $1207.63 for each year of formal education compared to $825.99 for wage earners and earning potential was higher for males than females (Robinson and Sexton, 1994). Unfortunately, the research is based on United States census data, which were corrected for doctors, lawyers and farmers, and did not include unsuccessful entrepreneurs. This is reflective of the ongoing challenges facing entrepreneurship researchers. Results vary based upon the definition of entrepreneur used by the researchers, and is therefore not conducive to comparison theories.

It is not uncommon within the entrepreneurship literature to omit the failures which may have an effect on reported statistics. Given that first time entrepreneurial attempts in North America have a 78% chance of failure, and even successful entrepreneurs have a 67% chance of failure in their second attempt (Gilbert, 2009), for each individual entrepreneur in Robinson and Sexton's (1994) research, there are no less than three that failed and therefore made $0.00. In fact, it is possible that they made less than zero since they probably lost their initial capital investment. These data would have a significant effect on the analysis presented by Robinson and Sexton (1994).

Those who attempt multiple new start-ups often possess several of the traits listed and are referred to as 'habitual' or 'serial' entrepreneurs. The specific definition of these actors varies within the literature but most agree that the serial entrepreneur enjoys the start-up phase of a venture more so than the long term nurturing of the business as it grows (Chen, 2000; Zhang, 2009; Harvey, 2012). The serial entrepreneur therefore sells or relinquishes control of the business to an employee to create time to launch another venture.

As with gender, background and cultural themes, the challenge of trait theory also represents a disparity between the literatures on salesmanship and entrepreneurship. Such opposition was not found within prior work on selling reviewed for this thesis. However, opposition to trait theory was prevalent within the literature on entrepreneurship.

2.3.2.2   *Opposition to Trait Theory for Entrepreneurial Research*

Several authors have taken issue with trait theory regarding the study of entrepreneurs. It has been suggested that study results on entrepreneurial traits are unreliable and such methodology should be discarded (Zhao and Seibert, 2006). Trait attributes are considered a result of nature and cannot be taught. However, many scholars are of the opinion that entrepreneurs are 'made not born', which suggests that entrepreneurship can be learned (Mueller and Thomas, 2000). The authors agree that this concept is extremely difficult to prove.

Several studies have shown that traits indicating a predisposition to entrepreneurship often do not result in new venture start-up (McClelland, 1961). One might also argue that many people without the supposedly necessary traits of entrepreneurship launch successful ventures. In fact, individuals that were unprepared for launching an enterprise were equally optimistic as their well-prepared counterparts (Cooper *et al*. 1988).

There are several deep-seated problems with entrepreneurial theories that are based on personality traits:

1. Most research methodologies that test personality traits were taken from Psychology and were not intended specifically to measure entrepreneurship,

2. The measuring tools mentioned above are intended for general use and often lose their effectiveness when tasked with a specific context such as entrepreneurship, and

3. It is understood that effective studies of entrepreneurial status and initiative must include environmental interactions (Robinson *et al*. 1991).

It has been suggested that because information exists independent of the individuals who recognize opportunities, trait analysis is somewhat irrelevant (Smith *et al* 2009) and that scholars would benefit from changing the focus to studying "competencies, motivation, cognition and behavior" (Baum and

Locke, 2004, *p*592) as the very act of being an entrepreneur can create personality traits that may not have been prevalent prior to launch (Littunen, 2000). Moreover, many feel that trait theory is typically unreliable (Shaver and Scott, 1991 citing the work of Shaver *et al*. 1990, unpublished manuscript). To show this the authors manipulated a questionnaire to give the participants the perception that they were entrepreneurial by nature. The test results showed considerably higher scores on creativeness, motivation to achieve, and risk taking; questioning the reliability of empirical research on entrepreneurial characteristics. However, such a statement may be too strong as this questionnaire was given to students not actual entrepreneurs.

2.3.3   *Summary – Traits, Characteristics and Behaviors of Salespeople and Entrepreneurs*

The literature on traits, characteristics and behaviors revealed many similarities between salesmanship and entrepreneurship. The highly successful players within both vocations are optimistic, assertive self-starters who prefer to be in control.

There are many differences within the dynamic as well. For instance, entrepreneurs generally have greater formal education than salespeople. Further, while both vocations avoid authority figures, the entrepreneur has a much stronger commitment to the firm he has established than the salesperson has to his / her employer. Interestingly, the literature on the roots and background of entrepreneurs is prevalent while this is seemingly non-existent within the research on salespeople.

A detailed summary of the similarities and differences within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic will be discussed in the next chapter supporting the conceptual framework for this thesis. The next section within this current chapter will critically review the literature as it pertains to motivation and purpose.

2.4.1   Values, Motivation and Purpose: Driving Success in Selling Situations

Prior to the late 1980s, sales managers sought out self-motivated, driven individuals who would respond as urgently as possible to customer demands in order to close a sale and encourage the completion of more work in a day. Lack of immediate action through a sense of urgency or failure to act was seen to originate from a fear within and only one's urgent actions determine one's worth in the market place (Mandino, 1968). Further, urgent motivation to satisfy customer's needs is paramount if the goal is to gain trust through the perception that the sales person is customer oriented (Swan *et al*. 1985).

Researchers have attempted to understand what motivates and demotivates people in selling roles. Maslow's Hierarchy suggests that monetary compensation represents the lower order of needs (Maslow, 1943). To motivate salespeople, higher order needs must be met such as esteem and self-actualization (Winer and Schiff, 1980). A sense of accomplishment is a strong motivator which correlates to increased sales (Swenson and Herche, 1994). And, while lack of financial rewards may represent 'dissatisfiers', the prospect of financial rewards seldom acts as motivation (Hertzberg et al. 1959).

In fact, accomplishment and self-actualization has been shown to be the number one motivator of highly successful salespeople (Winer and Schiff, 1980). It should be noted that this is in line with entrepreneur 'internal locus of control' themes (Cromie, 2000). However, their study somewhat contradicts this theory as 'making more money' was the number two motivator (out of 10 that were rated by participants) identified by 189 industrial salespersons. It should be of interest to practitioners that fulfilling management expectations rated the lowest of all potential motivators within their study, as company policies and supervisory issues were the number 1 and 3 'dissatisfiers' for this sample group. Interestingly, financial issues and earnings rated number 2 on both the motivation scale and the dissatisfaction scale (Winer and Schiff 1980). This work connects well with this thesis as the authors took steps to quantify income levels of participants, thus confirming that the more successful (monetarily) participants were less motivated by money than their lesser performing counterparts.

Some contend that motivation is more closely related to the anticipation of fulfillment than the reward itself (Simintiras et al. 1996). If goal fulfillment seems unlikely, motivation and performance will not occur. It should be noted that the work of Simitiras et al. (1996) was based upon questionnaires which

identified what selling participants thought they would do, rather than what they actually did. Further, while the sample size of 170 participants was significant, the quantitative research did not allow for discussion with participants and did not qualify performance levels of respondents. Practitioners may be interested in whether 'anticipation of fulfillment' as a motivator drives increased revenue. It is possible that underperformers are simply more comfortable if established quotas seem to be achievable, but performance-driving behaviors do not change.

More recent work on the motivation of sellers indicates that monetary rewards are seen as an expectation rather than a motivator (Tesavrita and Suryadi, 2012). Thus compensation is a prerequisite aligned with having a comfortable, clean and safe workplace. However, it should be noted that Tesavrita and Suryadi (2012) had a very small sample size for their quantitative research and did not incorporate performance criteria into their work. Rather than studying what motivates people in general, it may be of interest to practitioners to begin with isolating the achievers and working backwards to understand what motivates them specifically. This will be the focus of this new work. It is possible that 75% of participants see compensation as merely an expectation but the other 25% of the team drive the volume.

This contradiction; stating that money is both a motivator and demotivator is of interest to this thesis. An attempt will be made to design a semi-structured interview guide that will enable deep and rich discussion around financial rewards as motivators. Short term rewards can often lead to unethical behavior which in turn can negatively affect customer relationships (Schwepker and Good, 2010). This work is in line with past studies which have shown that financial 'kickbacks' or rewards lead to less ethical behaviors and decisions (Hegarty and Sims, 1978). The ethical and moral behaviors of sellers and entrepreneurs are of significant interest to this thesis and will be subsequently explored.

Given the fact that the average cost of business to business sales calls is $400.00 US (Nickels and McHughs, 2005) and it takes roughly 5.5 sales calls to close a sale (Sujan *et al*. 1988), it is understandable that firms encourage urgent behavior within their motivation strategies. However, these generalizations may dismiss the value of taking one's time when making decisions and meeting client demands, as urgency can be misinterpreted as standoffish and cold. In other words, a sense of urgency, while practical in some situations, may not be conducive to strengthening relationships with customers, especially if short term rewards have been offered by sales managers. Success in sales may have more to do with what sales people do rather than how hard they work or how urgent their

demeanor. Tactics in the field can make or break relationships as they reveal a salesperson's ethical boundaries and core values (Sujan et al. 1988).

2.4.1.1 Trust and the Buyer / Seller Relationship:

Ethics, Values and Influencing Tactics in the Sales Arena

Two major influencing techniques are generally used in the traditional selling process (Weitz, 1981). The first technique is described as open / direct influencing and involves being upfront with the buyer about key pieces of information. This method is conducive to maintaining a highly complex and longer seller-customer relationship and is reflective of entrepreneur effectuation concepts (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). On the other hand, closed / indirect influencing is deceitful and clandestine by nature. This approach is seldom used if the sales person desires a long-term relationship with the buyer. Rather, the approach lends itself well to the unscrupulous seller who may become unavailable after receiving his / her commissions (Weitz, 1981).

In line with this theme, 'high obstacle' salespeople tend to use more deceptive or closed influencing techniques in the hopes of overcoming the obstacles they face (Spiro and Perreault, 1979). The use of influence is directly related to the power mix between the seller and the buyer. A unique and in-demand product will give the seller more power and require less influencing effort. Conversely, a product offering that can be found bearing similar quality attributes at several firms would give the buyer more power, thus demanding a potentially significant influencing effort on the part of the salesperson.

Buyers are more amenable to informational rather than relational influence (Goff *et al*. 1994). As is the case in many sales situations, influence can cross the line into the area of 'controlling the interaction' (Weitz, 1981). This behavior presents itself when the sales person aggressively structures the customer's problem so the only logical solution involves purchasing the sales person's product.

There are ethical issues with many of these closed strategies that mirror the concerns raised over the inappropriate use of deceptive marketing (Spiro and Perreault, 1979). If customers or categories of customers have high 'willingness to pay' as in ongoing supplies for a manufacturing base, sellers will engage in less aggressive tactics (Franz, 2014). However if the customer base represents a low willingness to pay, as in the category of large ticket items such as automobiles or homes, sellers tend to

use more pressure tactics. This contribution is significant because the research was carried out with customers not sellers which brings a perspective not readily found within the literature.

Some studies have shown that higher performance correlates with higher propensity for immoral salesperson conduct and that financial rewards contribute to unethical behavior (Hoffman et al. 1991). The authors contend that commission-based remuneration packages are not conducive to building long term customer relationships as many coercive sales people suffer from the internal struggle of feeling like a 'perpetual intruder' facing constant resentment (McMurray, 1961). Such tactics in sales will erode the sales persons' and the company's image over time, which is not conducive to the building of trusting customer relationships.

In a study that surveyed a sample of 1001 citizens in the United States, it was found that most people trusted others approximately half of the time (Howard *et al*. 2006). When these results take into account age and education levels, those who were older and more educated were more likely to trust others than younger participants with less education. The exception to this trend was the trusting of government agencies and politicians, in which case the age / education factor was reversed.

Although this study is too simplistic and broad for the purposes of this thesis, it does provide a subtle introduction to the time-concept of building trust. Since trust building in business relationships takes an average of 5.6 meetings (Swan and Nolan, 1985) this may be supported by the fact that most people simply do not trust strangers in general. Another contributing factor is that if a stranger has something to sell, the trust factor is reduced dramatically (Painter and Semenik, 1979). The work does not deeply explore the concepts of the seller being an agent for a firm (salesperson) versus the seller being a self-employed craftsman or innovator, which some would relate to entrepreneurship. Further, Swan and Nolan's (1985) work on trust was self-reported by salespeople rather than qualifying that trust was achieved by asking the individual (the buyer / customer) presumed to be doing the trusting. Perhaps due to accessibility issues, this lack of triangulation is not uncommon within the literature on salesmanship. This gap may be especially relevant as testing trustworthiness by asking those in question if they are trustworthy may result in less than reliable findings.

Six basic elements of trust have been indicated as pertaining to the buyer / seller relationship. These elements include benevolence, psychological factors, value systems, past experiences / biases of buyer, the reputation of the firm, brand, or representative and the risk factor of trust (Wood *et al*. 2008).

It should be clarified that in a business setting, benevolence is defined as "behaviors that reflect an underlying motivation to place the consumer's interest ahead of self-interest" (Sun and Lin, 2010 *p*1445). This is somewhat reflective of entrepreneurial theories of humility (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). The sales person's behavior is often observed by the customer, which affects the overall development of trust. This is referred to as the 'concern for others' dimension (Saxe and Weitz, 1982).

Certain psychological factors are also significant in this process, since buyers typically utilize mental and emotional resources to contemplate trustworthiness (Swan and Nolan, 1985) and if the salesperson shares a basic value system with the customer, it increases the sales person's likelihood of gaining trust (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Examples of shared values might include concepts of family, leisure activities, political leanings or religious philosophies. Not only do shared values with customers enhance relationships and trust, but in this rare example which triangulated values against results, similarities in values between sellers and their managers increases performance (Weeks and Kahle, 1989).

Values are often ethically based but may also encompass social themes. Salespeople are frequently characterized by achievement values such as feelings of accomplishment and / or a sense of fulfillment and respect; both self-respect and respect from others (Swenson and Herche, 1994). This is relevant to this thesis because the study results showed triangulated correlation between 'strong achievement-based values' and increased performance. These 'internal' values are prevalent with individuals who prefer to have a feeling of being in control. This salesperson theme of internal locus of control has also been shown to be an important trait of entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1961; Litvak and Maule, 1974; Cromie, 2000).

Achievement-based values should not be mistaken with more generic 'moral values' which alone, were not shown to have a positive effect on performance (Schwepker and Good 2010). Further, strong hedonistic values such as fun and excitement and strong security values such as a sense of belonging and security, were not shown to affect performance either positively or negatively. It should be noted that the work of Schwepker and Good (2010) was quantitatively executed and while it provides useful information, there may be further insight gained on the concepts of morals and values within a more in-depth qualitative inquiry paradigm.

Having low moral values has been shown to negatively affect relationships with customers and increases the likelihood of participation in less than honorable selling techniques (Schwepker and Good, 2010).

However, other studies have shown that the prevalence of 'opportunity to take advantage of someone' is a stronger predictor of unethical behavior than lack of moral values (Ferrel and Gresham, 1985).

2.4.2   Values, Motivation and Purpose: Entrepreneur Drivers of Success

Understanding the values and motivators of entrepreneurs may be as challenging as defining the term itself. However, several authors have made an attempt. In order to better determine the phenomenon, it is common for researchers to compare entrepreneur values and motivators with those who occupy non-entrepreneurial positions: most often with small business owners, managers and corporate executives.

Research has distinguished between entrepreneurs and small business owners, suggesting that entrepreneurs are driven more by a desire to grow their enterprise than small business owners, who may simply seek self-employment (Carland *et al*. 1984). This creation of value above and beyond simply sustaining a modest lifestyle is often a motivating factor for entrepreneurs (Stewart *et al*. 1988). In contrast, small business owners are more interested in providing for their families while maintaining personal control over their resources and customers.

In many cases, small business owners have more in common with corporate managers than with entrepreneurs (Stewart *et al*. 1998). The single delineating factor between the two is that the small business owner will be slightly more risk inclined than the corporate manager. However, the small business owner will be less achievement driven and far more risk-evasive than the average entrepreneur. According to this definition, the small business owner may represent a nexus connecting entrepreneurship and management (Stewart *et al*. 1998).

More common than the comparison of entrepreneurs with small business owners, is the comparison of entrepreneurs and corporate managers. Managers and entrepreneurs score equally on dependability, but entrepreneurs score significantly higher on achievement motivation (Zhao and Seibert, 2006) locus of control and risk-taking propensity (Ahmed, 1985). Achievement needs are strongly connected to ego as the perceived increase in self-esteem represents a reward (Miner, 1993).

Managers, on the other hand, are more likely to be adaptive to their surroundings, finding comfort in close and intimate sources of information, often within their own firm, and responding to marketplace

cues. Entrepreneurs are more open to external, non-traditional sources of information such as filings

for patents and strangers they encounter in their travels (Kaish and Glad, 1991). Entrepreneurs not only

expose themselves to less obvious sources of information, but they are far more likely to simply trust

their own opinions and instincts than managers or executives, who are often programmed to solicit

input or consensus. Entrepreneur self-reliance theories are in line with 'lone wolf' selling attributes

(Dixon et al. 2003). A lone wolf salesperson is an optimistic high performer with above average listening

and adaptability skills, who autonomously avoids colleagues and management. Like entrepreneurs, he

prefers to work and make decisions independently (Harding, 2008). The lone wolf salesperson may

characterize a link between salesmanship and entrepreneurship but this connection was not found

within the literature. This may represent an opportunity for new perspectives within this work.

As shown in Table 2-2, the value systems, beliefs and motivators of entrepreneurs differ from those of

the general public (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005).

Table 2-2   **Values and Belief Systems Comparison: Entrepreneurs vs Wage Earners**

Category	Characteristics / Beliefs of Entrepreneurs	Characteristics / Beliefs of Wage and Salary Earners (non-entrepreneurs)
People live in need:	• Because of laziness and lack of willpower	• Because they are unlucky • Because of injustice in our society • Because it's an inevitable part of modern progress
Important qualities to teach children:	• Independence • Hard work • Imagination • Thrift • Perseverance	• Independence • Imagination • Thrift • Obedience
Evaluation of future developments:	• More emphases on the development of technology • Greater emphasis on the development of the individual • Freedom is more important than equality	• Equality is more important than freedom
Attitude towards social issues:	• There should be greater incentives for individual effort • Social stratification is not static but rather can be influenced through innovative opportunistic behavior	• Government ownership of business should be increased • The state should take more responsibility • Unemployed should have the right to refuse a job • Success is a matter of luck and connections
On changing of jobs:	• Change is not a bad thing • Change = opportunity	• Job change is discouraged and highly stressful
On change of status:	• Everyone should be able to change their social status with creative hard work • Change is constant and necessary for survival	• Social status is what it is • Making decisions and giving instructions equates to power
Income potential:	• Is unlimited for all • Success = making money • Failure = losing money	• Is a result of family background and historical social status
Equality means:	• Everyone has the same opportunity, rewards based on merit and performance	• Everyone entitled to the same rewards… treated equally

Source: derived by the author, from Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven (2005) and McGrath *et al*. (1992).

The research of McGrath *et al*. (1992) may be deemed unsurprising due to the fact that their non-entrepreneurs included teachers, bank managers and government employees. Future studies of this kind may find differing outcomes if more enterprising non-entrepreneur vocations were included in the work, such as commissioned sales representatives. Enterprise is described as creative enabling in an

adaptive manner and is a key element of entrepreneur motivation (Cromie, 2000). In fact, entrepreneurship has been represented as the 'exercise of enterprise' (Caird ,1990). Some may suggest that the key difference between an enterprising employee and an enterprising entrepreneur is the fact that the enterprising employee, while a valuable asset, is in a seemingly risk-free environment and is committed to the comfortable paradigms and moral boundaries of their firm's policies and systems.

Entrepreneurs must also be morality persistent (Stuart, 2014). While a strategy may be legal, it must also pass the ethical and morality test. Some describe this ethical and moral integrity as self-efficacy, which is a developmental trait acquired over time with life experience (Boyd and Vozikis, 1994) and which challenges the nature over nurture theorists. Personal ethics and values are crucial decision-making characteristics (Williams, 1979; Mele, 1995) and are implanted within the organization, thus affecting performance (Carpenter et al. 2004). Entrepreneurial ethical values that are self-directive have more connection to innovation driven firms while those ethical values that are more benevolent tend to lead to more collectivist organizations (Berson et al. 2008). Successful entrepreneurs have a tendency to value freedom, accomplishment and self-respect for themselves and their teams (Chapman, 2000) and their ethical values are key indicators of positive firm performance (Tomczyk et al. 2013). Further, entrepreneurs who launch their start-up with at least one partner tend to have higher concern for the well-being of their employees than entrepreneurs who launch independently. It should be noted that Tomczyk et al.'s (2013) work was comprised of quantitative inquiry which may be limited in its ability to penetrate these very personal entrepreneurship themes with richness and depth.

Many researchers have attempted to understand entrepreneurial motivation and drive, which have also been described as being 'pulled' or 'pushed' into entrepreneurial start-ups (Gray and Howard, 2006). In other words:

1. Pulled = Opportunity Start-up: identifying and exploiting gaps in the market place.

2. Pushed = Necessity Start-up: lack of employment opportunities (Cassar, 2007).

Diving slightly deeper within the opportunistic theme, there is common ground on motivation within the literature regarding financial rewards (Birley and Westhead, 1994), achievement / control needs (Carter et al. 2003; Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005), personal interest and development (Cassar, 2007) and desire to innovate and create (Shane et al. 1991). Much of this work however may be seen as one dimensional since it is common to examine motivations of entrepreneurs in a sequestered fashion. It has been suggested that this is unrealistic because there is seldom an isolated motivator for these players

(Jayawarna et al. 2011). The authors suggest that it is common to find a combination or 'cluster' of motivators for entrepreneurs, as will be shown to be the case for the participants within this new study. This cluster includes, achievement, independence and control needs, which considerably outweigh innovation and creativity as motivators of entrepreneurs (Gray and Howard, 2006). It is interesting to note that they are also strong motivators of lone wolf salespeople (Schuster and Danes, 1992; Dixon et al, 2003; Harding, 2008).

2.4.2.1   *Entrepreneur Need for Control as a Motivator*

Several scholars have studied entrepreneurial control and independence preferences. They generally have a strong need to achieve and be recognized, have a desire to take personal accountability for decisions, and have less tolerance for mundane repetitive tasks than non-entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1961; Gray and Howard, 2006). Accordingly, all these characteristics revolve around the ability to be in charge and control of the day-to-day operations of the business. Interestingly, salespeople have also been shown to have a high sense of achievement (Swenson and Herche, 1994).

Like the lone wolf salesperson (Dixon et al, 2003) entrepreneurs tend to keep colleagues in patriarchal relationships, prefer autonomy, avoid authority figures, and are generally anxious and self-destructive (Collins *et al*. 1964). The last finding could be the result of wanting to be constantly in control, as they avoid asking for help even when necessary.

Similarly, power, and freedom to make decisions are markers of entrepreneurship that substantiate control theories and help to separate the entrepreneur from the non-entrepreneur (Litvak and Maule, 1974). Further, entrepreneurial leaders are not liberal and progressive gamblers so much as focused, steadfast, controlling characters (Nicholson, 1998).

To be a successful entrepreneur one's inner character should stem from a base of decisiveness and confident inner strength, enhanced by a natural tendency to improve (Katriel, 1995) as well as the ability to deal with ambiguity (McGrath *et al*. 1992). Uncertainty or lack of control is quite stressful for the non-entrepreneur as well. In fact, while many people would enjoy being their own boss and having their name on the front of a corporate building, they often lack the temperament to cope with the day to day uncertainties related to an entrepreneurial venture (McGrath *et al*. 1992).

Further, internal locus of control is a primary indicator of success and reflects an individual's belief that hard work and perseverance can overcome obstacles (Cromie, 2000). Those with high internal locus of control do not believe that fate or bad luck contribute to their performance and do not leave anything to chance. Accordingly, successful entrepreneurs have not only a stronger internal locus of control than non-entrepreneurs, but they are also stronger in this regard than unsuccessful entrepreneurs. There is a potential connection within the literature in this regard to successful salespeople, who have been shown to attempt to take control of situations through adaptive strategies (Sujan *et al*. 1988).

In contrast, external locus of control emphasizes that most problems are caused by outside, perceived uncontrollable factors, which is often associated with non-entrepreneurs (Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). External locus of control coincides with a passive approach to personal development, which impedes the learning process. Self-improvement characteristics are more likely to be prevalent personality traits of those with an internal locus of control, which is a common trait of creative, innovative entrepreneurs (Rotter, 1966) as well as independent, achievement-driven salespeople (Dixon et al. 2003).

2.4.3   Summary – Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Motivation and Purpose

Supporting the primary objectives for this thesis, the separate literatures reveal several similarities between sellers and entrepreneurs within the themes of motivation and purpose. For instance, both are self-starters who dislike authority; which renders management motivation of highly successful salespeople a nonstarter. Past research has confirmed that internal locust of control is a predominant trait for both successful salespeople and entrepreneurs. And while financial rewards are important, they seem to represent a byproduct of strategy rather than a motivator. Rather, ego and achievement are more likely drivers of success for the performers within these groups.

There are many differences within the dynamic as well. The selling literature thoroughly explores issues of trust and unsavory influencing tactics. This did not appear to be a focus for entrepreneurship studies. Conversely, entrepreneurial team building strategies contrasted with the lone wolf salesperson's preference to be isolated from colleagues and management. And highly successful salespeople seldom seek to achieve beyond their financial and ego needs, whereas entrepreneurs often pursue goals of growing beyond one's immediate needs to become leaders in their communities, markets, and overall industries.

A more detailed summary of the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic will be discussed in the next chapter. The next section within this current chapter will explore the importance of adaptability for these players.

2.5 Adaptive Strategies of Salespeople and Entrepreneurs

The phenomenon of adapting one's behaviors and strategies to best suit the market environment, competitive atmosphere and personality of buyers is important to this thesis because it represents a correlation between sellers and entrepreneurs. In fact, all selling and entrepreneurial participants for this new study engage in adaptive behaviors to some degree. This is reflective of the separate literatures on these vocations.

2.5.1 Adaptive Selling Strategies

Adapting the sales approach to best suit the situation or more importantly, to suit the personality or mood of the customer, is an important success strategy (Sujan *et al*. 1988). This requires the sales person to take the time to carefully evaluate each need and wish of their customers. Non-adaptive selling tactics involve using the same 'canned' presentation with all prospects, which is often less effective (Weitz, 1981). Such adaptive strategies are being embraced and are in line with the entrepreneurial concepts of effectuation (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005) and bricolage (Baker, 2007) which will be discussed in a subsequent section of this thesis.

Customizing the approach for each individual situation is not always feasible based on the skill of the salesperson and the amount of information that is available in advance. Further, the concept of adaptive selling should not be confused with 'agility selling' which represents instant and urgent responses to problem solving opportunities (Terho *et al*. 2012). Such errand-running has been shown to be a short-term, reactionary behavior which neither creates sustainable value nor builds trust.

Many successful sales people possess the ability to use past experiences to read buyer signals and adapt their sales approach accordingly (Leigh and McGraw, 1989). This skill is rare as it is not easily taught, which is why it is common for sales people to use a more 'canned' or scripted approach to selling. Nonetheless, creativity, which is more a characteristic of nature than nurture, is an important trait for

those who successfully practice adaptive selling (Lassk and Shepherd, 2013) as the dynamic nature of a sales call is a complex incident that requires maneuverability (Age, 2011).

Conversely, a more scripted approach may be better suited to the average salesperson. A well planned script will include not only the subject matter of the customer need but the expected sequence of discussion points while allowing for "tactical adaptability in the particular interaction" (Leigh and McGraw, 1989, *p*19). Less effective scripts leave this order of events to chance.

However, as the inventory of past selling situations increases, the sales person risks becoming reliant on a generic approach in order to appease customer needs. This is referred to as 'cognitive script norms' (Dwyer *et al*. 1987) and caution must be taken to ensure that opportunities are not lost due to reliance on past experiences eclipsing the ability to understand a new or unique buyer.

On the contrary, it has been shown that highly effective sales people are those who utilize 'domain specific' strategies, which have been designed around the specific customer and his / her needs (Levy and Sharma, 1994; Sujan *et al*. 1999). Those who are less effective employ the 'global strategies' heralded by Jolson (2000) and Cravens *et al*. (1992). Not only should verbal strategies be adaptive but a sales person's entire body language and even the sharing of their emotions should be adaptive.

Adaptive selling represents the ability of the sales person to read cues, motives, and emotions of both customers and fellow colleagues, and respond to these signals 'adaptively' by altering their own motives, non-verbal behavior and emotional reactions (Sujan *et al*, 1999). It will be shown in the Findings Chapters that the entrepreneur and selling participants within this research concur exclusively. It should be noted that the authors do not insist that a selling approach must be different for each customer. Rather, a successful sales person will learn to categorize 'like' customers and situations, thus organizing their past experiences in their mind to enhance adaptability in the future (Sujan *et al*, 1988).

The ability to use adaptive techniques increases when one is intrinsically motivated, which will be shown in subsequent segments to be a trait of entrepreneurs (Ahmed, 1985; Zhao and Seibert, 2006). Intrinsically motivated individuals tend to avoid routine and enjoy the learning that results from creative problem solving (Jaramillo et al, 2007). Many corporations focus on extrinsic rewards to motivate individuals who would prefer to do anything but sell, rather than replace them and recruit the type of individual that is intrinsically motivated and genuinely enjoys the task (Walker *et al*. 1977). In fact, financial incentives are often of less concern to high performers with such entrepreneurial traits than being recognized and promoted to positions with higher levels of prestige

Hence, the major difference between excellent sales people and average sales people is the degree to which they combine adaptive skills with intimate knowledge of their customer's needs and their own firm's products and services (Sujan *et al*. 1991). Like entrepreneurs, top sales people link the three effectively, while average sales people fail to merge these concepts; thus missing out on opportunities.

Adaptability also involves shaping one's internal support system. Sales person performance is improved with more frequent exchange with surrounding staff; especially superiors (Sujan, 1999). Influencing superiors is more easily accomplished than many sales people know, given that the sales person is a 'boundary spanner' with access to information that is unavailable from other sources. This information; acquired on the street, is valuable to both the vending firm and its customers (Teas, 1981; Sujan, 1999). Balancing between the three main focal points of Street-Smarts is not an easy task as it involves:

1. 'Adapting' to one's surroundings and opportunities when one can, because this is easiest,

2. 'Selecting' different surroundings if this fails, and

3. 'Shaping' or influencing change in their surroundings --- this is the hardest --- if options 1 and 2 fail. Such an approach to growing one's business requires traits often associated with entrepreneurs (McGrath et al. 1992).

This environmental shaping theme represents a potential link between salespeople and entrepreneurs. The concept expands upon the basic strengths and weaknesses review, while forcing the practitioner to consider internal and external factors, not unlike the PESTLE Analysis (Cheverton *et al*. 2004) and the well-known Porter's Analysis (Porter, 1980). Having a happy, fulfilling career can largely depend on a sales person's or entrepreneur's ability to adapt to, or modify his / her surroundings (Sujan, 1999). Natural talent and abundant skill are underutilized if the individual is unhappily in the wrong environment.

Believing one has the ability to effectively change one's environment, and therefore take full responsibility for performance without excuses are elements of having an 'internal locus of control', which is an important trait for successful salespeople (Rotter, 1966; Teas, 1981: Swenson and Herche, 1994). Internal locus of control is also strongly linked to entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1961; Litvak and Maule, 1974; Cromie, 2000). It should be noted that this is one of many links to the salesmaship / entrepreneurship dynamic within the separate literatures which seemingly has not been comparatively explored.

The ultimate adaptive strategy also includes understanding when to 'walk away' from a sales opportunity. Not all sales people have developed the skill to recognize when their time is better spent elsewhere. Research has shown that there was no difference in the revenue generated from customers who asked for a 'call back' and those who simply said 'no thank you' (Schuster and Danes, 1986). This may explain why many sales people have been taught that 'no' does not always mean 'no'. Some firms literally teach their representatives that until they have heard "no" nine times, they are to persist (S-6: an interview participant for this thesis). This may contribute to the poor image and trust levels of salespeople, which will be subsequently discussed.

While this may be a sample specific phenomenon, it highlights the fact that considerable time can be wasted, even when following a customer's; or a superior's instructions. Thus, knowing when to walk away is an important trait for successful sales people. It is suggested that to know the difference and adapt accordingly, requires a skillset generally reserved for the highly qualified and often (therefore) highly paid sales person (Lars-Johan, 2011). Some would argue, and subsequent chapters will demonstrate, that opportunity evaluation and adaptability are closely tied to innovation, which is a trait more commonly credited to the successful entrepreneur.

2.5.2   Adaptive Entrepreneurship: Risk Tolerance, Creativity and Innovation

2.5.2.1   Recognizing and Adapting to Opportunities

Entrepreneurs are adept at sifting through disarray and uncertainty, and recognizing opportunity within such chaos (Timmons, 1989). It has been suggested that success has more to do with opportunity recognition than problem solving (Kaish and Gilad, 1991) and the minds of the talented few should be focused on seeking opportunities rather than solving problems; although many would argue that solving problems often results in unforeseen opportunities.

Others have suggested that opportunity recognition is knowledge based (Ardichvili *et al*. 2003) and that the enterprising ideas generated tend to reflect the formal and informal education of the individual involved. Specifically, knowledge of the industry, customer concerns and needs, and knowledge of how to logistically service the marketplace, will greatly increase the possibility of entrepreneurial opportunities being recognized (Ardichvili *et al*. 2003).

Scholars debate the construct of opportunity: is it socially possible to separate the opportunity from the recognizing individual? Or, are opportunities objective concepts that exist independently from those who recognize them? (McMullen *et al*. 2007). Opportunities require information, which is objective and independent of the individual. Opportunity recognition also requires knowledge, which is 'structured and coherent' and quite individualistic (Smith *et al*. 2009).

Contrary to the opinion that the main factor explaining successful opportunity identification stems from luck (Vesper, 1980) research has shown that work experience is the most prominent factor influencing this phenomenon (Gilad *et al*. 1988). In fact, the two primary reasons that some will succeed and others will fail to recognize opportunities is that the successful opportunists have the prior experience and knowledge to identify prospects and they also have the cognitive abilities to understand the value that the opportunity represents (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Further debunking the luck or 'serendipity' theories of Vesper (1980) is the feature that many entrepreneurs invest considerable resources seeking out and evaluating new opportunities or exploitable venture ideas (Shaver and Scott, 1991). This deliberate act cannot be attributed to luck. Rather, entrepreneurial opportunities and start-ups tend to be germinated from a belief that one has "lower information costs than other people" *(p*280) and it simply occurs as a result of opportunistic imbalance in the marketplace (Kaish and Gilad, 1991).

2.5.2.2   *The Risk of Adapting to Opportunities*

Hull *et al*. (1980) maintain that entrepreneurs not only adapt to market opportunities, but they take on a degree of risk in order to make a profit. This risk is often both monetary and emotional (Carland et al, 1984). However, others argue that an entrepreneur creates his own risk instead of one who takes on pre-existing risk (Kets de Vries, 1977). In this context, risk reflects a psychological or social phenomenon. Many agree that founders of companies require a significantly stronger propensity for risk and ambiguity tolerance than non-founders, (Begely and Boyd, 1987) and opportunity cannot exist without some degree of risk (McMullen *et al*. 2007), although this may be argued by effectuation theorists (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005, 2008; Fisher 2014). Effectuation will be subsequently discussed.

The risk-taking propensity theory is also challenged by the fact that many entrepreneurs simply do not perceive what they are doing as risky at all (Shaver and Scott, 1991). Therefore, rather than having a propensity for risk, they simply have a lack of fear. If applying resources and adapting to market trends

and needs creates no fear, courage is unnecessary as risk is not recognized. Those who seek sanctuary consider and measure the adverse consequences whereas those who are more prospective put more emphasis on potential (Shaver and Scott, 1991).

Risk taking characteristics are traditionally touted as the most distinguishing factors separating entrepreneurs from other individuals. However with strong analytics and proper planning, adaptive entrepreneurial strategies reduce risk (Hunt *et al*. 1986). Arguably, 'creative risk taking' better describes entrepreneurs (Stewart *et al*. 1998) which is in line with effectuation theorists (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2008). It is worth noting that the entrepreneurial participants for this thesis were exclusively of the view that through opportunity recognition and analysis there is minimal risk to starting new endeavors.

It was a 19th century economist J.S. Mill who first used the word entrepreneur in the present context, suggesting that 'risk bearing' was the primary distinguishing factor between managers and entrepreneurs (Brokhaus, 1987). However, most vocations involve some degree of risk and some have professed that 'innovation' is a more accurate point of discernment (Schumpter, 1934). The literature cites Schumpter's (1934) theories on entrepreneurship frequently, which speaks to an adaptive, creative approach to problem solving with an inspirational flare. The author suggests that entrepreneurs have a tendency to be unfettered by the boundaries established by others, but rather enthusiastically drive change. Interestingly, contributing to the objectives of this thesis, highly successful salespeople consider themselves agents of change; constantly adapting to customer needs (Painter and Semenik, 1979). However, research exploring the salesperson's propensity for risk was not found by this author.

Taking on risk to adaptively drive change is closely related to innovation, which is at the core of entrepreneurship (Drucker, 1985). Systematically responding to, or being the catalyst of change in the marketplace is key to innovative economic prosperity (Kirton, 1976; Stewart *et al*. 1998).

Supporting the creative and innovative theorists, successful entrepreneurs are often capable of creating differentiation in their offerings even when on the surface there is none to be seen. Within this bricolage related context, prosperous entrepreneurs have a greater ability to recognize and adapt when opportunity presents (Baker and Nelson, 2005).

On a deeper level, entrepreneurship has been described as an adaptive and creative progression (Steyaert, 1997). Entrepreneurship is associated with using resources creatively or all together differently (Cromie, 2000). In an attempt to understand and teach concepts of entrepreneurship, scholars have identified 3 primary categories of the theme: causation (Fisher, 2012), effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2001, 2008) and bricolage (Baker and Nelson, 2005).

The 'causal' approach to entrepreneurship is thought of as more traditional and involves the identification and subsequent exploitation of gaps in the marketplace. Such practitioners apply analysis to minimize risk and predict profitable outcomes (Sarasvathy, 2001; Fisher, 2012). Business plans are established and resources secured to apply against the opportunity. The causal approach to entrepreneurship suggests that opportunities are not created but rather pre-exist, and cannot be developed without specific market insights and the resources to adapt to the need.

However, some believe that the needs within the marketplace are ever-changing and cannot be foreseen. There is "no well-articulated demand, and therefore no market, 'out there' to be found or predicted" (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005, p229). Therefore, subsequent entrepreneurial approaches to predictability theories, such as low risk trial and error strategies must exist. 'Effectuation' refers to the "affordable loss principle" (Fisher, 2014, p1022).

Entrepreneurs engaging in effectuation techniques recognize opportunities and often use their own resources (funding, internal human skillsets, external customer and supplier relationships) to adapt to needs and opportunities in a way that ensures that all is not lost if the venture underperforms (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2008). 'What I can afford to lose?' becomes more important than 'what do I stand to gain?' The leveraging of existing relationships becomes more important than competitive analysis within this strategy: focusing more on strategic partnerships and less on keeping ahead of the competition (Fisher, 2014). Furthermore, such practitioners of effectuation will embrace changes and surprises as opportunities for the nimble rather than cumbersome deviations from a rigid plan. Interestingly, such adaptive behavior has also been shown to be an important aspect of success in selling situations (Sujan, 1999).

Effectual entrepreneurs remain flexible to influence their ever-changing environment rather than attempting to predict it or simply ride out its momentum. In other words, the effectual entrepreneur

will trust in his or her adaptability strengths and reduce risk by forming or building upon strategic partnerships with committed stakeholders, which reduces the reliance on predictability (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005).

Figure 2-2 illustrates the authors' model of effectuation.

Figure 2-2   **Effectuation Illustration**
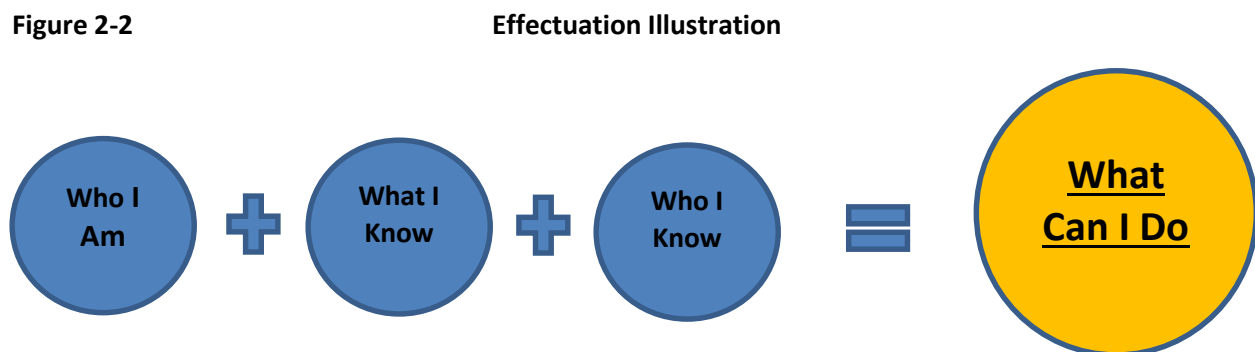
Derived by the author based upon Sarasvathy and Dew (2005)

Practitioners must caution against over-trusting in situations reliant upon effectual entrepreneurial relationships (Goel and Kari, 2006). However, to measure over-trust there must be a standardization of 'optimal trust' which is difficult to measure even in hindsight (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2008). Regardless, entrepreneurial effectuation involves a degree of unpredictability for all parties. Thus, by minimizing and sharing the risk equally one party is not reliant upon, or forced to trust the other disproportionately.

Perhaps a more innovative form of entrepreneurial adaptivity is bricolage, which simply put is the creative use of 'on-hand' resources (Baker, 2007; Salimath and Jones, 2011; Fisher, 2012; Power and Baker, 2014; Senyard et al. 2014). This concept involves 'making do' with people and materials that exist within the firm already but may be underutilized. One of the more familiar examples of bricolage is the Levi Straus solution for gold miner's need of trouser durability. Straus had strong canvas on hand for tent shelters from which he innovatively constructed pants. This durable product became the 'blue jean' which continues to be popular over 100 years later (Levi-Straus, 1966).

Firms which engage in bricolage have been shown to score high on innovativeness (Senyard et al. 2013) and often will not accept what others may view as limitations or restraints (Di Domenico et al. 2010). In fact, this approach represents a differentiation in some cases between successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs as 'bricoleurs' tend to recognize opportunities and resource availability that others reject,

ignore or simply miss (Baker and Nelson, 2005). It is worth noting that Senyard et al.'s (2013) study may provide stronger insights had they provided their working definition of entrepreneur.

Interestingly, bricolage may represent simple common sense to many entrepreneurs (Salimath and Jones, 2011; Senyard et al., 2013) who amend and revise existing products and services to solve problems (Salimath and Jones, 2011). However, if institutions wish to teach entrepreneurial concepts, methods must be developed to externalize the strategies and behaviors of these characters which scholars struggle to define. These are individuals who adaptively drive change through innovation, and they often work outside society's norms (Schumpter, 1934). Accordingly, the creativity of entrepreneurs makes it difficult to develop a formal and predictive scientific theory to study entrepreneurship, as creativity is such a subjective and internalized concept.

2.5.3   The Cycle of Adaptivity: from Entrepreneur to Manager

The creativity model has spawned several definitions that describe the entrepreneur as independent, impulsive, and dissatisfied with mainstream employability. Depravity theories suggest that the entrepreneur; driven by an inability to function within society's norms, defensively creates a new reality for himself in his enterprise where he is King (Kets de Vries, 1977). Thus, like the lone wolf salesperson the adaptive entrepreneur creates a new world, separating himself from his history of neglect and unreliable authority figures. This represents a significant emotional attachment to the business that managers and corporate executives might not possess.

This external factor represents environmental influence, which contradicts much of the individualistic entrepreneurial theory in the literature. Entrepreneurs are more individually oriented than the rest of the population and therefore seek independence from the masses. This need for autonomy has been historically explained by a general distrust of others (Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). It is this distrust that forces the entrepreneur to seek out less structured opportunities where he can more independently function within his own control preferences (Kets de Vries, 1977). Interestingly, these theories are not in line with adaptive entrepreneurship concepts. Rather, the authors suggest that an inability to adapt to the rules and regulations within the corporate structure may drive individuals to seek self-employment. In other words, entrepreneurs force their environment to adapt rather than adapt themselves to an undesirable environment. Thus, to some entrepreneurs, the risks associated

with independence represent a lesser evil than enduring frustration with authority figures (Susbauer, 1972; Draheim, 1972; Shapero, 1975).

While some are pushed into entrepreneurship by dissatisfaction, others are pulled into a new start-up by an exciting idea. And whether one functions within the spirit of causation, effectuation or bricolage, successful entrepreneurs inevitably will face the dilemma of evolving into a managerial role or moving on to another venture (Kaish and Gilad, 1991) which is in line with serial entrepreneurship (Chen, 2000; Zhang, 2009; Harvey, 2012). It is suggested that once the business is at a point of generating revenue and profits for multiple stakeholders, even the entrepreneur becomes somewhat protective of the creation. Bold, risky decisions which are often conducive to the early stages of an enterprise are eventually replaced with more moderate and adaptive behaviors which move the organization forward in careful steps (Mintzberg, 1973). Ironically, often opportunistic entrepreneurial characters do not adapt well to their own company needs as the firm eventually requires a manager as well as an innovator.

2.5.4   Summary: Exploring the Ever-Changing Concepts of Salesmanship and Entrepreneurship

Within this section, prior theory on the concepts of sales and selling was explored. It has been shown that selling philosophies have changed considerably over time. However, it has also been demonstrated that certain traditional interpersonal traits and attributes continue to be conducive to success in the sales profession. Table 2-3 provides a summary of how the perception of the concept of personal selling has evolved over a half century.

Table 2-3   **Sales Role Transition over Time**

Category	1960's Role of Salesperson	1980's Role of Salesperson	2000's Role of Salesperson
Salesperson Image / Self-image	• Sell! Sell! Sell! • Intruder / charmer • Insincere • Independent (McMurray, 1961)	• Consultant • Service representative • Not a traditional salesperson (Spiro and Weitz, 1990)	• Partner • Facilitator • Project manager • Resource gatherer (Prakash *et al*. 2007)
Selling Vernacular	• Seduction • Charm / flattery • Wooing instinct • Numbers game (McMurray, 1961)	• Value add • Nurture good accounts • Win – win • Needs based selling (Weitz, 1981)	• Linking / sharing • Manage customers not products • Adaptive teams (Osarenkhoe, 2008)
Personal Qualities or Traits of Effective Sales People	• Energy • Greed / hostility • Neurotic / immature • Egotistical / must win • Time management (McMurray, 1961)	• Consensus builders • Mature / confident • non-assertive • Business planners • Fair play / reactionary (Blau and Boal, 1989)	• Confident leaders • Facilitators • Adaptive selling (Jaramillo *et al*. 2007; Sharma *et al*. 2007)
Suggested Activities / Priorities	• Sales is simply a numbers game: 9 rejections for 1 purchase (McMurray, 1961)	• Build relationships • Entertain • Analyze the business (Anglin *et al*. 1990)	• Key account teams • Selective partners – exchanging resources • Drive mutual growth • Relationships (Dawson, 2008)
Teachability	• Selling ability cannot be taught; based on natural traits (McMurray, 1961)	• Attempt to develop all members of the team • Management by Objectives (MBO's) (Schuster and Danes, 1986)	• TEAMS: less reliance on individual traits • Consultative skills are deemed teachable (Shaw *et al*. 2002; Wilson, 2006; Prakash, 2007)
Customer Relationships	• Transient • Superficial (McMurray, 1961)	• Friends / social • Integrity (Berry, 1995)	• Customers = partners • Disclosure / trust (Dawson, 2008)
Annual Sales Turnover Rate	• 400% (Blau and Boal, 1989)	• 20% (Wotruba and Tyagi, 1991)	• 27% (DeConinick, 2009)
Management Approach	• Firm control • Show no weakness • Strict discipline (McMurray, 1961)	• Find a role for all, even the incompetent • Even necessary turnover = failure (Williams and Livingstone, 1994)	• Coaching / advising • Culling under-performers (Berry, 2002)
Management Qualities or Traits	• A good manager is the best sales person • Motivator / driver (Cheverton *et al*. 2004)	• Friendly / cheerleader • Growth through non-traditional channels • Manage from distance (home office trend) (Weitz, 1981)	• Empower others • Business analysis and planning vs selling • Ability to function internationally (Rust *et al*. 2010)

Source: Derived by the author on the basis of the literature.

The traits, characteristics and behaviors of selling practitioners vary and these players continue to prioritize methods and measure success in different ways. However, Table 2-3 supports the theory that defining success in sales, and defining the methods and traits necessary to achieve that success are dynamic and ever-changing; contributing to the lack of consensus among academics. Causative factors include technology advancements which allow vendors and customers to share more information than ever before; in real time. Further, less differentiation between brands of products facilitates likeability of the salesperson as a critical motivator for buyer's decision-making (Sojka and Deeter-Schmelz, 2002).

There also seems to be a pattern indicating that over time the emphasis has changed from trait analysis to adaptability theories which some might argue is reflective of entrepreneurial relationship building behavior. As will be demonstrated in subsequent sections, this one-on-one relationship building process is crucial to achieving high levels of success for both sellers and entrepreneurs.

Further, an opportunity exists to better triangulate traits, characteristics and behaviors against results and customer perceptions. It is not common within the literature to quantify attributes against performance, which may represent an opportunity to make the findings more useful to practitioners. Even less common is the inclusion of actual buyer / customer feedback as a reality check. If salesperson trustworthiness is in question, testing a hypothesis with self-reporting methodology may not allow for objective truths to emerge.

And finally, this section began to uncover certain correlations between the vocation of selling and the act of entrepreneurship. These concepts germinated within the prior theory on 'street smarts' (Sujan, 1999), adaptive strategies (Weitz, 1981; Sujan *et al*. 1991; Sujan, 1999; Sharma *et al*. 2007, Hughes et al, 2012) and environmental shaping (Sujan, 1999). It is worthy of note that none of these authors made any reference to a connection between salespeople and entrepreneurs.

Most scholars seem to agree to not agree on the definition of entrepreneur, although few would dispute that the meaning of the term has changed over time. It should be noted that much of the literature prior to the turn of the century viewed these bold, risk-takers or rejuvenators as individual entities. However, more recently successful entrepreneurs are involved with teams of contributors (Dodd, 2007). The evolution of entrepreneurship includes the deviant, dysfunctional non-team player description of Kets de Vries (1977) versus the motivational, exciting hero theories of Garfield (1986) and the team-building adaptive theories of Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Dodds (2007). This change in emphasis from

individual traits to more adaptive, team-building themes is reflective of the changes over time within the separate literature on salespeople (see Table 2-3).

Team leaders in business must be able to stimulate group commitment to their vision (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). This is not an easy task as groups can obstruct the decision-making process, confuse the workplace ethical philosophies and create hierarchies that are not conducive to entrepreneurial pursuit. This conflict represents a connection to the 'lone wolf' salesperson who avoids colleagues and teamwork at all costs, as such activities are deemed a waste of time (Dixon et al. 2003). It is therefore important for entrepreneurs to be able to adapt not just to their markets but to the internal needs of their firms.

However, the more passionate discussions seem to encompass softer themes such as trait theory and creativity. Table 2-4 provides a summary of the changes within the literature over 2 decades. Interestingly, the earlier interpretation seems to represent a harder, more calculated descriptive and twenty years later the traits are softer and more artistic in nature. Also of interest is the fact that there is no mention of propensity to take risks in the 2005 summary, which is a departure from most of the literature reviewed by this author.

Table 2-4 **Entrepreneurial Trait Literature Comparison over Time**

Olm and Eddy (1985)	Malach-Pines *et al*. (2005)
Self-generating enthusiasm and excitement	Initiative
Propensity to take calculated risks	Love of challenge
Determination / driven to goal attainment	Creativity
Understanding trends and markets	Optimism
Ability to plan and execute a plan	Independence
	Commitment
	Being a dreamer

Source: derived by the author, from Olm and Eddy (1985) and Malach-Pines *et al*. (2005)

While there are differences, there are also commonalities between scholarly findings over time which include themes of innovation, internal achievement and comfort with risk

It should also be noted that the literature on entrepreneurs tends to lean primarily towards those who succeed. As was discussed this may have an effect on findings given the fact that in North America 3 out of 4 entrepreneurial start-ups fail (Gilbert, 2009). Ironically, this thesis is in line with this 'success as a barrier to entry' phenomenon, however it is differentiated somewhat by the inclusion of this fact within the Limitations and Opportunities for Future Research sections.

These gaps represent opportunity for new perspectives. Further, there are several themes within this chapter that highlighted a significant connection within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic. The following chapter will further summarize these recurring connecting concepts within prior theory. This author's review of the literature indicates that these connections have not previously been a primary research focus.

