Is Your Sales Manager Attractive? Examining the Impact of Attractiveness on Credibility: An Abstract

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Abstract The credibility of a sales manager in the eyes of the salesperson is a key component of leadership effectiveness (Bass and Bass 2009; Bettinghaus and Baseheart 1969; Malshe 2010). The authors describe how salespeople form judgments about their managers' credibility based on an emotional connection driven by their managers' physical features (Busenitz et al. 2005; Lord et al. 1984). A salesperson will have a higher level of affective commitment to a more attractive manager, resulting in a perception that the manager is more credible. Consistent with signaling theory and implicit leadership theories, attractiveness signals a halo effect that the manager is able, up-to-date, and competent. The halo affect manifests itself as affective commitment. The ability to process these signals and use them to make assessments increases with experience. Therefore, manager attractiveness will have a greater effect on perceived manager credibility for experienced salespeople than for inexperienced salespeople.

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