Literature Review Summary – Building a Conceptual Framework
Recognizing Similarities and Differences, and Identifying the Gaps in Prior Theory

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

3.1   Introduction: Conceptual Framework

In the previous chapter this thesis explored the concepts of salesmanship and entrepreneurship, highlighting several commonalities and differences within these separate literatures. This chapter will provide a summary of this dynamic within the development of a more specific conceptual framework for this new study. Potential for new perspectives exists within these themes, grounded by prior research. Figure 3:1 characterizes a macro strategy for this thesis, illustrating the ongoing return to the literature.

Figure 3-1 **Concepual Framework Illustration**

Literature Review

Entrepreneur

Sales

Image / Trust

Similarities / Differences

Meta-analysis & Research Opportunities

Fieldwork / Case Study Interviews	
Salespeople	Entrepreneurs

Analysis	
Similarities	Differences

Outcomes	
Implications for Practitioners	Implications for Academia
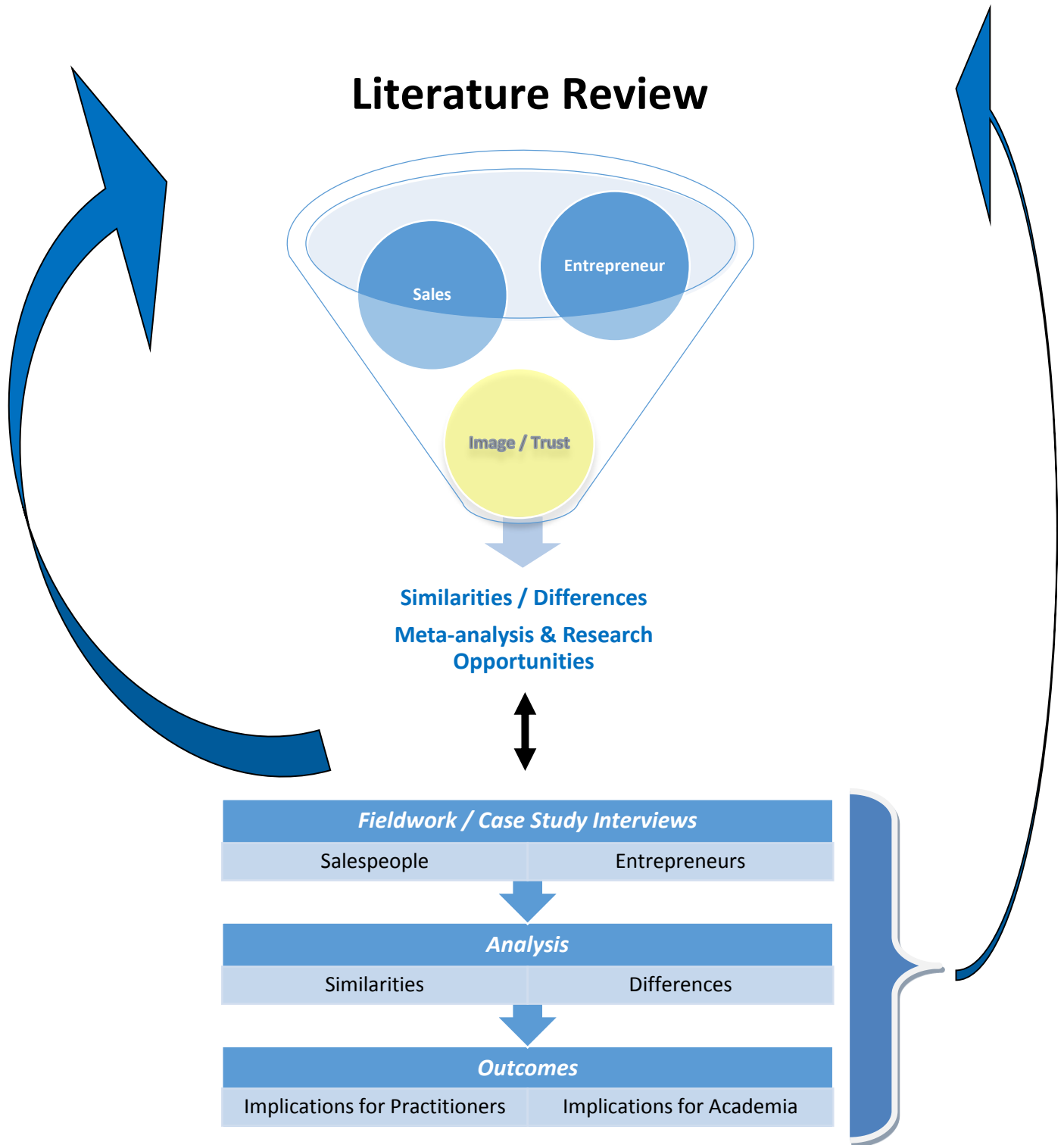
Source: derived by the author based upon the literature.

Figure 3-1 demonstrates the funneling or narrowing down process of past research to identify traits and behaviors of highly successful salespeople and entrepreneurs. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, elements of trust such as image and prestige represent an important difference within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic. These independent themes will crossover and be analyzed within this chapter, highlighting the relationships that seem to exist within prior work. This meta-analysis will in turn provide a foundation for the conceptual framework; or 'situate' (Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009, *p*126) this new research.

3.2 A Meta-analysis:

3.2.1 Commonalities – Traits, Characteristics and Behaviors of Successful Salespeople and Entrepreneurs within the Literature

Entrepreneurial research seemed to be profoundly concerned with comparing the actors with other professions, although the occupation of salesperson was not included in the many cases that this author explored. One inadvertent exception was an entrepreneurial study which included a real estate salesperson as an entrepreneur, which further highlights the dilemma of defining entrepreneurial concepts. Another exception occurs within the work of Chang and Rieple (2013) who noted that students who gained access to actual entrepreneurs were exposed to their insights regarding the necessity to sell and understand the needs of customers.

The following analysis (Table 3-1) summarizes the correlation between the traits of salespeople and entrepreneurs within the separate literatures. A more detailed version of this chart is provided as Appendix 2, which includes a comprehensive list of authors who have contributed to prior research respectively. This is the basis for the crossover research opportunity for this thesis. The independent literature indicates that a correlation seems to exist, which occurred by asking disconnected questions; both qualitative and quantitative of disconnected players: salespeople and entrepreneurs. This new research seeks to ask similar questions to both groups and to probe deeply to better understand this dynamic.

Any lack of similarities or lack of differences between the sellers and entrepreneurs may be because none exist or because the topic has not been thoroughly studied. This statement holds true for all categories within this chart and will not be repeated in each instance.

Table 3-1   **Building a Foundation for Strategic Conceptual Framework**

Unrecognized Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic within Prior Theory

(Similarities and Differences are based on Analysis of the Separate Literature)

Similarities	Differences	Crossover
VOCATIONAL IMAGE Within the separate literature reviewed for this thesis there is no significant contribution discussing similarities between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding vocational image.	**VOCATIONAL IMAGE** Several authors have explored the distrust of and poor occupational prestige of salespeople. Conversely, entrepreneurs have been shown to earn trust more easily and enjoy considerably higher occupational prestige.	**VOCATIONAL IMAGE** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant ideas regarding the definition of entrepreneurship and more specifically entrepreneurs. - Participant views on the image and occupational prestige of salespeople and entrepreneurs.
CULTERAL BACKGROUND THEORY Within the separate literature reviewed for this thesis there is no significant contribution highlighting similarities between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding cultural background theory.	**CULTERAL BACKGROUND THEORY** It has been shown that the vocation of sales is often populated by those with minimal exposure to post-secondary education. It has alternatively been demonstrated that successful entrepreneurs typically have pursued higher learning subsequent to their secondary education. Within this genre there exists several studies on childhood experiences of the entrepreneur and more specifically, the industrious work ethic example typically shown by parents of entrepreneurs. This has not been found to have been thoroughly studied within the concept of selling.	**CULTERAL BACKGROUND THEORY** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant ideas and experiences with parental example and family background including education. - Teachability concepts including mentorship. - Job enjoyment concepts (work is fun).
ASSERTIVENESS THEORIES The separate literatures describe urgency and assertiveness traits for both sellers and entrepreneurs. It is also suggested that both sellers and entrepreneurs can have competitive qualities and prefer to be evaluated and rewarded for performance.	**ASSERTIVENESS THEORIES** Within the genre of assertiveness theories several authors have explored the influencing tactics of salespeople. Research on entrepreneurs using influencing tactics on potential customers was not found within the literature reviewed for this thesis. The desire to grow beyond immediate self-needs was not found to be a topic of great interest on salespeople, however there is	**ASSERTIVENESS THEORIES** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant ideas and experiences regarding assertive or pushy influencing tactics. - Concepts related to competitive spirit and understanding competitors (a question will be included to investigate any connection to athleticism).

Similarities	Differences	Crossover
	extensive study on the need or desire for entrepreneurs to grow beyond themselves.	- Concepts related to integrity and honesty.
CONTROL PREFERENCES There is some consistency within the separate literature regarding the disdain of authority for both salespeople and entrepreneurs. The literature on the concept of preferring to work alone also represents a similarity between the vocations but seems to have changed over time. Salespeople were shown in dated studies be prefer isolation and independence but more recent work highlights the concepts of team selling to lessen the reliance on individuals with key customers. Similarly, in the previous century Entrepreneurs were seen by some authors as autonomous freedom seekers who avoid authority figures, but more recently entrepreneurs are referred to as opportunity seeking team builders. And the final similarity observed within the separate literature on these vocations is that both can have a propensity for low occupational commitment.	**CONTROL PREFERENCES** The concept of taking on, or even acknowledging the existence of stakeholder risk is absent from the reviewed literature on salespeople. Risk is prevalent however within the readings on entrepreneurs.	**CONTROL PREFERENCES** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant dealings with authority. - Isolation preferences verses team. - Occupational commitment. - Strategic planning and time-management. - Participant propensity to engage in risky endeavors.
HUMANITY Being self or intrinsically motivated has been shown to be a humanistic trait of both salespeople and entrepreneurs. Optimism and enjoying ones profession has also been shown to be a trait of salespeople and entrepreneurs. Several separate studies on leadership have shown that both successful salespeople and entrepreneurs can be inspirational coaches. The literature indicates that it is not uncommon for salespeople to be frustrated with their employers which is a contributor to the high turnover rates within the profession. It has also been shown that many	**HUMANITY** The separate literature on salespeople suggests that they are likely to be motivated by financial rewards. Conversely, the literature on entrepreneurs suggests that financial rewards do not represent a strong motivation for these players. The concept of "luck" contributing to the success of entrepreneurs was explored by several authors; arguing that luck generally played a role. The role of luck contributing to success in sales was not thoroughly explored within the literature reviewed for this thesis.	**HUMANITY** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant ideas and experiences with 'luck' as a contributor to success. - Definition of and reasons for personal success. - Achievement and recognition needs. - Participant experience with frustration on the job and specifically the contribution of frustration as a driver for entrepreneurial start-up.

Similarities	Differences	Crossover
entrepreneurs left the security of corporate positions to venture into entrepreneurship due to frustration on the job. And finally, it has been shown that to be successful, both salespeople and entrepreneurs should score high on achievement needs.		
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS The separate literature on salespeople (Table 2-3) and entrepreneurs (Table 2-4) indicates that the characteristics of these players has changed over time. A review of the separate literature on salespeople and entrepreneurs indicates that both sellers and entrepreneurs can have neurotic 'loner' tendencies. Although the players may differ regarding their strategic and financial approach to the concept, both sellers and entrepreneurs have been shown to be strong at recognizing and understanding opportunities.	**PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS** Within the literature there are several differences identified between the characteristics of salespeople and entrepreneurs. They have been addressed within this chart in other sections.	**PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant loner tendencies. - Experiences with opportunity recognition. - Work ethic and values.
ADAPTABILITY THEORIES The separate literature suggests that both sellers and Entrepreneurs should have the ability to earn trust and build strong relationships to succeed long term. This is a task that often requires a creative and innovative approach to ensure differentiation for these players. The distinctive literatures on these two vocations highlight the need for salespeople and entrepreneurs to be highly adaptive to their surroundings. To recognize opportunities and be ready to adapt accordingly requires a level of patience and tolerance for both salespeople and entrepreneurs.	**ADAPTABILITY THEORIES** Within the separate literatures reviewed for this thesis there are no significant contributions highlighting differences between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding adaptability. It is quite possible that these two vocations, which have been shown to engage in adaptive strategies, actually adapt in different ways to opportunities and challenges. This will be explored with participants.	**ADAPTABILITY THEORIES** **Concepts of specific interest to this thesis:** - Participant ideas and experiences with customer relationship building (for instance, 'is the customer always right?'). - Adaptive and differentiation strategies.

Source: created by the author from the literature (2013).

Detailed review of the literature indicates that there is a broad intersection of categorical interests within prior work on salesmanship and entrepreneurship as shown in Table 3-1 which provided a basis

for the conceptual framework. Although 72 themes surfaced from the field work they were narrowed down based upon categorical validity. Table 3-2 expands this theme to summarily include many sub-categories which merged to reflect the themes of the conceptual framework. The 8th category: "The Sales / Entrepreneur dynamic" represents new perspectives born within this thesis.

Table 3-2   Research Category Reduction – Supporting the Conceptual Framework

Category Headings	No. of Sub Categories	No. of References
Vocational Image of the Sales Person	1	21
Cultural and Professional Background - Career Path / Upbringing / Education	4	125
Assertiveness - Competitive Nature (& competitors)	4	53
Control Preferences - Strategy / Systems / Management	7	90
Humanity - Work Ethic / Motivation / Incentives / Leadership / Risk Propensity	4	121
Characteristics and Traits – Defining Success, Ethics & Values	4	128
Adaptability - Relationships (internal & external) / Creativity / Innovation	7	118
The Sales / Entrepreneur Dynamic	2	46
	33	**761**

Source: derived by the author.

While this work has identified parallels between salesmanship and entrepreneurship, it is perhaps of similar importance to highlight the contrasts within the separate literatures. In the following section these differences between the vocations will be explored. As with the identified similarities, research on the differences between these characters does not seem to have been of primary importance to date.

As stated by Levitt (1962):

> *"Selling is as basic to our society as metabolism is to life. It might be argued that selling is the*
> *metabolism of free enterprise. And since our society is thoroughly committed to the system of*
> *free enterprise, one would naturally expect that its people are thoroughly committed to the idea*
> *of selling --- that they openly accept the crucial role of selling and salesmanship and that*
> *salesmen are honored citizens. But curiously, selling just doesn't have this lofty status in*
> *America. In fact, it occupies one of the lowest rungs on the occupational status ladder" (p2).*

3.3   Trust and Occupational Prestige

The suspicion and disdain surrounding those who sell has endured for thousands of years. Steiner (1976) documented the longstanding distrust for sales, starting with Plato (428 to 347 BCE) who suggested that merchants represented the weakest (physical) members of society, unsuitable for tasks other than to peddle. He, like Ciero (106 to 43 BCE), felt that vendors were "unfriendly and unfaithful both to their own citizens and other nations" (Steiner, 1976, *p*6) and that goods resold at a profit meant the merchant either bought them for less than the product's true value or sold the products at a price exceeding their worth.

Interestingly, the poor image of merchants, sales people and / or marketers has withstood the test of time. This is evidenced through several comprehensive studies, which cast a wider net on the trust and prestige of many occupations; including sales positions. 'Occupational Prestige' is difficult to define due to the subjective nature of the concept. A person's environment, upbringing and values differ, as does their perceptions of their surroundings (Swan and Adkins, 1980).

Prestige is defined as one's standing or estimation of credibility in general opinion (Merriam-Webster - Prestige, 2009). Credibility represents one's capacity to be believed or trusted (Merriam-Webster – Credibility, 2009). Therefore, there is a direct relationship between occupational prestige and the level of trust of one's vocation.

Occupational prestige encapsulates many 'job attributes' and 'socioeconomic variables,' such as income level, influence of the position, value level of the position's activities, respectability of the position, and level of education or official scientific expertise required to fulfill the position (Swan and Adkins, 1980).

People who occupy, or wish others to perceive that they occupy prestigious positions in society tend to dress in expensive clothing, be highly educated or derive from wealth, often possessing a demeanor that is standoffish (Swan and Adkins, 1980; Thompson, 2009). Prestige is consigned to entice people to vocations by providing various rewards and stimulus (Swan and Adkins, 1982). It can bestow an advantage for individuals by insinuating positive presumptions from others, and by creating a launch pad for wielding power and authority. As a result, 'Occupational Prestige', is considered a measurement of societal influence and advantage that is bestowed upon those holding certain vocations (Swan and Adkins, 1980).

Several polls indicate that the sales person ranks at the very bottom of the occupational prestige scale, below union leaders, lawyers and politicians (Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005). Specifically, the car salesperson is the least trusted profession in America, according to Baldwin (1992).

The social image of various vocations was evaluated by Polish citizens in the 1970's. From a total sample of 29 different occupations, 'trade', which incorporates sales, marketing and wholesaling, ranked in the 26th position. Only unskilled labor positions ranked lower (Hodge *et al*. 1964, Steiner, 1976). On the contrary, 300 MBA students from three different countries found that entrepreneurs were considered third highest in perceived social status, behind physicians and lawyers, and above other respected professions such as scientist, manager, journalist, teacher and social worker (Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005). The social status of entrepreneurs was further supported by a Harris Poll (2004) which indicated that entrepreneurship ranked 4 times higher in occupational prestige than sales people as shown in Appendix 4.

This issue of salesperson occupational prestige represents a significant difference within the separate literature on selling and entrepreneurship and inspires a more profound exploration of vocational trust as it pertains to those who sell professionally. Is this a burden placed upon the modern salesperson by less than scrupulous predecessors, or are there behavioral issues that continue to contribute to the ongoing lack of trust and respect for the vocation?

3.4   The Issue of Trust in a Sales Context

Due to the landscape of the service industry, and the general levels of distrust in many societies, having the ability to gain trust may be a vendor's most important determinant of developing strong customer

relationships (Berry, 1996). In fact, it has been suggested that one way to improve the image and trust levels of sales people is to adjust their occupational title (Ingram and Schwepker, 1993). Titles set the stage for a relationship because they provide the recipient with an instant recognition of what may come. When the words sell and / or sales were substituted with terminology to reflect the genre of marketing the image of the title improved (Swan and Adkins, 1980-1). In fact, the label of salesperson is so negative that when buyers were informed that the role remained the same; that of a 'salesperson', but the title had simply been changed in the hopes of altering the image of the position (thus exposing the intent to deceive) it was found that the higher prestige level related to the new title did not decrease (Swan and Adkins, 1980-1). In other words, buyers would rather be lied to about the role and title of a representative than be called upon by someone with the title of 'salesperson'.

It is very important to this thesis that society's level of disdain for salespeople has been firmly established. The literature is very clear in this regard. This poor image is enhanced by the fact that the profession is known to lend itself to frequent staff changes. The average annual turnover rate of sales employees is 27% in the United States (Darmon, 2008) which is more than double that of the rest of the national workforce. Interestingly, the pharmaceutical sales category, which generally requires a college or university degree (Hanson, 2012) has a turnover rate of just 15%. Car dealerships, where sales employment can often be gained without even a high school diploma, exceed 60% turnover annually (Darmon, 2008). There is a direct correlation between education levels and tenure within this occupational category. In fact, being young, male, and possessing a lower educational status indicates a higher turnover rate in general, as well as a higher propensity to be involved in sales (Darmon, 2008).

Societal image and high turnover rates represent hurdles for even the most honorable of sellers who acknowledge that building trust quickly with customers is the highest priority (Swan and Nolan, 1985). In fact, business to business (B2B) sales people require an average of 5.6 customer calls (visits / meetings) to gain trust. This is in line with the literature in that over time people either develop more or less trust for others (Swan *et al*. 1985). In fact, only 7% of respondents described attaining trust on the first visit, with the majority identifying an initial goal of simply establishing some rapport. It should be noted that the study engaged a sampling of sales people rather than buyers. The research may have more significance if the incidences of trust were measured by the individuals presumed to be doing the trusting.

Given that the occupational prestige of entrepreneurs (and therefore trust) is higher than that of sales people it follows that those in a position to make large purchasing decisions would rather deal with an owner (entrepreneur) than a representative of the owner (salesperson). The literature demonstrates that entrepreneurs need to worry only about 'not losing trust' while salespeople face an uphill, and frequently never-ending battle to earn it.

This chapter has shown that many scholars feel that trust in business equates to credibility. Like trust, credibility and prestige are not ingredients to be added, or skills to be taught. They represent perceptions that lack unbiased measure (Sharma, 1990). Messages from those with credibility and prestige are processed on a deeper level, which increases the likelihood of message acceptance. Therefore, since it has been shown that entrepreneurs enjoy high levels of occupational prestige (Davis *et al*. 1989) messages from entrepreneurs, even if they are selling something, are more likely to be met with acceptance than messages from salespeople who have significantly lesser occupational prestige. The conceptual framework for this thesis is designed to explore and compare these phenomenon which have received little attention within the literature.

It is of importance to this research project to gain understanding of the behaviors that may contribute to the poor image of sellers, as well as the behaviors that may contribute to the positive image of entrepreneurs. A research framework which reveals such specific traits and behavioral themes is important to both academics and practitioners for several reasons. For instance, it is of interest to understand a more current and specific rationale for the poor image of salespeople. Are they unfairly branded by the conduct of those who came before? Or are they in some way contributing to their image through their behaviors and methods?

Secondly, the literature suggests that the modern entrepreneur must influence the decisions and behaviors of internal teams and external stakeholders (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Dodds, 2007). Therefore, to some degree, entrepreneurship success and failure is connected to the ability or inability to sell. If specific behaviors that contribute to societies' disdain for those who sell could be isolated, this may be of interest to entrepreneurship research and practice. Accordingly, concepts such as personal selling and customer relationship blueprinting may become a more prominent focus for academic institutions rather than learned primarily 'on the street'. Appendix 1 indicates that the MBA curriculum

at several major universities in North America do not seem to include such selling concepts within their programs.

Further, much of the prior theory, especially on salespeople, studied traits without any correlation to performance. This research project will investigate the traits, behaviors and characteristics of only highly successful salespeople and entrepreneurs.

And finally, a portion of the literature reviewed by this author was theoretical and based upon causal, quantitative inquiry; sometimes carried out with students due to accessibility challenges. This thesis will endeavor to qualify this prior theory within the realism paradigm by executing in depth interviews with highly successful 'actual' players. According to the seminal work of Walker *et al*. (1977), quantitative aptitude tests on salespeople in an effort to better understand performance outcomes explained a variance in only 17% of cases. This may be an indication that the realism paradigm is better suited to this specific line of inquiry.

There is a form of validation or objectivity to the connection being made by this author within the literature on the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic. Since the seemingly unnoticed phenomenon was not being specifically studied, the process of highlighting the connection could not have been affected by interviewer / interviewee bias; potentially adding credibility to the relational findings within the meta-analysis.

In the next chapter the paradigmatic and methodological intentions for this research project will be outlined.

Methodology

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

4.1   Introduction

The previous chapters have begun to build a case for the validity of the research intentions and conceptual framework of this thesis. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the specific research plans which will enhance comprehension of the theory. Various research methodologies will be discussed. The chapter will subsequently quantify why some methodologies were embraced and others rejected for this body of work.

The chapter will begin with a brief reminder of the aims and objectives of the thesis. This will be followed by a description of the considered methodology options and rationalization for the chosen strategy. A specific research design plan for this thesis will then be explored.

As outlined, this research project represented a dynamic process. Learning occurred constantly and therefore many changes were made to the plans during the course. A detailed account and discussion of the progressional changes to the interview guide and questionnaire is included within this chapter.

There are limitations to all research. Some are generic to a field of study and others are specific to the individual doing the work. This thesis faced several challenges in this regard. Those limitations which were specific to the methodology of the work will be discussed within this chapter. Limitations to the analysis of these data will be explored in subsequent chapters.

4.2   Aims and Objectives of the Research

The objective of this thesis is to contribute knowledge in two ways:

1. Contribute to new perspectives within the seemingly unexplored genre of the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, and

2. Expand upon existing knowledge related to selling and entrepreneurship.

Regarding the contribution to new perspectives, the author has found no previous work specifically comparing the traits, habits and behaviors of successful sales people and thriving entrepreneurs. This thesis aims to explore this gap in knowledge.

Further, the literature reviewed does not significantly discern between poor, average and high performing sales people. This thesis is primarily interested in the latter. It should be noted that much of the literature is one dimensional; assessing performance levels based on single criteria such as degree of team loyalty or self-evaluation of skills. The conceptual framework for this thesis has been designed to provide detailed and objective comparisons of the success factors of sales people and entrepreneurs. The definition of 'success' for the purposes of this work will be performance based.

4.3   Inquiry Paradigms: Philosophical Approaches to Scientific Research

Paradigm is described by Merriam Webster's dictionary as:

> *"A philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated; broadly: a philosophical or theoretical framework of any kind" (Merriam-Webster – Paradigm, 2012).*

Within the realm of academic inquiry, a research paradigm is an accepted insight regarding those elements that contribute to the way people think and act (Hill and McGowan, 1999). More specifically, a research paradigm is a global view representative of the way in which people judge or value things and ideas, such as what is normal or standard in our society. The paradigms also reflect the points of reference from which people frame their opinions and theories (Gummesson, 1991, as cited in Hill and McGowan, 1999) based upon divergent assumptions regarding research themes (Guba and Lincoln, 1982).

There are two primary paradigms or philosophical approaches to conducting scientific research and / or developing scientific theory (Perry, 1998). The two paradigms are seen as largely differentiated; that is, data can be interpreted in varying ways which are dependent upon the paradigm within which the researcher is working. The two primary research paradigms are:

1. Positivist: 'Testing' of objective, comparable deductive theory, often at a macro level (Perry 1998), also known as rationalistic (Guba, 1981). This is a 'nomothetic' approach which tests similarities (Guba, 1981, *p*77).

2. Phenomological: 'Building' of inductive theory which more closely reflects subjective investigation while maintaining comparable characteristics, often at a more detailed micro level (Perry, 1998; Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2000). Phenomenological research has also been referred to as anthropological, which reflects the study of natural and social sciences, and naturalistic or ethnographic, which is the study of people and cultures (Guba, 1981). This is an 'idiographic' approach to research which is equally interested in the 'differences' between postures as the similarities between objects (Guba, 1981, *p*77).

Positivist or quantitative researchers use figures and seek large sample sizes to prove or disprove a point in a value-free setting (Riege, 2003). In contrast, phenomenological or qualitative researchers use participant views in smaller samples to construct theories (Sobh and Perry, 2005, *p*1194) in a value laden setting with the knowledge and understanding that they do so without a degree of certainty (Riege, 2003). Within the phenomenological paradigm, researchers lean less heavily on strict objectives, attempting to comprehend phenomenon from within the experiences and insights of participants (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008).

The work within this paradigm is often referred to as 'social / behavioral'. While positivist research may be appropriate for the study of chemical or physical phenomenon, the phenomenological approach is more conducive to investigation of people, behaviors and happenings (Guba, 1981). Quantitative analysis involves the measurement of variables to provide useful, standardized comparisons (Armenakis *et al*. 1990). Quantitative methodology is well suited to closed questioning techniques that require mathematical tabulation (Weisberg *Et al*. 1989; Di Pofi, 2002).

The literature identifies several challenges with quantitative research within the field of business success and leadership:

1. The closed ended approach to questioning is limited by the researchers' chosen format. Participant bias can be formed by the wording of the questions as well as the order in which they are presented (Schein, 1985).

2. If data on behaviors are desired, often the closed-question survey approach measures the attitude or belief rather than actually measuring witnessed and monitored behavior (Phillips, 1973).

3. The survey approach has difficulty analyzing interpersonal relations. This is a vital component of leadership (Lantis, 1987).

4. Quantitative surveys capture a moment in time representing a static approach to research exploring a dynamic, 'ever-shifting' phenomena (Conger, 1998).

5. Quantitative research is generally lacking in valuable detail richness (Conger, 1998). The contexts of quantitative research "are like book covers which highlight in their titles an important discovery, yet are missing the explanatory chapters within" *(p110)*.

6. Quantitative rationalistic inquiry generally deems rigor to be more important than relevance (Guba, 1981).

7. Seeking absolute internal validity through laboratory-like repeatability contributes to lesser relevance and external validity because outcomes can only be repeated under the control of the exact same laboratory environment (Guba, 1981).

There exists a cultural context to the choice of paradigms or the frequency of usage. In the past two decades North American researchers have predominantly utilized positivist or quantitative methodologies while European researchers have leaned more towards qualitative paradigms (Easterby-Smith *et al*. (2009). Interestingly, although positivist research has dominated globally within the physical sciences for over four centuries, the paradigm is seen by many scholars as less reliable than its 'numerical analysis' nature might imply. In fact, the premise that 'numbers don't lie' (author unknown) has been disproven by Hubbard and Armstrong (1994) who replicated prior positivist research and found that in only 15% of cases were they able to duplicate prior findings. Subsequently, Sobh and Perry (2005) argue that the positivist paradigm has not performed significantly well as the defaulting research approach within the social sciences. Rather, both paradigms have their weaknesses.

Weakness of Positivist (quantitative) Research:

- Unlikely to bring about critical, in-depth means or methods such as the 'ways of thinking' or methods of decision-making of participants

Weakness of Phenomenological (qualitative) Research:

- Can be seen as too focused on the building of theory on a micro plane and may rely too heavily on the case study, which all but rules out generalizability (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2009).

More specifically, research paradigms fall into four main categories (Healy and Perry, 2000):

1. Positivism / Quantitative / Objective: mathematical, scientific, quantitative investigation of stand-alone facts within a single reality. These data are seen as static and unchanging; uninfluenced by participants.

2. Critical Theory / Qualitative / Subjective: often long tenured studies of cultural phenomenon rooted in social traditions and therefore considered value influenced. This paradigm is well suited to researchers who hope to transform the realities of participants rather than simply observe and analyze.

3. Constructivism / Qualitative / Subjective: holds that multiple realities exist and truth lies within the belief systems of participants rather than in mathematical or scientific facts within a single reality that are deemed unalterable by participants (positivism). Constructivist researchers deeply engage with their subjects, preferably within their specific reality to gain understanding of philosophies and behaviors (Guba, 1981).

4. Realism / Qualitative: combines the subjective with objective – there exists a world to discover that relates to the thoughts and beliefs of participants but is independent of them and is only unreliably understandable (Healy and Perry, 2000). In essence, this represents an independent reality which is pursued by indirect means.

Research paradigms are influenced by the level of deductive verses inductive analysis that is required (Perry, 1998). A pluralist approach combines methods within more than one paradigm, sometimes merging positivist and phenomological themes (Easterby-Smith et al. 2000).

The phenomological paradigm is generally referred to as 'realism' (Healy and Perry 2000, *p*118), is qualitative in nature (Hill and McGowan, 1999) and is reflective of several assumptions such as the academically accepted ontological matter of participant's world view and perceptions of reality (Hill and McGowan 1999). This approach to research is also known as:

- Constructivist (Lincoln and Guba, 1985),

- Interpretivist (Smith, 1989), and

- Post-positivist (Carson and Coviello, 1995).

Qualitative research has two primary sub-categories: constructivism, which intrinsically studies themes for their own sake, and realism, which instrumentally studies themes with an ultimate goal of understanding something related but altogether different (Stake, 1995). As an example, in constructivism, participants' views are studied with those very views as the main theme of the research. In realism, those views are examined as an interface or opening into another reality. The perceptions provide insight into a bigger picture being studied (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Positivist or rationalistic research lends itself to hypothesizing causal phenomenon while real-life inquirers require the ability to develop upon unstated data (Guba, 1981). If studying people, behaviors or cultures it is deemed more prudent within the conceptual framework to use a paradigm that can endure the reality that surrounds the phenomenon being studied rather than manipulate or control that reality to better suit the laboratory constraints of a paradigm (Guba and Lincoln, 1982).

The aim of the naturalistic or realism paradigm is to explore how the discoveries of an enquiry interact with the theories (Sobh and Perry, 2005). The goal is to uncover new ontological realities and to develop insights into the experiences that form those realities (Riege, 2003). This is not possible if the paradigm fetters the process by prohibiting change or adaptability within the methodology in order to safeguard the interpretation of the quantitative results (Guba, 1981).

Many authors, as stated above, (Healy and Perry, 2000; Sobh and Perry, 2005) feel that critical theory is worthy of mention. The properties of this paradigm have been included in Table 4-1. Realities are altered over time by social values within this value-reliant paradigm. Constructivist and critical theory paradigms are similar in that they are based upon the assumption that realities are created and influenced by the individuals involved. A good example is the teenager who resigns from high school due to the perception that it is a boring waste of time. Within this individual's reality at a certain point in time, this may be completely accurate. However, this is probably not reflective of all students and further, not likely reflective of this very individual's thoughts and beliefs 20 years in the future.

Table 4-1 summarizes the properties of the basic research paradigms.

Table 4-1   **Research Paradigm Properties**

Paradigm	Ontology (Reality)	Epistemology (How researcher relates to reality)	Common Methodologies (Techniques used to investigate reality)
Positivism	One reality. Impartially measurable.	Objectivist. Conclusions accurate.	Surveys. Quantitative testing of theory.
Critical Theory	Reality is influenced by social values over time.	Subjectivist. Influenced by values of participants.	Dialogical. Researcher influences information gathering and subsequently the results.
Constructivism	Several realities exist both real and perceived.	Subjectivist. Outcomes are constructed with the interviewer active within the process.	'Hermeneutical' (Sobh and Perry, 2005, p119). The interviewer is an enthusiastic player in the research process.
Realism	Reality exists, but it is imperfect, and recognized as possibly accurate.	Enhanced objectivist. Outcomes probably truthful.	Case study research. Interviews. Triangulated findings. Sometimes combining both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Source: derived by the author from Healy and Perry (2000) and Sobh and Perry (2005).

Healy and Perry (2000) and Sobh and Perry (2005) concur that multiple realities exist in any research situation, all of which can be influenced by an infinite number of mitigating factors. This contributes to the premise that deductive theory, which supports the concept of one reality only, is somewhat flawed, especially when studying unpredictably varying concepts such as traits and behaviors of humans (Hill and McGowan, 1999). Three such multiple realities or viewpoint paradigms are the epistemological realities of the individual doing the research (Healy and Perry, 2000) the ontological realities of the individual being interviewed (Sobh and Perry, 2005) and the realities of the individual reading the

summary paper; all of which have their own 'personality attributes' which influence interpretation (Hill and McGowan, 1999).

The issue of the researcher's relationship with the interviewees and with the specific subject of the research (which is often a concept of personal interest to the researcher) is referred to as the epistemological issue; or in other words 'the relationship between the paradigmatic reality and the researcher'. Positivists believe that they can remain separate from that which they are studying, which naturally lends to study methods that are distant from participants (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Of the three qualitative approaches to research, the preferred paradigm for case study research, especially in the field of marketing, is 'realism' (Perry, 1998; Riege, 2003; Sobh and Perry, 2005) for several reasons.

1. Case studies usually involve inductive building of theory rather than the deductive themes of the positivist approach (Riege, 2003).

2. Case studies can be viewed as 'portrayals' of themes and realities rather than causal theories (Stake, 1975; Guba, 1981).

3. Case studies often seek to analyze less than observable phenomenon such as viewpoints, perceptions and in the case of this thesis, traits and behaviors. This unobservable research lends itself to the epistemological realism theories which support the existence of external realities, rather than the single, observable reality theme of the positivist approach (Perry, 1998).

4. The realism paradigm is well suited to descriptive 'how do' (Perry, 1998, *p*787) concepts rather than the positivist prescriptionary 'how should' *(p*787) theories.

However, the ontologically 'constructivist' approach to research is well suited to the study of entrepreneurs because it adopts the concepts of plural realities; holding that participants create their own varying realities as they interact and perceive their surroundings (Hill and McGowan, 1999). As stated, the analysis of the literature on successful sales people and entrepreneurs indicates that a connection between the traits and attributes of each exists. This knowledge, as well as the life experiences of this author, the participating interviewees and ultimately the reader of this work, will have some degree of influence on the perceptions and interpretations of this thesis. The constructivist approach to research is therefore well suited to the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 3 as the

nature of entrepreneurial activities compels the researcher to deeply immerse into the life and surroundings of the interviewee (Eisner, 1991; Hill and McGowan, 1999).

It is suggested that epistemologically, the constructivist approach to research raises questions of values and their role (Hill and McGowan, 1999). By its nature, this research paradigm holds firm to the notion that the researcher cannot possibly be completely neutral to the themes of the work. Rather than pretend that one can, this paradigm recognizes and even pardons the researchers' lack of flawless objectivity, suggesting that participants within this paradigm of study acknowledge their biases openly and delve deeply into their chosen work without prejudice. The process should zero in on themes and ideas as they are emerging within the interviewer's senses and responses, and the researcher should adapt to the budding theories to delve more deeply into those emerging themes (Guba and Lincoln, 1982).

4.4   Combining Inductive and Deductive Theories

Some caution against presuming that deduction plays no part within the realism research paradigm, suggesting a blend of both inductive and deductive theories as the latter is often applied to prior theory; since it usually exists in some form (Perry, 1998). Research theory that is purely built upon the complete lack of hypothesis testing, which would be purely 100% inductive, is rare. It is conceivably impossible to clear one's mind of the biases formed over decades of social interaction (Manicas, 1989). A purist induction approach suggests that interview questions will differ from one participant to the next, making comparisons difficult, if not impossible. Further, the inquirer is apt to rediscover theories that preexist his own work, which is an unfortunate and unnecessary use of resources (Jensen and Jankowski, 1991; Perry, 1998). Therefore, deductive analysis of prior theory may play a role in triangulation strategies which aim to ensure thoroughness and credibility.

Interview strategy is considered somewhat more thorough and rigorous when combining the deductive and inductive theories. Pilot interviews, either formal or informal, can provide valuable insights which contribute to the interview schedule (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 1991; Fox-Wolfgramm, 1997). This strategy encourages the prior theory to uniformly influence the interviews which therefore become 'semi-structured' (the semi-structured interview is discussed in subsequent sections). It is important that the participants have the opportunity to contribute their insights. Therefore, the pilot interview strategy is often influenced and even developed during the literature review stage of a dissertation which is

considered the beginning phase of building theory (Perry, 1998). This inductive development of key themes combines 'adapted grounded theory' with interview techniques to identify burgeoning comparative theories (Hill and McGowan, 1999).

This combination of deductive and inductive theories in a dual phase strategy is supportive of the realism paradigm's objective to pursue the analysis of capability and means rather than the study of constancy and uniformity (Tsoukas, 1989; Easton, 1994). Theory generalization is the goal, as opposed to seeking absolute proof. However, actuality and speculative theory (deduction and induction) are equally important for each to have merit (Emory and Cooper, 1991). The combination of induction and deduction advocates for qualitative realism methodology within a foundation of embracing the idea that multiple realities exist (Hill and McGowan, 1999).

4.5   Choosing a Paradigm

Absolute objectivity is elusive within any paradigm and researchers must therefore find a paradigmatic approach to their work that is suitable to their needs and those of all stakeholders to the project (Sobh and Perry, 2005). To gain knowledge of the traits and behaviors of individuals within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, the phenomological paradigm, leaning on the constructivist and realism theories of Healy and Perry (2000) are well suited. Table 4-2 provides a brief summary of the paradigmatic themes were will be used for this thesis.

Table 4-2   **Chosen Paradigmatic Themes**

Paradigm	Utilization within this Thesis
Realism Theory	The information gathering methodology was realism based qualitative research, using primarily inductive theory building methods as outlined by Stake (1975), Guba (1981) and Riege (2003). However, since the literature has provided some degree of prior theory, there is also an element of deductive theory building within this body of work. Without the benefit of prior theory, comparisons and triangulation strategies become difficult. In keeping with the realism paradigmatic theme, this author chose to include comparison and triangulation strategies to both uncover and / or validate ontological realities. The combination of inductive and deductive strategies (Manicas, 1989; Perry, 1998), along with an adaptive interview approach (Hill and McGowan, 1999) support the pursuit of capability and means as opposed to constancy and uniformity (Tsoukas, 1989; Easton, 1994).
Constructivist Theory	As indicated in previous chapters, the literature provided a sound starting point for constructivist theory building. Table 3-1 suggests that there are many unexplored similarities between successful salespeople and entrepreneurs based upon prior work. The pre-interview questionnaire for this thesis further highlights similarities worthy of more in-depth inquiry.
	Also, it has been identified that this author has a personal connection with the concepts being studied. While systems have been employed to encourage objectivity, it must be acknowledged that epistemological realities will come to bear upon the research (Healy and Perry, 2000). Rather than pretend that one is capable of unbiased objectivity, researchers should openly acknowledge their biases and delve deeply into their chosen work without prejudice (Hill and McGowan, 1999).
	All of the theories mentioned above are constructivist in nature. Due to the dynamic of entrepreneurs and salespeople, it is important to embrace constructivist theories which are supportive of multiple, changing realities, and which are conducive to the study of such 'ever-changing' individuals (Hill and McGowan, 1999).

Source: derived by the author based upon the literature.

It is understood that in choosing a realism paradigm, the author entered the field of study with a degree of prior theory. While this contrasts with the 400 year history of the traditional positivist approach to

studying social phenomenon, it is in keeping with the philosophy of embracing the literature within emerging theoretical findings (Guba, 1981; Sobh and Perry, 2005).

With a slight 'adaptation' to the recommended approach of Patton (1990) and Perry (1998), this work endeavors to execute the conceptual framework plan to collect and analyze interview results within the realism paradigm, utilizing prior theory based upon the literature, combined with an 'adaptive' approach to the interview process. That is to say, it was expected that the interview schedule / guide would change over time. These changes are documented and the author has returned to all previous participants to ensure that they had the opportunity to contribute their perceptions accordingly to all adapting themes.

4.6 Chosen Research Plan

4.6.1 Macro level

The author hoped to connect with participants (successful sales people and entrepreneurs) to understand the subtle behaviors and traits of everyday existence which contribute to their success. The intention was to accomplish this task within the realism inquiry paradigm; primarily with qualitative research strategies. More specifically, the chosen methodology reflects the combining of deductive and inductive theories of Miles and Huberman (1994) and the adaptive grounded theories of Hill and McGowan (1987).

The theory generalization research was multifaceted, using two differing but supportive methods which will be subsequently described. This inductive method of preparation and comparison is not uncommon in realism qualitative studies because of the perception that it demonstrates depth and rigor (Barbour, 2001).

It is understood that while comparison methodology can represent a thorough validation strategy, it can be challenging to compare data that were derived from different processes. Furthermore, many researchers have positioned comparison methodology as secondary research to measure against primary interpretations. This is somewhat contrary to the qualitative research perspective that recognizes the existence of numerous beliefs of equivalent importance (Popay *et al*. 1998; Barbour, 2001). Research subjects should be considered individual but related experiments, as opposed to 'cases'

in a specific study, thus representing 'replication logic' rather than 'sampling logic' (Yin, 1994, *p*45-50). Richness and depth are more suitable objectives for comparison qualitative research than validation.

The two research methods used in this thesis were pre-interview questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The objective of each of these methods follows:

1. Pre-interview Questionnaires: This methodology was used to gather certain demographic and trait information about the sales and entrepreneur participants. These data were collected prior to the semi-structured interviews and by design constructively influenced the interview content (McGowan, 1999).

2. Semi-Structured Interviews: This methodology aimed to gather rich, in-depth information about the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic by exploring the behaviors and traits of successful sales people and successful entrepreneurs (Easton, 1994; McGowan, 1999).

For each of these stages the author attempted to emulate Karlsson *et al*'s (2007) methodological approach, which involves breaking each stage into three phases: planning, fieldwork and analysis. With this in mind, a more detailed outline of the research plan follows.

4.6.2   Micro Level:

4.6.2.1   Stage One – Pre-interview Questionnaires

The methodological aim of the pre-interview questionnaires was to provide a constructivist base of triangulation or comparison against the qualitative semi-structured interviews; preferably within the participant's environment or reality. Triangulation represents evaluation of data that is connected to the same phenomenon but stemming from separate sources (Hill and McGowan, 1999).

The ultimate goal is to discover and validate the themes and realities that influence and drive the traits and behaviors within the interface of successful sales people and entrepreneurs. It was understood that the interviewer would be required to adapt to the environment and to some degree experience the realities of the participants.

The pre-interview questionnaires were instrumental in gathering information in advance of the semi-structured interview pertaining to such concepts as age, gender, education and parental work history.

However, it also solicited preliminary soft data for triangulation analysis against the in-depth interviews which would explore such concepts as 'propensity to takes risks'.

The pre-interview questionnaire was primarily made up of 'Likert' scaled questions to be answered in private; preferably several days in advance of the actual interview. The reason for the advanced and isolated approach was to attempt to avoid any biases that may affect the interview response. In other words, if the pre-interview questionnaire had been executed immediately prior to the interview, there might have been an element of 'leading' the participant.

A 'Likert' scale is a type of rating system to measure participant views and attitudes providing a series of answers to a query or declaration. The concept reflects an ordinal scale which suggests less precision than an equal interval scale, however such precision is not crucial for phenomenological / realism research (Jamieson, 2004). The Likert Scale used for the pre-interview questionnaire provided five categorical levels ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' and was adapted from the literature (McRae and Costa, 1987; Potter, 2011). The pre-interview questionnaire document may be viewed as Appendix 5.

Table 4-3 provides a detailed summary of the planning, fieldwork and analysis phases of the pre-interview questionnaire stage of the research.

Table 4-3   **Planning the Pre-interview Questionnaire**

Questionnaire Planning	Questionnaire Distribution and Collection	Questionnaire Analysis
• Identify the targeted number of individuals to participate • Identify the questions to be asked and the format of the questionnaires • Write the introduction and instruction manuals for the questionnaires (with an emphasis on not "leading" the participants in a particular direction) • Write the Interviewee Consent forms and secure the approval of appropriate institutional governing ethics committees • Identify the method of distributing and collecting the questionnaires	• Distribute the questionnaires and consent forms to identified participants • Collect completed questionnaires and consent forms from participants	• Using Excel spreadsheet, display data for simple, objective comparison **Desired Outcome:** It is understood that this questionnaire does not represent quantitative research. Rather, it was the hope of the author that objective, comparable data could be gathered in advance of the semi-structured interviews to aid in preparation, and avoid using valuable interview time gathering data that are so conducive to a simple survey

Source: derived by the author.

The aim of this methodology stage is to gather rich data from which to further develop an understanding of the traits and behaviors within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

The author had intended to adopt the 'pilot interview' strategy of Fox-Wolfgramm (1997) by executing the interview, transcription and analysis phases of a single participant prior to progressing with other interviewees. However, this was not possible due to limitations of participant access and the author's time. Further, it is possible that analysis of prior interviews might have created interviewer bias for future interviews. The questionnaires and interview plans did in fact change over time as each experience exposed areas of potential improvement. These minor changes were identified and have been explored in a subsequent section of this thesis. But it should be noted that the questionnaires and subsequent interviews were all executed prior to any transcription or analysis of interview data.

Table 4-4 provides a detailed summary of the planning, fieldwork and analysis phases of the semi-structured interview stage of the research which was broadly outlined in the conceptual framework.

Table 4-4   **Planning the Semi-structured Interviews**

Semi-structured Interview Planning	Semi-structured Interview Fieldwork	Semi-structured Interview Analysis
• Write the primary and supporting depth questions • Establish interview parameters (venues etc.) • Create checklist of props required for the interviews • Secure transcribing software and hardware • Create a checklist of all known potential biases that may affect the researcher's behavior and influence over the interviewees • Arrange for NVIVO training	• Review potential bias and interview materials checklist prior to each interview • Pre-interview questionnaire completed in advance • Ensure that articipants sign the consent forms • Execute the interviews with identified successful sales people and entrepreneurs • All interviews were expected to take between one and two hours. This was an accurate estimate	• Dissect the themes of the interviews and collate the categorized data in NVIVO • Summarize outcomes **Desired Outcome:** a. A working description of the traits and behaviors of successful sales people and entrepreneurs for analysis b. Demographic verification for analysis against the literature

Source: derived by the author.

The reader will notice that 'checklists' are mentioned in several instances throughout this Methodology Chapter. The author is naturally drawn to this type of planning and organization. This approach to methodology promotes systematic repeatability, which is often a prerequisite to obtaining research funding or to comply with the requirements of publishers, but if used obsessively it can be counterproductive (Barbour, 2001).

4.7   Research Questions

The utmost commission of academic research is not to find solutions but rather to structure inquiries (Pierce, 1995). The research questions which follow, reflect the two stages of the research study; that is, the pre-interview survey and semi-structured interviews. It was understood that the specific questions might change in part or entirely as the research progressed.

Questions that could be answered with yes or no were avoided (Easton, 1994). When such questions were necessary, the interview guide document inductively prompted the interviewer to use laddering techniques to cue 'why' or 'how' questions if the interviewee did not naturally gravitate to more depth. The goal is to find the deeper meaning behind the words to discover the less apparent truth that lies beneath (Sobh and Perry, 2005).

To support the objectives outlined for this thesis and to build upon the foundation of the conceptual framework, the interview process is designed to draw out rich and thorough answers to the following questions:

Primary Thesis Research Question:

1. What are the similarities and differences between the characteristics, traits and behaviors of successful sales people and successful entrepreneurs?

Secondary / Supporting Thesis Research Questions:

1. What are the traits and behaviors of highly successful sales people?

2. What are the traits and behaviors of successful entrepreneurs?

While these are the primary and secondary questions of the thesis, there are more specific questions to be asked of participants to 'flush out' rich, in depth anecdotes and open a dialogue to uncover emerging realities (Perry, 1998).

4.8   Interview Process

The semi-structured interviews were preceded by a pre-interview survey which provided simple yet valuable information in preparation for the 'live' interview questions.

For example:

Pre-interview questionnaire question:

Were either of your parents' full-time self-employed?

Such questions provided yes or no answers, or numeric data from which to specifically frame a standardized semi-structured interview question such as:

You indicated that your father was full-time self-employed. How (if at all) did that affect your life choices and ultimately your career?

The pre-interview questionnaire was derived by the author, but influenced by several publications including McCrae and Costa's (1987) Five Factor Model. This model has been cited 2498 times according to the US National Library of Medicine (PubMed, 2012) and has been used in its original or a modified version by many reserachers since its creation. Due to peer and spouse controlled tests which confirmed its credibility, it is accepted as a reasonably reliable tool to measure personality traits. The Five factor model is also appreciated for its swiftness and simplicity.

The specific traits that are frequently investigated with this method are: 'extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability / neuroticism and culture', (McCrae and Costa, 1987). Since these traits have been identified in the literature by several authors as being associated with sales people and entrepreneurs, and since these traits have been highlighted for investigation within the conceptual framework for this thesis, the Five Factor personality methodology has been embraced. With some minor alterations it is well suited to this specific thesis.

The specific questions for the pre-interview questionnaire were chosen partially from the work of previous authors; such as the "I see myself as someone who:" approach of McCrae and Costa (1987). It should be noted that within the chosen realism paradigm, the questions are not designed to be positivistically or quantitatively compared, but are rather included as a preparatory 'starting point' from which to probe more deeply into the participants beliefs and behaviors during the semi-structured live interviews (Tsoukas, 1989; Perry, 1998). The entire pre-interview questionnaire may be found in Appendix 5, however, certain strategic inquiries are listed and justified in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5   **Pre-interview Survey Question Justification**

Pre-interview Survey Question	Justification
I see myself as someone who sometimes puts customer's needs before my own company needs.	This was based upon the 'needs' analysis of McMurray (1961) and supported by Sharma (2007). It is also coincidentally reflective of this author's own experience that some successful salespeople, who connect deeply with customers, may either periodically or consistently do so at the peril of their own firm. This question is relative to the 'Adaptability' category of the conceptual framework.
I see myself as someone who enjoys taking risks.	The question was based upon the literatures' fairly consistent portrayal of entrepreneurs having a propensity for risk taking (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000). The goal was to explore this concept with current entrepreneurs, who may be more concerned with team building and seeking opportunities with calculated methodology than past entrepreneurs who may have been more inventive and reckless. It was also of interest to know if successful salespeople share this view of themselves. This question is relative to the 'Control Preferences' category of the conceptual framework.
I see myself as someone who is more reactive to situations than organized.	The literature (especially dated publications) sometimes portrays entrepreneurs as neurotic, energetic leaders who let nothing stand in their way, and who are skilled at executing charming damage control measures behind them as they push forward to attain goals (McClelland, 1961; Collins and Moore, 1964; Smith, 1967; Litvac and Maule, 1974; Zhao and Siebert, 2006). This question was worded in such a way that it might apply equally to entrepreneurs and successful salespeople, and is relative to the 'Adaptability' category of the conceptual framework.

Pre-interview Survey Question	Justification
I see myself as someone who is highly competitive and hates to lose. I see myself as someone who has always been athletically inclined and better than average at most sports. I see myself as someone who is assertive.	This line of questioning reflects the literature on salespeople and entrepreneurs (Shapero, 1971; Kets de Vries, 1977; Walker *et al*. 1977; Chell, 1985; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). The purpose of the questions is to gain access to some of the motivators behind the beliefs and behaviors of these participants. The questions are relative to the 'Assertiveness' category of the conceptual framework.
I see myself as somebody who truly believes that my company and its core product are better than any competitive alternative.	Entrepreneurs are frequently considered innovators who solve problems and are therefore somewhat sheltered from competitive struggles; at least for a period of time (Watkins and Watkins, 1984; Drucker, 1985; Scott, 1991; McGrath *et al*. 1992; Mullen and Thomas, 2000). This question seeks to initiate a dialogue in this regard. Further, the criteria for salesperson participation includes 5 years of continuous exceptional performance, which may be deemed a difficult task if the product or firm is second rate. This question is relative to the career path segment of 'Cultural and Professional Background' category of the conceptual framework.
I see myself as someone who seeks to improve myself with a strong desire for achievement. I see myself as someone who has a disposition to act; to make things happen.	These questions were motivated by the desire to initiate rich discussion regarding the concepts of self-improvement and motivation within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic (Stewart *et al*. 1998; Zhao and Seibert, 2006) and are relative to the 'Cultural and Professional Background' and 'Assertiveness' categories of the conceptual framework.

Source: created by the author.

It was understood that the pre-interview questionnaire was subject to change as the process evolved. As recommended by Hill and McGowan (1999) a field log was maintained during this phase of the fieldwork.

The original intention was to execute the questionnaire with the participant at the time of the live interview, preceding the semi-structured interview. However, in the first interview this created an uncomfortable and less than optimally productive inauguration to a process that sought intimate and rich information. There simply was no value added by doing this together. Therefore, the first change to occur was altering the process to encourage participants to fill out the questionnaire alone and in advance. This required instructional alterations; such as providing fax and email details so participants could return the document to the author prior to the semi-structured 'in-person' interview. This change also brought about the need to change certain instructions from 'circle the correct response' to 'underline' to facilitate electronic communication.

The section on economic status created an awkward moment due to the wording of the question. Specifically, the question referred to 'class' rather than income level, which was subjective and uncomfortable for the participant. Following the first interview the wording was changed to 'household income' rather than 'lower, middle or upper classes'. This proved to be a positive adjustment.

The self-rated question "I see myself as someone who is emotionally disorganized but adaptable to my surroundings" confused early participants and was changed to the more simply worded query: "I see myself as someone who tends to be disorganized".

The final alteration to the pre-interview questionnaire applied to the concept of inventiveness, which was changed to "I see myself as someone who is inventive / creative". By adding the word 'creative' to this question the author hoped to solicit rich feedback from those who have not actually 'invented' a tangible object but yet are creative in their approach to solving problems. This seemed to achieve the desired effect of being equally applicable to the salespeople and entrepreneurs.

In all cases, participants were contacted and successfully solicited for answers to the altered questions.

4.10   Semi-Structured Interview Plan

A conventional semi-structured interview was created and utilized by the author. As discussed in the pre-interview questionnaire segment, it should be noted that within the constructivist realism paradigm, the questions were not designed to establish precise, quantifiable comparison points. Rather, the goal was to solicit rich and deep feedback from which to explore realities that have not been preconceived. The questions represent a guideline only, to be used to ensure that participants engage in the process. The specific semi-structured interview guideline is found in Appendix 6 and includes a justification reference to the conceptual framework for each question.

As demonstrated earlier with the pre-interview survey analysis, a brief note of justification for themes within the semi-structured interview schedule follows in Table 4-6. It is of importance to note, that within the realism paradigm the author understood that many of the themes explored within the interviews and planned for within the schedule would not be included in the final analysis of these data. Research within this paradigm is by its nature unpredictable and the goal is to deeply engage the participant and not necessarily to ensure consistency.

Table 4-6   **Semi-structured Interview Theme Justification**

Interview Theme Link to Conceptual Framework	Justification
Cultural Background Theory *'Parental background and culture'* This theme seeks to understand the family background of participants, which includes the concepts of lineage, immigrant status, education and mentoring; with the goal of updating previous knowledge and through emerging themes add new perspectives.	Early literature especially explored entrepreneurial themes of immigrant bravery and ambition (Collins *et al*. 1964; Shaver and Scott, 1991). Such an example may be significant in the development of participants 'drive' to succeed. It may be of value to understand whether highly successful sales people and successful entrepreneurs share similar motivation levels but simply differ in their ability (or perceptions of their ability) to influence these motivators (Hughs and Kemp, 2012).
Assertiveness and Control Preferences / **Humanity Characteristics and Traits** *'Success Definition' and 'Professional Enjoyment'* These concepts relate to success themes which connect to the concepts of assertiveness, control preferences and humanity concepts within this research.	While the criteria for participation was significantly a reflection of monetary success, the literature indicates that exploration of this theme as it pertains to family and spiritual issues (Humanity) is relevant to the research on both successful salespeople and entrepreneurs (Churchill *et al*. 1985; Dawson, 2008; Zoltner *et al*. 2008). The literature also indicates that those who perform at very high levels generally enjoy what they do (Walker *et al*. 1977; Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005).
Characteristics and Traits, Career Path and **Control Preferences** a) *'Risk Propensity and Assertiveness'* According to the literature, risk propensity and assertiveness are at the heart of the vocations being researched. The former relating to entrepreneurs and the latter to salespeople. b) *' Leisure Time and Competitive Nature'*	a) These represent natural tendencies for entrepreneurs according to the literature (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000), and are therefore worthy of exploration within the paradigmatic realities of successful salespeople and entrepreneurs. b) The competitive nature of entrepreneurs and salespeople is extensively discussed within the literature. This author chose to expand upon the

Interview Theme **Link to Conceptual Framework**	Justification
These themes were born of the literature (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Boles *et al*. 2000).	theme somewhat to incorporate a query regarding leisure time in the hopes to draw out more depth. More specifically; if the participants are intensely competitive, is it just within the business arena or does it spill off into other activities such as leisure and sports.
Adaptability a) '*Image of Selling and Customer Relationships*' This theme of questioning is relative to the career path segment of 'Cultural and Professional Background' and 'Adaptability' categories of the conceptual framework. b) '*Technology*' As mentioned earlier, the literature on selling concepts and entrepreneurial activity has changed drastically over the past 8 decades (Table 3-1).	a) This thesis explores themes of trust and occupational prestige (Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 1995). These concepts represent important motivators of successful salespeople and entrepreneurs. b) If this research is to be currently relevant, the theme of technological contributions to success are important. This question is relative to the career path segment of the 'Control Preferences' category of the conceptual framework.
Overall Thesis Analysis **(prior research not found)** '*Comparing the Successful Salesperson to the Entrepreneur*' Given the theme of this thesis and the primary question of the research, the exploration of this specific concept is important.	It was decided to put this very question to the participants to solicit views on the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic. Given the occupational prestige levels of each, the salesperson may be more eager to be seen as more entrepreneurial than the mirrored viewpoint. This question is relative to the career path segment of 'The Sales / Entrepreneur Dynamic' category of the conceptual framework.

Source: created by the author.

It was anticipated that the interview plan would be altered by the interviewer to draw out richness of information during the process. The interview schedule provided cues to the interviewer for depth

questions should the participant be guarded or shallow in their answers. As stated, the schedule in Appendix 6 identifies both the primary questions and the depth query cues. It provided a level of organization and consistency during the interview process without creating an excess of structure or rigidity. The same schedule was used for both the successful sales people and the entrepreneur participants.

4.11   Progression of the Semi-structured Interview Schedule

It was expected that the semi-structured interview schedule, like the pre-interview questionnaire, would adapt over time. The first change affected the question regarding the participant's definition of success, which originally inspired generic answers relating to business as well as personal and even spiritual concepts. By rewording the question to "Within the vocation of (selling or entrepreneurship) what equals success in your mind?"

Early in the interview process the author discovered concepts that were of interest but unintentionally omitted from the original schedule:

1. At what age and circumstance did the participants become independent from parental supervision and provision? This question solicited anecdotes which were both interesting and entertaining.

2. Within the framework of leisure activities, the author inserted a question regarding 'holiday time'. Most participants naturally gravitated to themes of work / life balance. The author decided that this concept warranted mention in the schedule to ensure that it would not be omitted in those cases where the participants did not naturally arrive upon the theme.

3. Almost all participants gravitated to the concept of teamwork whether or not the theme was solicited. This omission in the plan was simply an oversight on the part of the author. Team orientation was included in the questionnaire but was unfortunately missed in the semi-structured interview schedule. Thankfully, prior to this change in the schedule, literally all participants arrived at this theme without prompt. Subsequently, the interviews are consistent in this regard, and because the information was offered freely and unprompted, the author is pleased with the authentic nature of these data.

4. The concept of being mentored and mentoring others was of importance to the early interview participants. In fact, supportive of the theories of Sobh and Perry (2005) this was revealed as a direct result of asking an interviewee if he felt that there was anything of relevance to add which had not been directly asked by the interviewer. The author decided that this theme was worthy of inclusion because preconceptions exist in the literature regarding the desire for entrepreneurs to develop others with the goal to grow beyond, or to replace one's self. The literature also makes reference to the protective and private nature of many successful sales people; especially the controversial 'lone wolf' who has above average talents but is depicted as private and protective (Harding, 2008). While a connection has been made within this work between the lone wolf salesperson and the entrepreneur, this mentoring or sharing theme may represent an important contrast between the vocations. Therefore, the concepts of 'mentoring' and being 'mentored' represent an unplanned, yet interesting phenomenon.

In the pursuit to understand the mindset of participants a question was included pertaining to whether or not the individual felt unappreciated or misunderstood. This theme has been explored within prior work (Susbauer, 1972; Draheim, 1972; Shapero, 1975; Kets de Vries, 1977; Cunningham and Licheron, 1991). In the case of the entrepreneurs, this question was positioned as 'when you were not self-employed...'

There were several query concepts that were eliminated altogether:

1. The concept of 'valuing being right more than being kind' originally sought to understand the competitive spirit of the individual (Shapero, 1971; Kets de Vries, 1977; Walker *et al*. 1977; Chell, 1985; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005) but proved to be a confusing theme for both the participant to understand and for the author to explain. This question was therefore removed early in the interview process.

2. Company culture concepts were originally included in an attempt to understand whether successful companies were being driven by inclusionary energy and enthusiasm or financial budgeting and quotas (Cunningham and Usheron, 1991; McGrath, 1992; Dodd, 2007). This line of questioning was eliminated because the themes seemed to be elusive; especially for the sales people, and related to the firm as opposed to the individual. Further, asking how other employees feel in the workplace was soliciting hearsay, which was not desired.

3. The question: "are you as busy as you want to be or is growth an ongoing focus?" supplicated a response which questioned the author's credibility. The look of 'why would you ask such a question?' was consistently followed by an answer affirming the desire to grow. It was decided that this question should be eliminated because it did harm to the relationship between the interviewer and the participant, while adding no value to the research.

The work ultimately seeks to compare the traits and attributes of successful sales people against those of successful entrepreneurs or in other words, explore the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic. Therefore, it stands to reason that this very question should be put to the participants themselves. Originally, the schedule of questions and depth concepts for the semi-structured interviews simply asked how the participant would compare the successful sales person to the entrepreneur. It quickly became apparent that this should be preceded by the question: "how would you define entrepreneur?" because the former was, surprisingly, far too vague, and there is little value in a comparison of concepts that are less than defined. As identified in the literature review section of this thesis, even scholars cannot agree on a definition of entrepreneur (Cole, 1976). The addition of the defining question facilitated a more confident and clear participant answer to the comparison question.

The final addition to the original schedule was inspired by the entertaining rant of an early participant on why 75% of new start-up businesses fail in North America (Gilbert, 2009). In most cases the question drew out rich and passionate stories, providing a comfortable ending to the interview. It is fortunate that this participant represented one of the first interviews because this question is not conducive to a post interview follow-up email.

In all cases the participants were contacted and successfully solicited for answers to the altered questions. The author met with cooperation in all cases.

4.12   Participant Criteria, Accessibility and Research Sample Size

There exists a paradigm in statistical analysis that in order to uncover truths, a large sampling is required (Conger, 1998). However, some scholars dispute this theory, suggesting that a physicist should not apologize for splitting just one atom (Mintzberg, 1979).

Regarding sample size for qualitative research, some researchers do not attempt to define a specific targeted number of participants at all, but rather remain flexible to adapt to the limitations that present

themselves due to accessibility challenges (Lunsford and Lunsford, 1995) or theoretical saturation (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Within the realism paradigm, random selection of cases is less than ideal (Eisenhardt, 1989). A more productive goal would be to pursue cases that have potential to provide richness and depth from differing paradigmatic genres (Patton, 1990). Such 'purposive sampling' is not completely unbiased because there is some reliance on researcher judgment (Guarte and Barrios, 2006) however, the approach embraces the concept that a single strategically chosen participant may enhance the study more effectively than an arbitrarily selected group of fifty (Given, 2008). This strategy of depth and richness over quantity and randomness is crucial to qualitative research (Perry, 1998) and a sampling of 4 to 10 cases generally allows for a degree of grounding within theory generation without reaching saturation (Eisenhardt, 1989). While four to six cases may represent a sensible intended minimum (Hedges, 1985) more than fifteen cases may create a cumbersome and unmanageable amount of data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Hill and McGowan (1999) are less numerically driven, encouraging that information should simply be harvested until themes and comparative patterns develop. Since richness and depth are more significant than sample size (Patton, 1990) research that boasts thousands of pages of transcribed material is not of greater value than a much smaller, in-depth summary of a window into the reality of participants, which includes the thought processes which formed the realities (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2008).

For this thesis, this author chose to target 10 of each successful salespeople and entrepreneurs, which proved to be a well suited sample size for several reasons:

1. The information gathered was surprisingly similar from one participant to the next, potentially indicating saturation.

2. Accessibility challenges were not originally anticipated; however, there were two surprises:

   a. Entrepreneurs were generally eager and enthusiastic participants, but unless they were known personally by the author, or introduced by an intermediary, they were reluctant to be involved. The most common reason provided was time constraints but the author suspects that there may have been trust or discomfort issues as well.

   b. Highly skilled and successful sales people were eager to participate in all cases, however, based on the criteria established by the author, qualified participants were

very difficult to find. Specifically, the highly successful individuals that were sought; outperforming their peers by 30% or more consistently, were more rare than expected.

Therefore, targeting more than 10 qualified and willing successful salespeople and entrepreneurs seemed a lofty and unnecessary goal.

The sampling of successful sales person participants were identified by senior management based on the definition of 'highly successful' as established by the author. To promote validity, the author engaged the following objectivity strategies:

- This research only includes those who practice the act of selling as a profession or career. This eliminated the 'part-time' sales person.

- The author wanted to have a simplistic yet 'difficult to dispute' financial growth criteria and therefore chose 30% annual increase in gross sales as the target. Participant performance criteria was validated by sales managers or firm ownership.

- Understanding that many factors can affect sales outcomes, the goal was to rule out certain factors such as economic swings, territorial changes, competitive activities and government regulatory policies, to name but a few. In keeping with the spirit of simplicity, it was therefore decided that a time frame for year on year growth of 5 years should be in place (Dawson and Zoltner, 2008). This is significant as the North American economy suffered through its worst economic downturn since the great depression during the 5 years prior to the execution of the salesperson and entrepreneur interviews (Altman, 2009). This statistic bolsters the position that 5 years of significant growth during such challenging economic times is an indication of exceptional growth.

Therefore, in summary, the salesperson participants were required to be in a full time sales position as a career and their performance must have exceeded their peers by 30% or more, consistently, for no less than the previous five years. Participants were chosen from various industries in an attempt to ensure diversity and richness of outcomes. Criteria for participating firms included:

- Age of firm - no less than 10 years.

- Number of employees – no less than 10 but targeting > 50. However, several firms represented in this research employed more than 100 people.

- Nature of products sold – products or services that are legal to be sold in North America.

- Business to business personal selling was a required parameter (not retail sales).

- Researcher accessibility.

The effort was successful in identifying and interviewing ten candidates that met the criteria for salesperson participation as identified in Table 4-7. A code number has been included to replace the participant's name. 'S' indicates 'Salesperson' interview, followed by a dash and a number which indicates the order in which the interviews took place.

An attempt was made to execute the interviews within one or more of the participant's realities such as their personal office or, as was often the case for entrepreneurs, at their private club (Conger, 1998).

Table 4-7   **Research Participants – Successful Salespeople**

Code	Date of Interview	Industry	Interview Location	# Empl.
S-1	July-06-11	Agricultural Supplies – International	Private Club	< 50
S-2	August-10-11	Commercial BBQ's – International	Restaurant	> 50
S-3	October-31-11	Industrial Food Supplies – National	Personal Office	> 50
S-4	November-07-11	Real Estate – Regional	Personal Office	< 50
S-5	November-10-11	Food and Paper Supplies – Regional	Personal Office	> 50
S-6	December-01-11	Print and Internet Marketing	Personal Office	< 50
S-7	January-23-12	Real Estate – Regional	Personal Office	< 50
S-8	January-27-12	Food Wholesaling – Regional	Restaurant	> 50
S-9	January-30-12	Restaurant Supplies – International	Personal Office	> 50
S-10	February-06-12	Hospital Supplies – Regional	Personal Office	> 50

Source: derived by the author.

The sampling of successful entrepreneurs was chosen based on similar criteria with the following additions:

- The entrepreneurs must be operational in the firm in a full-time leadership capacity at the time of the research study.

- The entrepreneurs must have no less than 51% ownership and are therefore in control of their respective firms, which have been operational for no less than 5 years.

Twelve candidates were identified that met the criteria for entrepreneur participation as identified in Table 4-8. An attempt was made to have the entrepreneurs represent a broad range of industries and or business concepts. A code number has been included in replacement of the participant's name. 'E' indicates 'Entrepreneur' interview, followed by a dash and a number which indicates the order in which the interviews took place.

One entrepreneur was interviewed but asked to be removed from the process 11 months later. At that time, the interview audio recording had not yet been reviewed; nor had the recording been transcribed. The participant was notified in writing that all recording copies had been deleted and that the author was bound ethically and legally to do so. A confirmation note was received from the participant with gratitude.

Table 4-8　　　　　　　　　　**Research Participants – Entrepreneurs**

Code	Date of Interview	Industry	Location	# Empl
E-1	July-18-11	Engineering	Private Club	> 50
E-2	October-03-11	Engineering	Private Club	> 50
E-3	November-04-11	Agricultural Supplies	Private Club	< 50
E-4	November-09-11	Print and Advertising	Private Club	< 50
E-5	January-20-12	Auto Serv. / Developer	Personal Office	> 50
E-6	January-20-12	Food Manufacturing	Personal Office	> 50
E-7	January-24-12	Food Manufacturing	Personal Office	> 50
E-8	January-27-12	Business Consulting	Personal Office	< 50
E-9	January-30-12	Logistics	Personal Office	< 50
E-10	February-17-12	Food Manufacturing	Personal Office	> 50
E-11	February-27-12	Auto Parts Mfg	Personal Office	> 50

Source: derived by the author

The entrepreneur participants all engaged in strategies of causation, effectuation and bricolage (discussed within literature review chapter). Two of the participants are categorized as serial

entrepreneurs. It is also of interest to note that none of the entrepreneurial participants engaged in their ventures out of necessity (Cassar, 2007), but rather all were opportunists who were 'pulled' into their new start-up (Gray and Howard, 2006). Table 4-9 summarizes the motivations of these entrepreneur participants and the strategy most commonly engaged by these players as marked with a 'XXX'.

Table 4-9   **Entrepreneur Participant Methodology Preference**

Participant Code	Causation	Effectuation	Bricolage	Involved with More than one Start-Up (Habitual / Serial / Repeat Entrepreneur?)	Opportunity Verses Necessity	Pulled Verses Pushed into Venture
E-1	XXX	X	X		O	Pulled
E-2	XXX	X	X		O	Pulled
E-3	XXX	X	X		O	Both
E-4	X	XXX	X		O	Both
E-5	X	XXX	X	X	O	Pulled
E-6	X	XXX	X	X	O	Pulled
E-7	X	XXX	X		O	Pulled
E-8	XXX	X	X		O	Both
E-9	X	X	XXX		O	Pulled
E-10	XXX	X	X		O	Pulled
E-11	X	XXX	X		O	Pulled

Source: derived by the author based upon the interviews.

For both groupings (successful sales people and entrepreneurs) there were no pre-established criteria to ensure diversity of males and females, differing age groups or ethnic backgrounds. Participants were chosen primarily based upon the definitions above and accessibility. The age of salesperson participants ranged from 35 to 59 and entrepreneur participants ranged from 42 to 57. The average age of participants was 48 and 51 respectively and all, by mere coincidence were Caucasians and male. While this last point signifies a limitation to this work, it is representative of the population demographic to some degree. A 2004 study of 16 companies employing 417 business to business salespeople in Canada and the United States, indicated that the average age was 44 and 89% were male (Marshal et al, 2004).

In 2011, visible minorities represented 15% of the Canadian population but research indicating the group's representation within the B2B selling field could not be found. Further, in 2011, 75% of Canadian entrepreneurs who wholly owned their firms were between the ages of 40 and 64, 84% were male and 90% were Caucasian (Gulati, 2012).

Finally, the author hoped that the sampling would represent various industries and this was largely achieved. Although the 'industry' column of the above charts (Table 4-7; Table 4-8) may be perceived by the reader as duplication, this was not the case. The 'industry' category was purposely positioned vaguely to protect the identities of participants as requested by either the participant or their respective firm.

4.13   Replication

Regardless of the number of interview subjects, it is recommended that they be organized in a format that can be replicated (Perry, 1998). The interviews for this thesis represented six dimensions:

1. Industry

    a) Services

    b) Manufacturing

2. Number of employees

    a) Less than 50 employees

    b) More than 50 employees

3. Vocation

    a) Sales role

    b) Ownership – Entrepreneur role

Table 4-10 summarizes the multi-dimensions of the participant interviews examined.

Table 4-10   **Participant Summary**

	Industry				
	Services		**Manufacturing**		**Total**
	< 50 Empl.	**> 50 Empl.**	**< 50 Empl.**	**> 50 Empl.**	
Sales persons	3	5	1	1	**10**
Entrepreneurs	1	2	4	4	**11**

Source: created by the author, based upon the work of Perry (1998, *p*795, Figure 3)

4.14 Organizing the Notes and Audio Recordings

Subsequent chapters will address the organization of fieldwork notes in more depth. However, a brief description is relevant within the Methodology Chapter for validation and replication purposes.

As expected, the interview process generated many pages of unstructured notes and hours of recorded audio. 'NVIVO 9' software was utilized to organize and assist in the analysis of these data, as recommended by supervisory professors and peers. The software was instrumental in organizing transcripts, recordings and rough notes while highlighting major themes and ideas for exploration. 'NVIVO 9' research software delivered several advantages:

- The software made it possible to code themes in written and audio formats within the same filing system, allowing the author to remain confident that particles of information were captured and organized regardless of the format.

- Data could be searched by code or key words to identify themes that may have been under the surface, saving considerable time.

The author participated in a three day comprehensive training course on the use of NVIVO software in Toronto, Ontario Canada from December 8, 2011 to December 10, 2011 inclusive. Karlsson *et al*. (2007)

caution against 'over coding' which can occur with specialized coding software. They recommend a strict classification for each category as well as a stringent system for adding new categories.

There are generally three phases of reduction coding in a research project (Neuman, 1994). The first phase involves a general pass through the information with an awareness of emerging themes. However, in realism research, the themes largely emerge as a response to the 'conceptual framework'. Therefore, realism researchers should jump directly to what is considered the traditional second pass, thereby applying portions of content to the concept framework that has been constructivistically pre-established (Sobh and Perry, 2005). The work is then reviewed to establish elucidation and links or associations.

Another approach to coding is the four stage 'constant comparative analysis' (Matsuo and Easterby-Smith, 2008):

1. Comparing Incidents:

    • Incidents are compared to create categorical theories.

2. Integrating Categories:

    • Incidents are compared against the properties of the categories themselves.

3. Delimiting Theory:

    • A reduction process to develop a higher level of lesser categories to the point of theoretical saturation.

4. Writing Theory:

    • Share the findings of the experimental learning (as opposed to sharing of knowledge).

The Matsuo and Easterby-Smith (2008) coding strategies were combined with those of Neuman (1994) for the purposes of this research project. The initial pass through of the material created 70 categories identified in Appendix 7. These initial 70 findings categories were reduced to 9 through a process of merging and rejection. The reduction of these categories reflects their validity and relevance to the conceptual framework. The summary of this reduction highlights the reduction process and follows in Table 4-11:

Table 4-11   Research Findings Category Reduction – Conceptual Framework Validation

Position in Findings Chapters	Category Headings	# of Sub Categories	# of References
1	Image of Sales	1	21
2	Developmental Phase - Career Path / Upbringing / Education / Leadership	10	178
3	Competitive Nature (& competitors)	3	66
4	Systems / Time-Management Strategies	13	114
5	Work Ethic / Motivation / Incentives / Philosophies	11	131
6	Humanity: Characteristics and Traits (ethics, values, teamwork and risk)	10	130
7	Relationships (internal & external), Adapting	9	118
9	The Sales / Entrepreneur Dynamic	3	47
		68	**838**

Source: derived by the author.

Following the reduction phase, the author embraced the theories of Sobh and Perry (2005) who advocate for empirical occurrences to be displayed numerically, along with a description of why these experiences took place. Further, an attempt was made to identify relationships and connections between the experiences of the participants (Hawkes and Rowe, 2008). Caution was observed to avoid being 'romanced' by the stories of dynamic participants (Barbour, 2001). This phenomenon was quite prevalent within the one on one interviews with these charismatic sales people and entrepreneurs.

It became apparent that further reduction was required as redundancy existed within the summaries and not all data were relevant to this thesis. Further, while several of the emerging categorical themes were interesting, they were not reflective of the objectives and conceptual framework of this thesis. As a result, several categories were rejected altogether and others were merged. Appendix 8 illustrates the detailed categorical reduction, which reflects the conceptual framework and also represents the

approximate order in which the categories will be discussed in the Findings Chapters. To simplify with less detail, the findings category headings follow in Table 4-12:

Table 4-12   **Research Findings Summary – Conceptual Framework**

Position in Findings Chapters	Category Headings	# of Sub Categories	# of References
1.	**Vocational Image of the Sales Person**	1	21
2.	**Cultural and Professional Background** - Career Path / Upbringing / Education	4	125
3.	**Assertiveness** - Competitive Nature (& competitors)	4	53
4.	**Control Preferences** - Strategy / Systems / Management	7	90
5.	**Humanity** - Work Ethic / Motivation / Incentives / Leadership / Risk propensity	4	121
6.	**Characteristics and Traits** Defining Success, Ethics & Values	4	128
7.	**Adaptability** - Relationships (internal &r external) / Creativity / Innovation	7	118
8.	**The Sales / Entrepreneur Dynamic**	2	46
		33	**761**

Source: derived by the author.

4.15   *Validation: Ensuring Quality within the Realism Paradigm*

The word validation derives from the Latin: 'validus'; meaning robust and strong, thus contributing to the integrity of research work (Aldridge and Aldridge, 1996). The primary method of gathering information for this thesis was the semi-structured interview within the phenomenological realism paradigm. This model will produce data that represent the opinions of participants. While interesting

and thorough, further validation enhances the robustness of the outcome. Therefore, the following validation strategies have been applied:

1. The days of interviews were chosen with the goal of seeking normalcy or routine rather than special occasions (Conger, 1998).

2. The data collected in the pre-interview questionnaire were compared against the semi-structured interview to identify validation or conflict of themes; to some degree using the triangulation theories of Sobh and Perry (2005). It should be noted that this was not done with a quantification approach but rather one of inquiry.

3. 'Off the cuff' feedback was sought after which may support or conflict with the answers previously given (Conger, 1998). Unsolicited comments or anecdotes often provide the researcher with a better understanding of the participant's experience (Peirce, 1995).

4. Feedback and findings were validated with outside observers if and when possible (Conger, 1998).

There are many approaches to interview analysis. The key issue is that analysts must embrace frameworks that recognize the eclectic nature of inductive theory building (Hill and McGowan, 1999). The 'open-ended' nature of inductively emerging theory makes it difficult to adhere to rigid planning and validation techniques. Rather, the researcher must remain flexible to change as theories are likely to be abandoned or distilled into something unforeseen (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2008). It is subsequently necessary for researchers to ensure that they document this evolution so that the reader may follow their journey and trust its transitional methodology. The investigator should pay extra attention to those cases which seem to deviate from the norm and discern observation from interpretation.

The end result is expected to be a reconstructive summary of the experiences of entrepreneurs and successful sales people, which is identified through participant opinion and less directly, but perhaps more convincingly through analysis of anecdotal depiction. In support of validation theories, the researcher should endeavor to live vicariously through the subjects and subsequently provide the reader with a 'lens' into their views, experiences and realities (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2008).

The participant interview is a 'social encounter' which requires alertness and presence of mind to identify when a participant is being vague or avoiding a particular line of questioning (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2008). There is a relationship factor within the process which must be balanced to ensure depth is

acquired while not offending the interviewee and affecting the entire interview. One must also caution against the possibility of peeling back too many layers of a theme that is not relevant as depth interviews can result in a subjective plethora of chaotic information. It is crucial that researchers employ methods and tactics to not only ensure quality but to convince their readers that this has been undertaken (Sobh and Perry, 2005).

There are several methods of ensuring that realism research is of quality.   The first to be discussed here is the ontological question. Healy and Perry (2000) suggest that researchers ask a simple question: is the information being gathered reflective of multiple realities.

A second method of ensuring quality involves the ever fragile nature of social phenomenon, and recognizing that underlying themes are affected by circumstance and environment (Sobh and Perry, 2005). With this in mind, researchers must ensure that they are digging 'deep' by asking depth questions reflecting 'how' and 'why', rather than simply asking about the 'what' (Healy and Perry, 2000). This is known as laddering (Hawkes and Rowe, 2008) which supports 'contingent validity' (Healy and Perry, 2000, *p*125).

Another approach to ensuring quality falls into the theme of 'methodological trustworthiness'. Unlike the positivist paradigm, which seeks a measurement of randomness or probability of error, within the realism paradigm the concept reflects the ability to review or audit the work (Healy and Perry, 2000). It is suggested that realism researchers ensure that their work be organized in a fashion such that the reader can understand the specific methodology and repeat the process if desired. It is also suggested that participant quotations as well as interviewer notations be included whenever possible so that the reader may gain an understanding of the body of influencers which ultimately created the outcomes. This is also referred to as a 'dependability audit' (Riege 2003, *p*79) and has been embraced within the Findings Chapters.

A fourth dimension of ensuring quality within the realism paradigm is 'analytic generalization' which recognizes the 'theory building' nature of the work. In other words, the research themes are generally identified in advance and the interview questions are developed with the goal of promoting depth within those themes (Healy and Perry, 2000).

There are a number of methods to ensure the quality of realism research:

1. Construct Validity – efforts to limit subjective judgments at planning and execution stages. The author attempted to adhere to this premise as evidenced by the numerous cautionary declarations throughout this work.

2. Internal Validity – investigating not just patterns or non-patterns in the perceptions of the interviewees, but also the means or instruments that created them. Charts and graphs have been included to emphasize such outcomes.

3. External validity – applies repeatability to the emerging theories through comparison. The researcher should identify the number of interviews across the number of industries to emphasize the scope of the research. The author has executed these concepts so that comparisons may be made within future research findings.

4. Reliability – is the work replicable? Provide the logic behind each phase of the methodology. The author has kept a record of notational observations during the process, used semi-structured guideline protocols and mechanically documented the interviews with a tape recorder (Riege, 2003).

Themes and comparisons are of interest not simply to see what is consistent, but to highlight that which is not (Riege, 2003).

It is very important to ensure quality within the subjective realism paradigm. Some researchers have gone to the extent of offering any part of their backup notes to the reader upon request as well as describing in minute detail the selection process of interviewees and the approach taken to attempt to avoid creating bias while building rapport with their subjects. This concept has been described as the four 'Ps of context'; place, period, people and process (Sobh and Perry, 2005 citing Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

The primary goal of phenomological analysis is not to prove or disprove a theory, but rather to observe or develop emerging theory (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2008) while discerning between 'knowledge sharing' and 'experimental learning' *(p*34). Investigations should attempt to look deeply into happenings more so than the people involved to support and develop the emerging theory.

If quality is to result, realism based research must acknowledge the perceptions that have come before while building upon research concepts that reflect systematically sound methods and transparency (Easterby-Smith *et al*. 2008). The author is confident that based upon the specific plans and executed

methodologies described in this chapter, such quality enhancing theories have been embraced and sound, in-depth and valid research is the result.

4.16   Ethical Issues – Epistemological Concerns

One problem with data reduction is that of researcher bias (Sobh and Perry, 2005). This 'corruption' is deemed minimized if the author interacts with the literature that came before, as the conceptual frameworks for his or her own work are being established. While the researcher is expected to be involved; at times 'passionately', the overall influence of the emerging reality should be curtailed whenever possible. A reasonable target in this regard is 'value-awareness' rather than setting the bar at 'value-removal' *(*Sobh and Perry, 2005, *p*1205) which is deemed an impossible task by many authors as discussed earlier in this thesis. On the advice of Sobh and Perry (2005) this author will hereby state his own background and values:

> *I am a 50 year old male, born in Canada to Dutch immigrants who came from a farming background reflective of hard work and honesty with strict Catholic values. However, by the time I was 3 years old my parents had abandoned the church for reasons unknown to me. I have a wife of 26 years and two teenage daughters. Although I have travelled throughout the North American and European continents, I have never called anything but the province of Ontario, Canada my home. I have a master's degree in business administration and have spent my entire working life in the private sector.*

> *I firmly believe that the best global economies are based upon established systems that attempt to ensure fair play without intruding upon freedoms, which assist those truly in need, and reward innovative hard working individuals. I have been both a successful salesperson and on a small scale, depending upon one's chosen definition of entrepreneur, I have also been an entrepreneur for the past 20 years.*

> *This thesis was originally driven in no small part by my frustrations with society's apparent judgment of certain occupations; specifically that of 'salesperson'. The literature unequivocally confirms the poor image of this vocation in North American Society. It is my experience that there are undesirables in all professions, but few, if any, are burdened with such a broad*

generalization. I have long felt that exceptional salespeople have much in common with entrepreneurs, yet the former are denigrated while the latter are lauded.

I seek to understand the traits and behaviors of the very best salespeople I can access and compare against those of successful entrepreneurs to explore the dynamic between the two. One might ask if I have an agenda or something to prove. To be frank, in the beginning, the answer was 'yes'. However, the process of researching and writing this thesis has created change in my views, goals and even my behaviors. With the guidance of my supervisory professors, I believe that the initial motivation to 'prove a point' has been replaced with a desire to learn, understand and discover. The Findings Chapters clearly indicate that I did not prove my initial point at all.

Source: derived by the author (2012; revised 2015)

4.17   Summary: Methodology

Within this Methodology Chapter it has been demonstrated that there is opportunity to add to knowledge, for both academia and practitioners within the selling and entrepreneurial themes. This chapter has also explored and considered paradigmatic options to identify the appropriate approach for this thesis. The realism paradigm is well suited to develop an understanding of the realities of selling and entrepreneurial characters. It is the intention of this work to contribute new knowledge while acknowledging past work within a methodological approach that allows for future replication.

Contributing to knowledge necessitates vigilant documentation of processes and the intentions outlined for inquiry within this conceptual framework contribute to attainment of this goal. The author has made significant strides to ensure that this methodology is thorough and sound, with a foundation of validated theoretical strategy.

Finally, the author is aware that reliability is paramount for any research project. These concerns have been addressed in several ways. Checklists have been designed to promote transferability and consistency. Further, two research methods were employed; including pre-interview questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with predetermined primary and in-depth secondary questions to uncover not just the 'what' phenomenon but the 'how' and 'why', with a degree of triangulation. This was managed with full awareness of the need for consistency and transferability.

In the next chapter this work will begin the process of analysis and exploration of interview participant emerging realities.

Findings:
Traits, Behaviors & Characteristics - Shaping Trust & Image

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

5.1 Introduction

The literature indicates that gaining, building and maintaining trusting relationships with customers is paramount to succeeding in business (27 authors listed chronologically in Appendix 2). These Findings Chapters will explore the background, motivators and behaviors of participants and highlight how trust and image may be affected by vocational characteristics within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic. The sections are organized according to the conceptual framework.

5.2 Vocational Image of Salesmanship

The literature indicates that the image of salespeople has had its challenges throughout history (Hodge *et al*. 1964; Painter and Semenik, 1979; Swan and Nolan, 1985; MacKenzie *et al*. 1998; Gounaris, 2005; Hartman, 2006).

> *"I don't like salesmen. I never have. I know my business depends upon them for its very survival, but when they call on me I don't like it!" (E-1).*

Overwhelmingly, the participant feedback indicated that the poor image of the concept of sales and of those who sell for a living persists. All of the interview participants indicated that sales and selling has a bad image with only 2 out of 21 suggesting that this is only 'somewhat' true, and the other 19 participants firmly stating that this poor image remains a significant challenge for the industry. The participants overwhelmingly agreed that the profession of 'sales' is one significantly lacking in trust which is in line with Swan and Adkins (1980-2) and Jones (2005). Table 5-1 summarizes the feedback in

this regard. It should be noted that detailed tables describing individual responses to queries will henceforth be located within the Appendix.

Table 5-1   Participant View: Do Salespersons have a Bad Image in Society?

ENTREPRENEURS		SALESPERSONS	
Code		**Code**	
E-1	yes	S-1	yes
E-2	somewhat	S-2	yes
E-3	yes	S-3	yes
E-4	somewhat	S-4	yes
E-5	yes	S-5	yes
E-6	yes	S-6	yes
E-7	yes	S-7	yes
E-8	yes	S-8	yes
E-9	yes	S-9	yes
E-10	yes	S-10	yes
E-11	yes		

Source: Derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

While E-2 and E-4 have a less negative view of sales image they recognize that there are issues with the image and trust of this vocation. Table 5-1 also indicates that, as shown in Steiner's (1976) millennially historical review of the poor image of those who 'sell things for a living'; the selling participants themselves continue to view their vocation harshly. One sales participant expressed that he despised the concept of selling and seeks to have customers do the buying rather than him doing the selling (S-10).

This professional sales representative has outperformed his peers by 30% consistently for over 5 years, and he embodies the characteristics of a lone wolf salesperson (Dixon et al. 2003). The concept of selling continues to have such low occupational prestige that many firms, and even sales people themselves maintain that they prefer to have titles that do not mention selling. This is in line with the 'deceptive titles' theories of Swan and Adkins (1980-1) and Ingram and Schwepker (1993). Participants

described going to extremes to call themselves 'Marketing Associates' or literally anything but a 'salesperson' (S-6; S-10).

Although it was not mentioned within the literature reviewed for this thesis, it would appear that entrepreneurs share in the frustration regarding the image and trust levels of their sales departments. Products are developed to create solutions for customers. If someone sincerely assists in the process of choosing the ideal solution, how is that a bad experience? (E-3).

One entrepreneur participant suggested that analysts should separate the transactional business from the relational sales positions to improve the image and trust levels of the latter (E-7). He gave the example of real estate agents, who often enjoy a one-time lucrative payout with no need to see their customers ever again. Such transactional dealings lend themselves to "creating slime balls" who change jobs frequently, which is in line with Darmon (2008). It is E-7's view that the techniques cannot work long term and it is unfortunate that these few individuals contribute largely to the overall image and distrust of salespeople.

Although the personal human experience was not specifically addressed within the interview brief, unsolicited comments emerged from several participants in relation to this theme. This is beneficial as 'off the cuff' feedback which may support or conflict with the answers previously given may be more indicative of reality (Conger, 1998). These concepts are important to this research because, as will be shown, a theme of contradictory behavior among the salesperson participants emerges within this chapter. These potentially trust inhibiting characteristics do not show themselves with direct answers to semi-structured interview questions. Rather, they emerge within the anecdotal contributions of the participants.

At the core of the image and trust issues is that these specific selling concepts have little (if any) academic connection and are seldom part of formal business training curriculum (Hanson, 2012). One entrepreneur participant cautioned that he may not enjoy living in a world where sales skills are scholastically honed, and where all are selling all the time (E-3).

E-3's views suggest that Smith's (1967) and Leigh's (1987) theories remain a concern: the vocation is learned informally, and because selling is not taught in schools, it often becomes a default position or unplanned career move (S-3; S-8).

With the image of sales as a vocation being low and formal academic training in sales being limited, adaptive theories of several authors (Moncrief, 1986; Sujan, 1999; Woods, 2008) remain critical to the development and survival of effective salespeople.

> *"I was shocked at the reception I got in the field. I was used to being liked in life. I learned very quickly that 4 out of 5 people really don't want to see you. I learned very early that I have to adapt to figure out a way to deal effectively with the contempt" (S-6).*

Adaptive sales strategies will be discussed in a subsequent section of this Findings Chapter. However, in line with Davis et al. (1989) and Baldwin (1992) this quote seemed to reflect the main hurdle that continues to face salespeople: their collective image and trustworthiness. Consumers and industrial buyers alike seem to remember bad verses good experiences (S-5) making it very difficult for most salespeople to earn trust (S-4).

These findings demonstrate that there is consensus among selling and entrepreneur participants regarding their views on the concept of selling: those who sell are not trusted and have a bad image in society. This is in line with earlier work on occupational prestige (Hodge *et al*. 1964; Swan and Adkins, 1980 and 1980-1; Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 1995) and highlights that the distrust of the vocation continues to hold true.

5.3   Entrepreneurial Identification & Definition

5.3.1   Defining Entrepreneurship

The literature is clear and consistent in its depiction of entrepreneurs being difficult to define (Cole, 1976). Most scholars agree that it involves some degree of risk and innovation (de Farcy, 1973) but even this point is not categorically conceded by all. Several authors suggest that to be entrepreneurial one must be the founder of new enterprise (Davids, 1963; Hornaby and Abound, 1971; Boyd, 1987) while others contend that entrepreneurship is more about innovation and creativity; a process in which people or teams of people engage, rather than an issue of ownership (Schumpter, 1934; Steyaert, 1997; Hill and McGowan, 1999; Cromie, 2000).

There are many scholars that feel entrepreneurship is about the individual, centering on personality traits (McClelland, 1961; Collins and Moore, 1964; Litvac and Maule, 1974; McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel,

1995; Cromie, 2000). Others take this concept further to suggest that dissatisfied individuals seeking independence from the frustrations of traditional employment drive most entrepreneurial endeavors (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). Interestingly, many of these authors overlap within the various themes mentioned above with altering degrees of support or opposition. The one thing most agree upon is that it is very difficult to agree on a definition for entrepreneur.

5.3.2 Defining Entrepreneurship: Ownership and Equity

In line with Boyd (1989) most, of the entrepreneurs (9 of the 11) believe that to be an entrepreneur one must have a financial stake in the company, answer to no one but customers and the bank manager, and measure success by his / her own scale. The two entrepreneur participants who felt that ownership was not an entrepreneurial criterion cited behavioral traits as paramount, which is in line with Cromie (2000). The sales participants generally concur that ownership is not necessarily a prerequisite to entrepreneurship, suggesting that creatively taking initiative is entrepreneurial. Interestingly, the commentary of both vocational participants became more passionate and intense as the theme moved away from the financial aspect of entrepreneurship.

5.3.3 Defining Entrepreneurship: Risk Factor

Most entrepreneurs (8 out of 11) felt strongly that without risk, entrepreneurship does not exist, which is in line with McMullen et al. (2007). In this spirit, one entrepreneur was adamant that 2nd generation owners, who take over 'Daddy's' creation are not entrepreneurs because there is no risk (E-11).

> "He's gotta have his nuts on the line. I don't care how big the company is as long as his survival... if feeding his kids depends on his succeeding and his nuts are on the line!" (E-7).

The sales participants were less likely (6 of the 10) to indicate that risk is a prerequisite to entrepreneurship. Interestingly, 3 out of 4 of the sales participants (S-3, S-5 and S-8) who felt that risk was not required to be entrepreneurial were those who identified risk as being something other than financial. For example, S-5 deemed cold calling as risky because rejection can be hurtful. In fact, although the question was posed with consistent simplicity, there was some confusion among the selling

participants within this theme of defining the entrepreneur. There may be an opportunity for future study to test whether the educational component played a role in the responses of some of the selling participants. It has been established within the literature that professional sellers generally have less education than entrepreneurs (Hanson, 2012). As will be subsequently discussed, this held true for participants in this thesis. It may be worthy of future study to confirm whether lesser education contributes to the variance in the comprehension of risk factors.

It is therefore of interest to this research on the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic to recognize 'how' the question was answered by the salespeople and not simply to analyze the content or definition provided by these players. This is in line with Easterby-Smith *et al*. (2008). For instance, several of the sales participants internalized the entrepreneurial definition; reflecting entrepreneurial qualities upon themselves within concepts of taking initiative and responsibility for ensuring promises are delivered upon without blaming others or making excuses. It may be worthy of future study to test if this entrepreneurial connection is an attempt to shed a more positive light on the seller's self-image which the literature (Davis et al. 1989) and the participants indicate is very poor.

5.3.4   Defining Entrepreneurship: Innovation

Most of the entrepreneur participants (9 of the 11) felt that innovation and differentiation must be part of the entrepreneurial definition which is a theory that has withstood the test of time (Schumpter, 1934; Steyaert, 1997; Cromie, 2000). The two who felt otherwise did not discount innovation but rather indicated that hard work and honest dedication to customer service can drive entrepreneurial success without creative ideas, which is in line with the work-ethic theories of Cunningham and Lischeron (1991). Intense customer loyalty is often the result of mending the problems created by competitors who made promises they could not keep (E-11).

The sales participants were less likely (4 of the 10) to identify innovation as a key ingredient of entrepreneurship. In fact, most saw themselves as entrepreneurially inclined because they are recognizers of opportunity and drive forward to accomplish their goals with more focus and rigor than others.

Interestingly, one entrepreneur offered the following related comment without a specific prompt on this theme:

"There are lots of successful salespeople who win the day by shooting their mouths off, but they really add no creative value do they... arguing with a customer until they give-in from fatigue... but an integrated effort of research, planning and great implementation with integrity... that's entrepreneurial... and you don't have to be an owner to make that happen. Those are valuable people" (E-2).

This quote is very much in line with Anglin et al. (1990) who cautioned against continuing to 'sell' and subsequently missing opportunities, and Ireland et al. (2009) who suggested that non-owners can have entrepreneurial characteristics. Implementation with integrity and hard work are traits that will be discussed further in upcoming sections, however, it is worthy of mention that being perceived as a hard working person of integrity is a key ingredient to building trust for entrepreneurs (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). This theme, which includes entrepreneur humility, emerges throughout these Findings Chapters.

Two of the selling participants were quite adamant that innovation is a significant aspect of entrepreneurial spirit, whether or not one takes on risk or invests as an owner. It is often a risk-taking owner that plants a seed and passionately oversees the growth and infrastructure creation, but not always (S-10).

In a unique and passionate way, one entrepreneur participant spoke of entrepreneurial spirit in others as opposed to himself; largely crediting the team with his success which is in line with Malach-Pines et al. (2005). Many companies can 'snuff out the flame' of those who are the soul of the business as the firm grows (E-2). This participant's sensitivity and care for his people reflect Toftoy and Jabbour's (2007) themes of humility. The authors contend that true leaders care about others first, which is a component of building and maintaining trust, and may be in contrast with some emerging traits and behaviors of the participating salespeople.

5.3.5   Defining Entrepreneurship: Beyond Self-employment

The entrepreneur participants were almost equally divided regarding the need to grow beyond one's own personal financial needs to be considered an entrepreneur, which reflects the findings of Howell (1972). Some were adamant regarding expansion, while others felt that simply being self-employed with associated risks equates to entrepreneurship.

One entrepreneur shared a unique view as an entrepreneur, which was more reflective of the response of a salesperson, stating that one must act entrepreneurial. For instance, a sales rep that takes a set of products and services and reconfigures them to meet the needs of a customer is entrepreneurial. Most times the way the corporation configures products and services is not the way they'll actually be sold to solve a customer's problem. It takes an entrepreneurial view to bring this back into the organization and start lobbying internally to change the offering (E-9). These comments are in line with the entrepreneurial definition embraced by this author which was influenced by Ireland et al. (2009), Vesper (1984) and Lau et al. (2012).

Many of the sales participants self-identified as entrepreneurial. It has already been suggested that future study may wish to test whether this represents subconscious image boosting, which, ironically may be in direct contrast with the entrepreneurial humility themes of Toftoy and Jabbour (2007). In fact, the one theme that seemed to be consistent and clear among the entrepreneur participants was humility; accrediting the contributions of others (team).

> *"There is no minimal amount of employees... you are a business owner, working hard to grow. That's entrepreneurial. But you must also be a leader in your community... not just your geographical community but that of your industry. Promoting your industry as opposed to your business... mentoring others within your field... that is true leadership and entrepreneurship" (E-4).*

Figure 5-1 summarizes the participants' views on the definition of entrepreneur. Unless otherwise stated all charts formatted in this fashion represent numerical values and not percentages. While the inductive study of emerging realities cannot be viewed through a positivistic, quantitative lens, these numbers have some degree of relevance and cannot be ignored within realism discussion.

Figure 5-1   Entrepreneurial Definition Criterion
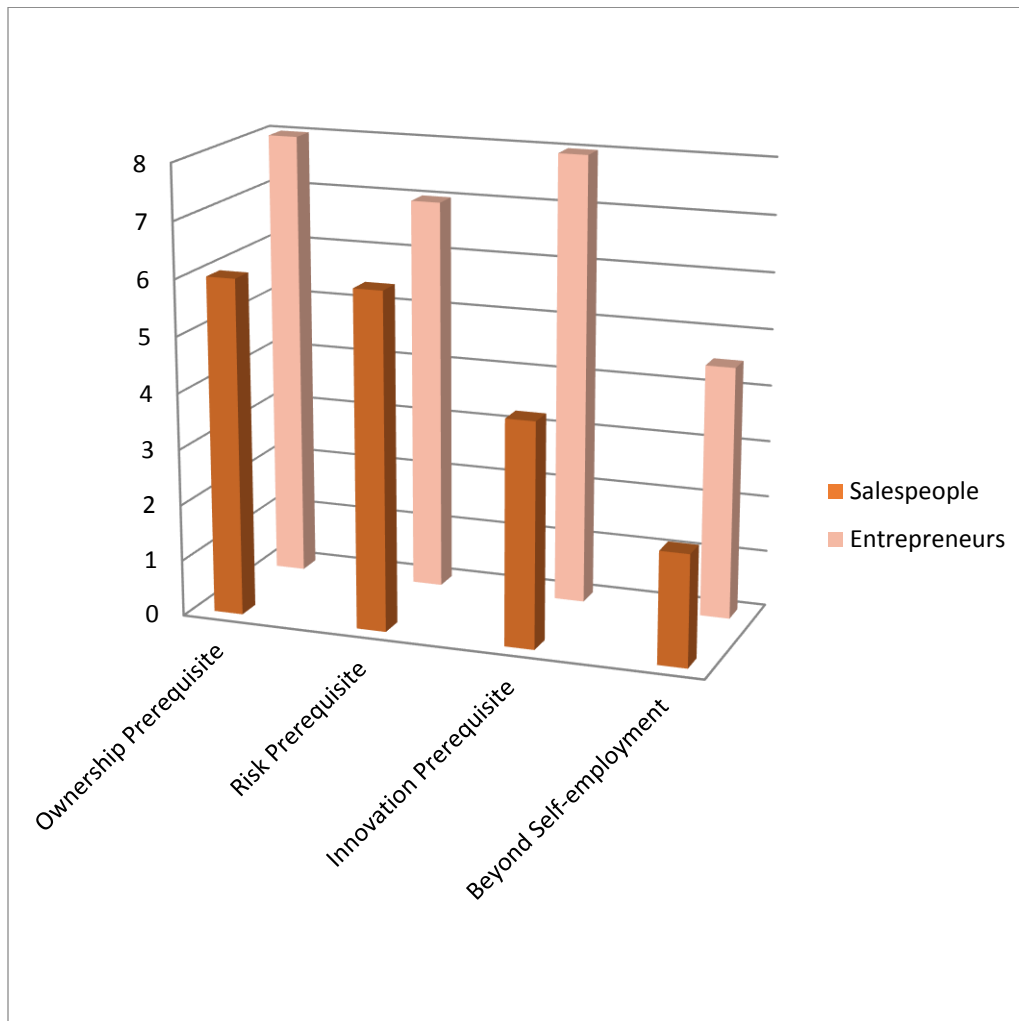
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

5.4   Cultural Background

5.4.1   Family Background

To better understand the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic it is of interest to explore the backgrounds of the participants. Within this section tangible concepts of childhood, such as parental examples and support, formal education and mentoring, will be discussed as they pertain to the realities of the participants and ultimately their ability to form long term trusting relationships.

The 'salesperson / parental example' phenomenon was not found to be explored in depth within the literature. However, academics have shown interest in the backgrounds of entrepreneurs. For example, those who came from industrious families are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial endeavors (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991; Stanworth *et al*. 1994). In fact, in one study, 36.5% of self-employed respondents indicated that their fathers were self-employed during their youth (Goldthorpe *et al*. 1987) supporting 'self-efficacy' and 'observational learning' concepts (Boyd and Vozikis, 1994). Entrepreneurial participants for this work reflected these themes with greater propensity as 7 out of the 11 participants grew up in a home with self-employed parents verses just 3 out of 10 of the sales participants.

Immigration themes of entrepreneurship were investigated by several authors such as Collins *et al*. (1964) and Shaver and Scott (1991) who suggested that courage and the inability to secure a normal job due to cultural intolerance were drivers of entrepreneurial tendencies. However, this study is not in line with this earlier work as only 2 of the 11 entrepreneurs were first generation North Americans. In the interest of exploring the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, only 1 out of the 10 salesperson participants derived from immigrant parents.

Further, Collins *et al*'s (1964) theories of poverty as a background for most entrepreneurs does not hold true within this current work, as all entrepreneur and salesperson participants indicated backgrounds of working / middle class upbringings. This may have more to do with economic times than participant background. Interestingly, all of the participants also exclusively identified as not having an upper class childhood. It may be worthy of future study to test whether affluent people lack the desire to pursue a career in sales or lack the ambition to launch a new enterprise.

Figure 5-2 illustrates the immigration and self-employment phenomenon.

Figure 5-2   **Parental Background Component**
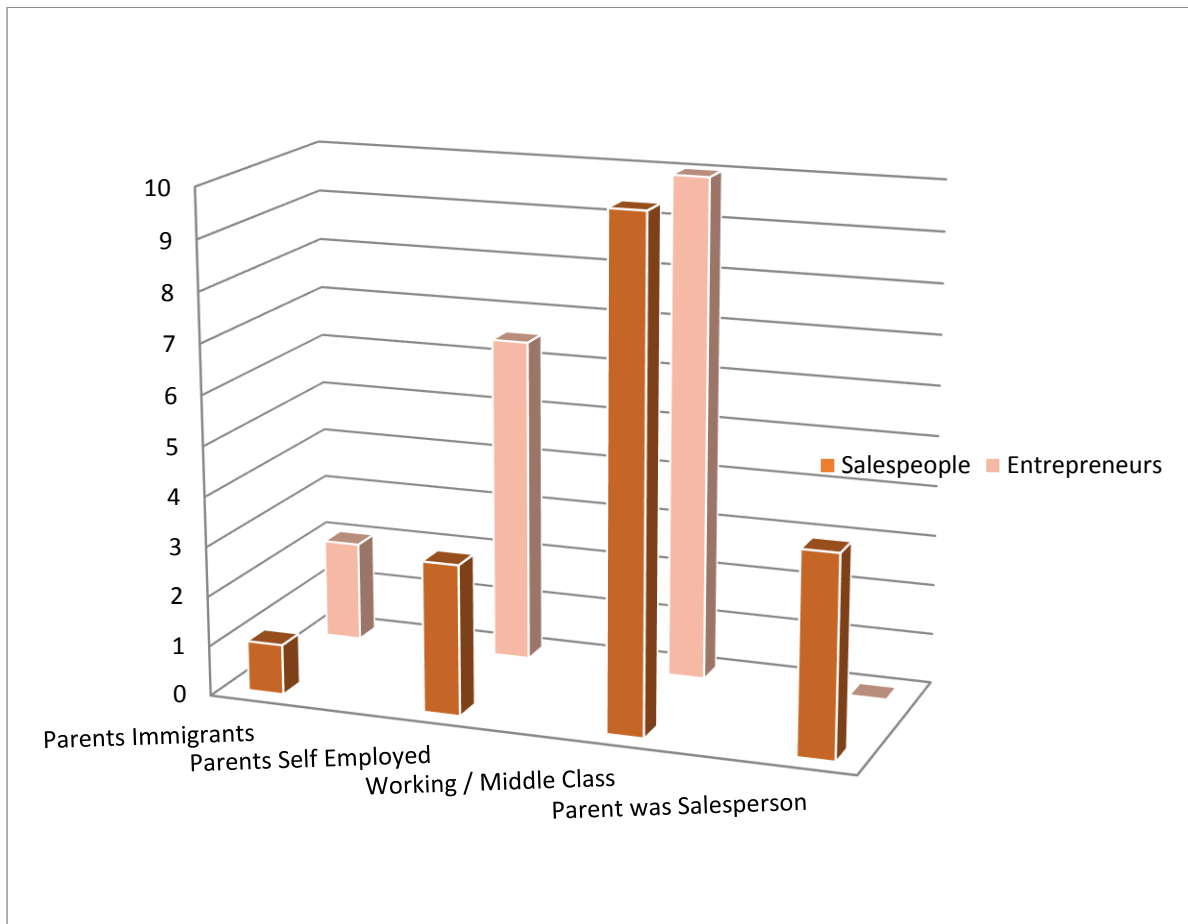
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Interestingly, the salespeople also followed their parents into the vocation in 4 out of 10 instances. The following quotes provide depth of understanding within these themes:

"Dad was a drug salesman. I saw the freedom of the career choice. I liked that" (S-7).

 "Dad sold pots and pans, then life insurance and then real estate. He was a charmer. He talked to everybody. He got me into a work-reward mentality" (S-9).

"I watched my Dad develop relationships. He talked to people. That's all. He was a people person" (S-5).

In summary, the findings are in line with the literature regarding the theme of parental example influencing entrepreneurship (Goldthorpe et al. 1987) and may represent new perspectives on the same

holding true for salesmanship. Conversely, this work is not in line with prior research regarding immigration theories of entrepreneurship (Weber, 1931). And finally, this section of the findings highlights two very interesting emerging themes regarding the participating salespeople which represent characteristics that have not been found to be discussed in the literature:

1. Like entrepreneurs, the salespeople were very likely to follow in their parents footsteps if the latter pursued a career in sales.

2. Not one of the entrepreneurs had parents who were involved in selling as a vocation. It may be worthy of future study to test whether entrepreneur activity in progeny is less evident if parents are involved in sales.

5.4.2   Education

Parental example appears to be a shared phenomenon within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic. Along this youth theme, this research endeavored to understand the formal education levels of the participants as past studies have shown that higher education is reflective of higher propensity to launch an entrepreneurship endeavor (Robinson and Sexton, 1994; Gray and Howard, 2006). In fact, each year of formal education raises the probability of self-employment by 8% (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982). Conversely, the literature shows that the opposite is true for the vocation of selling. Being young, male and possessing a lower educational status indicates a higher propensity to be involved in sales (Darmon, 2008).

These findings are in line with Darmon's (2008) statement on education with 7 out of the 11 of the entrepreneur participants holding a university degree; with almost half of those holding a graduate degree. Conversely, 2 out of the 10 sales participants had a university degree, and none of those had gone on to earn graduate degrees. Selling participant comments actually included emotive declarations of 'hating' school. Appendix 9 illustrates the detailed educational component as it reflects the realities of the participants.

Discussion revealed that S-10 patterns his career similarly to how he managed his education, which was within the margins of minimal exertion. Although he consistently and significantly outperforms his peers, he does so without any effort at all; admittedly he works just 25 hours weekly or less. It may be

worthy of future study to test whether high performing sellers typically do only what it takes to succeed, thus satisfying their achievement needs (Spiro and Perreault, 1979) and never reach their true potential.

Table 5-2 summarizes the educational component of participants.

Table 5-2   **Summary of Participant Education Levels**

	Number of Sales People	Number of Entrepreneurs
High School Education Only	2	3
College Diploma	6	1
University Degree	2	4
Graduate Degree	0	3
Doctorate / Other	0	0

Source: Derived by the author based upon the interview responses

In summary, this work is in line with the literature regarding the education levels of salespeople and entrepreneurs; however, there may be a contribution to new perspectives related to the trait phenomenon of ongoing self-improvement. Almost all of the selling (8 of 10) and entrepreneur (8 of the 11) participants indicated that they feel that ongoing personal self-improvement strategies are important, yet only one participant from each vocational category does anything formally to pursue personal growth in this regard. While the theme of contradiction is emerging within the selling participant interviews, this represents a singular instance within the entrepreneurial interactions. Figure 5-3 summarizes this phenomenon.

Figure 5-3   **Self-improvement Phenomenon**
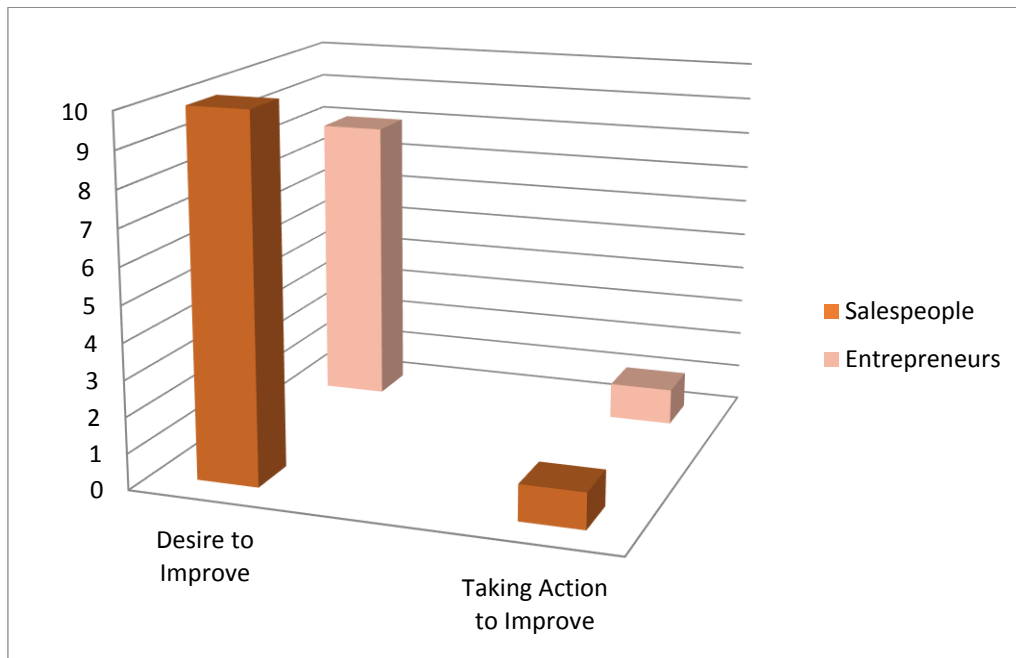
Source: Derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

5.4.3   *Parental Guidance – Setting an Example and Providing Support*

Although prior research on parental guidance / example for sellers could not be readily found, cultural background theory of entrepreneurs has been explored. In line with the findings of Stanworth et al. (1989) and Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) entrepreneur participants generally followed the example of their parents. Interestingly, this represents a common thread linking the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic. Perhaps the most interesting emerging youth-era phenomenon uncovered by this salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic research is that of parental support. 9 out of the 10 sales participants and 10 of the 11 entrepreneurs reported having unwavering and absolute parental support throughout their childhood; continuing through their youthful decision-making years.

> *"Jobs have always been a stepping stone for me with no clear means to an end. I am a free spirit that way. Ironically, my parents even fully supported me in not choosing a career!" (S-10).*

Appendix 10 illustrates the participant realities as they pertained to parental and familial background.

In summary, this work is not in line with the somewhat dated work by Weber (1931) as it relates to the poverty phenomenon as a driver of entrepreneur activity. None of the participating entrepreneurs were driven to self-employment by survival needs, which is an example of 'push' motivation (Gray and Howard, 2006). Further, new perspectives may be emerging within the theme of parental example and parental support. Review of the literature on salespeople and entrepreneurs revealed no past research in this regard. There is consensus among all participants relating to unwavering and absolute parental support. Since these participants represent the 'highly successful', it may be worthy of future research to explore this phenomenon as it relates to those who achieve lesser degrees of success.

5.4.4   Mentoring

For the purposes of this thesis, the Merriam Webster definition of 'mentor' was adopted which describes a trusted counselor or guide (Merriam – Webster – Mentor, 2013). The literature reviewed for this thesis did not thoroughly explore the concept of mentoring for entrepreneurs. In fact, it was E-1 who identified the phenomenon as a potential gap in the interview process. Selling theory discussed the concept, however the focus seemed to highlight the talented seller's disinterest in mentoring others (Harding, 2008). It is important to note that for purposes of this research, 'mentor', which connects to nature verses nurture themes of teachability, does not include a parental figure. Only 5 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants reported having a non-parental mentor during their formative years verses 7 of 10 of their salesperson counterparts. Participant feedback included themes of motivation (S-3; S-4), focus and listening skills (S-1; E-3).

> "He (mentor) said, 'I don't consider you average. You have the ability to make a lot of money and enjoy this more. Why be average when you can be really, really good?' That was a light bulb for me. I'll never forget it" (S-4).

This emerging mentoring phenomenon may be in line with previous work which established that entrepreneurs generally have higher education levels (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Robinson and Sexton, 1994; Darmon, 2008), which may render mentorship less necessary to their success. Conversely, lesser formal education for many sales people may render their vocation more conducive to mentoring. Appendix 11 illustrates the mentoring component in detail as it reflects upon the realities of the participants.

Interestingly, 8 out of 11 of the entrepreneurs are formal mentors to others, while only 2 of 10 of the salespeople formally develop up-and-comers. This is supportive of Harding's (2008) theory that effective sales people are often private and protective of their respective methods and are seldom long term strategic thinkers. In several cases, the participating entrepreneurs were passionate about the concepts of developing others; viewing the activity as a duty or responsibility (E-4).

Figure 5-4 summarizes the overall mentoring component for the participants which is illustrated in more detail in Appendix 11.

Figure 5-4   **Mentoring Component**
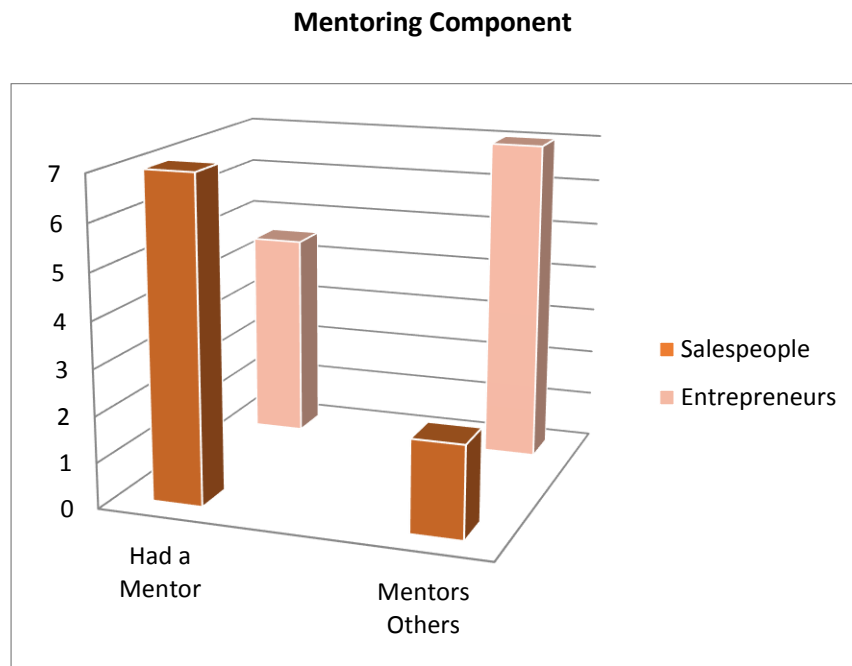
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Interestingly, 7 out of 10 of the highly successful salespeople indicated that they had been mentored, yet only 2 out of 10 of these top performers reported having any involvement in mentoring others. Given that selling skills are generally not taught in higher learning institutions (Raskin, 2002) mentoring programs may be a very important component of this vocation. However, the high performing sales participants within this research are not involved in mentoring others. Therefore, it may be worthy of future research to test specifically who is doing the mentoring for this profession and whether it is generally the lesser performers taking on the task. This may indicate that the highest performers within this vocation actually hone their skills to the elite level independently in the field, which would be in line with the adaptability concepts identified within the literature (Jaramillo *et al*. 2007; Osarenkhoe, 2008;

Wood *et al*. 2008). It may also interest future researchers to test whether the reluctance to help other team members develop their skills contributes to the poor image and lack of trust in society for these high performing salespeople. Conversely, is the entrepreneur's tendency to share knowledge and develop others representative of benevolence and humility; thus contributing to the building of trust?

5.4.5   Job Enjoyment Factor

The final concept to be explored within this section on the cultural phase of participants is job enjoyment. The literature suggested that most entrepreneurs come from the realm of the employed and are sometimes driven to self-employment by dissatisfaction with their firm (Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994). Similarly, successful sales people who are independent and autonomous by nature will naturally seek 'greener pastures' if they are faced with poor opportunities for performance, thus selecting a new environment (Schuster and Danes, 1992). Further, when faced with dissatisfying changes in organizational policy, most employees will exercise adaptive or coping strategies, while many talented salespeople are more likely to exit the firm (Griffith *et al*. 1999).

This phenomenon has a developmental connection within the conceptual framework for this thesis because it reflects the choice of vocation. There is a strong commonality within the successful salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic in this regard. All of the participants either like or extremely like their vocation. In fact, 9 out of the 10 salespeople and 8 of 11 of the entrepreneurs 'extremely' like what they do and in many cases this was a direct result of enjoying interacting with people. However, the other reasons for job enjoyment do not represent commonalities between the two vocations. For instance, the entrepreneur participants seemed more likely to enjoy problem solving for clients than the salespeople, which is in line with Cromie's (2000) theories of entrepreneurial creativity and innovativeness.

Conversely, the selling participants were pleased with the freedom that their vocation facilitated. The selling literature explored themes of positivity, mood (Churchill, 1985; George, 1998) but did not extensively explore 'freedom' as a driver of job enjoyment. Five of ten of the salesperson participants discussed this phenomenon which was completely absent from the entrepreneur component. S-6 is a full-time salesperson for a global company: "*No one manages me... tells me what to do. I work 25 hours a week and over deliver... for this they pay me six figures. This is a good gig"* (S-6).

This current research also suggests that salespeople and entrepreneurs may differ regarding the things they dislike about their respective professions. 6 out of the 11 entrepreneurs mentioned issues relating to uncommitted or 'lazy' people being a primary irritant while only 2 of the 10 salespeople indicated people issues as a concern.

> "Fools and dishonesty. I have little patience for fools and an absolute intolerance of dishonesty" (E-1).

In line with the lone wolf selling theories of earlier work (Goulder, 1957; Blau and Boal, 1989; Schuster and Danes, 1992; Dixon *et al*. 2003; Harding, 2008; Prakash *et al*. 2008) the high performing sales participants indicated a strong dislike for management control or regulation systems. 8 out of the 10 selling participants spoke passionately about this frustration.

Regulations were also a point of contention for 4 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants; however, this represented external influences such as governmental involvement or client approval systems as opposed to the internal control issues expressed by several sales participants. Appendix 12 summarizes the individual participant's feedback regarding the likeability of their respective vocations.

Since 6 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants indicated dislike of the people problems encountered in their roles, and given that 8 out of the 10 sales participants avoid teaching and mentoring peers, it may be worthy of future research to explore whether freedom from people responsibilities is a significant component of the level of 'extreme' likeability of the selling profession. It may also be of interest to test whether salesperson probability to choose the 'extremely like' option for vocational enjoyment is a reflection of reality or an example of an impulsive image-boosting response.

Ironically, some may have the misconception that 'want of freedom' is a driver for new business start-ups. The literature suggests that cultures that value individualism tend to be more occupationally mobile and generally enjoy more freedom (McGrath *et al*. 1992). Individualism is considered the most critical factor leading to entrepreneurial tendencies (Koh, 1996; Begley and Boyd, 1987; Deakins, 1999; Cromie, 2000; Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005). However, this new research is not fully in line with these concepts, as not one of the entrepreneur participants identified this freedom phenomenon as an enjoyment factor of their vocation. Future study may seek to confirm that those who take on risk, work long and hard, and help to develop the skills of colleagues have less freedom but earn trust easily. Conversely, researchers may seek to test whether elite salespeople who outperform their peers while working less hours, actually enjoy more freedom but struggle to earn trust as a result.

5.4.6   Summary and Conclusions – Cultural background

To summarize this section which focused on the developmental stages of the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, this work is in line with earlier work in several ways. It has been demonstrated that the selling and entrepreneur participants unanimously feel that the image of sales and selling continues to have a poor image in society. In fact, emerging evidence from these interviews may ironically demonstrate that desire to improve this poor self-image may be driving salesperson behaviors that contribute to the phenomenon and subsequently inhibit the building of trust.

In line with the literature on salespeople being generally young uneducated males (Darmon, 2008) this work indicates that the participating salespeople have significantly lesser education than their entrepreneur counterparts. An interesting reality which emerged from the interviews is that while both the sales and entrepreneur participants indicated that they felt that ongoing self-improvement is critical, and that they had a strong desire to improve, no formal action is taken by these players to further develop their skills and education.

A strong and interesting theme is emerging regarding the parental component. It is not uncommon for parents to have set an example of hard work ethic and to have led by example within vocational choices. And while this work is in line with the literatures' position that entrepreneurs frequently follow in their parent's footsteps, parental example in the case of salespeople was not found to be explored previously. Therefore, this thesis may be exploring new perspectives in this regard.

There is also unanimous consensus among interview participants with regards to parental support. These players did not answer a query with: "yes, my parents were supportive"; but rather, the interviews revealed rich and deep anecdotes describing unwavering and unconditional parental support. The literature was not found to have explored this specific phenomenon in depth, so this study may be contributing new perspectives in this regard.

However, for salespeople the theme of supporting others does not necessarily translate through generations. This research seems to indicate that the participating salespeople and entrepreneurs do not share in their enjoyment of teaching their skills to others. The entrepreneurs eagerly help to develop the skills and careers of others while the salespeople are more likely to keep to themselves. In fact, while the participating salespeople are twice as likely as entrepreneurs to be mentored by others,

the participating entrepreneurs are almost 4 times more likely to be mentors themselves. This phenomenon may represent a new perspective and is worthy of future study using a larger sample size.

And finally, the evidence from the interviews indicates that both the salesperson and entrepreneur participants have a dislike for rules and regulations. However, for the salesperson they tend to represent internal frustrations driven by management control systems and for the entrepreneurs the annoyance is generally driven by external policy from regulatory bodies or government agencies. It is worthy of future study to better understand the difference between the outside factors which sometimes inhibit entrepreneur progress and the internal policies and procedures that frustrate high performing sellers. The selling participants indicated that they did not appreciate filling out forms which highlight their activities. Interestingly, if management are inflexible in this regard, sellers who work only 25 hours weekly may be forced to lie throughout this process which may also inhibit the building of trust. Further, within these interviews a theme of exaggeration seemed to be emerging on behalf of the salesperson participants. The behavior appeared to be unintentional. It may be worthy of future study to explore this phenomenon more deeply to test whether these players impulsively exaggerate to reflect a stronger self-image and whether such behaviors discourage the building of. This phenomenon did not present with the entrepreneur participants.

Expanding upon the developmental analysis of the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, the next section of this Findings Chapter will explore the competitive nature of the participants.

5.5   Assertiveness

5.5.1   Assertiveness / Diplomacy

The literature is fairly clear and consistent regarding assertiveness of both successful salespeople and entrepreneurs, although the dynamic between the two has not been extensively explored. Both salespeople (McGrath, 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000) and entrepreneurs (Sujan, 1999; Sojka and Deeter-Schmelz, 2002; Sharma *et al*. 2007) have been found to be predisposed to having an assertive nature. The pre-interview questionnaire portion of this work addressed this assertiveness phenomenon directly and seems to be in line with the literature. 9 out of the 10 participating salespeople and 9 of the 11 entrepreneurs consider themselves to be assertive; although salespeople were twice as likely to describe themselves as extremely assertive.

However, the semi-structured interviews provided deeper understanding; indicating that there is an interesting variant to the assertive phenomenon as it pertains to these high achievers. Participants tend to apply their assertiveness internally to ensure customer performance goals are met. In other words, these high achievers in business do not inflict assertive behaviors onto customers but rather onto their peers and employees within their firms.

> *"I might be assertive and creative to get past a gatekeeper, but once I have the audience I need and want... once the person who needs to hear my story is in front of me, no. Assertive to get there, but then it's toned way down" (E-9).*

There appears to be a pattern to the 'assertive' phenomenon for these highly successful participants: push the team, not the customer. Those who push customers are not rewarded for their efforts. However, once a customer commits, it is common for these players to apply aggression internally to ensure the firm delivers on promises.

Successful salespeople are even willing to challenge their bosses with frequency. The following quote suitably captures their passion in this regard:

> *"I have no time for 'stupid'. When stupid shows up I get frustrated and impatient. And when it's your boss showing up wearing the stupid hat, well, that doesn't always work out so well. But I seem to have the patience of Job with customers. Some think I should use a little of that skill around the office" (S-1).*

Appendix 13 details the participant feedback regarding the assertiveness component within their realities.

It is of interest to note that while almost all salesperson and entrepreneur participants suggested that they were assertive in nature, 8 of 11 of the entrepreneurs indicated that they had a tendency to be shy, against only 3 out of the 10 of the salespeople, which may be a reflection that financial risk and ultimate responsibility comes with a degree of humility. Humility is a characteristic which has been shown to contribute to building trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). Further supporting this entrepreneur humility theme is the fact that all of the highly successful salespeople interviewed felt that their company was the absolute best in their field, while only 6 out of the 11 entrepreneurs shared this view. Figure 5-5 provides a visual summary of the assertive phenomenon as it pertains to the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

Figure 5-5   **Assertiveness Phenomenon Summary**
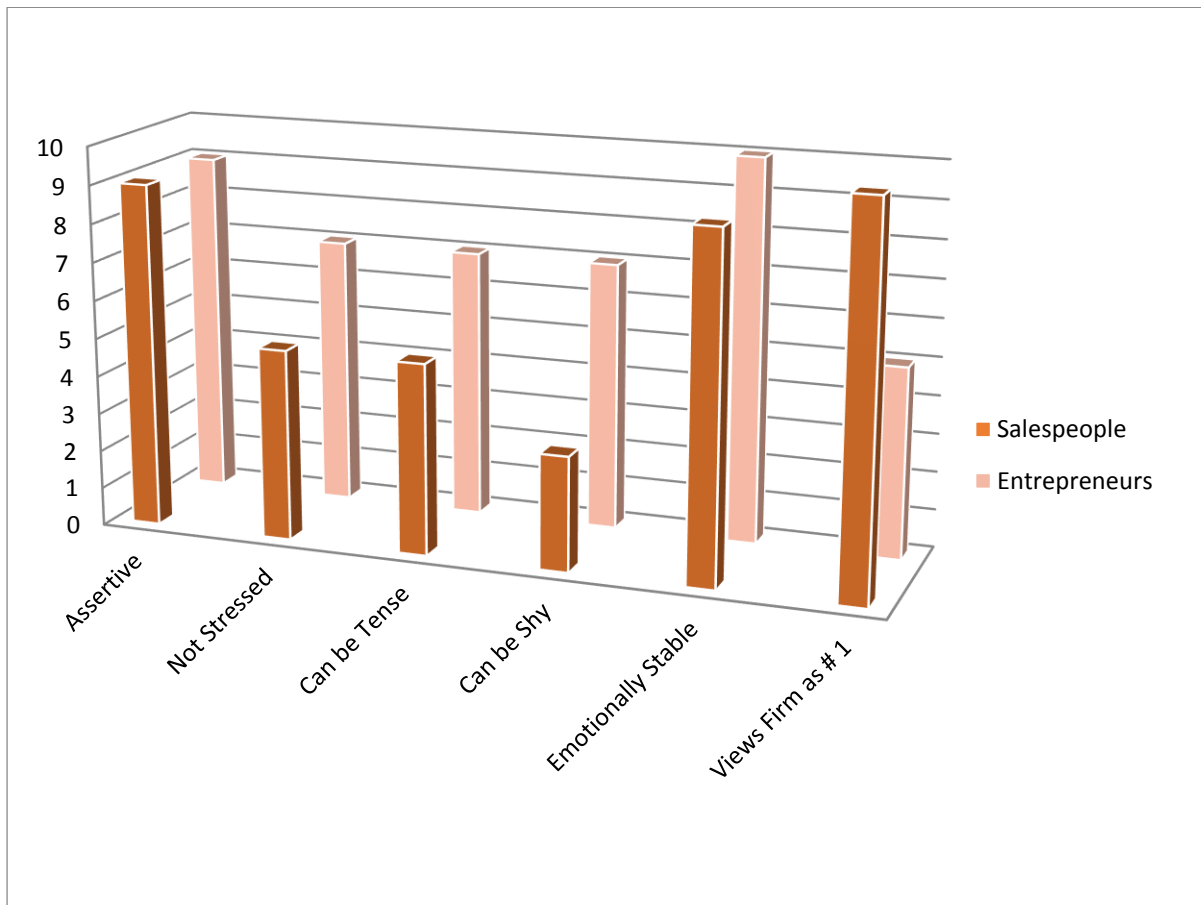
Source: Derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

An interesting potential conflict emerges within these assertiveness and behavioral themes. With some consistency, the interview responses indicate that these high achieving entrepreneurs see themselves as emotionally flexible and capable of being assertive, yet tense, while being unstressed and shy. Strangely, the entrepreneurs also describe themselves as emotionally stable. This was not apparent within the salesperson interviews and may represent a new perspective. It may be worthy of future research to explore whether this phenomenon emerges as a result of the risk, responsibility and stress involved with new start-up endeavors. Does this emotional plasticity represent a preconceived trait or does it evolve over time as a consequence of taking on risk and responsibility? It has been suggested that the very act of being an entrepreneur can create personality traits that may not have been prevalent prior to launch (Littunen, 2000).

5.5.2 Competitive Nature

There is some interest within the reviewed literature which speaks to the competitive nature of successful salespeople and entrepreneurs (Watkins and Watkins, 1984; McGrath *et al*. 1992). In fact, competitive environments; whether driven by internal (management) or external (rivals) sources, have been shown to apply pressure to salespeople which in turn can cause them to compromise their ethical and moral boundaries (Hegerty and Sims, 1978; Schwepker and Good, 2010). Queries were therefore included in both the pre-interview questionnaire and semi-structured interview for this research. In summary, very little information was gathered as competitive spirit or 'winning' was not a day to day factor for any of the sales or entrepreneur participants. In fact, the opposite seemed to be true, which may be the most interesting aspect of this phenomenon.

Literally all of the participants indicated that they are highly competitive and hate to lose. However, there were no anecdotes supporting the existence of a strong competitive nature in daily dealings for either the successful salespeople or entrepreneurs. Rather, they are focused on other things and winning is a by-product of this. Future researchers may seek to explore this phenomenon along one of these themes:

1. Does raw competitive drive inhibit success or limit one's scope of focus; and is this in any way related to the fact that these high performing participants do not blindly focus on winning at all costs?

2. Is this phenomenon unique to high performers? That is; given that these players identify as highly competitive and hate to lose, yet have the discipline to not filter all activities through this competitive lens, does this represent a primary difference between those who succeed verses those who fail?

Expanding upon the competitive theme, the next section of this chapter will explore participant awareness of competitive products and initiatives.

5.5.3 Understanding Competitors

The literature describes the boundary spanning sales representative as a critical source of competitive information (Teas, 1981; Sujan, 1999). This work appears to support that concept from an ownership

standpoint; however a conflict exists between the participating entrepreneur's expectations and the participating salesperson commitment to the strategy. It should be noted that none of the participating sellers were employed by participating entrepreneurs.

All of the entrepreneurial participants indicated that understanding their competition is very important, but seemingly not important enough to apply strategic focus and resources against the investigation. 8 out of the 11 participating entrepreneurs indicated that their source of competitive information was the informal reporting of their field sales representatives. Only 3 of 11 entrepreneurs allocated resources to the tracking of competitive activity.

> *"My salesman brings me all the information I need to know" (E-5).*

> *"Our sales guy has contacts everywhere. He always finds out whatever we need to know" (E-10).*

Conversely, all of the participating salespeople; who ironically represent this very group of boundary spanning individuals deemed so important to competitive intelligence gathering, feel that this activity is an unimportant waste of time. This supports earlier work which explored the private and protective tendencies of lone wolf salespeople (Harding, 2008; Dixon et al. 2003). Selling participants were blunt: "No. Don't care" (S-4).

The conflict between the entrepreneur participant's reliance upon boundary spanning salespeople for competitive information and the selling participant's reluctance to gather or share such information seems to represent a new perspective and may be worthy of future study. It may be worthwhile to investigate whether this conflict contributes to building or inhibiting trust for salespeople. Appendix 14 illustrates the individual participant feedback regarding competitive spirit and tracking competitors.

Figure 5-6 summarizes the interesting contrast between participant competitive natures in theory, against their lack of day to day focus on being competitive and / or understanding competitors. Included in this graphic is the phenomenon of seeing one's self as being athletically inclined, which represents a potential connection to being competitive.

Figure 5-6   **Competitive Spirit Summary**
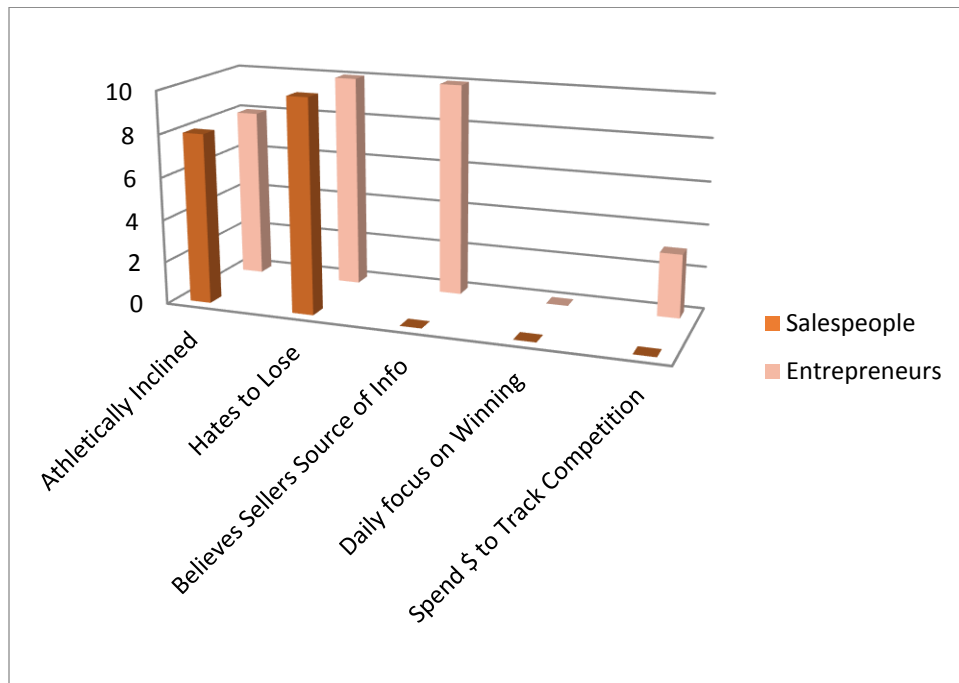
Source: Derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

5.5.4   Summary and Conclusions - Assertiveness

To summarize this section which focused on the assertiveness aspect of the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, this work is in line with earlier work and adds some further points for consideration. For instance, the general consensus from the selling and entrepreneur participants that they see themselves as assertive individuals is fully supportive of several authors (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000). However, the assertiveness of these highly successful salespeople and entrepreneurs is not directed at customers. This emerging theme may represent a new perspective. Aggressive behavior is not employed by these elite performers in business except internally within their team and / or firms to ensure customer promises are delivered upon.

Further, the participating entrepreneurs seem to have immense behavioral and emotional versatility according to their self-analysis. This chameleon-like trait is unique to entrepreneur participants and represents a contrast within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, adding to new perspectives.

While both the successful sales and entrepreneur participants are generally athletic, highly competitive in nature and they all hate to lose; these elite performers do not bring that phenomenon to the workplace. That is, 'winning' or defeating the competitor is not a daily focus but rather a longer term result of other concepts falling into place. However, the selling participants seem to take pride in 'not caring' about competitive activity while ironically, the entrepreneurs not only deem competitive knowledge important; they count on their boundary spanning salespeople (who don't care) to gather and share the intelligence. Interestingly, the entrepreneur participants 'trust' that their sales team will contribute competitive intelligence while the selling participants self-identify as 'untrustworthy' in this regard.

Expanding into more strategic aspects of selling and entrepreneurial performance, the next section of this Findings Chapter will explore the tools and systems utilized by our highly successful participants.

5.6   Control Preferences

5.6.1   Planning and Personal Time Management

The literature on salespeople and entrepreneurs does not extensively explore the phenomenon of planning and personal time management.

> *"… planning is expensive, it often requires unrealistic stability in the environment, and, above all, it is the least flexible of the strategy-making modes" (Mintzberg, 1973, p53).*

Daily flexibility or 'adaptability' seems to take immense priority within prior theory on salespeople and entrepreneurs. In Table 2-1, 36 authors were identified as having explored the phenomenon of salesperson adaptability with virtually none of these researchers exploring the time management habits of these players. Therefore, this thesis represents an interesting opportunity to explore new perspectives regarding the phenomenon of the 'importance of planning' and the 'ability to plan' within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

This research is somewhat in line with previous research on adaptability of entrepreneurs (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991) and salespeople (Weitz, 1981; Sujan et al. 1999; Jaramillo et al. 2007) in that 5 out of the 11 participating entrepreneurs and 6 of 10 salespeople indicated that they were more reactive than organized. However, 8 out of the 10 salespeople and 8 of 11 entrepreneurs highlighted that

forward planning, both of the long term strategic nature and that of daily, weekly and monthly scheduling of priorities, was important. Yet, conflict emerged. For instance, S-1 indicated that planning is very important, but further discussion revealed that 75% of the next 6 weeks in his personal planner were blank. In fact, 3 out of the 8 of the salespeople who deemed forward planning as important actually did not practice forward planning at all upon further investigation. This was not the case for entrepreneurs who did not suggest that they did something that they did not in fact do.

The following visual illustration (Figure 5-7) compares the planning related attributes of the selling and entrepreneur participants. It has been adjusted to remove the entrepreneur participants for whom forward planning is a vocational impossibility.

Figure 5-7   **Planning / Time Management Importance**
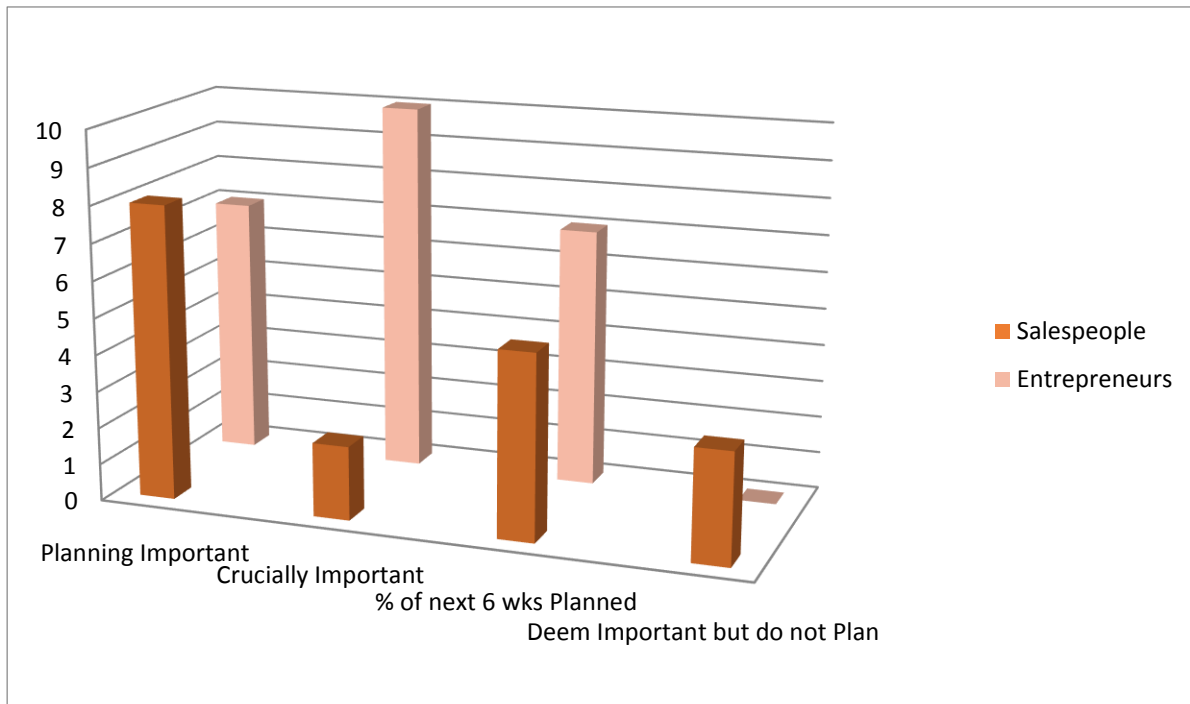
Source: Derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

It may be worthy of future study to better understand why the selling participants were more prone to provide an answer that may be pleasing, but ultimately does not accurately depict their reality. This may have an effect on their ability to maintain trusting relationships. Delving more deeply into emerging trust-building concepts, the next section of this chapter will explore the participant realities as they pertain to the use of customer relationship technology.

5.6.2 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems / Technology

While it is not the goal of this thesis to explore the attributes of CRM systems, it is of interest to understand whether our high performing participants utilize them. The urgent sharing and analysis of current customer information as imperative if an organization is to produce effective marketing plans (Kothandaraman et al. 2011). The authors recognize that cooperation and participation from boundary spanning sales representative is a lofty expectation. Only 2 out of the 10 salesperson participants reported that they have CRM systems in place but only one of them is actually in use; reducing the figure to 1 in 10. Conversely, 3 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants have CRM systems and in all of these cases the systems were embraced by the respective firm's employees.

The fact that half of the salesperson participants who claimed to have CRM systems in place, did not actually use them, is somewhat reflective of the credibility questions raised regarding the fact that one third of the sales participants who felt forward planning is important did not themselves engage in forward planning at all.

Further contributing to the emerging theme of selling participant inconsistency, while there was no indication that any of the entrepreneur participants lacked understanding of the concept of CRM systems, the same cannot be said for the salesperson participants. CRM was mistaken for communication tools such as a pager or Blackberry (S-8). Another salesperson remarked that "mailing out calendars every year is just not effective" (S-7) which was completely irrelevant to the query. Another salesperson related CRM systems to the act of bothering customers rather than as a tool for managing time and information. These selling participants did not understand the primary purpose of CRM.

It is therefore of great interest to the trust component of this thesis that several of the entrepreneur participants asked for clarification regarding the concept of CRM before responding. It was clearly important to them that they understood before engaging. Yet none of the three salespeople mentioned above asked for clarification regarding CRM; rather they impulsively expressed their unrelated views.

These two facts may collectively represent significant trust inhibiting behaviors. Providing lengthy answers to misunderstood questions without seeking clarification may be proven to inhibit trust. Further, not using the CRM system that management deems an important and useful tool represents a

conflict, which may be shown to inhibit trust. And finally, it has been shown that salespeople have lesser education than many other vocations (Hanson, 2012). Future researchers may seek to investigate whether these players (in general) have the capacity to fully understand the potential of an embraced CRM system. While it was not specifically tested or proven, there was no indication within the interviews that any of the selling participants fully comprehend the concept of CRM systems; including the one individual that claimed to use one.

5.6.3   Summary and Conclusions   -   Control Preferences

To summarize this section which focused on control preferences and the importance of systems and time management strategies within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, this work is in line with existing theory and added some thoughts for further consideration. For example, both the successful salespeople and entrepreneur participants tend to be reactive or responsive in nature, which is in line with earlier work on the reactive behaviors of salespeople (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Dawson, 2008) and entrepreneurs (Gersick, 1994). Expanding on prior theory, participating salespeople are more likely to be 'more reactive than organized' than their entrepreneur counterparts, which may be a reflection of the entrepreneur participant's likelihood to consider strategic forward planning and detailed daily planning crucially important. The entrepreneur participants are also more likely than the salesperson participants to actually have specific plans in place for the 'next six weeks'.

More importantly, regarding the building of trust and the emerging theme of inconsistency (whether intentional or not) 30% of the successful salesperson participants who deemed planning important did not actually plan at all. Further, half of the participating salespeople who said they had CRM systems in place did not use them. Such a phenomenon did not present within the analysis of participating entrepreneur interviews.

Within this section summary, it should be reiterated that future researchers may wish to test several emerging 'trust' related phenomenon:

- These high performing selling participants do not deem customer relationship software useful and half of those who have a system in place do not use it. As will be demonstrated within upcoming sections of this work, there may be concepts emerging within this research to suggest that protecting performance tactics may represent a lesser motivator than maintaining privacy

regarding an opportunistic work ethic for these players. Testing such theories against the propensity to affect the building and maintaining of trust may be of interest to academics and practitioners.

- The fact that several of the selling participants eagerly answered questions that were not understood represents a contrast to the participating entrepreneur's approach of seeking clarification prior to offering feedback. Future research may seek to design an intentionally confusing method of inquiry to examine whether salespeople have a tendency to provide impulsive and pleasing answers without seeking clarification. Testing such theories against the propensity to affect the building and maintaining of trust may be of interest to academics and practitioners.

The building and maintaining of trust is very important to these participants and to this thesis. Emerging trust-building themes, such as honesty and humility are of great interest. Similarly, behaviors that may negatively affect the building of trust, such as inconsistency, opportunism and selfishness are also of significant importance. Upcoming sections of this chapter will continue to explore participant trust-building and trust- harming behaviors and the subsequent Discussion Chapter will delve more deeply into these emerging themes.

5.7   Humanity

5.7.1   Hobbies and Work / Life Balance

Research has shown that athletes score higher than non-athletes on sociability and extraversion (Aries *et al*. 2004) which has been shown to be a prevalent trait of successful salespeople and entrepreneurs (Weitz, 1981; Berry, 1995; Dawson, 2008; Lambert, 2008; Osarenkhoe, 2008). However, while competitive spirit may be athletically developed in youth, several of the entrepreneur participants indicated that if anything was to take on lesser priority during their business building years it was their athletic hobbies, rather than their family activities.

Almost all of the sales participants indicated that 'freedom' is a large component of their job-enjoyment rating. As previously stated, the 'freedom' concept was not found to have been extensively explored within the literature. While the selling participants take 30% more official holiday time than the entrepreneurs, 'freedom' is a separate phenomenon which may be worthy of future inquiry. These

findings indicate that 7 of 10 of the salesperson participants enjoy having the ability to exercise or golf within the margins of 'company time'. This supports the upcoming theme of highly successful salespeople working 'smart' but not 'hard' or 'long'. Further exploring the theme of trust-building and trust-harming behavior, future researchers may wish to test on a larger scale whether these players are opportunistically taking advantage of their employers by discerning how to deliver beyond management expectations in a portion of the expected time, to subsequently enjoy the freedom to pursue personal endeavors.

Two themes were explored within the interviews that were not motivated by the literature but may contribute to interesting new perspectives. Vocational participants were equally unlikely to read for pleasure, and entrepreneurs were far more likely to participate in the arts. This supports the education theory: increased education reflects stronger propensity to be an entrepreneur (Darmon, 2008) and also to be a more active participant in the arts (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2003).

Appendix 15 details the similarities and differences within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic as they pertain to hobbies and work / life balance. The columns of athleticism and competitiveness have appeared within prior charts but are deemed relevant within these realities as well. Figure 5-8 provides an illustrative summary of the themes discussed within this section. As a connection to the freedom theme, the average holiday time is measured in weeks and has been included within this summary chart.

Figure 5-8   **Hobbies and Work / Life Balance – Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic**
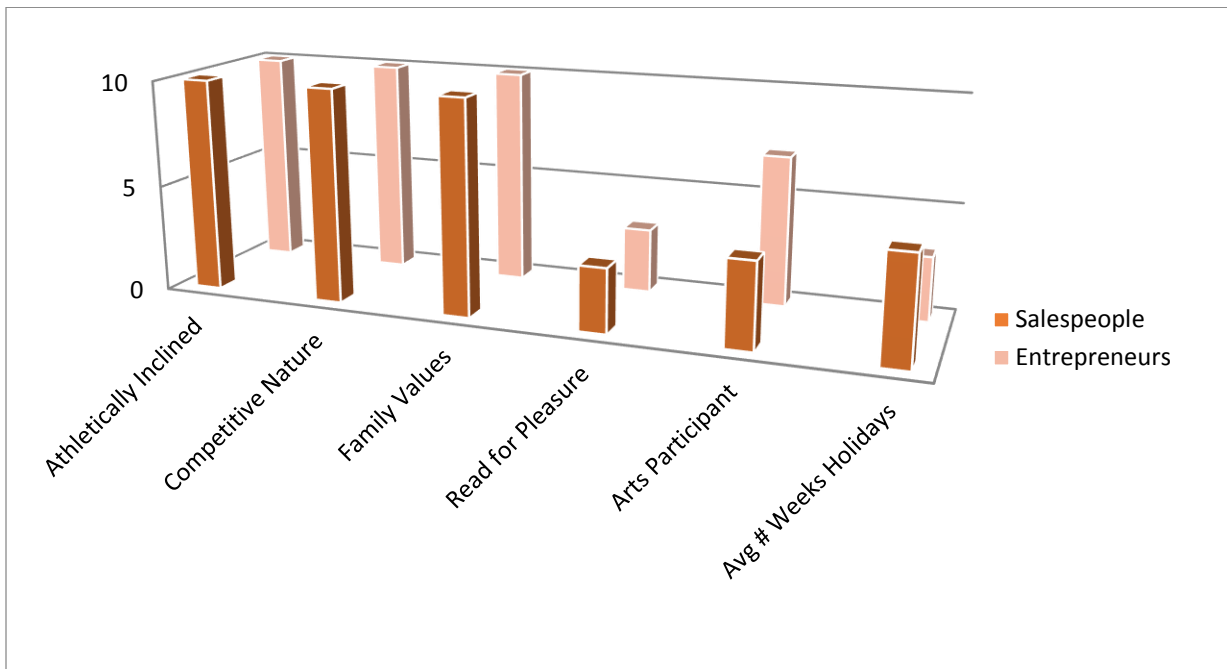
Source: derived by the author based upon the literature.

Within the sphere of hobbies and work / life balance, there are more similarities than differences within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic. In the next section the participant realities will be explored as they relate to concepts of success drivers and how these motivators may affect the building or inhibing of trust in society.

5.7.2   *Reasons for Personal Success – Nature vs Nurture Concepts*

Within this section three themes emerge from the interviews which seem to reflect the concept of humility:

1. Strategic Concepts and Work Ethic,

2. Nature vs Nurture – are the drivers of success teachable, and

3. The element of luck.

Strategically, several of the participants; both salespeople and entrepreneurs, indicated that having a good work ethic is critical to success. This is reflective of prior literature on working hard, handling rejection, managing time effectively and having a strong sense of urgency (McMurray, 1961; Blau and Boal, 1989; Sujan *et al*. 1999; Dawson, 2008). However, even though the selling participants extol the virtues of hard work and long hours, they have indicated clearly that they generally do not work 'long' or 'hard'. Nonetheless, the salesperson and entrepreneur participants shared the general viewpoint that certain activities simply must be accomplished; consistently and with discipline. This theme does not necessarily conflict with the freedom discussion of the previous section. Rather, the sales participants work efficiently to do what is required to succeed, prior to enjoying the freedom that is their reward for proficiency.

Entrepreneur 'hard work' themes include tenacity and resolve in several cases, which is in line with the work of McMurray (1961) and Glynn and Webster (1992).

> *"I don't quit. Tactics have always been natural to me. You go see this guy, and there was a hundred salespeople there before you, and when you get there he's fucking done... everybody's done... but you figure out a way to break through the clutter and differentiate with this guy. How can I make him look good and attain my goals at the same time?" (E-7).*

One business success attribute that has been consistent throughout several decades of research is communication skills (Berry, 2002; Rust *et al*. 2010). Another such theme that has survived over time is the ability to build trust (Humphries and Williams, 1996; Coppola, 2004; Woods *et al*. 2008). There seems to be consensus from both of the participant vocations that communication skills and integrity play a role in achieving success in business. However, a theme is emerging within this work which reflects that sometimes the selling participants communicate one thing and actually do another. Future research may seek to test to what degree such behavior inhibits the building of trust.

> *"I do what it takes to get the job done and generally that is less than 25 hours a week. And I get paid very well to do that. My work schedule revolves around my fitness schedule and personal life. I work out every day and that's my priority" (S-10).*

This statement which may be viewed as selfish and opportunistic is in direct contrast with feedback of several of the entrepreneurs who spoke of honesty and fairness with customers and staff. Customers must be in a trusting and comfortable space so that they can participate productively when vendor priorities differ from their own (E-5).

The success drivers for the participants represented primarily 'soft' skills which some argue are reflective of one's nature and cannot be taught (Nicholson, 1998; Evanschitzky, 2012). In the last decade some practitioners have engaged in strategies such as team based selling to lessen their reliance on such individualistic and arguably unteachable traits (Prakish, 2007). It is therefore of interest to this new research to update prior theory with participant feedback on the teachability of these factors. The general consensus of both the salesperson and entrepreneur participants is that these characteristics or traits that ultimately drive success for elite performers are primeval or instinctive. They cannot be taught.

> *"I think the hard skills can be taught, but the soft skills... knowing how to NOT rush to the finish line... how to truly care; not act like you care but TRULY care about the customer... I don't think you can teach that" (E-9).*

> *"You've got will and skill. I can teach someone how to ask the right questions of an executive at a bank. What I can't teach a guy is how to not break out in a sweat when he sees the guy" (E-8).*

Several of the participants inadvertently discussed concepts of 'changing' people, which represents interesting depth within the theme of teachability. To many of the participants these necessary soft skills; or perhaps more appropriately, the apparent lack of these essential traits is inveterate and cannot be altered with training.

> *"That instinctive need to act... if you're not born to act... if you don't walk into a room with a burning desire to take charge and solve the problem. I don't know... for most people it's instinctive to look for someone else to act" (E-2).*

A common thread among most of the participants which reflected the literature (Hunter and Perreault, 2007; Lambert, 2008) is relationship building. This concept is explored with the participants within a subsequent section. However, it is presently relevant to discuss the teachability of making deep connections with people.

> *"Relationship building cannot be taught. Some people just don't have a personality... they're cold, wet, sloppy, hunks of shit and nobody likes them" (S-1).*

One sales representative indicated that he was passionately attempting to convince his firm; one of North America's largest distribution companies, to change their approach to customer contact and let

the true relationship managers do just that. This would eliminate their need to 'take orders' which ironically, this salesperson deems a waste of his time.

This new research is not in line with previous work suggesting that business success factors could be taught (Wilson, 2006; Prakash, 2007). As shown in Appendix 16, the proponents of 'unteachable nature' overwhelmed the 'teachable nurture' supporters within this new work.

The same did not hold true for the participant views on the contribution factor of good fortune or luck. The entrepreneurs are more likely (5 out of the 11) than the salespeople (2 of 10) to suggest that luck contributed to their success. Future researchers may wish to explore the possibility that due to the risk undertaken by entrepreneurs, there may be a feeling of vulnerability for a period of time which culminates in a sense of ultimate relief when the period of risk subsides. Given the levels of emotional stress during this timeframe, it is understandable that one might feel that luck made a contribution to the successful outcome. This phenomenon may be somewhat supported by the entrepreneur participant tendency to self-identify as shy; which, as in the case of crediting 'luck' with success is a reflection of humility.

The summary illustrated in Figure 5-9 identifies the similarities and differences between the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic within the nature vs nurture themes.

Figure 5-9   Nature vs Nurture Summary
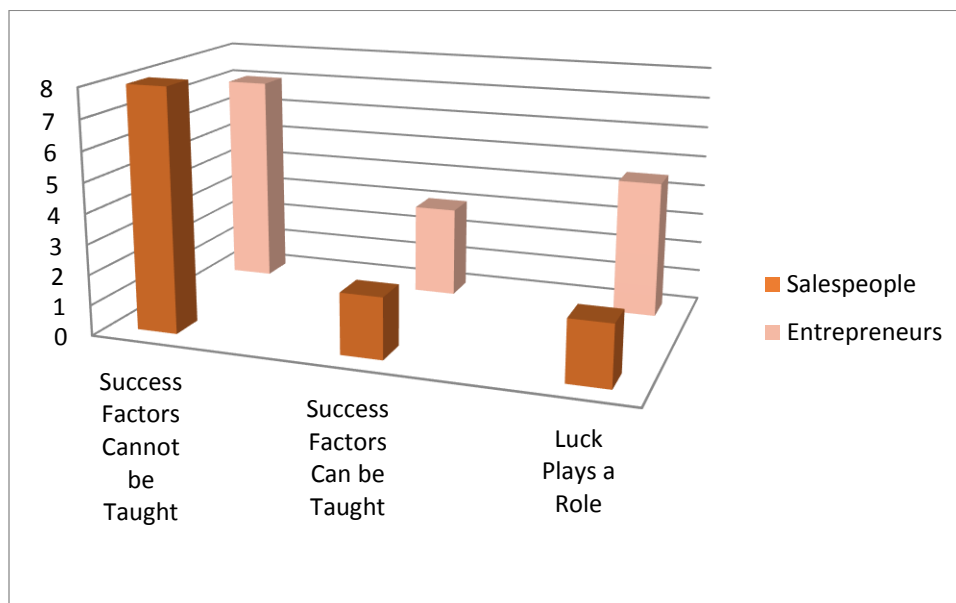
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

The emerging theme regarding salespeople saying things that do not reflect their actual behavior was built upon within this section. Specifically:

- Claiming that work ethic is crucial but subsequently boasting about working half as hard as peers while outperforming them, and

- Suggesting that success is a direct result of hard work but subsequently admitting to not working hard.

Future research may seek to understand to what level such behaviors inhibit the building of trust; especially when combined with the lack of humility represented by the belief that luck plays no role in the selling participant success. In the next section of this chapter, trait theory will be explored more deeply; beyond the teachability and luck phenomenon. The participants feedback regarding the concept of risk and risk-taking will be discussed.

5.7.3   Propensity to take Risks

It has been discussed that entrepreneurship is difficult to define (Cole, 1996; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). However, if there is one trait phenomenon that has endured the test of time regarding entrepreneurship it is the comfort with or propensity to take on risk (McClelland, 1961; Collins and Moore, 1964; Litvac and Maule, 1974; McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000). Review of the literature indicates that risk propensity in salespeople has not been extensively explored to date.

For this research project, the concept of risk was specifically addressed in two ways:

1. The pre-interview questionnaire included a Likert Scale statement for consideration: 'I see myself as someone who enjoys taking risks'.

2. The semi-structured interview schedule subsequently prompted the query, "you indicated that you were quite comfortable taking risks, tell me about this please".

These two interview components initiated interesting feedback; however the semi-structured interview further presented several opportunities for the risk phenomenon to be broached, which provided unsolicited, rich anecdotes within this theme. In line with earlier work regarding entrepreneur comfort with risk, the findings indicate that 10 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants are quite comfortable

with risk, although all of the individuals qualified this position with the condition that they are personally in control of the situation. Risking capital, with trust in others to control and manage the project is not within the comfort zone of these players.

Fear has been identified as a crucial ingredient of risk-taking. As stated in Chapter 2, many entrepreneurs simply do not perceive what they are doing as risky at all. Therefore, rather than having a propensity for risk, they simply have a lack of fear. If there is no fear, courage is unnecessary as risk is not recognized (Shaver and Scott, 1991).

All of the participants were asked to discuss the fear phenomenon as it relates to risk in business. 7 out of the 11 entrepreneurs indicated that they eliminate the fear factor by minimizing the unknown, thus reducing the risk. These 7 players identified as having no fear; not because of 'nerves of steel' (author unknown) but rather due to an extremely calculated approach to analyzing opportunities. Several of the comments regarding themes of risk represent suitable examples of entrepreneur effectuation (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005, 2008):

> *"I don't take risks. I don't make a move until I understand everything about the opportunity... and at that point it is a calculated choice to take action. If I do this... I know this is what can happen if it goes this way... and this is what can happen if it goes the other way. And if I am prepared to live with it either way, there's no risk" (E-7).*

The entrepreneur participants unanimously indicated that they are more apt to take perceived risks if they are personally in control. Further, lack of perceived risk does not equate to having no apprehension. While 3 out of the 11 entrepreneurial participants indicated that fear is part of their reality, in some cases fear only relates to the business components outside of their control.

E-5 suggested that the average person does not understand how much it costs to run a business. The day to day risk increases as the firm expands. The investment gets bigger; the credit line gets higher, "I like keeping things small. We can turn on a dime if we have to" (E-5). For this reason, E-5 brought in two partners to his firm which is in line with the entrepreneurial stage theories of Mintzberg (1973). Alone, the risk could ruin him during an economic downturn. Collectively, the three partners limit their exposure.

Effectuation literature explores the difference between calculated and reckless risk taking (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005, 2008). It is clear that within the participant sampling of entrepreneurs effectuation

strategies are embraced as reckless risk taking is rare among these players. Specific details regarding the salesperson and entrepreneur participant feedback on propensity to take risks follow in Appendix 17.

The salesperson participants provided interesting insights within the theme of risk taking. For instance, like their entrepreneur counterparts, they self-identify as 'enjoying risk' (10 out of the 10). However, there is virtually no fear component for these players in business which may reflect the absence of financial risk within their vocation. The non-entrepreneur participants related risk to non-financial phenomenon, such as taking initiative outside of one's comfort zone or daredevil behaviors.

> *"Cold calls are risky. Rejection can ruin my day. I am better than most at it... but the concept of rejection scares me, so I avoid that kind of risk at all costs" (S-5).*

Interestingly, one salesperson that self-identified as enjoying risk discussed perilous sporting endeavors yet described an extremely conservative approach to business risk: "my wife and I have plans to start a business but we'll do it 'on the side' of our regular jobs... so it's kinda risk-free" (S-6).

The findings are consistently in line with earlier work which indicates that entrepreneurs are more comfortable with career changing financial risk than most people (Collins and Moore, 1964; McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000). As stated though, several authors believe that without fear there is no risk (Shaver and Scott 1991) and these entrepreneur participants unanimously imply that they eliminate fear through vigorous calculations and analysis. Further, all of the entrepreneur participants embrace effectuation strategies (although none used the term) by reducing or eliminating fear; and therefore risk, by ensuring they are personally in 'control' of the situation.

Figure 5-10 illustrates the similarities and differences within the salesperson dynamic within the theme of risk-taking. This trait-phenomenon represents vast disparity between the two vocations.

Figure 5-10   **Propensity to take Risks**
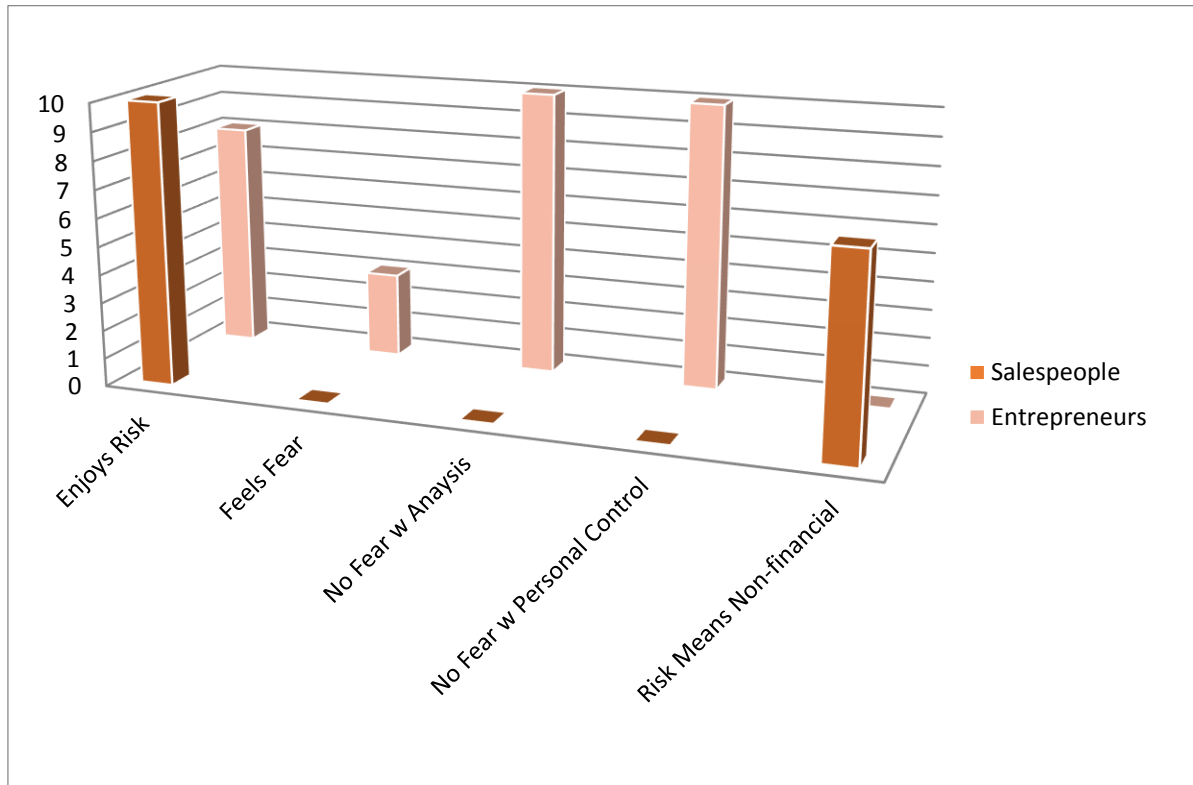
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

In the next section, more variances will be identified as the concept of working alone verses within a team is explored.

5.7.4   Team Work vs Lone Wolf Tendencies

The literature indicates that the entrepreneur dynamic with regards to teamwork has evolved over time. In the 1970's there were studies that suggested entrepreneurs were non-conformists who were generally dysfunctional non-team players (Kets de Vries, 1977). In the 1980's some academics found that entrepreneurs were becoming larger than life motivational heroes (Garfield, 1986). And in the new millennium they are seen as team building opportunity seekers (Dodds, 2007). The entrepreneurs who participated in this research concur with these recent findings and several spoke of teams in terms of delegational opportunities.

Sales management has also evolved over time in this regard, paralleling the entrepreneurial progression to some degree. The independent, boundary-spanning 'handlers of rejection' theories of the 1960's (McMurray, 1961) have theoretically evolved into team based selling approaches which rely less heavily on individualistic traits; thus reducing firm vulnerability (Dawson, 2008; Osarenkhoe, 2008). The Key Account Management (KAM) approach to selling explores problem solving solutions to specific customer needs through a collaborative multi-departmental effort (Shaw *et al*. 2002; Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Wilson, 2006; Dodds, 2007; Prakash, 2007; Lars-Johan, 2011).

10 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants self-identified as preferring to not work alone and in line with (Dodds, 2007) all 11 feel that the team approach to business development is crucial; however this strategy is not what is driving the volume for the participating selling firms. For the selling participants, independence is preferred.

> "I like being president... out there on my own" (S-5). [1]

> "I like not being bothered" (S-6).

> "I like being alone. That's how I work. We have meetings weekly. I go once a month just to show my face. It adds nothing (no value) for me" (S-7).

10 out of the 10 selling participants prefer to work alone which supports the lone wolf theories of several authors (Dixon et al. 2003; Wilson, 2006; Harding, 2008). However, as stated, this work may represent new perspectives regarding the reasons why the performers wish to be left alone. Themes are emerging that suggest avoiding exposure of opportunistic work habits may be more of a motivation for isolation than protecting trade secrets.

Appendix 18 details the participant responses within the themes of teamwork and lone wolf tendencies.

There is an interesting contrast within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic in this regard. While these elite level selling participants unanimously prefer to work alone, the entrepreneur participants who embrace the concept of teams generally would rather not work with these lone wolf personalities. 8 out of the 11 entrepreneurs indicated that they would not hire a lone wolf salesperson, regardless of

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[1] Participant S-5 is a sales representative. Twenty years prior to this interview he scratched out his 'Sales Representative' title on his business card and wrote 'President'. He keeps this card in his wall*et al*ways, to remind him of the frame of mind required to take proper care of his customers.

the revenue opportunity. It may be worthy of future research to uncover if this is due to entrepreneurs' understanding of the seemingly untrustworthy nature of lone wolf salespeople which is emerging within this body of work.

> *"I had a guy like that. Yes he outsold just about anyone who ever worked for me. But he did more harm than good. He was disruptive. There was always unnecessary stress. No... I don't want those guys working here" (E-3).*

There were 3 out of the 11 entrepreneurs who would actually hire lone wolf type performers. All three of these entrepreneurs had been salespeople themselves, with lone wolf traits. Interestingly, 2 out of the 3 describe a need to control the lone wolf, which by definition is a daunting task. Therefore E-8 was revisited by telephone and asked if he would tolerate the lone wolf even if he could not be controlled and was disruptive or causing undue stress for the firm.

> *"You're telling me 8 out of the 11 of your entrepreneurs said they wouldn't hire a guy who drives volume if he doesn't play nice in the sandbox? Those guys are fucking liars. Tell me this, are they all successful? Well, talk to me when they have the creditors lined up and they're about to lose their fucking house... then let's see how proud they are! If he breaks laws... probably not. Unethical but legal? If he drives volume, damned straight they'd hire him!" (E-8).*

Since all of the participating entrepreneurs are highly successful, it may be worthy of future research to explore the ethical boundaries of less successful entrepreneurs in this regard.

Figure 5-11 illustrates the participants' general philosophies regarding working in or as a team. This phenomenon is similar to that of propensity to take risks in that it represents a strong contrast within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic.

Figure 5-11   **Team verses Lone Wolf Tendencies**
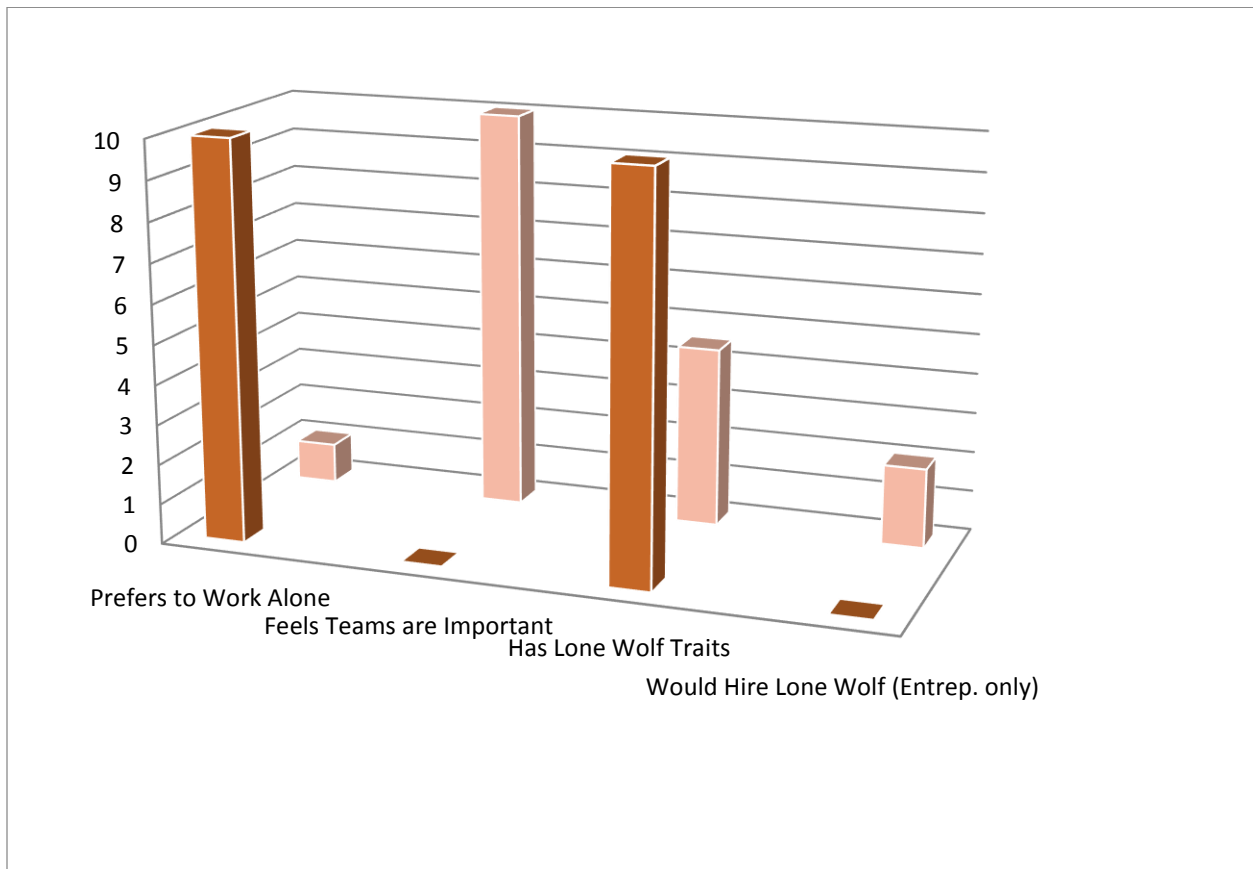
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

5.7.5   Summary and Conclusions – Humanity (Risk Propensity and Team)

It has been established within the literature that image and trust issues have plagued salespeople throughout history (Hodge *et al*. 1964; Tumin, 1967; Swan and Adkins, 1982; Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2009). The evidence from these interviews indicates that this theme prevails among the participants despite having strong family values. Having a strong sense of family helps to make connections with people and build trust with decision-making buyers (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and this phenomenon is more prevalent with entrepreneurs than non-entrepreneurs (McGrath *et al*. 1992). This work contrasts with past work, indicating that all of the highly successful selling and entrepreneur participants self-identify as having very strong family values. However, it should be emphasized that this 'self-identification' was not tested or proven.

Interestingly, the primary driver of success for these players according to their own views and the literature (Painter and Semenik, 1979; Swan and Nolan, 1985; Howard et al. 2006) is the ability to build trust. Success factors for the selling and entrepreneur participants indicate that there is a natural talent involved which reflects an ability to connect with people. Interestingly, there is emerging evidence that these vocational participants use differing techniques and behaviors (both deemed unteachable) to make connections with others. The entrepreneur participants engage in hard work, strategic forward planning and show humility in their interactions. The literature suggests that this is trust-building behavior which is conducive to making deep connections with others (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007).

There is also evidence within the interviews that selling participants within this study do not work hard, do not forward plan, avoid making positive contributions to internal systems and show uniformity in their dislike of working with others or on teams. This reflects the opposite of the literature's definition of trustworthy behavior, which may consequently inhibit the ability to make deep connections with others. Further, the salesperson participants take more time-off than their entrepreneur counterparts. This phenomenon reflects official 'booked holidays' as well as unofficial time away from their duties. Relating to this phenomenon, almost all of the sales participants indicated that they extremely enjoy the 'freedom' aspect of their vocation, which results from outperforming peers in a fraction of the time. Freedom actually represents being paid to engage in personal errands and hobbies, which may be deemed to be untrustworthy behavior.

Risk is a theme that has been explored extensively within the literature on entrepreneurs. However, the majority feel no fear in business because they eliminate this emotion through detailed analysis and personal control over execution; which is in line with effectuation concepts (Sarasvathy and dew, 2005, 2008). The selling participants identified non-financial themes with risk, such as risking one's pride through exposure to rejection.

Regarding teamwork, the selling participants see no value in working with or even contributing to teams. Although some management strategies have evolved in an attempt to reduce firm reliance on individualistic traits and talents (Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Prakash, 2007) literally all of these participating selling performers indicated they would rather work alone. This contrasts greatly with the entrepreneur participant's team-building philosophies.

The summary of this section reveals an opportunity to analyze a trust-building pattern of humility within the entrepreneur group as well as a pattern of potentially trust-inhibiting behaviors and strategies within the selling group. These phenomenon will be explored within the Discussion Chapter

5.8   Characteristics and Traits

5.8.1   Defining Success

As stated in Chapter 2 of this thesis defining 'success' in business (Rackham, 1988; Daley and Wolfe, 1996; Comer and Dollinger, 1999) is as daunting as defining entrepreneurship for scholars (Cole, 1996). Success is an important phenomenon within this work because it was a prerequisite for participation. Exploration of work ethics and motivation within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic should therefore include investigation into the participant's reality with regards to defining success.

Merriam Webster defines success as "favorable or desired outcome... the attainment of wealth, favor, eminence" (Merriam – Webster – Success, 2013). Earlier research agrees that monetary gain is an important ingredient in business success (Racham, 1988; Daley and Wolfe, 1996; Comer and Drollinger, 1999). This basic monetary phenomenon is supported within this work as well; however, the participants perceived the question in a more personal way than expected, which resulted in themes emerging such as freedom, family and lifestyle.

> *"Success equals two things: being beholden to no one and earning the respect of your peers" (E-1).*

Virtually all of the salesperson and entrepreneur participants included family concepts within their definition of success, which is in line with McGrath *et al.* (1992) and Malach-Pines *et al.* (2005). The work / family balance phenomenon was consistently of high importance. In several instances the participants suggested that their definition of success changed over their career. Financial success goals once achieved turned into happiness and contentment goals. It may be worth testing whether success measurement goals actually changed or simply advanced due to achievement.

Many of the participants quickly turned to spiritual themes when discussing success. 9 out of the 10 sales participants indicated they were spiritual, however 6 of those identified as non-religious.

Entrepreneurs were less likely to identify as spiritual (6 out of the 11) with 4 of those participants indicating they were spiritual but not religious.

> *"Work hard and be honest in all you do. Religious values... but not necessarily religious" (E-3).*

> *"What's right and what's wrong. That's my spiritual mantra" (S-7).*

8 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants identified money as being instrumental within their definition of success which is in contrast with Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven (2005). 3 of 11 did not mention money at all. None of these 3 entrepreneurs who did not mention money in their definition attempted to convince the interviewer of this fact. They simply did not mention it.

Conversely, only 5 out of the 10 participating salespeople highlighted money as being part of their success definition. However, those who did not identify money as a measurement of success seemed to feel the need to convince their audience. For instance, several selling participants made assertive statements such as, "well, I'll tell you one thing, success has nothing to do with money!" (S-10). Interestingly, 3 out of the 5 of those salespeople who emphatically declared that success was in no way related to money, described doing what they want to do (S-10), freedom to do what one wants such as enjoy golf memberships (S-9) or helping their kids without "having to talk to the bank" (S-5) within their answers. This conflicted emerging reality suggests that financial rewards actually do equate to success for these participants, which is in line with earlier work (Racham, 1988; Daley and Wolfe, 1996; Comer and Drollinger, 1999).

Appendix 1*9* illustrates the specific participant's realities regarding defining success and spirituality while Figure 5-12 provides a summary of these data.

Figure 5-12   **Salesperson / Entrepreneur Definition of Success**
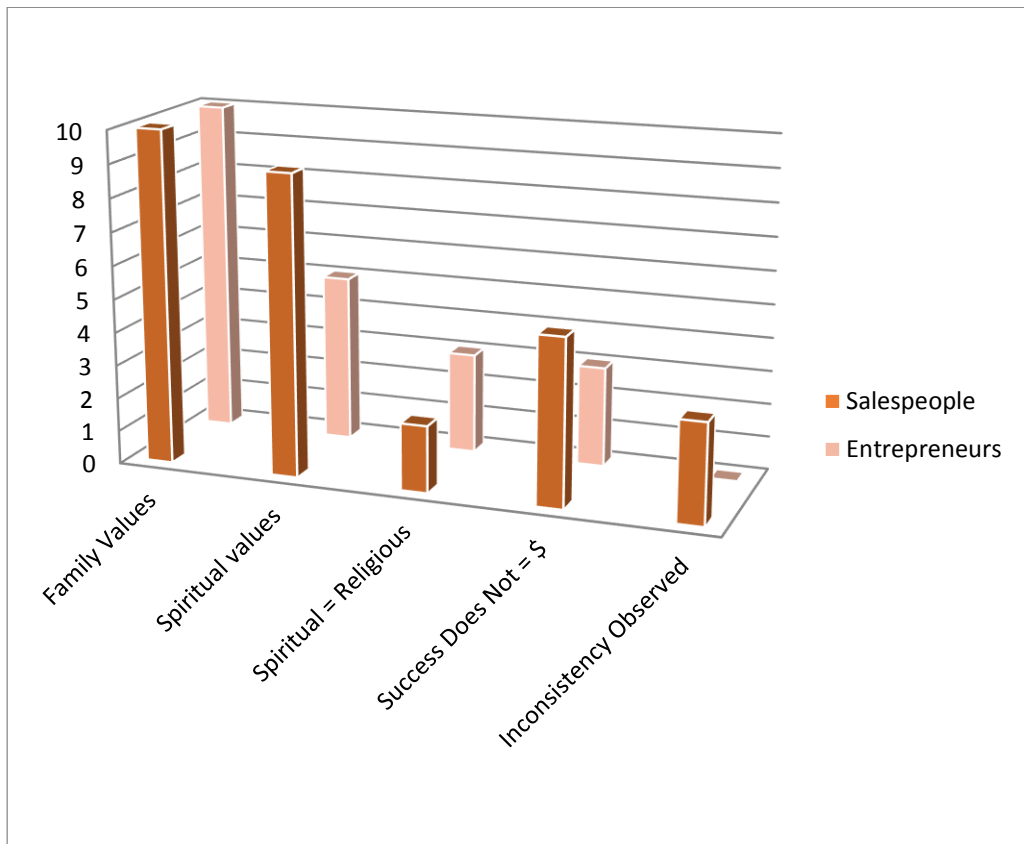
Source: Derived by the author from the interview responses.

5.8.2   *Work Ethic*

The literature explores the phenomenon of 'hard work' ethic relating to entrepreneurs thoroughly (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991; McGrath *et al*. 1992; Cromie, 2000; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). However, the theme of working hard was not evident within the literature on salespeople. That is not to say the literature represented a 'poor' work ethic for these players, but rather the theme has not been extensively researched within the work reviewed by this author.

The findings are in line with earlier work on entrepreneur work ethic. 8 out of the 11 participating entrepreneurs indicated that they felt they personally worked hard on a consistent basis. Only 5 of 10 of their salesperson counterparts identified themselves as hard workers, and in some cases it seemed to

be a badge of honor to not work hard, as evidenced by S-10 who works less than 25 hours weekly and plans his sales calls around his family errands and gym visits.

> *"The company guy in me wants to tell ya 10 to 12 hours a day, but in actuality it's 5 to 6. I have a good life. If more is needed I'll put it in" (S-9).*

Interestingly, 7 out of the 11 entrepreneur participants could not define the amount of hours they work daily. They literally had no idea and in several cases they did not want to know. It was fairly typical of the entrepreneurs to consistently work into the night, often after having their evening meal at home. This is in line with Senyard et al.'s (2013) study on entrepreneurial bricolage which showed a direct and consistent correlation between working long hours and innovativeness. Most of the salesperson participants (8 out of the 10) were well aware of the number of hours they typically work in a day.

One commonality regarding work ethic within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic is that all participants see themselves as having high energy. Interestingly, the salespeople are far less likely (5 out of the 10) to apply that energy to working harder than others. Conversely, the participating entrepreneurs are quite likely to do so, as evidenced by 11 out of the 11 self-identifying as 'working harder than most'. Another work ethic commonality is that all of the participants, both sellers and entrepreneurs, indicated that they felt they worked somewhat or very much 'smarter' than most people.

> *"I don't work on shit that's non-value-adding and shit that I can't add value to... and I can make that determination pretty quickly. If I can't add value I hand it off or avoid the situation" (E-7).*

As a final note on personal work ethic, it is of interest that 7 out of the 11 participating entrepreneurs take a complete break for lunch; literally turning off their phones and business minds to have a short period of 'recharging their batteries' (E-10). Future researchers may seek to better understand whether this is a response to a human need resulting from working long hours with immense responsibility. Conversely, only 2 of the 10 participating salespeople reported that they generally take a time-out and break for lunch. Rather, the selling participants are far more likely to work through lunch without stopping. It may be worthy of deeper study to understand whether this phenomenon relates directly to the 'freedom' theories emerging within this research. More specifically, are these selling participants racing to the daily finish line to enjoy personal hobbies on company time?

Figure 5-13 provides a summary of the participant's realities regarding work ethic, traits and habits.

Figure 5-13   Exploring the Work Ethic and Habits within the Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic
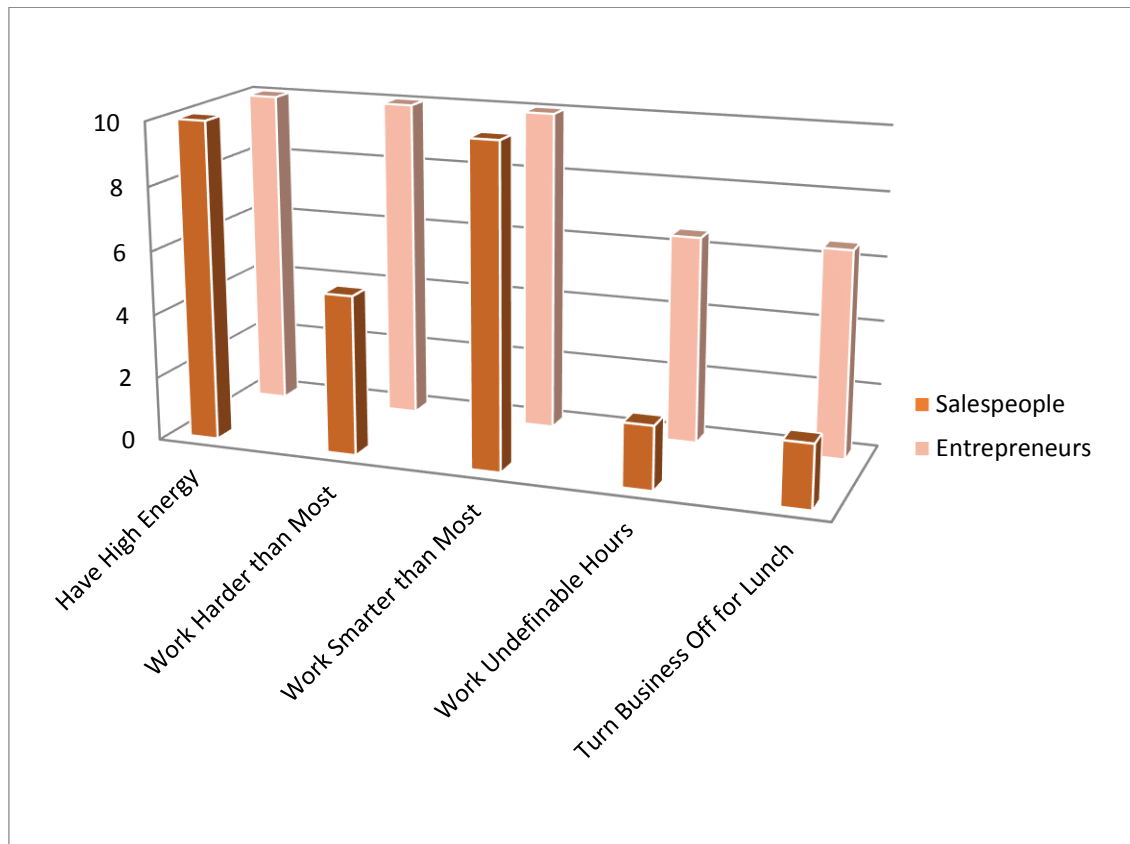
Source: Derived by the author from the interview responses.

There are several interesting and relevant emerging themes within the findings on work ethic and habits of the salesperson and entrepreneur participants which are directly related to the ability to build trusting relationships. These relate directly to prior and subsequent sections of this chapter and will be summarized in due course.

5.8.3   Motivation / Performance Incentives

Several authors have suggested that highly successful salespeople (Walker *et al*. 1997; Jaramillo *et al*. 2007) and successful entrepreneurs (Shaver and Scott, 1991; Zhao and Siebert, 2006) are more motivated by an intrinsic need for achievement than money. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the literature seldom mentions increased earning potential as a motivator to pursue a new start-up business. Based upon the participant feedback for this work, 9 out of the 11 entrepreneurs and 9 out of the 10

successful salespeople are in fact motivated by money. It is worthy of future consideration to investigate this phenomenon with more vigor to understand if highly successful people generally have stronger financial motivations than those who are less successful and whether financial motivation affects one's ability to build trust with customers. This thesis is interested in comparing the phenomenon within the domain of the successful salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic rather than comparing against lesser performers. Within this narrowed down scope there is a contribution to new perspectives.

One third of those salespeople who initially claimed they were not motivated by money subsequently revealed through anecdotes that this was not true. As stated with more detail in the previous section of this thesis, there is an emerging pattern of contradiction by some of the sales participants.

However, quite supportive of prior theory is that 10 out of the 11 entrepreneurs and 9 of 10 salespeople are also highly motivated by a need for achievement which is in line with achievement motivation theories of several authors (McClelland, 1961; Litvak and Maule, 1974; Hersche, 1994; Cromie, 2000).

Interestingly, entrepreneurs are somewhat less likely to be annoyed if their achievements are not recognized by others. 4 out of the 11 entrepreneurs have high achievement-recognition needs verses 6 of 10 salespeople. This may be an indication that the entrepreneurs have higher self-esteem and stronger internal locus of control than the salespeople, which is in line with earlier work (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Cromie, 2000; Mullen and Thomas, 2000). The following quotation serves well to demonstrate the value of an 'ego boost' for many salespeople:

> *"To me the high is getting the person to sign. Everything after that is anticlimactic" (E-9).*

A detailed illustration of the participant motivation and achievement needs follows in Appendix 21.

The recognition need phenomenon is further supported within this research by the fact that 7 out of the 10 salesperson participants indicated that they feel unappreciated or misunderstood on the job and comparatively 7 of the 11 entrepreneurs were driven to self-employment by frustration within the firms of previous employers; very much in line with earlier research (Mintzberg, 1973; Caird, 1991; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994).

> *"Even though I was travelling the world and making the company lots of money, my boss literally drove me out of the company. I was very dissatisfied with his lack of appreciation for what I did. I couldn't work for that guy" (E-3).*

"I beat my head against the wall. I don't play nice with people that I think are stupid. They wouldn't let me do what I wanted to do so I left and started my own company" (E-8).

This analysis of the interview responses highlights 'lone wolf' type frustration tendencies of high performing sales people who rebel to some degree against internal systems and management policy (Dixon *et al*. 2003; Wilson, 2006; Jaramillo *et al*. 2007; Harding, 2008). The analysis is also in line with earlier work on entrepreneur inspiration stemming from dissatisfaction with traditional jobs (Mintzberg, 1973; Caird, 1991; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994). Appendix 22 provides detail in this regard.

Relating to the theme of motivation, achievement and rewards, as well as the phenomenon of trust, this work sought to explore the concept of honesty and integrity in business. The literature speaks to integrity and trust as integral to success in sustaining long term business relationships (27 authors listed chronologically in Appendix 2). While few would argue that trust is important, unscrupulous behavior in business is not entirely uncommon and it was deemed prudent to explore these concepts within this work.

The phenomenon was addressed with the question, "Does winning ever trump fair play in business?" The question was positioned to gently open a discussion regarding business ethics. This author realized that not all of the participants would be completely forthcoming and hoped to elicit rich and real information without creating apprehension.

For all but one of the salespeople who crossed the ethical line periodically there was a pause as the concept of anonymity was considered. One salesperson (S-1) quickly said "No! Never!" and then proceeded to tell a story about misrepresenting product test results. Including this individual, 4 out of the 10 participating salespeople indicated that misleading or misrepresenting is acceptable behavior.

"We are commissioned salespeople. We are all paid differently. I win... pay me!" (S-10).

A slightly smaller sample of entrepreneur participants (3 out of the 11) suggested that winning periodically takes priority over ethics. However, unlike their salesperson counterparts, not one of these three 'line-crossers' hesitated to answer the question or seemed to debate whether to be candid or protective. Rather, they boldly expressed their views:

"To get creative and beat a competitor in business? Yes. Lie or mislead a customer? Never!" (E-9).

It was more common (8 out of the 11) for the entrepreneur participants to emphatically state that there is never a good time to mislead or slightly cheat in business. Figure 5-14 provides a visual illustration of the motivation / rewards phenomenon within the successful salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic.

Figure 5-14   **Motivation / Rewards Summary**
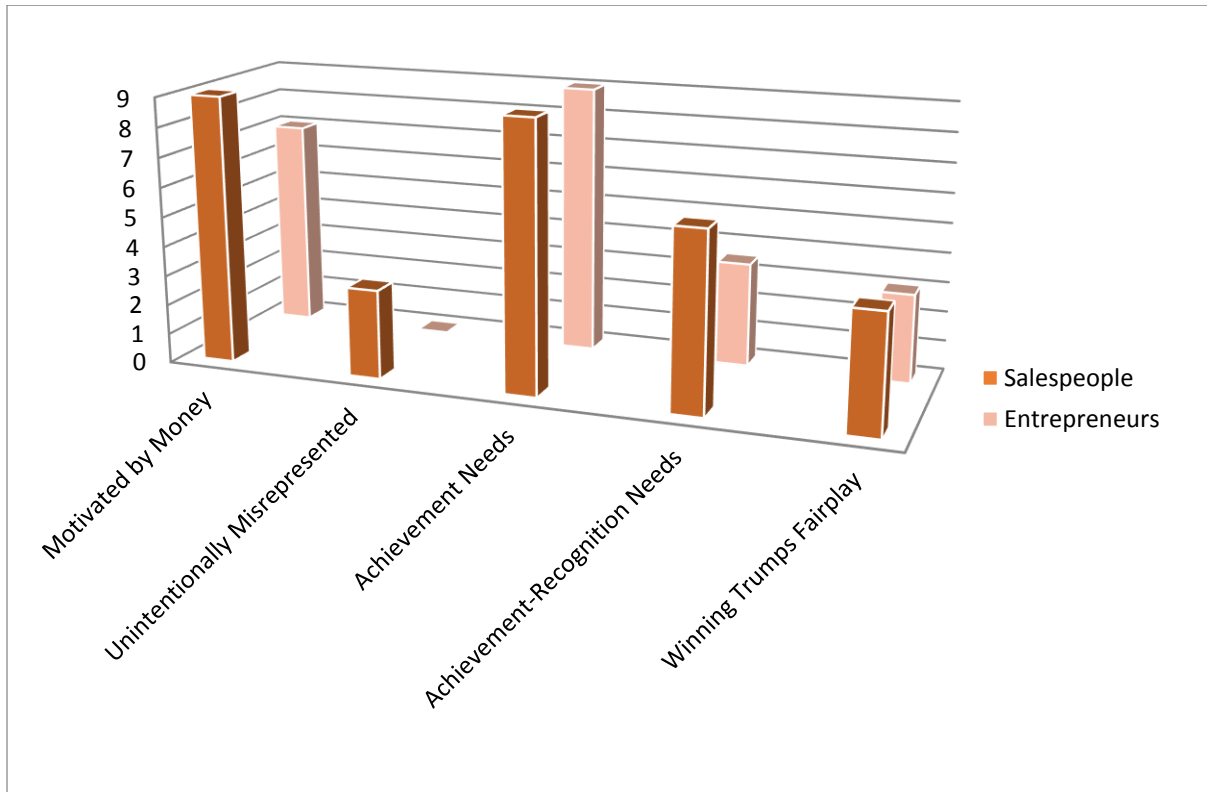
Source: Derived by the author from the interview responses.

5.8.4   Summary and Conclusions   -   Characteristics and Traits

Interview analysis within the themes of personal work ethic and motivation has been revealing in several ways and may represent a connection to the image issues of salespeople explored in previous work (Dixon *et al*. 2003; Maxwell *et al*. 2005; Prakash *et al*. 2007). Future researchers may seek to test whether they impulsively provide image boosting answers to improve their image.

In line with prior research on salesperson spirituality (Chawla and Guda, 2012) the participating salespeople were almost entirely (9 out of the 10) self-described spiritualists with two thirds of those involved in non-religious endeavors. Cohen (1997) found that 40% of participants at spiritual rallies in

the USA were salespeople. Some feel that such a connection to a greater purpose is necessary due to the trust and image issues faced daily by these players. Entrepreneurs were almost half as likely to be spiritual in any way (6 of the 11) with a similar ratio indicating non-religious activities. Future study may seek to test whether higher entrepreneur self-esteem and education reflect a lesser need to be involved in spiritual endeavors.

The literature suggests that achievement needs are very strong among both successful salespeople and entrepreneurs (Shaver and Scott, 1991; Zhao and Siebert, 2006). This work is highly supportive of earlier work in this regard with almost all of the participants confirming that they possess a strong desire to achieve. However, the sales participants are twice as likely to require recognition from others for their achievements rather than achievement representing a self-fulfilling phenomenon. Future study may seek to test whether this is reflective of the self-esteem (self-image) issues that plague many salespeople as indicated within this, and prior research (Ingram and Schwepker, 1993). It may also be of interest to understand if such self-esteem issues contribute to the building or inhibiting of trust.

One emerging reality which seems to embody both the similarities and differences of successful salespeople and entrepreneurs is the work hard / work smart phenomenon. All of the participants; both sellers and entrepreneurs self-identified as high energy people who worked smarter than most. However while virtually all the entrepreneurs identify themselves as very 'hard' working individuals only half of the participating salespeople indicate that they themselves work hard. In fact, several of the selling participants proudly announced that unbeknownst to management, they work far less hours than their lesser performing peers. It may be worthy of future research to test whether such behaviors are conducive to building trust.

The concept of frustration on the job contributed to the emergence of interesting findings. The majority of high performing salespeople (7 out of the 10) feel frustrated or misunderstood on the job. Interestingly, 7 out of 11 of the entrepreneur participants acknowledged that they were somewhat unhappy in their former 'jobs' which is in line with the literature in this regard (Mintzberg, 1973; Caird, 1991; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994). Since turnover rates are of great concern to sales managers (MacKenzie *et al.* 1998; Darmon, 2008; DeConinick, 2009) it may be of interest to investigate the level of frustration within their respective ranks. Further, since it has been shown that high performing salespeople are more likely to flee their organization than engage in internal problem solving (Dixon *et al.* 2003) this may contribute to the untrustworthy image of the vocation.

The final phenomenon worthy of discussion within this section summary is that of honor or sense of fair play. 4 out of the 10 of the salesperson participants felt that cheating in some capacity is perfectly fair and expected in business, but 3 of those attempted to hide this fact. In other words, they are indicating that they are not always completely honest in their business dealings while not being completely honest answering the question. This salesperson theme of inconsistency continues within upcoming sections of this thesis and will be further explored within the Discussion Chapter.

5.9 Adaptability

5.9.1 Customer (External) Relationships

It is not the intent of this research to explore philosophies and methods of building customer relationships. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Key Account Management (KAM) are vast topics worthy of attention. Rather, this work seeks to understand the priorities and habits of individuals.

In that spirit, this section will demonstrate that building trust-based relationships with customers is paramount to both the selling and entrepreneur participants. Industrial or business to business (B2B) sales people generally believe that in order to secure a trusting relationship with a customer, it is a prerequisite that the sales person be dependable, honest, competent, customer focused and likeable (Swan and Nolan, 1985). S-10 takes this relational trust building to such a strategic level it may be perceived as contrived:

> *"Reverse psychology... credibility. I tell you it works every time! Relationship and trust first... even if I have a better solution I will hold it back to somehow leverage the building of trust. It's like you meet a beautiful woman who is married and you think you have more to offer than her husband... you can say I respect that relationship even though I have a better solution. It happens in business all the time. Eventually the customer will ask me what I think and then I will share. Then I will say the equivalent of 'please tell your husband I was not in here trying to take you away' – that's how I approach it and it works. It's all about earning the trust of the customer. I almost always get where I want to go but never with a push... finish line with trust and credibility. Visualization and big picture thinking are crucial!" (S-10).*

Future researchers may seek to understand whether such a contrived and complicated strategies actually fool customers and whether they truly build long term trusting relationships.

As a final note within this theme, the interview results consistently indicate that the participants frequently put customer needs ahead of their own in pursuit of strengthening the relationship. 10 out of the 10 salespeople and 9 of 11 entrepreneurs indicated that this is a common practice. In the next section the concept of "the customer is always right" (author unknown) will be explored.

5.9.2   The Customer is Always Right

Putting customer needs ahead of one's own can be a sound business philosophy (Leigh and McGraw, 1989). Participants in this research both agreed and disagreed:

> *"No. They're wrong 90% of the time... but they're always the customer!" (E-6).*

E-8 explained that this concept comes back to trust and relationships which is in line with Singh and Koshy (2012). If a customer is being unreasonable, it is hoped that a relationship exists which permits an open dialogue. However, the customer must always be allowed to retreat with dignity if the relationship is to endure and trust is to be maintained.

Several of the sales participants spoke of ensuring that the customer believes they are right, whether they are actually right or not (S-3, S-8, and S-9). All of the participants eagerly indicated that the customer is not always right with the exception of E-5 who was adamant that if there was nothing wrong, the customer would not be upset. His commitment to customers in this regard indicated that if a staff member did not embrace the theme they would be removed from his team. Further, he feels that even having a discussion about customers not always being right is opening a dangerous door for performance excuses.

Figure 5:15 summarizes details of the participant feedback regarding customer relationship themes which are detailed in Appendix 23.

Figure 5-15   **Customer Relationships Summary**
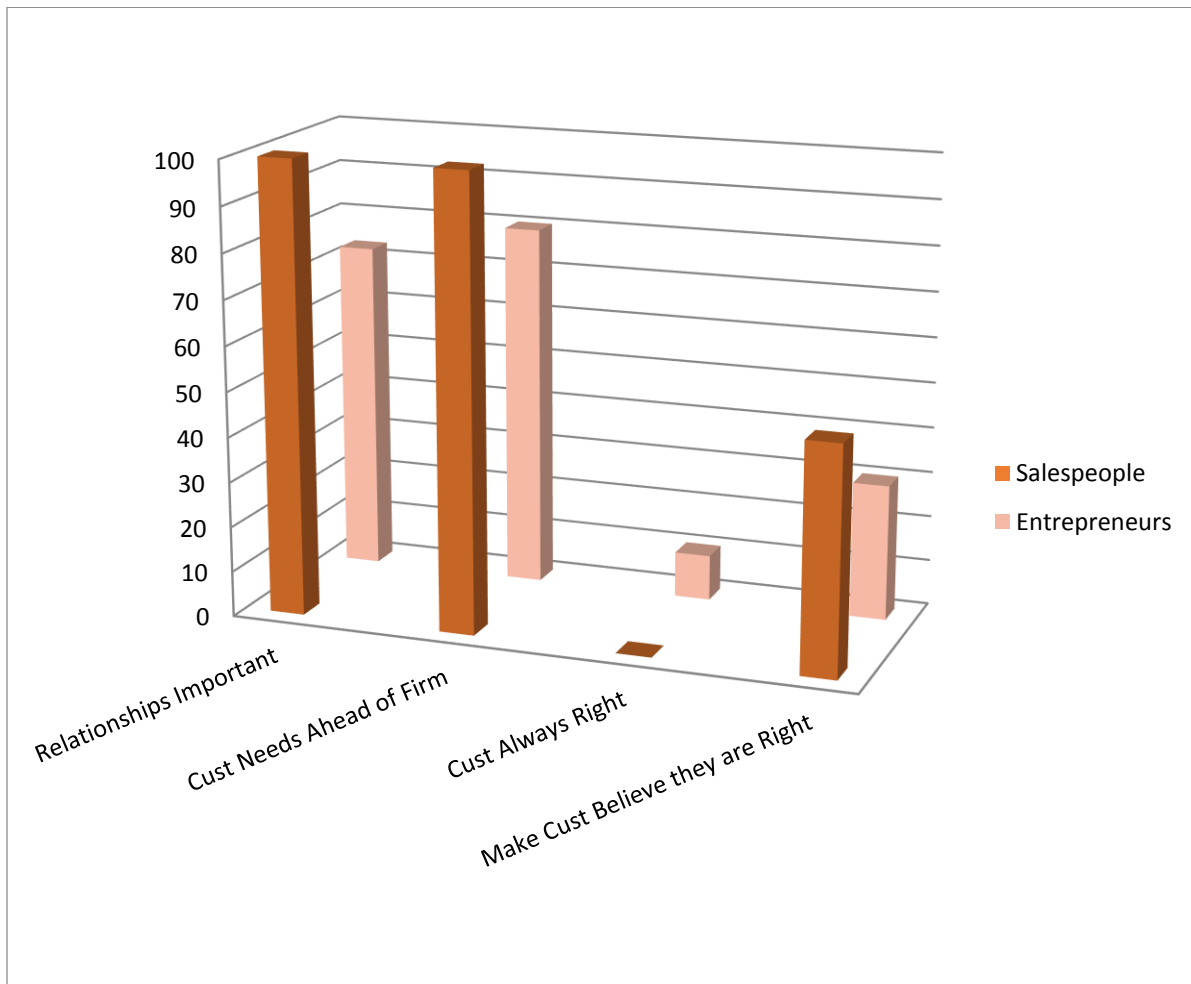
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

E-8 provided insight which reflects the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic to some degree. The entrepreneur presumably has much control over his / her firm at all levels and in all departments. For a customer, dealing with the founder and owner is a very efficient use of time because decisions can be made and support staff motivated to ensure delivery of promises. E-8 compares these control and influence phenomenon to the outstanding salesperson:

> *"They (salespeople) have to be able to manage backwards to satisfy the needs of what they have sold. Customers will pay more for a relationship with a guy that can manage his own internal customers. This makes a powerful relationship. Why do you think they'd rather deal with owners?" (E-8).*

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E-7 was a highly successful salesperson for an international meat processing firm prior to becoming an entrepreneur. His comments regarding 'managing backwards' very much support those of E-8:

> *"Even when I was a sales rep, I wouldn't leave a deal alone... wouldn't leave important aspects to others. I would tell our product developer, 'tell me when you're running this cause I'm coming in to watch'. I wanted to fully understand why it was working or not working... understanding these issues, I found out early on if you could sit in front of a customer and talk about what happened and why... 'and if we just do this, this is what we can achieve'... no competitor had a rep like me. I've always made customers feel like they were talking to the owner... even before I was one" (E-7).*

5.9.3   *Adaptive and Creative Attributes*

Adaptive selling represents the ability of the sales person to read cues, motives, and emotions of both customers and fellow colleagues, and respond to these signals 'adaptively' by altering their own motives, non-verbal behavior and emotional reactions (Sujan *et al*, 1999). The concepts of creative and adaptive selling have been explored by many authors; over 35 of which are mentioned within the literature review of this thesis (Appendix 2). Many argue that this skill is rare and not easily taught. This has been supportively demonstrated within these Findings Chapters as reflected by the opinions of the participating salespeople and entrepreneurs. Creativity, which is more a characteristic of nature than nurture, is an important trait for those who successfully practice adaptive selling (Lassk and Shepherd, 2013).

In line with the theories of E-7, E-8 and S-5 in the previous findings section, Anderson *et al*. (2007) contend that value-based selling is easier said than done. Very few firms have systems in place to adapt their contribution or offering for their customers, and too often, value is created and communicated by the rarely talented sales person rather than the vending firm. It is further suggested that most adaptive behaviors on behalf of salespeople are but an influencing tactic that cannot have long term success unless value is created. In essence, adaptive selling is a sales call strategy rather than a trust-building relationship strategy unless the offering and services surrounding that offering are adaptive (Anderson *et al*. 2007).

Figure 5-16 summarizes the participants' self-reported traits and attributes in this regard. All of the participants see themselves as original / creative, inventive problem solvers who have a disposition to make things happen. And all but one of the sales participants would never sell something to a customer that they did not specifically want and need.

Figure 5-16   **Adaptability Summary**
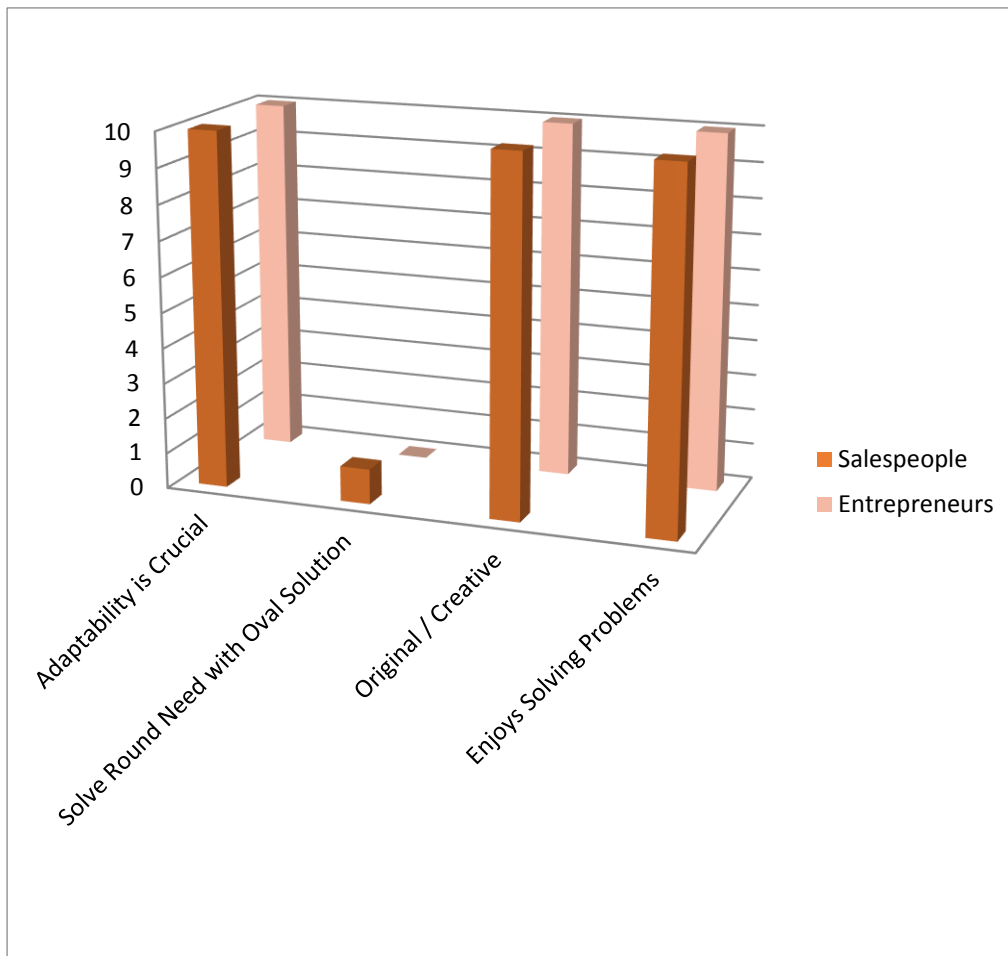
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Several of the salesperson and entrepreneur participants indicated that their ability to adapt, both internally and externally is the absolute key to building trust

> *"Every situation's different. When you're meeting someone for the first time you have to have an on-off switch because you carry yourself differently depending on that person" (S-5).*

E-5 made more than one reference to the concept of selling being paramount to his success as an entrepreneur:

> *"As a home builder, you're selling when you get dressed. Yesterday I am visiting with a couple who are farmers. You don't go there in a three piece suit. I went in these clothes, work boots and drove my truck over. You're always selling. Try to understand your consumer and then make sure you're in sync with him. Don't overpower him with all your knowledge – trying to get him way down below you. They likely need what you have or they wouldn't have called... just don't fuck it up!" (E-5).*

Although the word 'adapt' was not overly used by most participants, there is consensus among both the salesperson and entrepreneur participants that going with the flow of the customer's personality, moods and needs is crucial to building long term, trusting relationships. In fact none of the participants support scripted selling approaches, which may be better suited to beginners or less talented individuals.

5.9.4   Summary and Conclusions – Adaptability

Evidence from the interviews suggests that the selling and entrepreneur participants feel that having trusting relationships with customers is paramount to succeeding in business. However, the findings indicate a key difference between the two regarding strategy and execution. It appears that the entrepreneur participant is very likely to work hard and 'do' the right things to ensure success. The salesperson is more likely to not work hard while 'saying' the right things to ensure success. This is a variance between the vocations that is directly related to the building or inhibiting of trust.

Both of the vocational participants are likely to sacrifice important resources, often putting customer needs ahead of their own. Further, all but one of the participants agree that the customer is not always right. However, a significant difference is that the majority of entrepreneur participants will say 'no' to a customer to change the strategic direction of a discussion, whereas most of the sellers will attempt to manipulate the situation to simply make the customer believe they are correct and in control. Future research may wish to test whether less successful sales people also use such tactics and whether long term trusting relationships can be maintained with such strategies.

Finally, all of the participants feel that the domain specific adaptive approach to building customer relationships is a far better strategy than a preconceived global or 'canned' approach. The key to success however, lies in the participant's ability to rally internal support to deliver on customer promises. Entrepreneurs have the authority to ensure internal cooperation. The most successful salespeople use their powers of persuasion and trust building skills on their internal peers to influence cooperation. This ultimate deliverance of promises builds trust and solidifies customer relationships.

To further study the trust and image issues within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic, the final section of this chapter will discuss the very concept of entrepreneurship; exploring the participant's views of this phenomenon which the literature identified as difficult to define.

5.10   Findings Chapter Summary:

5.10.1   Exploring the Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic

In Chapter 3 of this work, a comparison of the literature on salespeople and entrepreneurs highlighted that there may be several commonalities between the two vocations within trait and behavioral theories. This Findings Chapter identified further similarities and differences within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic according to these specific interviews. A summary chart of these similarities and differences follows in the next chapter as Table 6-1.

This overall chapter summary does not seek to repeat previous topical summaries and references to the literature, but rather shed light on the dynamic between the selling and entrepreneur vocational participants. This summary will include the participant's input regarding the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic which ironically represents a contribution to the findings themselves since the two vocational groups have contrasting views in this regard. These relate to both trust building and trust inhibiting traits and behaviors. Further, this summary will set the stage for the next 'discussion' chapter which will bring together the independent trust and image building / inhibiting characteristics discussed thus far.

There is absolute concensus among the selling (10 out of the 10) and entrepreneur (11 of 11) participants regarding the vocational dynamic. All agree that highly successful salespeople have much in common with entrepreneurs.

"Absolutely, we were all selling when we launched our busness. We HAD to sell. Building trust, relationships... crucial" (E-1).

There was almost complete concensus among the participants regarding differences between the vocations. Salespeople are dealing with tangible knowns which implies a one way out scenario. Entrepreneurs are selling themselves; selling their less tangible ideas to their team and to their partners.

"The one entrepreneur I really know well and respect would never call himself a sales guy but you sit in a room with him and within minutes you realize this guy is a big thinker and he makes you want to be a part of it. Was he selling? I suppose he was wasn't he. Was he a sales guy? It gets blurry there" (E-3).

The literature (Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2009) and this research may indicate that a contributing factor to this "blurry line" is the image of the salesperson verses the entrepreneur. The distinguishing factor may also be that entrepreneurs may be selling at a very sophisticated level. They are selling concepts and ideas rather than selling tangible wares.

It is worthy of future research to attempt to understand the pressures that are inherently applied to the seller who has minimal control over their offering. It may also be of interest to understand the sequence of the entrepreneurship selling cycle. To some degree it may be timing that dictates the entrance of the vocations. Entrepreneurs have a knack for recognizing opportunities or disequilibrium in the marketplace (Shapero, 1971; Kaish and Gilad, 1991) but once the entrepreneur creates a solution to a gap in the marketplace or a specific solution to a customer's need, it is at this time that the salesperson is introduced to share the innovation to other 'like' customers.

For many though, one major question remains: if highly successful salespeople have the ability to grow a business and they seemingly share similar traits and attributes to the entrepreneur why are they not venturing out on their own to build wealth or create a legacy for themselves? Evidence from the interviews reveals that 'propensity for risk' is one prevailing factor. 10 out of the 10 salesperson and 9 of the 11 entrepreneur participants indicated that they felt that that primary difference between the two vocations relates to the concept of risk. Most of the salespeople felt that this was the 'only' difference: "Risk. Salespeople have a safety net. Salary plus bonus or commissions equals safety" (S-7).

As shown in Appendix 24, not all of the participants felt that there was a disparity of any kind within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic. Surprisingly, it was 2 entrepreneur participants (rather than

salespeople) who were consistent with their views that entrepreneurship is a spirit or a trait that need not involve financial investment or risk.

> *"Outstanding sellers or marketers are entrepreneurial by nature. They are unrestrained, creative, out-of-the-box people. And when the time comes, they are organized, disciplined and strategic... the really good ones anyways. That flame... initiative... then the evolution to raise it up to something worthwhile. A great sales guy is that visionary. He's entrepreneurial" (E-2).*

Figure 5-17 provides a visual summary of the participant responses regarding the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic.

Figure 5-17   Selling / Entrepreneurial Summary
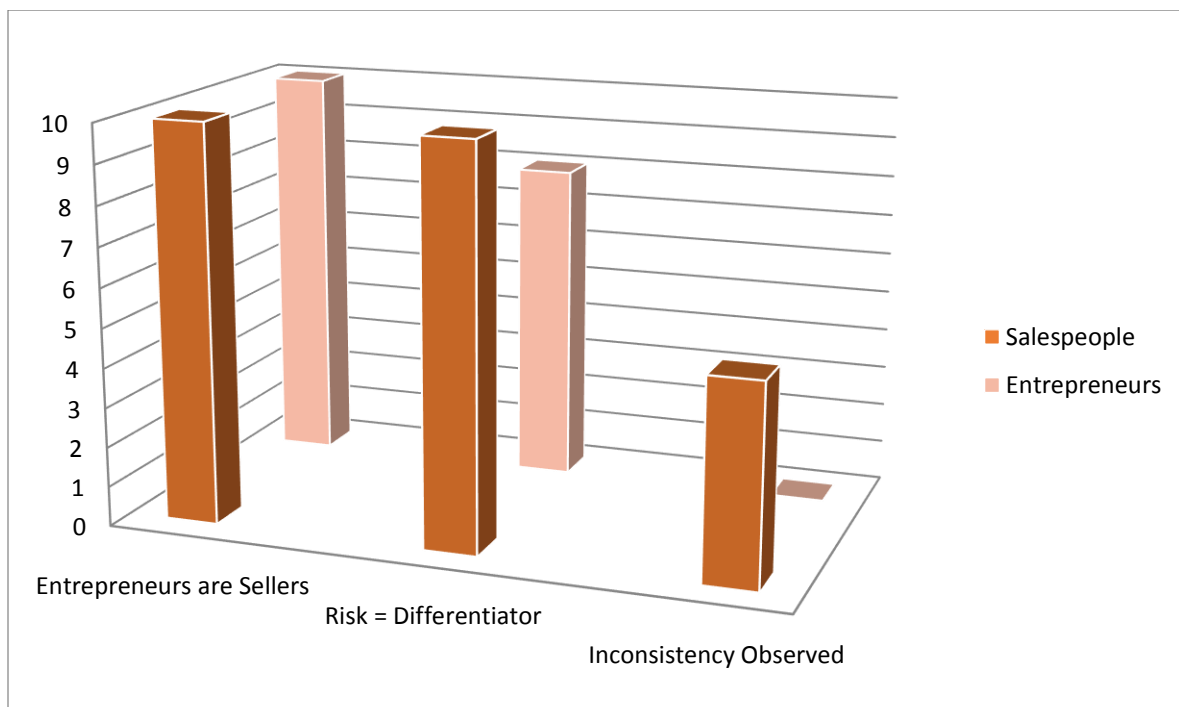
Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

The theme of entrepreneurship being difficult to define (Cole, 1996; Begelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005) emerges consistently within the study responses. The majority of the participants agree that ownership is a prerequisite to qualify as an entrepreneur, although the entrepreneur participants were more likely to feel this way (9 out of the 11) verses their selling counterparts (6 of 10).

Sales participants set the bar slightly lower within their definition of entrepreneur as they are less likely than entrepreneurs to feel that ownership, risk-taking, innovation and growing beyond self-employment were prerequisites to entrepreneurship. As mentioned earlier, it may be worthy of future study to understand if this phenomenon reflects a potentially emerging theme of 'salesperson self-image boosting behavior'. For instance, if these concepts are not prerequisites to entrepreneurship, then salespeople can more closely relate themselves to entrepreneurial traits, rather than those of salespeople who are held in low regard by society. The one concept on which all could agree was that entrepreneurs are selling constantly and most effective salespeople are somewhat entrepreneurial by nature.

Supporting the emerging themes within this Findings Chapter, evidence of entrepreneur humility came to light within this segment. It should be noted that the theme of humility was not extensively explored within the literature on entrepreneurs (or salespeople). More than one entrepreneur was quick to credit others or highlight the need to assist others in their field or communities. This represents a disparity within the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic which may be strengthened by future study on the underlying reasons for certain selling behaviors. For instance, if it can be shown that salespeople provide impulsively untruthful answers which subconsciously attempt to boost self-image, this would represent the polar opposite of humility, which seems to be a trait that the entrepreneur participants possess. Understanding the degree to which this salesperson characteristic inhibits the building of trust may be of interest to academics and practitioners.

In the next chapter, these trust building and trust inhibiting themes will be connected in a summary format. Individually, the attributes, traits and behaviors of salespeople and entrepreneurs show many differences which are significant on their own. However, when these discrete findings and themes are brought together a much stronger position on image and trust emerges.

Discussion: Trust and Image Contributions within the Findings

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

6.1   Discussion Introduction

The previous chapter analyzed the interview findings which were summarized based upon the conceptual framework. These categorical summaries were rooted in the aims and objectives outlined in Chapter 1:

1. Contribute to new perspectives and identify opportunities for future study within the genre of the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, and

2. Expand upon existing knowledge related to selling and entrepreneurship.

The independent literature on salesmanship and entrepreneurship indicates that commonalities exist between these vocations. This new research endeavored to delve deeper by asking similar questions to both groups to better understand this specific dynamic.

This work was inspired by the desire to understand why North American society holds salespeople in such disdain while bestowing admiration upon the entrepreneur; when both must sell to succeed. Emerging perspectives within the findings were thought-provoking as independent phenomenon. However, when combining and connecting these developments within the following discussion, a broader perspective emerges which positions trust at the nucleus of the argument.

It may be suggested that selling tactics from the past unfairly create hurdles for modern-day salespeople. While this concept has not been tested, emerging themes within this thesis show that selling participants engage in behaviors that may be considered opportunistic and inconsistent, which may inhibit trust building. On the contrary, the entrepreneur participants seem to engage in behaviors that have been shown to inspire confidence and respect, which stimulate trust. This difference may be rooted in the fact that the entrepreneurs have a wider perspective on their businesses due to financial

risk, people responsibility and ambition to grow beyond themselves. In contrast, the salespeople seemed to exhibit narrower perspectives related to their own self-interest.

Within this chapter, themes that are rooted within the conceptual framework and subsequently have emerged from the findings will be discussed. In line with the objectives outlined for this research several new and supportive perspectives emerged:

Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic Similarities:

- 10 emerging themes representing new perspectives
- 6 emerging themes representing perspectives that are in line with existing knowledge

Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic Differences:

- 19 emerging themes representing new perspectives
- 2 emerging themes representing perspectives that are in line with existing knowledge

Table 6-1 provides a summary of these emerging themes and reflects the structure of the conceptual framework. A more detailed version of this illustration which includes references to past work may be found in Appendix 25.

Table 6-1 **Contribution Synthesis: New and Supportive Perspectives**

Similarities and Differences within the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

| Conceptual Framework | | Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic | |
Category	Component	Participant Similarities	Participant Differences
Cultural and Professional Background	Parents	**New Perspectives:** Both vocational groups share parental themes of unwavering support, work ethic example, following in vocational footsteps and not being raised in a high income household.	
	Education & Self-improvement	**New Perspectives:** Both groups claim to possess a strong desire to improve themselves, but neither does anything formally to do so.	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** The entrepreneurs are more formally educated than the salespeople.
	Mentoring		**New Perspectives:** The sellers are more likely than entrepreneurs to be mentored and they are ironically far less likely to mentor others.
	Like and Dislikes re: Role	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** Both groups thoroughly enjoy what they do and take pleasure in interacting with people. Both are also likely to feel dissatisfaction and frustration with their jobs. Entrepreneurs are likely to be driven by these themes into their self-employment endeavors.	**New Perspectives:** The sales participants identify 'freedom' as a primary driver of vocational enjoyment, verses entrepreneurs who site 'problem solving' as their primary motivation driver (Kirton, 1976; Drucker, 1985; Stewart *et al*. 1998).
Assertiveness	Assertiveness / Diplomacy	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** Both groups self-identify as having high energy. **New Perspectives:** Both groups are assertive in nature but neither applies this trait externally with customers, rather, it is applied internally to ensure customer promises are delivered upon.	
	Competitive Nature	**New Perspectives:** Both groups are athletically inclined and hate to lose but are not driven day to day by the concepts of winning or competition. Winning is a by-product of other focused activities.	
	Understanding Competitors		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs feel that understanding competitive products, services and strategies is very important. Sellers find this a waste of time and do not partake. This represents a significant conflict as entrepreneurs believe that their sales people are a reliable source of competitive intelligence.
	Winning Trumps Fair Play	**New Perspectives:** One third of both groups of participants are likely to bend the rules and / or not be completely forthright in business.	**New Perspectives:** Sellers were uncomfortable, attempting to avoid the question. Conversely, entrepreneur participants who identified that they sometimes "leveled the playing field" through manipulation were completely forthright in the interview.

Conceptual Framework		Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic	
Category	**Component**	**Participant Similarities**	**Participant Differences**
Control Preferences	Planning & Time Management		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs feel that forward planning is critically important and practice strategic forward planning. Salespeople identify planning as important but do not practice such; some who deem planning 'very important' do not plan ahead at all.
	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Technology		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs are more likely than sellers to embrace CRM systems in their operations. Several sellers did not know the meaning or purpose of CRM, yet this did not stop them from providing a detailed (albeit completely unrelated) answer to the query.
Humanity and Motivation	Spiritual		**New Perspectives:** Sellers were twice as likely as entrepreneurs to identify as 'spiritual'. For both groups spirituality was likely of a non-religious nature.
	Risk, Fear and Luck		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs are far more likely to self-identify as hard workers and to consider detailed forward planning critically important to success; both of which reduce the 'unknown' or 'risk factor', thus lessening the reliance on chance or luck. Sellers proudly indicated that they do not work hard or plan ahead, and are unlikely to credit luck for their success. In other words, those participants who limit risk and take precautions against requiring luck are more likely to credit luck with their success than those who throw caution to the wind.
	Teamwork		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs prefer to work on teams which 'are crucial to success'. Sellers prefer to be alone and avoid teamwork; possibly to maintain freedom and avoid exposing work habits and lack of loyalty.
	Hobbies / Work-life Balance	**New Perspectives:** All selling and entrepreneur participants indicated that family values are critically important. Further, both groups generally do not read for pleasure (15 of 21 of the participants).	**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs are far more likely than the sellers to enjoy the arts in some way, such as playing an instrument, going to live theatre etc. This supports the education theory: increased education reflects stronger propensity to be an entrepreneur (Darmon, 2008) and also to be a more active participant in the arts (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2003).
	Motivation	**In Line with Existing Knowledge**: Both participant groups have high achievement needs. **New Perspectives:** Both groups are motivated by money.	**New Perspectives:** Sellers are more likely than entrepreneurs to need to be recognized for their achievements. **New Perspectives:** While, both groups have been confirmed as being motivated by money, the salespeople are likely to deny it and the entrepreneurs will state such with conviction.

Conceptual Framework		Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic	
Category	**Component**	**Participant Similarities**	**Participant Differences**
Characteristics and Traits	Honesty and Trust		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs are likely to clarify issues before reacting. Salespeople frequently responded impulsively; presuming to know the meaning of a query which was clearly misunderstood. Selling participants seemed to take pride in their ability to work half as hard as their peers and take extra time off once goals were met, unbeknownst to their managers. Sellers seemed to be trying to convince the interviewer of things throughout the interview process; in several cases expressing untruths (seemingly unintentional). The entrepreneur participants did not exhibit such behaviors.
	Defining Success		**New perspectives:** While these vocational participants are equally likely to identify financial rewards as part of the definition of success, several of the sales participants were inconsistent; indicating that they felt success had nothing to do with money.
	Nature vs Nurture	**New Perspectives:** Sellers and entrepreneurs both feel that the factors of their personal success are part of their nature and cannot be taught.	**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneurs are twice as likely as the sellers to self- identify as shy.
	Work Ethic	**New Perspectives:** Both vocational groups feel that they work smarter than most people.	**New Perspectives:** The entrepreneurs are more likely to identify as hard working individuals. Several salespeople proudly do not work hard. Sellers are fully aware of the amount of hours they work and are likely to work the minimal amount required to be recognized as high performers and then enjoy the freedoms that such status evokes. Entrepreneurs are likely to have no idea how many hours they work as they generally 'live' their work and are constantly focusing on their firms. Sellers take 40% more holidays annually than entrepreneurs, not including the unofficial time off which is a reflection of the "freedom" theme discussed by most of the selling participants. Entrepreneurs require an absolute break in their day to re-charge. Most sellers will eat their meals while they continue working.
	Hours in a Day		
Adaptive Behaviors / Environment	Relationships Internal & External	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** Both participant groups exclusively identified that the development and maintenance of long term, trusting 'customer relationships' are crucial to the longevity of any business.	

| Conceptual Framework | | Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic | |
Category	Component	Participant Similarities	Participant Differences
	Customer Needs Ahead of Firm's	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** In the interest of building trusting relationships, both the sales and entrepreneur participants self-identify as often putting customer interests above their own. However, the sacrifices differ. Salespeople allocate their time disproportionately to certain customers' advantage and entrepreneurs allocate more tangible resources such as money and staff expertise.	
	Number One Player in Market		**New Perspectives:** The sales participants unanimously claimed that they work for the very best company in their field. The entrepreneur participants were half as likely to say so. This concept is reflective of an emerging humility theme, which has been shown to contribute to likeability and building trust.
	Creativity and Adaptability	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** Both groups self-identify as being adaptive and all feel this is necessary for achieving success in business. Further, both shared anecdotes supporting the fact that they practice such strategies.	**In Line with Existing Knowledge:** Both groups share a dislike of rules and regulations, however the sales participants are hindered by internal (i.e. management) controls and entrepreneurs are bothered by external (i.e. governmental) regulations.
	Customer Always Right		**New Perspectives:** While both the sellers and entrepreneurs agree that customers are NOT always right; entrepreneurs are more likely to inform the customer outright that their request is unreasonable and "the answer is no", whereas the sellers are more likely to attempt to manipulate the situation to make the customer believe they have gotten their way.
Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	Defining Entrepreneur		**New Perspectives:** Entrepreneur participants were twice as likely to identify ownership, risk, innovation and growing beyond self-employment as prerequisites for entrepreneurship than the sellers, who seemed to set the bar lower in their definition of entrepreneur.
	Comparing Entrepreneurs to Salespeople	**New Perspectives:** Both the selling and entrepreneur participants feel that entrepreneurs are generally sellers and that successful salespeople are entrepreneurial. They generally agree that the primary difference between successful salespeople and entrepreneurs is the risk factor.	

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

To facilitate a discussion which builds towards a deeper understanding of the image and trust levels bestowed upon salespeople and entrepreneurs, this chapter will discuss the emerging themes, identified in Table 6-1 relating to similarities and differences:

Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Similarities

1. Cultural and Background Similarities

   - Emerging themes which are marginally related to image and trust

2. Philosophical Similarities

   - Emerging themes which connect to other perspectives and are notably related to image and trust

Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Differences

1. Cultural and Background Differences

   - Emerging themes which are marginally related to image and trust

2. Inconsistencies and Discrepancies

   - Emerging themes representing differences which are directly related to image and trust

3. Behavioral Differences

   - Themes that connect to emphasize important emerging image and trust issues

6.2 Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Similarities

6.2.1   Cultural and Background Similarities

Entrepreneurs have been shown to be more prevalent in masculine and individualistic cultures (Malach-Pines et al, 2005), are likely to come from industrious families (Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991) and have at least one self-employed parent (Senyard et al. 2013). This work is in line with the literature as

entrepreneur participants were likely to have had self-employed parents (7 of 11) and in 4 of 10 instances, the salespeople also followed a parent into their vocation. This phenomenon may simply represent a connection to parenting in general, rather than a specific connection to the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

Delving more deeply, parental support represents a rare absolute within the similarities of the dynamic. These players all provided rich anecdotes depicting unwavering encouragement, including one participant who was unconditionally reassured of his decision to leave university and "chase chicks on the beach in Australia for a year" (S-10). S-10 is now a highly successful and competitive salesperson in the hospitality industry.

Having a competitive nature seems to come naturally to all selling and entrepreneur participants. In line with the literature (Schwepker and Good, 2010), these players simply hate to lose. Such spirit motivates the salespeople to be entrepreneurial and inspires the entrepreneurs to sell.

The similarities within this section shed light on a connection between these vocations. Given that entrepreneurs have been shown to have more respect in society and higher occupational prestige than salespeople (Hodge et al. 1964; Tumin, 1967; Swan and Adkins, 1982; Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2009) it may follow that such a connection might positively influence the image of those who sell. However, in the upcoming sections, this Discussion Chapter will explore emerging perspectives that point to a possible link between selling participant behaviors and the poor societal image they seek to circumvent. Interestingly, there may also be a link between entrepreneur behaviors and the positive imprint they leave behind.

6.2.2   Philosophical Similarities

The literature indicates that assertiveness is a common trait of successful salespeople and entrepreneurs (Shapero, 1971; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). However, this new research indicates that for these elite players assertiveness absolutely does not surface with customers: "Forcing the issue with a customer? Never, never, never!" (S-5). Rather, their assertive spirit is used internally to ensure that promises to fulfill customer needs are delivered by their respective firms. This may seem a natural progression for a founding entrepreneur, but several of the selling participants expressed that rules are only guidelines when it comes to taking care of customers (S-5; S10). Since positive internal

relationships with colleagues and managers can also be an ingredient for success, assertive, rule-bending behaviors may have trust-inhibiting repercussions for salespeople internally within the confines of their firms.   Further, it may be of interest to explore whether less successful salespeople 'assert' themselves upon potential customers and internal colleagues.

In line with earlier work (Wang and Netemeyer, 2002; Dixon *et al*. 2003; Maxwell *et al*. 2005; Wilson, 2006; Prakash *et al*. 2007; Harding, 2008) both vocational groups dislike rules and regulations . However, perhaps due to broader perspectives on their business the entrepreneurs found frustration with external rules (i.e. government regulations) while sales participants, whose perspectives may be narrower, felt hindered by internal controls (management / ownership). This may contribute to a breakdown of management and co-worker trust levels. More importantly, while external customers may benefit short term from the behaviors of a rule breaking, boundary spanning sales representative, on a deeper level, such work habits may have an adverse effect on maintaining long term trusting relationships. In line with the literature on rules and regulations (Susbauer, 1972; Draheim, 1972; Shapero, 1975) entrepreneur participants were highly likely to have been pushed into their start-up endeavor by frustration with their previous jobs. Researchers may seek to understand if this frustration is a symptom of narrower business focus as an employee, or whether a wider perspective already existed, which motivated the new enterprise, as the very act of being an entrepreneur can create personality traits that may not have been prevalent prior to launch (Littunen, 2000).

On a final note on philosophical similarities, in line with nature vs nurture themes (McMurray, 1961; Evanschitzky, 2012) the consensus among the selling and entrepreneur participants is that the contributing factors to their success are reflective of nature and cannot be taught. For salespeople, this opens a discussion around themes of secrecy and solitude. The literature suggests that sellers are protective of their tactics (Harding, 2008). However, if their skill is of their nature, success tactics cannot be learned by those without such 'natural' gifts. Therefore, protecting success methodology is immaterial. Perhaps there are other reasons for the selling participants to be secretive and to seek solitude.

6.2 Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Differences

6.3.1 Cultural and Background Differences

The vocations of selling and entrepreneurship have different educational backgrounds within the literature. Higher education indicates more likelihood to become an entrepreneur and lower education levels reflect greater probability to be in sales (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Robinson and Sexton, 1994; Gray and Howard, 2006). Further, greater education also indicates a stronger propensity to be involved in the arts. This work is in line with the literature in both regards as the entrepreneur participants have more formal education than the sellers and although neither group is likely to read for pleasure, the entrepreneurs are far more likely to play a musical instrument or enjoy live theatre.

The concept of higher education and cultural endeavors may seem inconsequential within the grand scheme of this work, but there are several inconsistencies and behaviors discussed in upcoming sections which draw attention back to these themes. There are significant differences between these vocational participants which may, to some degree, reflect education levels.

Delving more deeply into culture and education, the literature reviewed for this work did not extensively explore the issue of spirituality for these two vocations. However, on more general terms, in 137 countries world-wide, those with greater intelligence scores, more formal education, and higher income levels are far more likely to be atheists (Lynn et al. 2009). This work is in line with these themes as the sales participants were more likely than the entrepreneurs to self-identify as spiritual; although half of those in both groups classify this as non-religious. There is a potential spiritual connection to other themes within the findings for this work. These selling professionals often exist in seclusion and can sometimes behave in ways that may not earn trust and respect. Subsequently, spiritual associations may represent a counterbalancing effect.

On a final note, within this section on cultural and background differences, the entrepreneur participants are far more likely to self-identify as shy. The literature suggests that humility contributes to likeability and the building of trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). Entrepreneur shyness, combined with sellers lack thereof, may influence society's image of these players and merge within humility themes in upcoming sections of this discussion.

6.3.2   Inconsistencies and Discrepancies

An assertiveness connection has been made between salespeople and ego traits (McMurray, 1961). Ego can be a positive (superiority) or negative (inferiority) phenomenon, and selling performance often reflects relatively as positive individuals sell more than those with negative dispositions (Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977). Within this research, the question "In your market, are you the number one player in overall volume?" was designed to gain understanding of the correlation between an individual's performance and their company's position in the marketplace. Is it common to be an elite performer in sales if one is not representing the top performing company in one's field? The question, which was based on volume, expected a simple yes or no mathematical response. The answer to the question itself is not enlightening. However, the comparison of how the two vocational groups answered the question provides insight within the themes of ego, humility and trust.

The sales participants all claimed that they work for the number one player in their trading area. Yet, 2 of the 10 sellers are employed by competing firms within the same market, indicating that at least one was inaccurate. In fact, 5 out of the 10 sellers work for firms that are not volume leaders in their field. There are several possible reasons for this unanimously optimistic response. The sellers may be depicting their company's stature as they see it, based on their relatively narrow perspective on the business. It is also possible that interviewees who unanimously declared that they do not care about competitive activity, simply have no objective knowledge of where their firms rank. In their personal territories they win the competitive battle and therefore they are number one.   There is also the possibility that the selling participants answered impulsively; providing an image building response that was subconsciously hoping to please or impress their audience.

There are many untested possibilities for the decisive declarations of all selling participants regarding their firm's status. There is emerging evidence that the self-esteem and image issues highlighted within the literature (Hodge et al. 1964; Tumin, 1967; Swan and Adkins, 1982; Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2009) may actually drive certain selling behaviors. Regardless of the reason for this inconsistency, providing a steadfast and inaccurate response to such a question is unlikely to improve the image of the vocation.

Perhaps due to wider perspectives, the entrepreneur participants were less likely to make the claim that their firm was an industry volume leader. This concept is reflective of an emerging humility theme for the entrepreneurs, which fosters the building of trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). Conversely, the

selling participant's overstated response may suppress the building of trust. This theme of humility seems to be a recent development within the literature which has historically depicted entrepreneurs as dysfunctional non-conformists (Kets de Vries, 1977) and extroverted conquerors (Garfield, 1986).

One entrepreneurship descriptor that has withstood the test of time is the reference to organized pursuers of opportunity (McClelland, 1961; Collins and Moore, 1964; Litvac and Maule, 1974; McGrath *et al*. 1992; Katreiel, 1995; Cromie, 2000). To this end the entrepreneur participants for this thesis feel that forward planning is critically important and they actually do practice the strategy. However, several admit to being periodically more reactive than methodical, which represents a link with the selling participants. Sales participants within this study identify that planning is important but do not necessarily practice such. In fact, 3 of the 8 sales participants who deemed the practice 'very important' do not plan ahead at all. Their calendars were blank. It is possible that 'planning' for these individuals is an internal practice that takes place only in their minds. It is also possible that because they know where they are going within their daily routines they see no need to capture their intentions externally on paper or within a customer relationship management (CRM) system. Given that the request to view their calendar planners was met with embarrassing laughter, it is also possible that subconsciously and impulsively these participants provided a response that was hoping to please, but was actually less than accurate.

Expanding on themes of CRM systems, planning and inconsistent responses, the selling participants unanimously dislike reporting systems that indicate either where they are going or where they have been. Interestingly, it was revealed that 3 selling participants did not understand what CRM meant even after a detailed interviewer explanation; yet they proceeded to discuss their inaccurate impressions of the concept at length. Entrepreneur participants sought clarity before responding.

Perhaps the stronger emerging message within the findings on salesperson systems and time management is the concept of avoidance rather than control preferences. These salespeople may be motivated by their need to avoid oversight to enjoy freedom. Subsequent discussion will show that the salespeople feel that freedom is a reward for superior achievement. To this author's knowledge this motivational theme represents a contribution to new perspectives. It may be deliberate, or it may be a subconscious result of salespeople having more narrow perspectives and being less reflective than entrepreneurs. But beyond money and achievement needs, it is possible that this emerging theme of avoidance contributes to perpetual insecurity, which may drive the need to impulsively provide answers

that please. This may be contributing to the poor image these salespeople seek to evade (Ingram and Schwepker, 1993).

Motivation research suggests that highly successful salespeople (Walker *et al*. 1997; Jaramillo *et al*. 2007) and successful entrepreneurs (Shaver and Scott, 1991; Zhao and Siebert, 2006) are more driven by an intrinsic need for achievement than money. Probing more deeply, a perspective emerging from this work highlights that the selling participants are far more likely than their entrepreneur counterparts to need to be 'recognized' for their achievements. Entrepreneurs have been shown to have higher self-esteem and stronger internal locus of control than salespeople (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Cromie, 2000; Mullen and Thomas, 2000). This 'need for recognition' may stem from lower levels of education and the poor image of the selling profession. It follows that there may also be an ongoing element of apprehension for these high performing sellers due to calculated work habits. Perhaps this insecurity is calmed by the reassurance of praise and recognition.

Expanding on motivational themes, this new work is not in line with the theory that successful salespeople and entrepreneurs are not motivated by money (Hill and McGowan, 1999; Malach and Pines, 2005; Lassk and Shepherd, 2013). Almost all of participants appear to be motivated by money. However, the entrepreneurs stated such with conviction. Conversely, 3 of the 9 salespeople initially claimed emphatically that they were not motivated by money, but analysis of the transcripts revealed a conflict. This theme of entrepreneur candor and salesperson inconsistency repeated within the discussions surrounding financial rewards relating to their personal definition of success:

> *"Well, I'll tell you one thing, success has nothing to do with money!" (S-10).*

In fact, for most of the sales participants, deeper questioning identified that money had everything to do with their definition of success. It may be that for these high performers above average earnings are taken for granted. Regardless of the driving influence behind the behavior, there are trust related risks associated with suggesting that money is neither a motivator nor a factor within one's definition of success, when it is actually both.

Inconsistencies presented within other themes as well. 4 of the 10 sales participants and 3 of the 11 entrepreneurs feel that winning trumps fair play in business. The sellers were visibly uncomfortable answering the question, as they declared that nothing is more important than integrity. In line with the literature which indicates that manipulation within the field of selling is not rare (Ahmad, 1985; Swan *et al*. 1985; Sujan *et al*. 1988) this was followed by anecdotes which revealed that manipulations of product

attributes or pricing quotations were common. All 3 of the entrepreneur participants, who identified that they sometimes 'level the playing field' through manipulation, were completely forthright as they unhesitatingly admitted such within the interview. Ironically, the 4 selling participants were dishonest about being dishonest; perhaps with intention; or perhaps subconsciously providing a response that was hoping to please. This may be viewed by customers and internal teams as trust inhibiting behavior.

The 5 themes discussed within this section represent straightforward and outspoken inconsistencies on behalf of the selling participants. In all cases, the players made direct statements, which, upon analysis of the recordings and transcripts were revealed as inconsistent. Ironically, it might be argued that in all cases, the discrepancy related to an attempt to shed more positive light on traits and characteristics which might be perceived as negative. This potentially trust-inhibiting pattern may be a naturally occurring phenomenon for a vocation that holds such a poor image in society. It is worth testing whether this occurs with all salespeople, or if it is something that is more prevalent with high performers.

The upcoming section of this discussion chapter explores behavioral differences within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic. While these do not represent straightforward inconsistencies, the self-described behaviors do highlight potential conflicts with colleagues, management and customers, and they have a direct, yet opposing effect on society's image and trust levels for these vocations.

6.3.3   Behavioral Differences

Within this section several behaviors will be discussed as they relate to the traits and behaviors of participating salespeople and entrepreneurs. As previously stated, individually these issues are not compelling. But when combined with the previously mentioned inconsistencies, a representation emerges which may underline why society views those who sell with caution and those who take on risk to launch and develop a new enterprise in the face of competition with admiration and respect.

The findings chapter showed that all of the entrepreneur participants feel that understanding their competition is very important, and 8 out of the 11 indicated that their source of competitive information was the informal reporting of their field sales representatives. The literature describes the boundary spanning salesperson as a critical source of such information (Teas, 1981; Sujan, 1999) yet, perhaps due

to having narrower perspectives on their business, all of the participating salespeople feel that the activity of gathering and sharing competitive information is an unimportant waste of time.

This may reflect earlier work which explored the private and protective tendencies of many salespeople (Walker et al, 1977; Harding, 2008; Zoltner et al. 2008). As stated, this new research has revealed that selling participants believe the attributes and characteristics that drive their success come naturally and cannot be taught. They are not concerned about others knowing their selling techniques because they believe others are incapable. This research may indicate that this reluctance to contribute information and time to their teams may have more to do with selfishness than protecting methodology as outlined by Dixon et al (2003). Some of the selling participants exhibited arrogance during the interview in this regard: "Couldn't care less" (S-6).

Within this discussion an interesting conflict has emerged between the expectations and priorities of these vocational participants. Entrepreneurs count on their sales representatives as their primary source of competitive information, yet these high performing sellers have no interest in providing such information. Although it has been suggested that high performing lone wolf salespeople make valuable financial contributions to a firm (Dixon et al, 2003; Harding, 2008) most of the entrepreneur participants indicated that they would not hire them, regardless of performance levels. It is possible that they understand this self-centered phenomenon, which may be contributing to the poor image and trust levels of salespeople.

> *"If you mean opportunistic, driven, self-centered performer… constantly thinking only of what's best for me… uh… yes that pretty much sums me up" (S-9).*

For most of the participating entrepreneurs, there is no place on their strategic, opportunity seeking teams for individuals with such work habits.

Delving more deeply into work ethic issues, the fact that entrepreneurs work long, hard hours has withstood the test of time (Brandstatter, 1977; Hill and McGowan, 1999; Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Schoorman *et al*. 2007). Entrepreneur participants for this thesis self-identify as hard working individuals, which is in contrast to most of the selling participants; several of whom exhibited pride regarding the fact that they did not work hard. These sellers take 40% more holidays annually than the participating entrepreneurs, which does not include 'unofficial' time off. Indeed, selling participants value their 'freedom' to a greater degree than entrepreneurs who generally require a break in their day

for a meal or to recharge. The sellers on the other hand, eat their meals 'on the run', perhaps to quicken their pursuit to the finish line to enjoy the freedom they value.

For several sellers freedom represents the ability to efficiently outperform their peers and then withdraw from further responsibility to pursue other interests. They often work the minimal amount of hours required to be recognized as high performers. This approach to the workday may be viewed as efficiency, motivated by opportunism. Secretly working half time and justifying it with results may be viewed as less than honorable behavior. Conversely, entrepreneurs are likely to be unaware of the hours they log since they often 'live' their work; constantly focused on their firms and unable to shelve responsibilities.

There is a connection within work ethic and motivation themes that is worthy of deeper study as it pertains to working smart verses working hard. The selling participants partake in the former, seeking freedom from work responsibilities, while their entrepreneur counterparts engage in both. Strong work ethic has been shown to be a reflection of humility and trustworthiness (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). Researchers of trustworthiness in business may wish to test whether trusting relationships can be fostered when one party makes inconsistent statements (perhaps to boost esteem and image) and seeks praise for achievements that were realized by working opportunistically. There is a vast difference between opportunism, which represents gaining benefit from opportunities or circumstances, without concern for ethics or after-effects (Merriam – Webster, 2015) and taking on risk to capitalize on marketplace disequilibrium (Kaish and Gilad, 1991).

Regarding risk propensity, this work is in line with past work (Ahmed, 1985) highlighting that these entrepreneur participants are comfortable staking their assets against the probability of success, provided they have thoroughly analyzed the opportunity and they are personally in control. In fact, although the entrepreneurs had never heard of effectuation (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005) they unanimously embraced the principles of leveraging relationships to lessen risk. This tendency to eliminate fear with detailed analysis and forward planning may control outcomes to some degree. It may be of interest to test whether higher levels of education prepare them for this strategic task.

Interestingly, not one sales participant indicated in any way that they understood that their employers bear risk on their behalf. There is potential to explore this concept more deeply. For instance:

- Is this phenomenon due to the fact that salespeople are not invested financially and therefore unaware of the presence of risk?

- Is this a result of salespeople having a narrower perspective on the business which relates to their own self-interest?

- If salespeople were generally more educated (Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977; Robinson and Sexton, 1994; Gray and Howard, 2006), would they be more likely to appreciate stakeholder risk and endeavor to protect the investment of their employers?

- If practitioners teach their salespeople about the risks involved in business can they inspire them to work more diligently? Might it have an effect on ethical behavior and influencing tactics with customers?

While understanding stakeholder risk may be beneficial to salespeople, both groups of vocational participants agree that building trusting relationships with customers is very important, and it is not uncommon for them to adapt their approach and offerings to put customer needs ahead of their own. However, when this decision is taken by entrepreneurs it reflects an investment of resources directly affecting them personally. On the contrary, for salespeople, putting customer needs ahead of their own does not affect them personally, but rather it affects the resources of their firm. Influencing situations in such ways represents a potential conflict within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

Research has been conducted on the ethical issues surrounding certain influencing tactics (Spiro and Perreault, 1979; Kumar and Bergstrom, 2008). While both the selling and entrepreneur participants agree that customers are 'not' always right; and in fact believe they are often wrong, entrepreneurs are more likely to inform the customer outright that their request is unreasonable and the answer is "no". On the contrary, the sellers are more likely to manipulate the situation to make the customer believe they have either come up with a solution on their own, or have gotten their way. Given that sales strategies have evolved to include sharing resources and networking teams of representatives from various vendor and customer departments (Cheverton et al. 2004; Dodds, 2007; Lars Joha, 2011) such tactics may not be conducive to maintaining long term trusting relationships.

The literature extensively explores the concept of teamwork as it pertains to entrepreneurs building and leading collaborative groups (Dodds, 2007) and salespeople both aligning with supportive colleagues (Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Dodds, 2007; Lars-Johan, 2011) and avoiding such (Dixon et al. 2003; Harding

2008). Literally all of the entrepreneur participants feel that teams are crucial to the success of a business. Conversely, 10 out 10 of the high performing sales participants prefer to work alone.

It has been established that there may be evidence within this research to warrant discussion around highly performing salespeople avoiding teamwork to avoid exposure of their work habits and loyalties. Many of these elite performers admit to working far less hours than their peers, creating freedom that would be potentially stifled or certainly exposed by team association. Depending on how this behavior is presented, it may be viewed as elitist and untrustworthy. Internal firm relationships are important to the development and mentoring of employees, as well as delivering upon customer commitments (Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Dodds, 2007). This research has shown that salespeople are more likely to have been mentored than entrepreneurs, yet they are far less likely than entrepreneurs to mentor others. If colleagues sense that their own focus and work ethic contributes more to the team than those on the outside who earn high commissions, internal trusting relationships may be difficult to maintain.

Past work has explored internal locust of control and highlights that focused, hard work can overcome obstacles (Cromie, 2000). Interestingly, within this new study, the entrepreneurs are more likely (5 out of the 11) than the salespeople (2 of 10) to suggest that luck contributed to their success. Entrepreneurs have been shown within this work to be more humble in general, which would increase the likelihood of crediting luck rather than expertise for their success. It is worth repeating in this segment that the participating entrepreneurs are far more likely to self-identify as hard workers and to consider detailed forward planning and competitive knowledge critically important to success; all of which reduce the 'unknown' or 'risk factor', and lessen the reliance on chance or luck. Yet the sales participants, who in several cases proudly indicated that they do not work hard or plan ahead, and couldn't care less about competitive activity, are less than half as likely to credit luck for any measure of their success. In other words, those participants who take precautions against requiring luck are more likely to credit luck with their success than those who are more reactive to their environment than strategic.

> *"Did luck occur because you put yourself in the situation to be lucky? And then is it luck at all? I don't think so" (S-7).*

This is a powerful example of entrepreneur humility which has been shown to build trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). As discussed earlier, sales participants require ongoing recognition for their achievements: potentially to boost their self-esteem and image. Acknowledging that luck played a role in one's success may diminish the glory.

It has been established that trust is an underlying theme for success in business and a prerequisite for holding a strong image in society (see Table 3-1 for a list of 45 researchers). It has also been confirmed that people who sell things for a living hold a low position on the occupational prestige scale (Hodge *et al*. 1964; Painter and Semenik, 1979; Swan and Nolan, 1985; MacKenzie *et al*. 1998; Gounaris, 2005; Hartman, 2006). There is an emerging theme of conflicting salesperson feedback which may be contributing to their poor image. As shown in Appendix 26, not one of the selling participants was immune to this phenomenon. The salesperson who exhibited the least inconsistency contradicted himself twice and one of the participants provided inaccurate responses 6 times. It is of interest to note that this behavior was not demonstrated by any of the entrepreneur participants.

As previously identified, it may be of interest to study whether inconsistent salesperson responses are attempts to improve self-image. And if so, is the very act of subconsciously attempting to boost esteem at the core of salespeople perpetuating their own fate? This phenomenon has been described as 'organizational defensive routines' which can present themselves in situations of perceived vulnerability (Flood, 2001). There is a gap between our espoused values: those values that we virtuously deem self-defining, and our 'values in use': more realistic values which attempt to guide our behavior (Argyris and Schon, 1996). It is possible that the selling participants default to their 'values in use' providing responses which are protective and defensive. This emerging theme represents a vast difference between the sales participants, who demonstrated inconsistency and contradiction, and the entrepreneurs who demonstrated candor and humility.

Humility as it relates to leaders in business has changed over time, as evidenced by the literatures interpretation of luck as a contributor to entrepreneurial success. Vesper's (1980) right place / right time (luck) theories seem to have been rebuked just a decade later by 'opportunity recognition' theory (Shaver and Scott, 1991) and 'marketplace disequilibrium' themes (Kaish and Gilad, 1991). More recently, bricolage theorists suggest that even if a new opportunity for existing resources presents without solicitation, there is a skill and knowledge base that must exist to effectively adapt to the need (Baker and Nelson, 2005).

In seeking to understand the broader meaning within this thesis, there are several factors contributing to a bigger collective picture. For instance, supporting the work by Shaver and Scott (1991) many of the entrepreneur attributes which seem to contribute to their respect in society are character based.

Integrity and humility are themes that present themselves through hard work, long hours, preparation and presenting one's self with honesty and openness (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). This work indicates that the participating entrepreneurs generally possess such traits.

On the contrary, the highly successful sales participants sporadically display attributes that are inconsistent and may be viewed as lacking integrity or 'image-boosting'. This reflects the opposite of humility. These traits and behaviors were not apparent at the time of the interview, but rather they were noticed during the analysis phase. Participant criteria of 'successful' within this research indicated consistently strong financial performance and did not validate the depth of customer relationships. The question may be asked: given that customers do not have the time or inclination to record and analyze the interactions with their salespeople, do they pick up on the subtle exaggerations or misleading behaviors? This author's personal experience with all vocational participants reflected an enjoyable interaction at the time of the interview which evolved into a fondness for all. However, after spending time with the recordings and transcripts the level of trust grew for the entrepreneurs and diminished for the sellers. There was no evidence that this was deliberate. Rather, the phenomenon was under the surface and emerged resembling an impulsive reaction; lacking in reflection and consequence awareness. Unlike the entrepreneurs, who seemed to view their business through a much broader lens, the salespeople demonstrated narrower perspectives, related to self-interest.

To simplify these observational findings of the similarities and differences within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, and supporting previous work (Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Dodds, 2007; Lars-Johan, 2011) both seek to enhance customer relationships by building trust. The entrepreneur participants seem to partake in lifestyle and business behaviors that are trustworthy with more consistency.

As a final note in this regard, it must be emphasized that these 10 selling participants were chosen as representing the best long term performers in their field. They succeed despite their periodic behaviors that may be viewed as trust-inhibiting. It would be of great interest to explore the potential of these players if they embraced entrepreneurial traits, habits and behaviors, such as:

- strategically planning ahead,

- working long hours,

- working hard,

- enthusiastically contributing to teams,

- mentoring others and

- being more open and honest in all internal and external interactions.

Further, it may be worth testing whether the concept of entrepreneurship lends itself to performing with honor and integrity. An entrepreneur is less likely to have the luxury of working alone and therefore work habits and ethical decisions are exposed for all to see. Perhaps behaviors are altered or 'in check' when there is more at risk than just money; such as when dedicated employees and their families depend upon the longevity of the firm, or when a founding entrepreneur invests great amounts of time into the task of replacing him / herself. Given that the entrepreneur cannot easily flee to greener pastures when faced with conflict or dissonance, perhaps the interaction with customers and the assertiveness with colleagues naturally takes on a sense of humility, respect and trustworthiness.

The literature and this research are in line regarding two opposing themes: there are many similarities and there are many differences, between the traits, behaviors and characteristics of successful salespeople and successful entrepreneurs. Research comparing these themes has not been found to be prevalent. The notion of the salesperson / entrepreneur dynamic sheds light on these concepts and highlights implications for research and practice.

Conclusions / Implications / Opportunities for Future Research / Limitations

Exploring the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

7.1   Introduction

The overriding purpose of this thesis has been to explore and compare the traits, behaviors and characteristics of highly successful salespeople and entrepreneurs. The motivation for this work is rooted within the author's personal experience with preconceived apprehension as a successful salesperson and subsequently with admiration as the founder of a new enterprise. Prior to embarking upon this endeavor, the author may have chosen to self-identify as an entrepreneur rather than a 'founder of a new enterprise'. However, embracing the work of Howell (1972) and the comments of entrepreneur participant E-1, this author now believes that the concept of entrepreneurship involves growing beyond one's personal needs, which does not apply.

The original problem statement motivating this work sought to understand why North American society holds salespeople in such disdain while bestowing admiration upon the entrepreneur, when both must sell to succeed. As such, four specific objectives are outlined for this thesis:

1   To explore the traits, habits and behaviors associated with high performance within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic.

2   To assess the similarities and differences between high performing sales people and entrepreneurs in relation to their traits, habits and behaviors.

3   To contribute to a stronger foundation for academic research into the sales / entrepreneur dynamic.

4   To provide practical recommendations for improving sales practice and entrepreneurial performance.

This thesis is rooted within the literature on traits, behaviors and characteristics of salespeople and entrepreneurs, which provides the groundwork for a conceptual framework. Analysis of past work highlights similarities and differences within the dynamic based upon independent studies, which asked separate questions of both vocational groups. This chapter integrates conclusions based on new research which asks similar questions of both groups; representing a deeper foundation for such analysis.

The research embraces qualitative research strategies; combining deductive, inductive (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and adaptive grounded theories (Hill and McGowan, 1987). The work makes connections with successful salespeople and entrepreneurs utilizing a two-phase inquiry strategy which includes a Pre-Interview Questionnaire, (primarily Likert Scale type questions) followed by in-depth one on one interviews.

7.2 Conclusions: Theoretical Contribution Synthesis

The combination of deductive and inductive theories conflicts somewhat with forms of the word 'conclude'. The aim is to analyze and highlight possibilities and potential for deeper study rather than prove constancy and uniformity (Tsoukas, 1989; Easton, 1994). As stated within the Methodology Chapter, the combination of induction and deduction advocates for qualitative realism methodology while embracing the idea that multiple realities exist (Hill and McGowan, 1999). The conclusions highlighted within this chapter do not represent facts that apply to the whole of these vocations of salesmanship and entrepreneurship, but rather they signify themes within the realities of participants which are worthy of deeper examination. As such, the emerging data from these interviews are not case studies; but rather distinct, yet connected experiments (Yin, 1994).

Within this thesis on the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic, many similarities and differences have been identified. The emerging themes that are in line with existing knowledge are representative of new perspectives to some degree, because although the themes have been explored, it was done within separate literatures and not compared within the body of work reviewed for this thesis.

As a Contribution Synthesis, the chart presented in Chapter 6 (Table 6-1) provides point-form conclusions as they relate to participant realities. A more detailed version of this Contribution Synthesis which includes significantly more references to the literature can be found as Appendix 25.

Both vocational groups of sellers and entrepreneurs exclusively identified that the development of long term, trusting customer relationships is crucial to success, which is in line with the theories of several authors (Kahk, 2010; Lars-Johan, 2011; Dixon and Tanner, 2012; see Table3-1 for an extensive list of authors). Traits, habits and behaviors have emerged within the findings that both support and conflict with trust-building goals. Narrowing down: one theme which emerges repeatedly is that of entrepreneur 'humility', which contributes to building trust and developing meaningful relationships with peers and customers (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007). Conversely, opposing themes of ego, arrogance and insecurity emerge for the salespeople, which are not conducive to building trust (Balsom et al. 2009).

This research highlights many new perspectives to support these claims. While salespeople and entrepreneurs both seek to build trust with others, they display traits, behaviors and characteristics that are quite different and in some cases may be viewed to achieve the opposite of this goal. The entrepreneur participants seek opportunities within the disequilibrium of the marketplace. They take on financial risk to develop revenue generating solutions through forward planning, analysis and hard work, while developing people along the way. They generally display integrity, honor and humility; all of which have been shown to enable trust.

Conversely, the findings indicate that the selling participants sometimes attempt to give the impression that they do these things, when they do not. They do not bother themselves with forward planning and they generally self-identify as not being hard workers. Rather, with no financial risk, they apply a portion of their birth-given talents to outperform their peers: for which they seek achievement recognition. They avoid management and working on teams, and they generally gain advantage over their firm's internal systems to enjoy the freedoms they feel they deserve. This does not apply to all salespeople; and it is not exclusively representative of all selling participants within this study. But, as shown in Appendix 26, none were immune to the behaviors, most displayed several of the characteristics, and literally all valued their freedom and independence above other aspects of their profession.

Ironically, this may represent a very significant aspect of this thesis contribution. The self-made, intrinsically motivated and deeply invested entrepreneur participants seem to have a lack of freedom; ostensibly due to their benevolence and responsibility for others. On the contrary, beyond financial and status related rewards, the selling participants seem to be motivated by their quest for freedom. Perhaps due to lack of financial or emotional investment, this presents in the form of unofficial paid

time-off. This in itself represents an integrity conflict, and in turn may elicit behaviors that further hinder the forming of trusting relationships.

It may be worth examining whether the role or nature of the profession of sales lends itself to those who learned to hustle for their rewards in life. This work is in line with the literature regarding the educational background of salespeople, which is generally low (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994; Robinson and Sexton, 1994). Further, those who succeed in sales, especially the elite players such as those interviewed for this research, are generously compensated for efficient use of their time. They are often granted a level of independence and autonomy by their managers, contingent on the achievement of performance goals. These psychological contracts (Rousseau et al. 2013) do not always coincide with Human Resources requirements. Such a system is ideal for opportunistic high performers who swiftly comprehend the weakness in their compensation packages (E-8). Therefore, the profession itself and the design of many sales reward systems may systematically encourage behaviors that contribute to the poor image and lack of trust for the vocation of salesmanship.

Perhaps due to cultural background, higher education levels, or perhaps simply due to wider business perspectives, the entrepreneur participants seem to be either unwilling or incapable of behaving in ways that inhibit trust. Conversely, possibly due to lesser education, narrower business perspectives, or simply misunderstanding their own behaviors and characteristics, the selling participants seem to be either unwilling or incapable of consistently behaving in ways that build trust; thus contributing to the poor image they so desperately seek to circumvent.

7.3   Implications for Research

The concepts of selling and entrepreneurship are of interest to scholars and practitioners (see Appendix 2 for comprehensive list of themes and authors). Several opportunities to expand upon this research have been highlighted within specific segments of this thesis but only key issues; especially those directly related to building trust with colleagues and customers will be emphasized within this section.

Several demographic expansion opportunities exist to augment this research project. For instance: expanding beyond the region of Ontario, Canada, and involving a broader range of ethnicity, gender and age. More specifically, it may be of interest to better understand how the themes within this thesis

apply to women exclusively. Entrepreneurs have a propensity to value individual financial and ego rewards, which are more masculine, over mutually shared team recognition rewards, which are more feminine (McGrath *et al*. 1992). Given that sole proprietorships launched by North American women have been on the increase in recent decades (Fagenson, 1993; Orser and Connell, 2005) this may be of special interest.

The same may be applied to different cultures. The literature suggests that entire nations may be culturally categorized by their masculine or feminine traits (McGrath *et al*. 1992). The USA is an example of a masculine nation, valuing independence and personal growth, while a country such as Hungary has a more family or feminine leaning culture, which values the collective. For this reason, research on the behaviors and traits of entrepreneurs and / or salespeople within different cultures may be of value.

In line with previous work, it has been shown that the selling participants generally are not highly educated compared to the entrepreneurs (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994; Robinson and Sexton, 1994). It is possible that higher education itself may be a contributor to becoming a more confident (stronger self-image) and trustworthy individual. More recent studies suggest that higher education levels coincide with less probability to be involved in sales, even though as many as 46% of university students identify themselves as wanting to pursue a new start-up venture (McKenna, 2013). Given that new perspectives within this thesis show that entrepreneur participants recognize that their vocation largely involves selling, inquiry may be of value regarding exactly what they are selling, to whom, and at what stage of the business development cycle. Further, academic institutions may seek to explore learning programs to enhance skills in the areas of prospecting and developing meaningful relationships with decision makers.

Expanding upon the theme of education, researchers may seek to test whether lesser education themes apply to other selling capacities such as Sales Management roles and Key Account Management (KAM) which is a more team oriented approach to satisfying customer needs (Cheverton *et al*. 2004). By design, this work sought to understand the traits, behaviors and characteristics of highly performing 'individuals'. This author respectfully recognizes that many firms have adjusted their selling strategies to rely less on the talents of individuals and more on the strengths that emerge from teams.

It is worthy of note that firms using KAM strategies were neither sought out nor avoided within this work. In fact, although participating corporations varied greatly in scope, size and concept, not one of the firms which were included in this study engaged in team selling strategies. Study in other

geographic areas with an expanded sampling of participants may yield more diversity regarding firm selling strategies.

Beyond the concept of strategic selling, there may be underlying behavioral issues that are of interest to researchers. The motivation for this behavior may be rooted in insecurities that afflict those with poor societal prestige. Is it an attempt to boost self-image? Are they less reflective than entrepreneurs? Do they do it on purpose? Or are they simply 'pleasers' by nature; subconsciously trying to provide the desired answer? Is this behavior, which was apparent for all selling participants and none of the entrepreneurs, connected to high performance? Research that advances understanding of this phenomenon may be of great benefit to practitioners and academia.

Further, this research intentionally sought out participants that were elite performers. Interesting opportunities exist within all emerging themes to compare these findings with moderately successful salespeople and entrepreneurs. If these self-proclaiming, trust-building performers periodically exaggerate, what do the weaker performers do to boost their self-esteem? It may be of interest to understand if lesser performance equates to lesser self-esteem and subsequently leads to more or less inconsistent behaviors.

Largely due to inconsistent behaviors, 8 out of the 10 participating entrepreneurs would not hire a disruptive, less than completely ethical, non-team oriented salesperson (Lone Wolf); even if he / she drove volume. It would be of interest to understand the moral boundaries of the less successful entrepreneurs. Is integrity the key to success? Do less successful entrepreneurs see their businesses through a broad lens that inspires benevolence and humility? Therefore, research that explores ethical boundaries of moderately successful and even failed attempts at entrepreneurship may be of benefit to academics and practitioners.

Delving more deeply into success concepts, the literature highlighted that salespeople are private and protective of their methods (Walker *et al.* 1977; Dixon et al. 2003; Zoltner *et al*. 2008). Yet these elite performers do not believe that their skills are teachable; which represents a conflict within the literature. If one's nature hinders capability, the methods of these elite players cannot be learned. Therefore, secrecy is unlikely motivated by protectionism. Rather, based on the emerging themes within this thesis, isolation may have more to do with averting the exposure of opportunistic work habits.   Research design that sheds more light on this concept and expands upon this new perspective would be of benefit to industry and learning.

There is one final emerging perspective within this thesis that is not in line with the literature. Although past studies have suggested that money does not represent a strong motivator for successful salespeople and entrepreneurs (Hill and McGowan, 1999; Sujan, 1999; Sojkaand and Deeter-Schmelz, 2002; Malach and Pines, 2005; Maxwell, 2005; Lassk and Shepherd, 2013) triangulation analysis revealed financial motivations for all participants. This may be reflective of the high performance levels of the players or it may indicate that motivations for sellers and entrepreneurs have changed. Deeper and more current understanding of motivations within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic would be of benefit.

7.4 Implications for Teaching and Learning

Learning opportunities have been brought to light within previous chapters. For instance, it has been established that selling skills are generally learned in the field rather than taught in schools (Smith, 1967; Leigh, 1987). This affects both vocations within the salesmanship / entrepreneurship dynamic since all participating entrepreneurs highlighted that 'the ability to sell' contributed to their success. Although, effectuation (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005) and bricolage (Baker, 2007) theories have emerged within entrepreneurship literature, the terminology was not used by these participants interviewed in 2011 / 2012 and was not featured within this author's MBA curriculum in 2007 / 2008. This may represent a potential opportunity to enhance learning programs within the concepts of developing trusting customer relationships and fostering innovation.

Given that the development of strong customer relationships is rooted in trust (Swan and Adkins, 1982; Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2009) learning institutions may seek to understand if 'becoming completely trustworthy' can be taught. The concept of nature verses nurture has been explored previously with salespeople (Spiro and Weitz, 1990; Lassk and Shepherd, 2013) and entrepreneurs (Cromie and Johns, 1983; Boyd and Vozikis, 1994). However, it may be of interest to seek out those who are deemed trustworthy and apply research strategies to better understand why. Is it merely a result of one's occupational prestige, or is it a consequence of behavior? It is acknowledged that familiarity on a personal level either generates deeper or lesser trust (Swan *et al.* 1985). Identifying individuals that earn trust on this deeper, more personal level and investigating the contributing factors (nature vs nurture / teachable) may be beneficial to many fields of study.

This theme of teachability is in line with previous research which indicates that the trade of selling is not generally taught in higher learning institutions (Smith, 1967; Leigh, 1987). Consideration may be given to designing methods and measures to teach these concepts at the university level. The expansion of MBA curriculum to include case studies and role plays that enhance trust-building engagement skills would help to prepare students for careers that involve creating and building businesses. Such case studies and role plays may seek to:

1. Demonstrate that entrepreneurs need to convince others (sell?) of their ideas and concepts; both internally and externally.

2. Demonstrate methods of understanding and solving customer problems. This should be explored from both the perspective of an owner (entrepreneur) and from the perspective of a representative of ownership (salesperson).

3. Enhance listening and engagement skills.

4. Develop the awareness to diplomatically apply assertiveness; both internally and externally.

5. Demonstrate the importance of strategic forward planning, combined with internal and external adaptability.

Further, it has been established within this thesis that those who sell for a living may not have access to higher learning. Current and relevant curriculum does not necessarily lead to salesperson exposure. Therefore, an opportunity may exist for sales managers and training consultants to explore conference style learning concepts that bring awareness to traits and behaviors that both build and inhibit the building of trusting relationships. Such learning themes may include:

1. Questionnaires that deliberately employ triangulation to demonstrate unintentionally misleading, exaggerated, and / or impulsive responses. This questionnaire concept could further explore the significance of clarifying issues before responding.

2. Case studies and role plays that demonstrate the character-building value of fully engaging in a process and working hard to achieve a goal, both individually and in teams.

   a. Some entrepreneur participants within this research project may suggest that if one does not require a break from the rigor of their day, they are not fully engaged or focused on task.

b. If achievement is not enough; but rather 'achievement recognition' is required, this may signify a less than fully sincere effort, or a lack of humility, which has been shown to aid in building trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007).

c. If 'freedom' from the discerning eye of others, or the ability to opportunistically work half as hard as others are motivators for one's vocational preference, perhaps the individual is not fully committed and engaged.

3. Case studies and role plays that highlight the trust-building value of following rules and regulations, and applying diplomacy to promote change.

4. Case studies and role plays that demonstrate the value of technology in managing customer relationships (CRM). Such a program should highlight the benefits to both managers and salespeople. New perspectives within this research indicate that there is a significant lack of understanding of CRM concepts.

5. Case studies and role plays that demonstrate the trust-building value of straight-forwardly saying 'no' to a customer or internal colleague. Conversely, the potential negative effects of using manipulation to imply acquiescence.

6. Case studies and role plays that demonstrate the trust-building value of sharing knowledge and mentoring others, rather than privately disengaging.

7. Perhaps encompassing all of the above to some degree, case studies that demonstrate the value of seeking broader business perspective. Employing a wider lens through which to set priorities and regulate behaviors may be of benefit to the profession of salesmanship.

Finally, it should be of interest that all of the sales and entrepreneur participants described having unwavering and absolute parental support. These are not average performers. Rather, they represent the elite of their vocations. Supportive interaction with caretakers reinforces the building of confidence and self-image (McMurray, 1961; Harding, 2008). This leads to the development of skills and traits which enhance the ability to achieve. Parents, academics and practitioners who seek to improve outcomes may find benefit in pursuing methods to increase the level of encouragement and support of those in their care.

The Implications for Research (7.3), as well as The Implications for Teaching and Learning (7.4) all apply to this section on The Implications for Practice, as it is an ongoing challenge to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Allsopp et al. 2006).

Over time, many firms have systematically contributed to the poor image of their sales teams with leadership philosophies that advocate for quotas to be met, regardless of whether long term trusting relationships are nurtured (McMurray, 1961). It appears that modern day firms are not immune to such goal setting strategies:

"My boss doesn't give a shit how many hours I put in as long as I deliver his numbers" (S-10).

The firm represented by S-6 rotates their salespeople throughout their customer base every two years or less. S-6 feels that this is because the firm believes there are opportunities being lost due to personal relationships with customers as closer ties may lead to less aggressive selling techniques. This may add new perspective to past research on high turnover rates within the vocation of sales (Blau and Boal, 1989; Williams and Livingstone, 2008; DeConinick, 2009).

However, based upon emerging themes within this thesis, it is also possible that S-6's firm recognizes that over time some salespeople reveal their trust-inhibiting behaviors. Future inquiry may seek to understand if such management strategy is common as it may represent an opportunity to improve performance and reduce turnover.

Trust inhibiting behaviors may actually be at the root of high turnover rates within the field of salesmanship. Practitioners may seek to test methods of identifying candidates capable of development rather than those potentially hardened by the experience of selling. By providing the tools and education required to invoke change, the participants may become more trustworthy and subsequently improve their self-image. This may reduce turnover and create more loyalty within firms.

Trust is also a key ingredient of penetration strategies. It has been demonstrated in Chapter 2 of this thesis that sales agents who seek to connect more deeply with less customers achieve higher sales volume than those who maintain more shallow and distant connections with greater numbers of customers (Dawson, 2008; Zoltner *et al*. 2008). Developmental programs which address these trust building themes may assist stakeholders and independent training firms in their quest to develop deeper penetration tactics.

While building and maintaining trust may represent a long term challenge for practitioners, the theme of assertiveness may represent a new perspective within this thesis that is closer to the surface. The literature speaks to both salespeople (Sujan, 1999; Maxwell *et al*. 2005) and entrepreneurs (Chell, 1985; Zhao and Seibert, 2006) being assertive. Yet the high performing participants within this study are never assertive with customers. Rather, they apply their assertiveness internally with colleagues to ensure that promises are delivered upon. This may represent an interesting opportunity for entrepreneurs, sales managers and consultants who wish to enhance the skillsets and outcomes of sales teams. It may also be advantageous for start-up entrepreneurs to understand where and when to channel their own assertive traits.

Another implication for entrepreneurs and sales managers that emerges within this thesis is related to competitive information gathering. The literature describes the boundary spanning sales representative as a critical source of competitive information (Teas, 1981; Sujan, 1999) and participating entrepreneurs within this study lean heavily upon their sales teams in this regard. However, entrepreneurs and sales managers should validate the level of commitment and cooperation being demonstrated by their sales teams. Representing a potential conflict, selling participants for this study simply do not willingly contribute field data on competitors back to their firms, as they consider it a waste of time.

Identifying conflict and inconsistency within sales teams may be the strongest opportunity emerging from this research. The elite performing selling participants are not always candid, sometimes behave opportunistically, and periodically exhibit characteristics not conducive to building trust. While this is not representative of all salespeople, it should be noted that none of the participants for this study were immune to inconsistent behavior. Ownership and managers may wish to facilitate a behavioral inventory of their selling groups to identify developmental opportunities:

- o Do they answer questions without seeking clarification? Is this more or less prevalent with average and poor performing sellers?

- o Is it their nature to bend rules and defy regulations?

- o Are they working all of the hours for which they are being paid? If the performers are reluctant to share methodologies, are they protective of tactics, or do they simply avoid exposing opportunistic work habits to management and teammates?

- Above all else, these elite sellers value their freedom – from teams, management oversight, and rules and regulations. This may have implications for policy and incentive programs. If management establishes success criteria solely based upon quota delivery, they may be systematically encouraging opportunistic behaviors.

In the interest of building trustworthy teams of contributors, ownership and managers may seek to test the performance of salespeople who are successfully encouraged to behave more like entrepreneurs. That is:

1. Creatively identify new opportunities,

2. Design innovative, specific plans and timelines to achieve success,

3. Approach customers, vendors and internal colleagues with unwavering integrity and humility,

4. Work long and hard to absolutely ensure success and reduce risk for stakeholders,

5. Share their thought processes and techniques with the team around them to build the overall value of their firm in the eyes of the customer, and

6. Do all of the above with the vigor and dedication of one whose home, retirement and children's education is at risk.

It is of interest that not one of the salesperson participants made any reference to understanding the risk undertaken by their employers and several applied their own definition to risk; such as 'the risk of being rejected' by a cold-call customer. Future research may wish to test whether entrepreneur's understanding of risk is exclusively due to the financial exposure that results from a new start up, or whether this understanding also reflects their higher level of education. As stated, this may also be a result of seeing their business through a wide lens, necessitated by having responsibility for others. This thesis is in line with prior work which indicated that salespeople are generally not highly educated (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994; Robinson and Sexton, 1994). It may be useful to owners and managers to facilitate developmental opportunities for their salespeople, to help them understand the risk undertaken by stakeholders.   Understanding shareholder risk may encourage more consistency with regards to salespeople's focus, ethics, dedication and work habits; which in turn may directly affect their ability to build trust.

7.6   Opportunities for Future Research

The concepts of entrepreneurship and selling offer many prospects for future study. Several opportunities to expand upon this research have been highlighted within specific segments of this thesis but only key issues; especially those directly related to the building and maintain of trust with colleagues and customers will be duplicated in this summary.

Several demographic expansion opportunities exist to augment this research project. For instance: expanding beyond the region of Ontario, Canada, and involving a broader range of ethnicity, gender and age. It would also be of interest to academics and practitioners to explore the themes of relationship building and trust within a broader range of industries and institutions.

It is not uncommon within the literature to highlight 'successful' candidates. This thesis is no exception as it intentionally sought out participants that were deemed 'highly successful'. However the emerging themes of salesperson inconsistency may represent a particularly interesting opportunity. Are the inconsistencies necessary for success and absent from the tool box of those who fail? Or do the lesser performers bare more inconsistencies that inhibit trust and contribute to their lack of success?

The concept of trust emerged in every chapter of this thesis. The following key points highlight opportunities for future research relating to trust:

- The selling participants were likely to reflect entrepreneurial qualities upon themselves, such as the trait of being an independent self-starter. Sellers were also likely to discredit certain entrepreneurial attributes that did not apply to them, such as the traits of being innovative or having financial ownership in their respective firms. Future study may seek to establish whether this is an attempt to boost self-image, and whether such positioning inhibits building trust with colleagues and customers.

- The selling participants were quite likely to reveal inconsistencies within the interview process. Future study may seek to understand if colleagues and customers experience this duplicity and whether it affects the building and maintaining of trust.

- Delving deeper within the work ethic component, there was evidence within the interviews that some sellers seemed to take a 'look what I can do without trying' approach to their jobs. It was apparent that the entrepreneur participants exhibited humility through hard work, long hours,

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sharing and developing others, and basically attempting to do the right thing in their daily business endeavors. Yet many of the participating sellers likely do not work hard or long, have no desire to share or work on teams, and were more likely to 'say' the right thing than 'do' the right thing. Future study may seek to test whether colleagues and customers comprehend this phenomenon and how this affects the building and maintaining of trust.

- On the topic of humility, the entrepreneur participants were far more likely to credit luck with their success even though they engage in behaviors and strategies that make luck less necessary, such as planning, analysis, hard work and developing others. The selling participants on the other hand, were far less likely to take such diligent precautions yet were far less likely to credit luck with their success. Future study may seek to test whether this lack of humility affects the building of and maintaining of trust with colleagues and customers.

- On the topic of sharing and learning, both of the vocational participants deemed personal development and self-improvement to be important yet neither group had a propensity to seek personal development opportunities. The entrepreneur participants were far more likely to mentor others and far less likely to have been mentored personally. The selling participants were quite likely to have been mentored but very unlikely to mentor others. Future study may seek to test whether this phenomenon reflects a selfish 'take' approach and whether this has an effect on building and maintaining trust with colleagues and customers. Further, if the elite performers are not sharing their knowledge, it may be of interest to better understand who is doing this mentoring.

- Selling participants within the study were far more likely to need to be recognized for their achievements. Future study may seek to understand this phenomenon on a deeper level. Does this reflect a need to boost self-image? Does it signify validation for the insecurity that may result from opportunistic work habits? Is this simply a reflection of self-doubt due to lesser formal education? It may also be of interest to understand whether this achievement recognition need has an effect on the building of trust with colleagues and customers.

- The selling participants within the study unanimously disregarded reporting systems such as CRM or filling out forms. They also deemed the gathering of competitive information in the field a waste of time. Yet, ironically their participating entrepreneur counterparts almost exclusively count on such individuals to provide strategic insights from the marketplace. Future study may

seek to test whether this conflict is recognized internally and whether it has an effect on building and maintaining trusting relationships.

- Within the concept of 'job-enjoyment' or lack thereof, the selling participants within the study cited 'freedom' as their primary enjoyment factor. In some cases they describe efficiently 'racing to the finish line' in order to enjoy such freedom. They have a dislike for any systems that inhibit their freedom such as filling out activity summaries, teaching others and working on teams. Such behaviors may be viewed as selfish. Further, the 'freedom' concept may come at the price of one's integrity if deceit is necessary to be on the golf course without the knowledge of superiors. Future study may seek to test whether colleagues and customers are aware of this phenomenon and whether the building and maintaining of trust are affected. Interestingly, as independent owners in control of their firms, not one of the participating entrepreneurs cited 'freedom' as a job-enjoyment factor. Future study may seek to understand if ultimate responsibility for the financial and human aspects of a business makes 'freedom' a non-starter and whether taking on such responsibility enhances ones trustworthiness.

- It was shown in the previous chapter that several of the participating sellers within this study indicated that winning never trumps fair play, yet subsequently shared anecdotes of manipulating situations to improve their chances at success. These participants did not appear to be lying in the interview. Rather, they seemed equally proud and sincere in both their declaration of integrity and subsequently within their anecdote of trickery. It was in depth analysis of the data recordings that revealed the inconsistencies. Future study may seek to test whether colleagues and customers are aware of such phenomenon and to what degree this affects the ability to build and maintain trust.

7.7   Methodological Limitations and Validation

All research is vulnerable to bias. Bias is defined as happening "when a point of view prevents impartial judgment on issues relating to the subject of that point of view" (Bias, 2010). Academic researchers should take all possible steps to avoid diagnostic bias. Research methodology should include plans to minimize this phenomenon (Di Pofi, 2002).

Researchers must caution against the 'Observer Expectancy Effect'. If one is looking harder for something, the prevalence will increase (Ferguson, 2011). As an example, if one looks harder for diabetes in men, they are likely to find more diabetes in men. If the same amount of diabetes is found in men as in women, but the researchers tried to find it in men with twice the vigor, the odds are increased that there is more diabetes in women than in men.

It is acknowledged that research within the realism paradigm is by nature subjective. The concepts of trust and credibility are themselves personal and biased. This creates a challenge for the reader to discern between the research outcomes and the opinions of the researcher (Aldridge and Aldridge, 1996). This author has been both a successful sales person and subsequently owns two small, moderately successful start-up businesses, which creates a potentially biased position based upon personal experience.

Given that this thesis is exploring the similarities and differences between two vocations held by the author, it is recognized that pursuing emerging concepts and themes rather than attempting to prove the author's point, quite possibly represent the author's most significant challenge. It is an issue of 'internal validity' (Koch, 1994) to explore the degree to which the author allows personal experience and deeply rooted opinions to affect the outcomes of the work. It is further understood that the realism paradigm recognizes that the researcher's own epistemological reality exists and that this practice of 'self-inquiry' (Bruscia, 1995) is of great importance to this thesis.

Other limitations identified for this thesis are:

- The qualitative data were self-reported by the participants, which can result in biased feedback (Di Pofi, 2002).

- The participants were not recruited with a 'topic-blind' approach. In the process of inviting participation and ethically introducing the research work being conducted, all actors possessed some knowledge of the research concepts which represents a potential source of bias.

- The research was executed only in Ontario, Canada. Future studies may incorporate a more global strategy.

Such limitations were explored in specific detail following the identification of the sampling of actors and the execution of the interviews. The author's primary criteria for interviewee participation were a

reasonable level of experience and above average success, while hopefully representing a diverse demographic of participants. Due to accessibility limitations, it was somewhat by chance that such diversity occurred within the themes of age and vocation. However, also completely by chance, there is an opportunity for future research to branch out from this sampling within the themes of gender and cultural background. Although three women entrepreneurs were on the original target list, none of them were personally familiar with the author or his network of colleagues. Subsequently all either declined or ignored the request to be involved. Further, not only was this final participant sampling representative of only males, but all were Caucasians. This may not be a significant limitation but rather indicative of the demographic of the vocations since being young, male and possessing a lower educational status indicates a higher propensity to be involved in sales (Darmon, 2008). Further, in 2011, 84% of Canadian entrepreneurs with whole ownership of their firms were male and 90% were Caucasian (Gulati, 2012).

The author wishes to stress that this phenomenon was not by design and there is no reason to the author's knowledge to believe it is due to a selection mechanism. Within a 150 km radius of the author's home and business core, 22% of Canada's 4 million visible minorities are represented (Ontario, 2012). The area, which includes the internationally renowned city of Toronto, is considered a receptive, multi-cultural and gender-equal community. For the purposes of this research, the author neither sought out nor avoided visible minorities or women as participants. The effort was driven completely by the criteria established herein and accessibility to qualifying actors.

The final limitation identified is experience. The quality of research is often dependent upon the level of expertise of the researcher. Many scholars believe that this is even more critical for qualitative research than quantitative research (Karlsson *et al*. 2007). In many instances the critical audience may be probing the reliability of the researcher as much as the material itself (Aldridge and Aldridge, 1996). To this end, the author has taken the University of the West of England's Discovery Research Methods Course.

Glossary

The following definitions are rooted within the literature reviewed for this thesis. It should be noted that, especially in the case of the terminology related to entrepreneur, there is as much debate as consensus within previous bodies of work. This has been discussed within the literature review section of this thesis. The purpose of these Glossary entries is to provide clarity regarding the chosen definitions for this thesis as they pertain to the findings chapters. The definitions also provided a framework for choosing the selling and entrepreneur participants for this study.

Entrepreneur: A creative innovator (Lau et al. 2012) who has taken on financial risk as the founder of a new enterprise (Davids, 1963; Boyd, 1987) which has thrived and grown over time (Hornaby and Abound, 1971) and which extends beyond self-needs, thus affecting the gainful employment of others (Howell, 1972). Entrepreneurship represents the act or practice of being an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurial: Behaviors and traits related to identifying gaps within new or existing markets (Ireland et al. 2009) and taking initiative to proactively apply creativity and innovation (Vesper, 1984) to capitalize on opportunities; with or without ownership and with or without personal or financial risk (Lau et al. 2012).

Serial Entrepreneur: An entrepreneur who attempts multiple new start-ups (one at a time or simultaneously). One who enjoys the early phase of venture creation but subsequently exits the business (sells or leaves an employee to operate) to accommodate the time requirements for other start-ups (Chen, 2000; Zhang, 2009; Harvey, 2012).

Salesperson: Someone who is employed to convert existing products into revenue (Kotler and Keller, 2007). That is, a person who promotes, encourages and enables the transference of products or services for monetary returns (Armbruster, 2006) or "other valuable consideration" (Merriam-Webster - Sales 2009). For the purposes of this thesis, selling participants were chosen based upon their capacity as full time gainfully employed 'business to business' salespeople who engage in forging relationships (Hunter and Perreault, 2007) to encourage "the holistic business system required to effectively develop, manage, enable, and execute a mutually beneficial, interpersonal exchange of goods and / or services for equitable value" (Lambert, 2008, p1).

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Appendix 1

University MBA Curriculum Summary

Institution (Rank No. where applicable)	Accounting & Finance	H.R. & Leadership	Business Research Strategy	Marketing	Negotiation	Tech Mgt	Entrepr	Selling Methods Strategy
University of Windsor (UofW 2008)	5	3	4	2	1	3	2	0
Ranked # 15 **University of Western Ontario** (UWO 2012)	2	4	4	1	0	1	1	0
Ranked # 1 **Harvard Business School** (HBS 2012)	3	1	2	1	0	1	.5	0
Ranked # 2 **Wharton University of Pennsylvania** (WUP 2012)	2	2	7	2	0	2	2	0

Institution (Rank No. where applicable)	Accounting & Finance	H.R. & Leadership	Business Research Strategy	Marketing	Negotiation	Tech Mgt	Entrepr	Selling Methods Strategy
Ranked # 3 **Kellogg School of Business** (KSB 2012)	6	4	5	1	1	1	1	0
Ranked # 4 **Stanford University** (SU 2012)	8	9	7	2	0	2	1	0
Ranked # 5 **Columbia Business School** (CBS 2012)	5	3	4	3	0	1	0	0

Source: Sources are listed within the first column of the chart with specific detail in the Reference List for the respective institutions. The rankings are based upon employer feedback and were sourced through TOPMBA (TOPMBA 2012). The University of Windsor was included because it is the alma mater of the author. The University of Western Ontario was included because it is the number one ranked MBA program in Canada, the author's residence, while ranked number 15 in North America.

Building a Foundation for Strategic Conceptual Framework

Unrecognized Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic within Prior Theory

(Similarities and Differences are based on Analysis of the Separate Literature)

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
Vocational Image Authors that made reference to the image of salespeople: • Hodge *et al*. (1964) • Painter and Semenik (1979) • Swan and Nolan (1985) • MacKenzie *et al*. (1998) • Gounaris (2005) • Hartman (2006) Authors that made reference to the identification and / or the image of entrepreneurs: • Weber (1931) • Kets de Vries' (1977) • Mulroney (1986) • Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) • Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff (1991) • McGrath *et al*. (1992) • Hill and McGowan (1999)	Within the separate literature reviewed for this thesis there is no significant contribution discussing similarities between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding vocational image.	Several authors have explored the distrust of salespeople (Levitt, 1962; Semenik, 1979; davis et al. 1989; Sojka and Deeter Schmelz, 2002J; Hanson, 2012) and subsequently their poor occupational prestige (Baldwin, 1992; Jones, 2005). Conversely, entrepreneurs have been show to earn trust more easily and enjoy considerably higher occupational prestige (Davis et al. 1989; Harris Poll, 2004).	Any lack of similarities or lack of differences between the sellers and entrepreneurs may be because none exist or because the topic has not been thoroughly studied. The highlighted similarities and differences are based upon separate literature asking disconnected questions; both qualitative and quantitative. **This statement above holds true for all categories within this chart and will not be repeated in each instance.** An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant ideas regarding the definition of

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
			entrepreneurship and more specifically entrepreneurs. - Participant views on the image and occupational prestige of salespeople and entrepreneurs.
Cultural Background Theory - **Family background** - **Immigrant Theories** - **Education / self-improvement** - **Mentoring** Authors that made reference to the cultural background of salespeople: • McMurray 1961 • Levitt (1962) • Hodge *et al*. (1964) • Weitz (1981) • Sujan *et al*. (1988) • Morgan and hunt (1994) • Sirdeshmukh *et al*. (2002) • Malach-Pines *et al*. (2005) • Jones (2005) • Howard *et al*. (2006) • Jaramillo *et al*. (2007) • Harding (2008) Authors that made reference to the cultural	Within the separate literature reviewed for this thesis there is no significant contribution highlighting similarities between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding cultural background theory.	It has been shown that the vocation of sales is often populated by those with minimal exposure to post-secondary education (Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977). It has alternatively been demonstrated that successful entrepreneurs typically have pursued higher learning subsequent to their secondary education (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994; Roninson and Sexton, 1994). Within this genre there exists several studies on childhood experiences of the entrepreneur (Collins et al. 1964; Lynn, 1969; Kets de Vries, 1977; Chell, 1985) and more specifically, the industrious work ethic example typically shown by parents of entrepreneurs (Stanworth et al. 1989; Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991; Cromie et al. 1992). This has not been found to have been	An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant ideas and experiences with parental example and family background including education. - Teachability concepts including mentorship. - Job enjoyment concepts (work is fun).

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Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
background of entrepreneurs: • Collins *et al.* (1964) • Steiner (1976) • Kets de Vries (1977) • Cunningham and Usheron (1991) • Shaver and Scott (1991) • Fagenson (1993) • Blanchflower and Meyer (1994) • Koh (1996) • Deacons (1999) • Mullen and Thomas (2000) • Cheverton *et al.* (2004) • Schoorman *et al.* (2007) • Thompson (2009)		thoroughly studied within the concept of selling.	
Assertiveness Theories - **Competitive spirit** - **Focus on competition** - **Extroversion** - **Ego related needs** - **Athletic connection to competitiveness** - **Strong desire to win** Authors that made reference to the assertiveness of salespeople: • Walker *et al.* (1977) • Weitz (1981) • Berry (1995) • Sharma *et al.* (2007)	The separate literature describe urgency and assertiveness traits for both sellers (Terho et al. 2012) and entrepreneurs (Lynn, 1969). It is also suggested that both sellers (McMurray, 1961; Blau and Boal, 1989; Sujan et al, 1999) and entrepreneurs (McGrath et al. 1992; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005) can have competitive qualities and prefer to be evaluated and rewarded for performance.	Within the genre of assertiveness theories several authors have explored the influencing tactics of salespeople (Spiro and Perreault, 1979; Weitz, 1981; Gogg et al. 1994). Research on entrepreneurs using influencing tactics on potential customers was not found within the literature reviewed for this thesis. The desire to grow beyond immediate self-needs was not found to be a topic of great interest on salespeople, however there is extensive study on the need or desire for	An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant ideas and experiences regarding assertive or pushy influencing tactics - Concepts related to competitive spirit and understanding competitors (a question will be included to

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
• Dawson (2008) • Lambert (2008) • Osarenkhoe (2008) Authors that made reference to the assertiveness of entrepreneurs: • Smith (1967) • Mintzberg (1973) • Ahmed (1985) • Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) • McGrath *et al.* (1992) • Cromie (2000) • Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven (2005)		entrepreneurs to grow beyond themselves (Carland et al. 1984; Stewart et al. 1988; Zhao and Seibert, 2006).	investigate any connection to athletisism). - Concepts related to integrity and honesty.
Control Preferences - **Time management** - **CRM systems** - **Strategic preferences** - **Comfort with risk** - **Prefer team vs independent tasks** Authors that made reference to the control preferences of salespeople: • Hunt (1994) McMurray 1961 • Lundstrum (1977) • Spiro and Perreault (1979) • Weitz (1981) • Schuster and Danes (1986)	There is some consistency within the separate literature regarding the disdain of authority for both salespeople (Caird, 1991, Dixon et al. 2003) and entrepreneurs (Hagen, 1962; Mintzberg, 1973; McGrath, 1992). The literature on the concept of preferring to work alone also represents a similarity between the vocations but seems to have changed over time. Salespeople were shown in dated studies be prefer isolation and independence (McMurray, 1961; Kets de Vries, 1977) but more recent work highlights	The concept of taking on, or even acknowledging the existence of stakeholder risk is absent from the reviewed literature on salespeople. Risk is prevalent however within the readings on entrepreneurs (de Farcy, 1973; Cunningham and Lischeron, 1991; Stewart et al. 1998; Hill and McGowan, 1999).	An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant dealings with authority. - Isolation preferences verses team. - Occupational commitment. - Strategic planning and time-management.

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
• Schuster and Danes 1992 • Griffith *et al*. 1999 • Dixon *et al*. 2003 • Wilson 2006 • Jaramillo *et al*. 2007 • Harding 2008 Authors that made reference to the control preferences of entrepreneurs: • Schumpter 1934 • McClelland (1961) • Hagen 1962 • Collins *et al*. 1964 • Collins and Moore (1964) • Lynn 1969 • Mintzberg 1973 • Litvac and Maule (1974) • Kets de Vries 1977 • Chell 1985 • Stanworth *et al*. 1989 • Cromie *et al*. 1992 • McGrath *et al*. (1992) • Katreiel (1995) • Cromie (2000) • Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven 2005 • Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005	the concepts of team selling to lessen the reliance on individuals with key customers (Cheverton et al. 2004; Lars-Johan, 2011). Similarly, in the previous century Entrepreneurs were seen by some authors as autonomous freedom seekers who avoid authority figures (Collins et al. 1964; Litvak and Maule, 1974; Nicholson, 1998) but more recently entrepreneurs are often referred to as opportunity seeking team builders (Dodd, 2007). And the final similarity observed within the separate literature on these vocations is that both salespeople (Blau and Boal, 1989; Livingston, 1994; Darmon, 2008) and entrepreneurs (Shapero, 1975; Cromie et al. 1992) can have a propensity for low occupational commitment.		- Participant propensity to engage in risky endeavors.
Humanity - **Self (Intrinsically) Motivated** - **Optimistic – "Work is Fun"** - **Leadership theories**	Being self or intrinsically motivated has been shown to be a humanistic trait of both salespeople (Weitz, 1978; Maxwell et al. 2005; Kahle, 2010) and entrepreneurs (Hill and	The separate literature on salespeople suggests that salespeople are likely to be motivated by financial rewards (Lamont and Lundstrum, 1977; Comer and Drollinger,	An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
- **Incentives** - **Defining success** - **Frustration with employer** Authors that made reference to the humanity of salespeople: • Lamont and Lundstrum (1977) • Swan and Nolan (1985) • Blau and Boal (1989) • Bladovick *et al.* (1992) • Webster (1992) • McKenzie *et al.* (1998) • Sojkaand and Deeter-Schmelz (2002) • Malach and Pines (2005) • Lassk and Shepherd (2013) Authors that made reference to the humanity of entrepreneurs: • Brandstatter (1977) • Kets de Vries (1977) • Olm and Eddy (1985) • Kao (1989) • Hill and McGowan (1999) • Sujan (1999) • Maxwell (2005)	McGowan, 1999; Sujan, 1999; Cromie, 2000; Beugelsijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). Optimism and enjoying ones profession has also been shown to be a trait of salespeople (McMurray, 1961; Churchill, 1985; Leigh and McGraw, 1989; George, 1998; Berry, 1995) and entrepreneurs (Smith, 1967; Zhao and Seibert, 2006. Several separate studies on leadership have shown that both successful salespeople (Berry, 2002; Rust et al. 2010) and entrepreneurs (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Dodd, 2007) can be inspirational coaches. The literature indicates that it is not uncommon for salespeople to be frustrated with their employers which is a contributor to the high turnover rates within the profession (MacKenzie et al. 1998; Fournier et al. 2010). It has also been shown that many entrepreneurs left the security of corporate positions to venture into entrepreneurship due to frustration on the job (McLelland, 1961; Mintzberg, 1973; Caird, 1991; Cromie et al. 1992;	1999). Conversely, the literature on entrepreneurs suggests that financial rewards do not represent a strong motivation for these players (Carland et al. 1984; Johnson, 1990; Stewart et al. 1998; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005; malach-Pines et al. 2005). The concept of "luck" contributing to the success of entrepreneurs was explored by several authors; arguing that luck both generally played a role (Vesper, 1980) and had minimal influence (Gilad et al. 1988; Shaver and Scott, 1991; Kaish and Gilad, 1991). The role of luck contributing to success in sales was not thoroughly explored within the literature reviewed for this thesis.	understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant ideas and experiences with 'luck' as a contributor to success. - Definition of and reasons for personal success. - Achievement and recognition needs. - Participant experience with frustration on the job and specifically the contribution of frustration as a driver for entrepreneurial start-up.

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
	McGrath et al. 1992; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005). And finally, it has been shown that to be successful, both salespeople (McMurray, 1961; Lamont and Lundstum, 1977; Spiro and Perreault, 1979; MacKenzie et al. 1998) and entrepreneurs (McLelland, 1965; Begely and Boyd, 1987) should score high on achievement needs.		
Personal Characteristics - **Ethics and Values** - **Work ethic** - **Conscientiousness** - **Emotional stability / neuroticism** - **Propensity for risk** Authors that made reference to the personal characteristics of salespeople: • Lamont and Lundstrum (1977) • Weitz (1981) • Swan and Nolan (1985) • Sujan *et al*. (1988) • Blau and Boal (1989) • Bladovick *et al*. (1992) • Morgan and hunt (1994)	It should be noted that the separate literature on salespeople (Table 2-1) and entrepreneurs (Table 2-2; Table 2-5) indicates that the characteristics of these players has changed significantly over time. This represents a similarity between the vocations. A review of the separate literature on salespeople and entrepreneurs indicates that both sellers (McMurray, 1961; Maxwell et al. 2005) and entrepreneurs (Lynn, 1969; Kets de Vries, 1977) can have neurotic 'loner' tendencies. Although the players may differ regarding their strategic and financial approach to the concept, both sellers (Shuster and	Within the literature there are several differences identified between the characteristics of salespeople and entrepreneurs. They have been addressed within this chart in other sections.	An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant loner tendencies. - Experiences with opportunity recognition. - Work ethic and values.

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
• Sirdeshmukh *et al.* (2002) • Sojkaand Deeter-Schmelz 2002 • Jaramillo *et al.* (2007) • Wood *et al.* (2008) Authors that made reference to the personal characteristics of entrepreneurs: • Steiner (1976) • Brandstatter (1977) • Kets de Vries (1977) • Hill and McGowan (1999) • Sujan 1999) • Cheverton *et al.* (2004) • Schoorman *et al.* (2007)	Danes, 1986; Anglin et al. 1990) and entrepreneurs (Drucker, 1985; Kaish and Gilad, 1991; Stewart et al. 1998; Ardichvili et al. 2003) have been shown to be strong at recognizing and understanding opportunities.		
Adaptability Theories - **Adapting to Internal and External Surroundings** - **Building Trust** - **Customer relationships** - **Creativity** - **Innovation** Authors that made reference to the adaptability of salespeople: • Walker *et al.* (1977) • Lamont and Lundstrum (1977) • Weitz (1981)	The separate literature suggests that both sellers (Hunter and Perreault, 2007; Lambert, 2008) and Entrepreneurs (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Dodd, 2007) should have the ability to earn trust and build strong relationships to succeed long term. This is a task that often requires a creative and innovative approach to ensure differentiation for these sellers (Dixon and Tanner, 2012; Terho et al. 2012) and entrepreneurs (Mintzberg, 1973; Ardichvili et al. 2003). The distinctive literatures on these two vocations	Within the separate literatures reviewed for this thesis there is no significant contribution highlighting differences between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding adaptability. It is quite possible that these two vocations, which have been shown to engage in adaptive strategies, actually adapt in different ways to opportunities and challenges. This will be explored with participants.	An opportunity exists to ask similar questions to both groups (sellers and entrepreneurs) and to probe deeply to better understand this specific dynamic. Concepts of specific interest to this thesis: - Participant ideas and experiences with customer relationship building (for instance, 'is the customer always right?). - Adaptive and differentiation strategies.

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
• Painter and Semenik 1979 • Teas (1981) • Moncrief (1986) • Schuster and Danes (1986) • Leigh and McGraw (1989) • Spiro and Weitz (1990) • Anglin *et al.*)1990) • Levy and Sharma (1994) • Sujan (1999) • Sujan *et al.* (1999) • Jolson (2000) • Sharma *et al.* (2007) • Jaramillo (2007) • Wood *et al.* (2008) • PSS (2009) • Kahk (2010) • Lars-Johan (2011) • Dixon and Tanner 2012 • Evanschitzki *et al.* (2012) • Haas (2012) • Hanson (2012) • Hughes *et al.* (2012) • Schwepker and Good (2012) Authors that made reference to the adaptability of entrepreneurs: • Schumpter (1934) • Smith (1967) • Mintzberg (1973) • Kirtan (1976) • Weitz (1981) • Teas (1981) • Timmon *et al.* (1985)	highlight the need for salespeople (Weitz, 1981; Jaramillo, 2007; Sharma et al. 2007) and entrepreneurs (Kao, 1989; Kaish and Gilad, 1991; Sujan, 1999) to be highly adaptive to their surroundings. To recognize opportunities and be ready to adapt accordingly requires a level of patience and tolerance for both salespeople (Weitz, 1981; Jolson, 2000) and entrepreneurs (Mintzberg, 1973; Kaish and Gilad, 1991).		

Trait	Similarities	Differences	Crossover
• Chell (1985) • Kao (1989) • Caird (1990) • Cunningham and Lischeron 1991 • Kaish and Glad (1991) • Stewart *et al*. 1998 • Sujan (1999) • Zhao and Siebert (2006) • Robin (2007) • Dincer and Uslander (2009) • Totara *et al*. (2011) • Dixon and Tanner (2012) • Terho *et al*. (2012)			

Source: created by the author from the literature (2013).

Appendix 3

Literature Summary: B2B verse B2C

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
Management Strategies:	Gwinner (1968)	B2B, B2C
Sales person Knowledge, Training,	Jolson (1974)	B2B, B2C
Expertise Level and Turnover	Teas (1981)	B2B, B2C
	Dubinski (1981)	B2B
	Futrell and Parasuraman (1984)	B2B, B2C
	Dubinski *et al*. (1986)	B2B
	Moncrief (1986)	B2B
	Joleson *et al*. (1987)	B2B
	Johnston *et al*. (1987)	B2B
	Anderson and Weitz (1989)	B2B
	Leong *et al*. (1989)	B2B, B2C
	Anglin *et al*. (1990)	B2B
	Ingram and Laforge (1990)	B2B
	Sujan *et al*. (1991)	B2B
	Wotruba and Tyagi (1991)	B2B, B2C
	Ingram and Schwepker (1993)	B2B
	Cespedes (1994)	B2B
	Jackson *et al*. (1994)	B2B
	Sujan *et al*. (1994)	B2B
	Sujan *et al*. (1998)	B2B
	Marshall *et al*. (1999)	B2B
	Shepherd (1999)	B2B
	Sujan (1999)	B2B
	Boles *et al*. (2000)	B2B
	Sojka and Deeter-Schmelz (2002)	B2B, B2C
	Marshall *et al*. (2003)	B2B, B2C
	Urch *et al*. (2003)	B2B
	Ko and Dennis (2004)	B2B
	Lane and Piercy (2004)	B2B

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
	Schweitzer (2004)	B2B
	Ang and Netemeyer (2004)	B2B
	Ahearne *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Hinkes and Whiteman (2005)	B2B
	Honeycutt *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Maxwell *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Hunter and Perreault (2007)	B2B. B2C
	Sharma *et al*. (2007)	B2B
	Darmon (2008)	B2B
	McElgunn (2008)	B2B, B2C
	Aitcheson (2009)	B2B, B2C
	DeConinck and Johnson (2009)	B2B
	PSS (2009)	B2B
	Schwepker and Good (2010)	B2B
	Hanson (2012)	B2B
Adaptive & Value Selling Techniques and Listening Skills	Painter and Semenik (1979)	B2B, B2C
	Weitz (1981)	B2B
	Sujan and Sujan (1986)	B2B
	Anderson and Oliver (1987)	B2B
	Dwyer *et al*. (1987)	B2C
	Leigh (1987)	B2B
	Lweis and Reunsch (1988)	B2B
	Leigh and McGraw (1989)	B2B
	Anglin *et al*. (1990)	B2B
	Spiro and Weltz (1990)	B2B
	Cravens (1992)	B2B
	Castleberry and Shepherd (1993)	B2B
	Yrle and Galle (1993)	B2B
	Goff *et al*. (1994)	B2C
	Levy and Sharma (1994)	B2B, B2C

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
	Ramsey and Sohi (1997)	B2B
	Comer and Drollinger (1999)	B2B
	Sujan *et al*. (1999)	B2B
	Sujan *et al*. (1999)	B2B, B2C
	Jolson (2000)	B2B
	Leigh *et al*. (2001)	B2B
	Rangarajan *et al*. (2004)	B2B
	Jones *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Anderson and Rosum (2006)	B2B
	Hummel (2007)	B2B
	Jaramillo *et al*. (2007)	B2B
	Sharma *et al*. (2007)	B2B
	PSS (2009)	B2B
	Kahle (2010)	B2B, B2C
	Lars-Johan (2011)	B2B
	Totara *et al*. (2011)	B2B
	Dixon and Tanner (2012)	B2B
	Haas *et al*. (2012)	B2B
	Hughes *et al*. (2012)	B2B
	Terho *et al*. (2012)	B2B
	Lassk and Shepherd (2013)	B2B
Probing Techniques	McMurray (1961)	B2B, B2C
	Schuster and Danes (1986)	B2C
	Lambert (2008)	B2B
Relationship Selling and Key Account Management	Woodside and Davenport (1974)	B2B, B2C
	Weitz (1978)	B2B
	Weitz (1981)	B2B, B2C
	Saxe and Weitz (1982)	B2B, B2C
	Berry (1983)	B2B, B2C
	Dwyer *et al*. (1987)	B2B, B2C

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
	Gummesson (1987)	B2B
	Crosby et al. (1990)	B2B
	Cravens et al. (1992)	B2B
	Dawson and Pettijohn (1992)	B2B
	Sako (1992)	B2B
	Morgan and Hunt (1994)	B2B, B2C
	Berry (1995)	B2B, B2C
	Berry (1995)	B2B
	Dion et al. (1995)	B2B, B2C
	Gronroos (1995)	B2B
	Aijo (1996)	B2B, B2C
	Berry (1996)	B2C
	Ravald and Gronroos (1996)	B2B, B2C
	Williams and Attaway (1996)	B2C
	Dodge (1997)	B2C
	Doney and Cannon (1997)	B2B, B2C
	Hunt (1997)	B2B. B2C
	Fournier et al. (1998)	B2B, B2C
	Smith (1998)	B2B
	Garbarino and Johnson (1999)	B2B, B2C
	Oliver (1999)	B2C
	O'Malley and Tynan (1999)	B2C
	Boles et al. (2000)	B2B
	Saxena (2000)	B2C
	Berry (2002)	B2C
	Claycomb and Martin (2002)	B2B
	Sireshmukh et al. (2002)	B2B, B2C
	Reichheld (2003)	B2B, B2C
	Cheverton et al. (2004)	B2B
	Arnett et al. (2005)	B2B
	Doney et al. (2007)	B2B

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
	Oneymah (2008)	B2B, B2C
	Petrof (2009)	B2B, B2C
	Steward *et al*. (2009)	B2B, B2C
	Berry (2010)	B2B
	Sun *et al*. (2010)	B2C
	Homberg *et al*. (2011)	B2B. B2C
	Singh and Koshi (2011)	B2B
	Evanschitzky (2012)	B2B
	Haas *et al*. (2012)	B2B
Planning and Sense of Urgency	Mandino (1968)	B2C
	Swan *et al*. (1985)	B2B
	Sujan *et al*. (1988)	B2B
	Ahmad (1985)	B2B
Persuasion Tactics	Bursk (1947)	B2B
	Davis and Silk (1972)	B2B
	Capon (1975)	B2B, B2C
	Spiro and Perrault (1979)	B2B. B2C
	Schuster and Danes (1986)	B2B
	Sharma (1990)	B2B
	Goff *et al*. (1994)	B2C
	Reid *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Armbruster (2006)	B2B
	Kumar and Bergstrom (2008)	B2B
	Amyx and Bhuian (2009)	B2B
	Haas *et al*. (2012)	B2B
	Lars-Johan (2011)	B2B
Motivation	McLelland *et al*. (1953)	B2B, B2C
	Walker *et al*. (1977)	B2B
	Berlet (1985)	B2B, B2C

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
	Sujan (1986)	B2B
	Weitz *et al*. (1986)	B2B, B2C
	Cromie (1987)	B2B, B2C
	Badovick (1992)	B2B
	Dubinski and Skinner (2002)	B2B
	Brown *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Thakor and Joshi (2005)	B2B
	Jaramillo *et al*. (2007)	B2B
	Onyemah (2008)	B2B
Lone Wolf Tendencies	Goulder (1957)	B2B, B2C
	Blau and Boal (1989)	B2B
	Schuster and Danes (1992)	B2B
	Griffeth *et al*. (1999)	B2B
	Shaw *et al*. (2002)	B2B
	Wang and Netemeyer (2002)	B2B
	Dixon *et al*. (2003)	B2B
	Maxwell *et al*. (2005)	B2B
	Wilson (2006)	B2B
	Prakash *et al*. (2007)	B2B
	Harding (2008)	B2B
	Prakash *et al*. (2008)	B2B
Salesperson Image and Impression Management / Building Trust	Hodge *et al*. (1964)	B2B, B2C
	Farley and Swinth (1967)	B2B
	Steiner (1976)	B2B, B2C
	Lamont and Lundstrum (1977)	B2B, B2C
	Painter and Semenik (1979)	B2B, B2C
	Swan and Adkins (1980-1)	B2B
	Swan and Adkins (1980-2)	B2B
	Swan and Adkins (1982-1)	B2B
	Swan *et al*. (1984)	B2B

Business Theme	Author(s)	B2B vs B2C
	Swan and Nolan (1985)	B2B
	Swan *et al*. (1985)	B2B
	Hawes *et al*. (1989)	B2B
	Szimanski and Churchill (1990)	B2B
	Grewel and Sharma (1991)	B2B
	Baldwin (1992)	B2B
	Glynn and Webster (1992)	B2B
	Humphreys and Williams (1996)	B2B
	George (1998)	B2B
	MacKenzie *et al*. (1998)	B2B, B2C
	Schulman (1999)	B2B
	Evans *et al*. (2000)	B2B, B2C
	Gounaris (2002)	B2B
	Coppola (2004)	B2B, B2C
	Gounaris (2005)	B2B
	Hartman (2006)	B2B, B2C
	Woods *et al*. (2008)	B2B
	Thompson (2009)	B2B, B2C
Salesperson Performance	McMurray (1961)	B2B, B2C
	Behrman and Perreault (1982)	B2B
	Churchill *et al*. (1985)	B2B
	Lewis and Wiegert (1985)	B2B, B2C
	Jackson (1993)	B2C
	Williams and Livingstone (1994)	B2B, B2C
	Harding (2008)	B2B, B2C
	Zoltners *et al*. (2008)	B2B
	Clay (2010)	B2B

Source: derived by the author based upon the literature.

Appendix 4

American Study 2004	
Occupational Prestige	
% of the Population that feels that the	
Vocation is worthy of Respect	
Scientist	**52%**
Doctor	**52%**
Firefighter	**48%**
Teacher	**48%**
Military officer	**47%**
Nurse	**44%**
Police officer	**40%**
Priest / Minister / Clergy	**32%**
Member of Congress	**31%**
Engineer	**29%**
Athlete	**21%**
Architect	**20%**
Business Executive / Entrepreneur	**19%**
Lawyer	**17%**
Entertainer	**16%**
Union leader	**16%**
Actor	**16%**
Banker	**15%**
Journalist	**14%**
Accountant	**10%**
Stockbroker	**10%**
Sales person / agent	**5%**
Source: Harris Poll of 1,012 adults conducted Aug. 10-15, 2004.	

Pre-interview Questionnaire

An Empirical Comparison of those who

Over-achieve in Business

<u>*Pre-interview Survey*</u>

Doctoral Thesis:

John F. Does, MBA, C. Ped., C Ped (C), PhD (Candidate)

University of Western England, Faculty of Business and Law

Pre-interview Survey

Instructions: The following statements concern your perception about yourself in a variety of situations. Your task is to indicate the strength of your agreement with each statement, utilizing a scale in which 1 denotes strong disagreement, 5 denotes strong agreement, and 2, 3, and 4 represent intermediate judgments. In the boxes after each statement, select a number from 1 to 5 based on the following scale:

1. *Strongly disagree*
2. *Disagree*
3. *Neither disagree nor agree*
4. *Agree*
5. *Strongly agree*

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, so please select the number that most closely reflects you on each statement. Take your time and consider each statement carefully (source: Potter 2011).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK Validity reference		
2	Participant Name: Company:	
2	Age	Enter number: _____
2	Gender	Circle: M F
2	Education Level (formal education)	Circle: • 12 years (high school diploma) • College Diploma

		• **University Degree** • **Graduate Degree** • **Doctorate**
2	**Marital Status**	Circle: M S D
2	**Number of dependents**	Enter number: _____
2	**Was either parent full-time self-employed**	Circle: Y N
2	**Were you born in North America?**	Circle: Y N
2	**Were your parents born in North America?**	Circle: Y N
2	**Parents economic status during your childhood**	Circle: • **Working class** • **Middle class** • **Upper class**
2	**Tenure with present firm (years)**	Enter number: _____
2	**Length of time in present industry (years)**	Enter number: _____
2	**How much do you enjoy your profession?**	Circle: • **Extremely dislike** • **Somewhat dislike** • **Neither dislike or enjoy** • **Somewhat enjoy** • **Extremely enjoy**

Each of the following statements was represented with the following Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree 1___ 2___ 3___ 4___ 5___ Strongly Agree

I see myself as someone who...   Conceptual Framework

Validity Reference

- **Is original, comes up with new ideas**   7
- **Is reserved**   3
- **Is relaxed, handles stress well**   3
- **Is full of energy**   3
- **Can be tense**   3, 6
- **Generates a lot of enthusiasm**   3,6
- **Tends to be disorganized**   4
- **Has an active imagination**   7
- **Is emotionally stable, not easily upset**   6
- **Is inventive**   7
- **Has an assertive personality**   3
- **Is sometimes shy, inhibited**   6
- **Is easily distracted**   6
- **Enjoys taking risks**   4
- **Is often more reactive to situations than organized**   4
- **Sometimes puts customer needs before my own company needs**   7
- **Prefers to work alone rather in groups**   4
- **Is annoyed if personal achievements are not recognized**   6
- **Is highly competitive and hates to lose**   3
- **Is athletically inclined and better than average at most sports**   3
- **Enjoys solving problems**   7
- **Is emotionally disorganized but adaptable to my surroundings**   6,7
- **Has a disposition to act; to make things happen**   3,4,6

- **Seeks to improve myself with strong desire for achievement**　　2,3,7

- **Believes that my company is better than any competitive alternative**　4

Conceptual Framework Validity Reference #	Category Headings
1	**Introduction to Chapters – Vocational Image of the Sales Person**
2	**Cultural and Professional Background** - Career Path / Upbringing / Education
3	**Assertiveness** - Competitive Nature (& competitors)
4	**Control Preferences** - Strategy / Systems / Management
5	**Humanity** - Work Ethic / Motivation / Incentives / Leadership
6	**Characteristics and Traits** (ethics & values)
7	**Adaptability** - Relationships (internal &r external) / Creativity / Innovation
8	**The Sales / Entrepreneur Dynamic**

Source: derived by the author based upon the literature.

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Successful Entrepreneur VS Successful Sales person:

An empirical comparison of those who over-achieve in business

Interview Schedule for Successful Sales people and Entrepreneurs

This semi-structured interview format may be altered at the interviewer's discretion to prmote depth. The interview will begin with:

1. An orientation process, informing the participant of the aims and objectives of the effort.

2. A brief description of the interviewer's background in sales, marketing and entrepreneurship. Hopefully this will make the process feel less judgmental and elicit honest and rich discussion.

 Note to interviewer: clarify that the survey can remain anonymous at the discretion of the participant.

Conceptual Framework Validity Reference	Theme	Primary Question	Supporting (depth) Concepts
2	Parents / Childhood	You indicated that your parents were (immigrants, self-employed, well off). How did that affect your life choices and ultimately your current career?	• Work ethic • Value system • Value of $ • Support level
5	Definition of success	Within the vocation of (selling or entrepreneurship) what = success in your mind?	• Financial • Spiritual • Separate personal and business?
2	Professional Enjoyment	You indicated that you (enjoyed / disliked) what you do. Could you expand on that?	• Likes • Dislikes • If you could change 1 thing…
2	Education	You indicated that you were formally educated to the level of _____.	• Scholastic networking as a success factor

		How did your education (or lack of) prepare you for your present vocation, affect your life choices, opportunities and ultimately your current career?	• Life choices • Opportunities / limitations • Personal development / self-improvement
3 4	Personal	a) You described your assertiveness as _____. Could you expand on that? b) You described your comfort with risk-taking as _____. Could you expand on that?	• Examples / anecdotes • Assertiveness helpful overall? • Examples / anecdotes • Risk-taking helpful overall?
2 6	Professional	a) Describe career path and the agents of change that led you to the present.	• Opportunities • Choices • Obstacles

		b) How many hours make up a typical workday?	• At the desk at home morning and night? • Break for meals and coffee or on the run?
7	Networking	In what groups or associations do you participate and why?	• Benefits of participation • Charities
5 3	Leisure	a) Describe your hobbies and their importance in your life. b) You described your level of competitive spirit as _____. Could you expand on that?	• Sports • Arts • Life / work balance • Winning trump fair play in business? • Some competitive individuals value being right more than being kind?
4 4	Work Habits 1. Planning	Planning – how important is planning… daily, weekly, monthly, annually.	• Value of time • Accurate execution of specific daily plan vs flexible

			guide or checklist only
4	2. Prioritizing	What % of your time is already accounted for in your planner for next week… next month…? How would you describe (in order of importance) your top 3 to 5 priorities?	• % of reactive or seat of the pants activities • Customer needs • Incremental vs repeat sales • Meeting budget
8	Concept of Selling	a) How important is the concept of 'selling' to your survival?	• Personally • Company
1		b) Do you feel that the concept of 'selling' has a bad image? Why or why not?	• General public • Within your industry
7		c) Some sales people have minimal flexibility within their product and service offerings,	• Strong influencing skills can pay a lot of bills • Do you find that sometimes this is necessary? If yes,

		and therefore find all too often they are selling less than ideal solutions to customers just to survive... what do you think of that concept?	how is the relationship managed moving forward... if at all?
7,8	Customer Relationships	d) How important (worthy of time and resources) are customer relationships?	• For you personally • For the firm • Ever changed firms and brought customers over to the new firm (competitor)
4		e) What do you deem more valuable: a great (successful) ad campaign or a solid "tier one" relationship?	• Is the customer always right? • THIS IS A GEM MOMENT... HAVE THEM EXPAND ON THIS

7		f) You indicated _____ regarding putting customer needs ahead of your firm's… could you expand?	• **CAREFUL…** philosophically speaking… some feel it is fair to spend company money to develop personal relationships which follow the individual rather than build loyalty to the firm spending the $
6 6	Performance	a) What degree of your success can be attributed to: b) The key factors to your success… do	• Personal expertise and effort? • Firm's superiority of products and service systems? • Luck and environment (right place right time) • Nature vs. Nurture

6		you think they can be taught?	
		c) What do you think is the key to your success?	• Unique planning? • Unique understanding? • Unique relationship skills? • Unique leadership skills? • Freedom to make decisions?
3		d) It has been said by some over-achievers that they 'simply want it more than the other guy" or that 'successful people are willing to do things that less successful people are not'. How would you respond to this concept?	Do you: • Work harder? • Work longer hours? • Work smarter? • Take risks?

4	Technology	a) Do you have specific software in place to track and manage customer relationships? b) Does technology assist in planning and tracking prospecting activities as well as existing clients?	• Database mgt / Quotas • Sales call and communication planning • What software is used? • Management have access to the calendar planners?
4			
6	Company Culture	c) What is the single driving concept behind your (or company's) success? d) How would the majority of the employees answer that question?	• New sales • Repeat sales • Managing budgets • Reducing costs
6			
3	Competition	a) In your market, are you the	• Where do they stand in the

		number one player? (volume)	competitive pecking order
3 3,4		b) Is competitive analysis and awareness worthy of your time resources? c) Are you as busy as you want to be or is growth an ongoing focus?	• Importance of understanding competitors value chain • % of time / resources prospecting verses maintaining? • Growth targets next year established? 3 year targets established?
8	Sales vs. Entrepreneurship	How would you compare the successful sales person and the entrepreneur?	• Habits • Priorities • Characteristics / personality

Source: derived by the author based upon the literature.

Appendix 7

Initial Research Category Listing Details

Initial Category Name	Sources	References
Adaptability	9	10
Creative	2	3
Dealing with diversity	2	2
Differentiation	2	2
Opportunity recognition	2	3
Round need square solution	12	13
Luck	7	7
Number one player in your market	19	19
ADAPTIVE BEHAVIORS / ENVIRONMENT		**59**
Assertive – diplomacy	20	26
Competitive nature	5	5
Understanding competitors	20	22
COMPETITIVE NATURE (& Competition)		**53**
Career path	13	19
Dissatisfaction w traditional job	16	18
Education - self improvement	20	41
Family business	1	1
Leadership turning point	5	5
Left parental home (age)	5	5
Likes and dislikes re: role	17	25
Mentoring	20	27
Parents	20	32
Steps - career ladder	2	5
CAREER PATH / UPBRINGING / EDUCATION / LEADERSHIP		**178**
Entrepreneur defined	20	22

Initial Category Name	Sources	References
Entrepreneurs selling	3	3
Salesperson compared to entrepreneur	18	22
SALES / ENTREP DYNAMIC		**25**
Image of the salesperson	18	21
INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER - IMAGE OF SALES		**42**
Charity work	7	8
Is customer always right?	13	13
Customer relationships	9	13
Putting customer needs ahead of personal or firm	13	13
Internal relationships	1	1
Internal vs external customers – patience	1	1
Networking	20	21
Relationships	16	25
Selling and relationships	16	23
RELATIONSHIPS (internal or external)		**118**
Ad campaign vs tier one relationship (value)	15	15
Budget management vs top line sales driven	8	12
Company $ used on relationship > transfer & steal customer	14	17
CRM systems – software	17	17
Entrepreneurial spirit – corporately	2	4
Growth targets next 3 years - planning / strategy	7	7
Incentives - commission etc.	2	2
Incremental vs repeat sales	8	9
Micro vs macro managing	4	4
Planning & time – management	20	22
Prospecting vs maintaining	2	2
Technology – CRM	1	1
Why do 75% of business fail	17	17
STRATEGY / SYSTEMS		**129**

Initial Category Name	Sources	References
Family - importance of family	4	5
Fear	1	2
Hobbies - leisure - holidays - work / life balance	19	29
Honesty & integrity	7	7
Listening	2	2
Nature vs nurture concepts	20	23
Reasons for personal success	11	12
Risk	19	24
Team vs alone - Lone Wolf	19	24
Trust	2	2
CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAITS (ethics & values)		130
Hours in a day - break for lunch	18	22
Motivation	7	8
Performance and incentives	2	2
Rewards and incentives	3	3
Separating business and personal	1	1
Spiritual	11	12
Success – defined	20	21
Value of a dollar	8	9
Winning trump fair play	17	18
Work ethic – urgency	15	18
Work harder than others – smarter	16	17
WORK ETHIC / MOTIVATION / PHILOSOPHIES / INCENTIVES		131

Source: derived by the author.

Appendix 8

Research Findings – Merging / Rejecting Summary – Conceptual Framework Validation

Conceptual Framework Status	Initial Category Name	Sources	References
Valid	Vocational Image of the salesperson	18	21
	INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER	**18**	**21**
Valid	Parents	21	32
Valid	Education - self improvement	23	41
Valid	Mentoring	22	27
Valid	Likes and dislikes re: role	17	25
Rejected	Family business		
Rejected	Leadership turning point		
Rejected	Left parental home (age)		
Rejected	Steps - career ladder		
	CUTURAL AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND	**83**	**125**
Valid	Assertive - diplomacy	23	26
Valid	Competitive nature	5	5
Valid	Understanding competitors	21	22
Valid	Winning trump fair play	17	18
	ASSERTIVENESS	**66**	**71**
Valid	Planning & time - management	20	22
Valid	CRM systems - software merge Technology - CRM	19	19
Valid	Ad campaign vs tier one relationship (Value)	15	15
Valid	Company $ used on relationship > transfer & steal customer	14	17
Valid	Risk merge Fear	19	24
Valid	Team vs alone - Lone Wolf	19	24
Valid	Why do 75% of business fail	17	17
Rejected	Budget management vs top line sales driven		

Conceptual Framework Status	Initial Category Name	Sources	References
Rejected	Entrepreneurial spirit - corporately		
Rejected	Growth targets next 3 years - planning / strategy		
Rejected	Incentives - commission etc.		
Rejected	Incremental vs repeat sales		
Rejected	Micro vs macro managing		
Rejected	Prospecting vs maintaining		
Merged	Technology - CRM		
Merged	Fear		
	CONTROL PREFERENCES	**123**	**138**
Valid	Spiritual	11	12
Valid	Success - defined	21	21
Valid	Hobbies - work / life balance merge importance of family	23	34
Valid	Motivation merge performance incentives merge rewards	12	13
Merged	Family - importance of family		
Merged	Charity work		
Merged	Performance and incentives		
Merged	Rewards and incentives		
Rejected	Separating business and personal		
	HUMANITY – WORK ETHIC - MOTIVATION	**57**	**80**
Valid	Honesty & integrity merge listening merge trust	11	11
Valid	Reasons for personal success merge nature vs nurture	33	35
Valid	Work ethic - urgency merge Work harder vs smarter	31	35
Valid	Hours in a day - break for lunch	18	22
Merged	Listening		
Merged	Nature vs nurture concepts		
Merged	Trust		
Rejected	Value of a dollar		
	CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAITS	**93**	**103**

Conceptual Framework Status	Initial Category Name	Sources	References
Valid	Relationships merge customers merge internal / external	43	63
Valid	Putting customer needs ahead of personal or firm	13	13
Valid	Number One player in your market	19	19
Valid	Round need square solution	12	13
Valid	Adaptability merge creative/diversity/opp/differentiation/luck	24	27
Valid	Is customer always right?	13	13
Valid	Networking merge charity work	27	29
Merged	Creative		
Merged	Dealing with diversity		
Merged	Differentiation		
Merged	Opportunity recognition		
Merged	Luck		
Merged	Customer relationships		
Merged	Internal relationships		
Merged	Internal vs external customers – patience		
Merged	Selling and relationships		
	ADAPTIVE BEHAVIORS / ENVIRONMENT	151	177
Valid	Entrepreneur defined	20	21
Valid	Salesperson compared to entrepreneur merge entrep. selling	21	25
Merged	Entrepreneurs selling		
	SALES / ENTREP DYNAMIC	41	46

Source: derived by the author.

Educational Component					
	High School	College Diploma	University Degree	Graduate Degree	Doctorate / Other
Entrepreneurs					
E-1				X	
E-2			X		
E-3		X			
E-4				X	
E-5	X				
E-6			X		
E-7			X		
E-8				X	
E-9			X		
E-10	X				
E-11	X				
Salespeople					
S-1		X			
S-2	X				
S-3		X			
S-4		X			
S-5	X				
S-6			X		
S-7		X			
S-8		X			
S-9		X			
S-10			X		

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Appendix 10

Parents - Familial Background			
	Parents were Immigrants	**Parents Self Employed**	**Economic Base**	**Parents Unconditionally Supportive**
Entrepreneurs				
E-1		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
E-2			Middle Class	Yes
E-3		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
E-4		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
E-5		Yes	Working Class	Yes
E-6		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
E-7		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
E-8	Yes		Middle Class	Yes
E-9			Working Class	**No**
E-10		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
E-11	Yes		Working Class	Yes
			W-3 of 11 **M-8 of 11**	
Salespeople				
S-1			Working Class	Yes
S-2			Working Class	N/A
S-3			Middle Class	Yes
S-4		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
S-5			Middle Class	Yes
S-6			Middle Class	Yes
S-7		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
S-8	Yes		Middle Class	Yes
S-9		Yes	Middle Class	Yes
S-10			Middle Class	Yes
			W-2of 10 **M-8 of 10**	

Source: derived by the author from the interview responses.

Appendix 11

Mentoring Component		
	Had a Mentor	**Mentors Others**
Entrepreneurs		
E-1	Yes	Yes
E-2		Yes
E-3	Yes	Yes
E-4		Yes
E-5	Yes	Yes
E-6		Yes
E-7		
E-8		
E-9	Yes	Yes
E-10		Yes
E-11	Yes	
Salespeople		
S-1	Yes	Yes
S-2	Yes	Yes
S-3	Yes	
S-4	Yes	
S-5	Yes	
S-6		
S-7		
S-8		
S-9	Yes	
S-10	Yes	

Source: derived by the author based on the interview responses.

	Extremely Likes What He Does	Dislikes Include People Issues	Dislikes Include Internal Regulations	Dislikes Include Outside Regulations
Vocational Enjoyment				
Entrepreneurs				
E-1	X	X		
E-2	X	X		
E-3	X			
E-4				
E-5	X			
E-6	X			X
E-7		X		X
E-8	X	X		
E-9	X			
E-10	X	X		
E-11	X	X		X
Salespeople				
S-1	X		X	
S-2	X	X	X	
S-3	X		X	
S-4	X			
S-5	X			
S-6	X	X	X	
S-7	X		X	
S-8	X		X	
S-9	X		X	
S-10			X	

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Assertiveness Component					
	Assertive	NOT Stressed	Can Be Tense	Can Be Shy	Emotionally Stable
Entrepreneurs					
E-1	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
E-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-4	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
E-5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-7	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
E-8	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-9	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-10	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Salespeople					
S-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
S-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
S-3	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
S-4	Yes	**No**	Yes	No	Yes
S-5	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
S-6	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
S-7	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
S-8	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
S-9	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
S-10	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Competitive Spirit Component				
	Athletically Inclined	**Hates to Lose**	**Daily Focus on Winning**	**Applies $ to Competitive Research**
Entrepreneurs				
E-1	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-3	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-4	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-5	**No**	Yes	No	No
E-6	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-7	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-8	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-9	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-10	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-11	Yes	Yes	No	No
Salespeople				
S-1	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-2	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-3	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-4	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-5	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-6	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-7	No	Yes	No	No
S-8	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-9	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-10	Yes	Yes	No	No

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Hobbies and Work / Life Balance

	Athletically Inclined as Adult	Competitive by Nature	Strong Family Values	Read for Pleasure	Participate in the Arts	# Weeks Holidays Annually
Entrepreneur						
E-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	3
E-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	1
E-3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3
E-4	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2
E-5	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	3
E-6	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2
E-7	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	4
E-8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
E-9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
E-10	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2
E-11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3
						Avg 3.0
Salespeople						
S-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	6
S-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	4
S-3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5
S-4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2
S-5	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	2.5
S-6	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	6
S-7	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	3
S-8	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	3
S-9	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	6
S-10	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	4
						Avg 4.2

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Nature - Nurture - Luck

	Success Traits NOT Teachable	RATIO	Success Traits Teachable	Is Luck a Component of Success?
Entrepreneur				
E-1	80		20	Yes
E-2	90		10	Yes
E-3	75		25	No
E-4	70		30	Yes
E-5	50		50	No
E-6	90		10	Yes
E-7	75		25	No
E-8	50		50	No
E-9	80		20	No
E-10	50		50	Yes
E-11	75		25	No
	72	:	**28**	
Salespeople				
S-1	80		20	Yes
S-2	75		25	No
S-3	35		65	No
S-4	90		10	No
S-5	75		25	No
S-6	90		10	Yes
S-7	90		10	No
S-8	70		30	No
S-9	90		10	No
S-10	90		10	No
	79	:	**21**	

Source: derived by the author based upon the literature. Columns 2 and 3 represent a ratio to each other respectively.

Propensity for Risk					
	Enjoys Risk (Pre-interv Quest.)	**Feels Fear**	**Eliminate Fear w Analysis**	**Eliminate Fear w Control**	**Risk = Non-financial**
Entrepreneur					
E-1	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
E-2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
E-3	Yes	**Yes**	Yes	Yes	
E-4	**No**	No	Yes	Yes	
E-5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
E-6	Yes	**Yes**	Yes	Yes	
E-7	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
E-8	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
E-9	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
E-10	Yes	**Yes**	Yes	Yes	
E-11	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
Salespeople					
S-1	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A
S-2	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes
S-3	Yes	N/A	N/A	No	Yes
S-4	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes
S-5	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
S-6	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes
S-7	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A
S-8	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
S-9	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
S-10	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Team Phenomenon - Lone Wolf				
	Prefers to Work Alone	**Teams are Crucial**	**Personally has L Wolf Tendencies**	**Would hire Lone Wolf Sellers**
Entrepreneur				
E-1	No	Yes	Yes	No
E-2	No	Yes	No	No
E-3	No	Yes	No	No
E-4	No	Yes	No	No
E-5	No	Yes	Yes	No
E-6	No	Yes	Yes	No
E-7	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-8	**Yes**	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-9	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-10	No	Yes	No	No
E-11	No	Yes	No	No
Salespeople				
S-1	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-2	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-3	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-4	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-5	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-6	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-7	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-8	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-9	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
S-10	Yes	No	Yes	N/A

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Success defined / Spiritual Phenomenon			
Entrepreneurs	**Success = $**	**Spiritual Component**	**Religious**
E-1	Yes	Yes	No
E-2	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-3	Yes	Yes	No
E-4	Yes	Yes	No
E-5	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-6	No	No	No
E-7	No	No	No
E-8	Yes	Yes	No
E-9	No	No	No
E-10	No	No	No
E-11	No	No	No
Salespeople			
S-1	Yes *	Yes	No
S-2	No	Yes	No
S-3	Yes	Yes	No
S-4	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-5	Yes *	No	No
S-6	No	Yes	No
S-7	Yes	Yes	No
S-8	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-9	Yes	Yes	No
S-10	Yes *	Yes	No

* answered 'no' but depth interview revealed yes

Source: derived by the author based on the interview responses.

Working Hard vs Smart - Hours in a Day				
	Work Smart	**Work Hard**	**Definable Hours**	**Break for Lunch**
Entrepreneurs				
E-1	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-2	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-3	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-4	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
E-6	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
E-7	Yes	Yes	No	No
E-8	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
E-9	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
E-10	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
E-11	Yes	Yes	No	No
Salespeople				
S-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-2	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-4	Yes	Yes	No	No
S-5	Yes	No	Yes	No
S-6	Yes	No	Yes	No
S-7	Yes	No	Yes	No
S-8	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
S-9	Yes	No	Yes	No
S-10	Yes	No	Yes	No

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

	Motivated by $	Achievement Motivation	Achievement Recognition
Motivation / Achievement Phenomenon			
Entrepreneurs			
E-1	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-2	Yes	Yes	No
E-3	Yes	Yes	No
E-4	**No**	**No**	**No**
E-5	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-6	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-7	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-8	**No**	Yes	No
E-9	Yes	Yes	No
E-10	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-11	Yes	Yes	No
Salespeople			
S-1	Yes *	Yes	Yes
S-2	**No**	Yes	Yes
S-3	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-4	Yes *	*Yes	**No**
S-5	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-6	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-7	Yes *	Yes	Yes
S-8	Yes	**No**	**No**
S-9	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-10	Yes	Yes	Yes

* answered 'no' but
depth interview revealed
yes

Source: Derived by the author from the interview responses.

Frustration Phenomenon		
	Frustrated on Job	**Frustration drove Entrepreneurship**
Entrepreneurs		
E-1		Yes
E-2		Yes
E-3		Yes
E-4		**No**
E-5		Yes
E-6		**No**
E-7		Yes
E-8		Yes
E-9		**No**
E-10		Yes
E-11		**No**
Salespeople		
S-1	Yes	Yes *
S-2	**No**	
S-3	Yes	
S-4	Yes	
S-5	**No**	
S-6	Yes	
S-7	**No**	
S-8	Yes	
S-9	Yes	
S-10	Yes	

* Started a business on the side

Source: Derived by the author from the interview responses.

Customer Relationships			
	Relationships are Important	**Customer Needs Trump Own**	**Customer Always Right**
Entrepreneurs			
E-1	Yes	Yes	No
E-2	Yes	No	No
E-3	Yes	Yes	No *
E-4	Yes	Yes	No
E-5	Yes	Yes	**Yes**
E-6	Yes	Yes	No *
E-7	Yes	No	No *
E-8	Yes	Yes	No *
E-9	Yes	Yes	No
E-10	Yes	Yes	No
E-11	Yes	Yes	No
	* Influences customers to believe they are right		
Salespeople			
S-1	Yes	Yes	No
S-2	Yes	Yes	No *
S-3	Yes	Yes	No *
S-4	Yes	Yes	No
S-5	Yes	Yes	No *
S-6	Yes	Yes	No
S-7	Yes	Yes	No
S-8	Yes	Yes	No *
S-9	Yes	Yes	No *
S-10	Yes	Yes	No *

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Salesperson vs Entrepreneur Vocational Dynamic (as defined by participants)			
	Entrepreneurs are Sellers	Differentiation = Risk Factor	Contradiction Observed
Entrepreneurs			
E-1	Yes	Yes	No
E-2	Yes	**No**	No
E-3	Yes	Yes	No
E-4	Yes	Yes	No
E-5	Yes	Yes	No
E-6	Yes	Yes	No
E-7	Yes	Yes	No
E-8	Yes	Yes	No
E-9	Yes	**No**	No
E-10	Yes	Yes	No
E-11	Yes	Yes	No
Salespeople			
S-1	Yes	Yes	No
S-2	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-3	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-4	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-5	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-6	Yes	Yes	No
S-7	Yes	Yes	No
S-8	Yes	Yes	No
S-9	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-10	Yes	Yes	No

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Contribution Synthesis: New and Supportive Perspectives

Summarizing the Similarities and Differences
within the Salesmanship / Entrepreneurship Dynamic

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
Categorical Heading	**Component**	**Participant Similarities**	**Participant Differences**
Vocational Image	**Same**	New Perspectives: The literature did not discuss in depth the fact that both salespeople and entrepreneurs generally dislike salespeople and the concept of selling. All of the participants representing both vocations feel that this perception is reflected in the public image of salespeople.	New Perspectives: While both vocations contribute to their image in society with their behaviors, the following observation / comparison is a direct result of this thesis: • The entrepreneur participants generally work hard and long hours to lead teams to solve customer problems; which <u>builds</u> trust. • The sales participants in this study generally do not work long or hard; but rather leverage their talents to outperform their peers while avoiding the exposure that would result from working on teams and subsequently enjoy

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			the freedom that results; which <u>discourages</u> trust.
Cultural and Professional Background	**Parents**	<u>New Perspectives:</u> There has been much study on the parental backgrounds of entrepreneurs (Stanworth *et al*. 1989; Collins *et al*. 1964). However the comparison to salespeople and the actual study of the parental and cultural backgrounds of salespeople may represent new perspective. Both vocational groups share parental themes of: - Unwavering parental support - Parental work ethic example - Following in parental vocational footsteps - Not being raised in a high income household	
	Education & Self-improvement	<u>New Perspectives:</u> The literature touches very briefly on self-improvement theories of entrepreneurs but not with regards to salespeople. Representing a relatively new discussion therefore: both	<u>In Line with Existing Knowledge:</u> In line with the literature (Gibb and Ritchie, 1982; Blanchflower and Meyer, 1994; Robinson and Sexton, 1994) the entrepreneur participants are generally

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
		vocational groups claim to possess a strong desire to improve themselves, but neither group of the vocational participants generally does anything formally to do so.	more formally educated than the salespeople within this study.
	Mentoring		New Perspectives: The sales participants are more likely than entrepreneurs to have been mentored, and ironically far less likely to share the gift by mentoring others.
	Like and Dislikes re: Role	In Line with Existing Knowledge: In line with past work (Lundstrum, 1977; Davis, 1989; Webster, 1992) both vocational groups of participants thoroughly enjoy what they do. Further, both vocations take pleasure in interacting with people and indicate that this is a significant contributor to job enjoyment. Both groups are likely to feel dissatisfaction and frustration with their employment situations. Entrepreneurs were quite likely to have been driven by these themes into their self-employment endeavors.	In Line with Existing Knowledge: In line with previous research (McMurray 1961, Maxwell *et al*. 2005) the sales participants identify 'freedom' as a primary driver of vocational enjoyment, verses entrepreneurs who site 'problem solving' (Kirton, 1976; Drucker, 1985; Stewart *et al*. 1998).

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
Assertiveness	**Assertiveness / Diplomacy**	In Line with Existing Knowledge: In line with previous work, both sellers (McMurray, 1961) and entrepreneurs (Hill and McGowan, 1999) self-identify as having high energy. New Perspectives: Both vocational participants describe themselves as assertive in nature but neither applies this trait externally with customers. Rather, both groups are far more likely to apply assertiveness internally to ensure customer promises are delivered upon by their respective firms.	
	Competitive Nature	New Perspectives: Both vocational groups are athletically inclined and hate to lose but are not driven day to day by the concepts of winning or competition. Winning is a byproduct of other focused activities.	
	Understanding Competitors		New Perspectives: The literature did not extensively explore the level of importance entrepreneurs and salespeople affix to competitive intelligence. This research

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			reveals that most of the entrepreneur participants feel that understanding competitive products, services and strategies is very important. Sales participants generally feel this is a waste of time. This represents a significant conflict given that the entrepreneur participants exclusively believe that their boundary spanning sales people are a reliable source of competitive intelligence.
	Winning Trumps Fair Play	New Perspectives: The literature did not at length comparatively explore the concepts of fair play and ethics in business for these specific players. Approximately one third of both groups of participants are likely to bend the rules and / or not be completely forthright in business.	New Perspectives: While several of the entrepreneur and selling participants acknowledge that they periodically cheat in business, the sellers were less than forthcoming with the information. They actually became visibly uncomfortable as they attempted to avoid the question. Conversely, entrepreneur participants who identified that they sometimes "leveled the playing field" through manipulation were completely forthright in admitting such within the interview.

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
Control Preferences	**Planning & Time Management**		New Perspectives: The literature describes entrepreneurs as organized opportunity seekers (Hill and McGowan, 1999). This new perspective reflects the lack of comparison to salespeople in this regard within past studies. The entrepreneur participants feel that forward planning is critically important and practice strategic forward planning. Salespeople identify planning as somewhat important but do not necessarily practice such... and some salespeople who deem the practice 'very important' do not plan ahead at all.
	CRM and Technology		New Perspectives: The literature did not explore the comparison between salespeople and entrepreneurs regarding the level of importance applied to CRM systems. The entrepreneur participants are three times more likely than sales participants to embrace Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems in their operations. In fact, several of the

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			selling participants did not know the meaning or purpose of CRM, yet this did not stop them from providing a detailed (albeit completely unrelated) answer to the query.
Humanity, Work Ethic and Motivation	**Spiritual**		New Perspectives: The literature did not explore the concepts of spirituality of either salespeople or entrepreneurs. Therefore, the likelihood of spirituality and the comparison of the vocations in this regard represent new perspectives. Sales participants (9 of 10) were almost twice as likely as entrepreneurs (6 of 11) to identify as 'spiritual' people. Interestingly 6 of the 9 salespeople suggested this spirituality was of a non-religious nature verses 4 of 6 of the entrepreneurs.
	Risk, Fear and Luck		New Perspectives: The participating entrepreneurs are far more likely to self-identify as hard workers and to consider detailed forward planning critically important to success; both of which reduce the 'unknown' or 'risk factor', thus

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			lessening the reliance on chance or luck. Yet the sales participants, who in several cases proudly indicated that they do not work hard or plan ahead, are less than half as likely to credit luck for any measure of their success. In other words, those participants who limit risk and take precautions against requiring luck are more likely to credit luck with their success than those who throw caution to the wind.
	Teamwork		New Perspectives: The literature extensively explores the concept of teamwork as it pertains to both entrepreneurs who generally build teams verses salespeople who may enjoy working in key account management (KAM) groups (Cheverton *et al*. 2004; Prakash, 2007) and those who prefer to work alone (Dixon *et al*. 2003). However, a comparison of the team philosophies of entrepreneurs and salespeople has not been investigated. 8 of the 11 entrepreneur participants prefer to work on teams and 11 of 11 feel that teams are crucial to the

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			success of a business. Conversely, 10 out of the 10 sales participants prefer to work alone. It has been established that there may be evidence within this research to warrant future discussion around highly performing salespeople avoiding teamwork to evade exposure of their work habits and loyalties.
	Hobbies / Work-life Balance	New Perspectives: The literature discussed entrepreneur family values and background (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Malach-Pines *et al*. 2005). However, it did not extensively explore salespeople in this fashion and did not compare the two vocations in this regard. All selling and entrepreneur participants indicated that family values are critically important. Further contributing to new perspectives, the literature did not divulge the fact that both groups generally do not read for pleasure (15 of 21 of the participants).	New Perspectives: The literature did not extensively explore, and certainly did not compare the concept of entrepreneur or salesperson hobbies. The entrepreneur participants are 82% more likely than the selling participants to enjoy the arts in some way, such as playing an instrument, going to live theatre etc. This supports the education theory: increased education reflects stronger propensity to be an entrepreneur (Darmon, 2008) and also to be a more active participant in the arts (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2003).
	Motivation	In Line with Existing Knowledge: Several authors have suggested that highly successful salespeople (Walker *et*	New Perspectives: The literature speaks to the achievement needs of performers

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic
		al. 1997; Jaramillo *et al*. 2007) and successful entrepreneurs (Shaver and Scott, 1991; Zhao and Siebert, 2006) have high achievement needs. This work is in line with this past research as both participant groups have high achievement needs. New Perspectives: The literature suggests that these players generally are not motivated by money (Hill and McGowan, 1999; Sujan, 1999; Sojkaand and Deeter-Schmelz, 2002; Malach and Pines, 2005; Maxwell, 2005; Lassk and Shepherd; 2013). This work is not in line with this past research. Participants within this research are indeed motivated by money, although several of the selling participants attempted to convince the interviewer otherwise only to subconsciously reveal	within both vocations. However, adding to new perspectives is the fact that the selling participants are far more likely than their entrepreneur counterparts to need to be recognized for their achievements by others which may represent an opportunity for future research on image and self-esteem issues for this vocation. Further representative of new perspectives: while, both groups have been confirmed as being motivated by money, the salespeople are likely to deny it and the entrepreneurs will state such with conviction.

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
		their misleading behavior later in the interview.	
Characteristics and Traits	Honesty and Trust		New Perspectives: Entrepreneur participants are considerably more likely to clarify issues before reacting. Salespeople frequently responded impulsively presuming to know the meaning of a query which was clearly not understood. This was apparent in several cases such as the query on CRM systems and the definition of entrepreneur. Further reflecting the theme of trust, in many cases the selling participants seemed to take pride in their ability to work half as hard as their peers and take extra time off once goals were met, unbeknownst to their managers. Finally, it emerged that the sales participants seemed to be trying to convince the interviewer of things throughout the interview process; in several cases expressing untruths (seemingly unintentional) possibly in an effort to enhance their image. Some examples are stating that success has

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			nothing to do with money, they are not motivated by money, and while they deem forward planning crucially important they do not plan at all. The entrepreneur participants did not depict such behaviors.
	Defining Success		New perspectives: The literature speaks at length to motivators of success for salespeople and entrepreneurs (Hill and McGowan, 1999; Sujan, 1999; Sojkaand and Deeter-Schmelz, 2002; Malach and Pines, 2005; Maxwell, 2005; Lassk and Shepherd, 2013). However, the concept of 'defining what equals success' and a comparison of their respective vocational views in this regard represent new perspectives. While these vocational participants are equally likely to identify financial rewards as part of the definition of success, several of the sales participants subconsciously misled the interviewer to indicate that they felt success had nothing to do with money.

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
	Nature vs Nurture	New Perspectives: The literature explored the nature verses nurture theme to a small degree on sellers (Spiro and Weitz, 1990; Lassk and Shepherd, 2013) and entrepreneurs (Cromie and Johns, 1983; Boyd and Vozikis, 1994), but it was generally not self-reported by the performers themselves and comparisons between the vocations of selling and entrepreneurism are not abundant. Therefore, it is representative of new perspectives that the sales and entrepreneur participants both generally feel that the factors of their personal success represented unteachable traits and characteristics that were part of their nature and could not be taught.	New Perspectives: The literature on entrepreneur (McGrath *et al*. 1992; Cromie, 2000; Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2005) and salesperson (Walker *et al*. 1977; Weitz, 1981; Sharma *et al*. 2007) extroversion was extensive. However, this new research identified that the entrepreneur participants are twice as likely as the sellers to also self- identify as shy. This concept is reflective of an emerging humility theme, which has been shown to contribute to likeability and building trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007).
	Work Ethic	New Perspectives: The literature did not extensively explore the efficiencies of these players and did not explore comparisons of the vocations. Therefore adding to new perspectives is the finding that both vocational groups feel that they work smarter than most people.	New Perspectives: The entrepreneur participants are 50% more likely to identify as hard working individuals. Conversely, several salespeople exhibited pride regarding the fact that they <u>did not</u> work hard. Overlapping the themes of work ethic and 'hours in a day', most entrepreneur

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic
		participants require an absolute break in their day to re-charge. Most sales participants do not need a break and are highly likely to eat their meals while they continue working. Future study may seek to test whether this may be due to the fact that sellers generally have more isolated objectives which can be 'checked off' or completed as they rush to the finish line to enjoy free time. This is further supported by the fact that these sellers value their 'freedom' to a greater degree than the entrepreneurs. Freedom may represent the ability to efficiently deliver on external promises and then walk away from further responsibilities to enjoy other pastimes. Entrepreneurs generally do not have this luxury.
	Hours in a Day	<u>New Perspectives:</u> The literature did not extensively explore the hours worked by these players and did not compare the vocations in this regard. The sales participants are very likely to be fully aware of the amount of hours they work in a day or week. Further, they

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			are highly likely to work the minimal amount of hours required to be recognized as high performers and then enjoy the freedoms that such status evokes. Entrepreneurs are almost just as likely to have no idea how many hours they work as they generally 'live' their work and are constantly focusing on their firms.
			Further, the sales participants generally take 40% more holidays annually than entrepreneurs, not including the unofficial time off which is a reflection of the "freedom" theme discussed by most of the selling participants. In fact, in many cases the selling participants seemed to take pride in their ability to work half as hard as their peers and take extra time off once management goals were met.
Adaptive Behaviors / Environment	**Relationships Internal & External**	In Line with Existing Knowledge: Supportive of the literature, both salespeople (Sharma *et al*. 2007; Jaramillo, 2007; Wood *et al*. 2008) and entrepreneur (Dincer and Uslander, 2009; Totara *et al*. 2011; Dixon and	

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
		Tanner, 2012) participant groups exclusively identified that the development and maintenance of long term, trusting 'customer relationships' are crucial to the longevity of any business.	
	Customer Needs Ahead of Firm's	In Line with Existing Knowledge: Although the literature did not describe this concept as such, the spirit of past theory (Dodds, 2007; Lars-Johan, 2011) is in line with this research that in the interest of building trusting relationships, both the sales and entrepreneur participants self-identify as often putting customer interests above their own. However, for obvious reasons, the sacrifices differ. Salespeople allocate their time disproportionately to certain customers' advantage and entrepreneurs allocate more tangible resources such as money and staff expertise.	
	Number One Player in Market		New Perspectives: The ego theme was explored within the literature (Lynn, 1969; Kets de Vries, 1977; Chell, 1985) but this particular question was not delved into deeply

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
		and the comparison between salespeople and entrepreneurs had not been investigated prior to this research. The sales participants unanimously claimed that they work for the absolute very best company in their field. The entrepreneur participants were half as likely to make such a claim. This concept is reflective of an emerging humility theme, which has been shown to contribute to likeability and building trust (Toftoy and Jabbour, 2007).	
	Creativity and Adaptability	In Line with Existing Knowledge: Both selling (Kahk, 2010; Lars-Johan, 2011; Dixon and Tanner, 2012; Evanschitzki *et al*. 2012) and entrepreneur (Totara *et al*. 2011; Dixon and Tanner, 2012; Terho *et al*. 2012; Welter, 2012) vocational groups adapt well to their surroundings and situations. Both the sales and entrepreneur participants are likely to self-identify as being adaptive and all feel this is necessary for achieving success in business. Further, both shared anecdotes supporting the fact that they practice such strategies.	In Line with Existing Knowledge: Supporting the work of previous researchers (Wang and Netemeyer, 2002; Dixon *et al*. 2003; Maxwell *et al*. 2005; Wilson, 2006; Prakash *et al*. 2007; Harding, 2008) this work indicates that the two groups share a dislike of rules and regulations , however the sales participants are hindered by internal (i.e. management) controls and entrepreneurs are bothered by external (i.e. governmental) regulations.

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
	Customer Always Right		New Perspectives: The literature did not extensively explore the concept or comparison of sales people and entrepreneur opinions on 'customers being always right'. While both the selling and entrepreneur participants agree that customers are NOT always right; and in fact believe they are often wrong, entrepreneurs are more likely to inform the customer outright that their request is unreasonable and the answer is "no", whereas the sellers are more likely to attempt to manipulate the situation to make the customer believe they have either come up with a solution on their own, or have gotten their way.
Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	**Defining Entrepreneur**		New Perspectives: The literature did not explore the concept of how entrepreneurs or salespeople define entrepreneurs. The entrepreneur participants were twice as likely to identify ownership, risk, innovation and growing beyond self-employment as prerequisites for entrepreneurship than the selling

Conceptual Framework		Salesperson / Entrepreneur Dynamic	
			participants, who seemed to set the bar lower in their definition of entrepreneur.
	Comparing Entrepreneurs to Salespeople	New Perspectives: Both the selling and entrepreneur participants feel that entrepreneurs are generally sellers and that highly successful salespeople are entrepreneurial. Further, they generally agree that the primary difference between successful salespeople and entrepreneurs is the risk factor.	

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.

Emerging Themes of Misleading Behaviors / Responses	Participants
Responding to queries for the sake of responding, or with a guess has been shown to be a deterrent of building trust (Swan *et al*. 1985). Within this research, several selling participants did not ask for clarification on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software but rather impulsively discussed completely unrelated concepts within their answer. Three entrepreneur participants also did not understand the concept of CRM software, but all three asked for clarification before responding.	S-4 S-7 S-8
Past research has shown that there have been many theories employed to measure success. However, although short term goals may generate small wins such as 'securing an appointment' most researchers agree that success in the sales arena equates to revenue generating results (Dawson, 2008; Zoltner *et al*. 2008). Interestingly, several selling participants within this research abruptly and impulsively indicated that success "has nothing to do with money", but subsequently discussed several concepts of success which cost money to partake in. Several entrepreneurs highlighted financial rewards as an indicator of success, but they did so openly and without an effort to conceal the phenomenon.	S-1 S-5 S-10
Relating to defining success and financial themes, performance motivators have been explored by many researchers. Findings vary from themes of ego and recognition (Lundstrum 1977), which indirectly support themes of avoiding the humiliation or guilt of failure (Badovick 1992). Others suggest that the best sales people are motivated by the opportunity to 'help' a customer (Goff *et al*. 1994). Yet practitioners often default to extrinsic rewards for their selling teams (Walker *et al*. 1977). Interestingly, within this research selling participants abruptly and impulsively indicated that they were not motivated by money and then subsequently shared anecdotes that indicated the opposite.	S-1 S-4 S-5
Several authors have extolled the value of planning and its contribution to success in sales or entrepreneurship (Swan and Nolan, 1985; Schuster and Danes, 1986; Boles *et*	S-1 S-5 S-10

Emerging Themes of Misleading Behaviors / Responses	Participants
al. 2000). Several selling participants indicated that forward planning was very important but actually did not forward plan at all.	
Entrepreneurs have been shown to come from backgrounds that extolled the importance of working hard (Cunningham and Lischeron 1991). This research supports past work which showed that entrepreneurs do work hard. However, extensive research on the work ethic of salespeople was not found. Within this research on highly successful sellers, participants have been shown to be more aware of rewards and freedom than work ethic. In fact, several selling participants indicated that they do not work hard or long and are very aware of the hours (lack thereof) worked in a day.	S-5 S-6 S-7 S-9 S-10
Selling participants indicated that cheating in business is sometimes acceptable, but were reluctant and even physically uncomfortable saying such in an interview. In a sense, they lied about whether they lie. Several entrepreneurs indicated that cheating is sometimes necessary but openly admitted to it without discomfort or an attempt to avoid or deceive.	S-1 S-3 S-9 S-10
Research on the importance of representing the primary company within a selling genre or trading area was not apparent within the literature on sellers. Interestingly, all selling participants for this work claimed that their firms were the absolute very best in their genre and markets. Given that only half of entrepreneurs made the same claim, and given that two of the sales participants worked for competing firms, it seems worthy of mention within this summary chart.	S-1 S-2 S-3 S-4 S-5 S-6 S-7 S-8 S-9 S-10
Influencing tactics have been explored by several researchers (Perreault, 1979; Weitz, 1981; Goff *et al*. 1994; Kumar and Bergstrom, 2008). Within this research several sales participants spoke of using influencing techniques to ensure that the customer believes they are right, whether they are actually right or not. It should be noted that	S-3 S-8 S-9

Emerging Themes of Misleading Behaviors / Responses	Participants
entrepreneur participants are more likely to say "no" to a customer or say that they are wrong and suggest solutions.	
Previous research on sellers comparing themselves to entrepreneurs could not be found. Within this body of work, sales participants internalized the entrepreneur definition; reflecting entrepreneurial qualities upon themselves. As mentioned, through deeper insight this may be found to be an attempt to shed a positive light on their self-image.	S-1 S-2 S-3 S-4 S-5 S-7 S-8 S-9 S-10
Several salespeople indicated that they felt there was absolutely no difference between entrepreneurs and highly successful salespeople. Yet in an alternate segment of the interview identified several differences such as 'comfort with risk'.	S-2 S-3 S-4 S-5 S-9
In several cases sales participants indicated that they do not work hard, long or plan ahead. They are less than half as likely to credit luck for any measure of their success as entrepreneur participants. In other words, those participants who take precautions against requiring luck are more likely to credit luck with their success than those who throw caution to the wind. The salespeople identified here were adamant that luck played no role in their success. This may represent an additional motivator for future research on the image issues and subsequent behaviors of salespeople: do salespeople suffer from insecurity issues which motivate impulsive, self-image building responses to questions?	S-2 S-3 S-4 S-5 S-7 S-8 S-9 S-10

Source: derived by the author based upon the interview responses.