

# Adapting Sales Influence Tactics Based on Customer Expertise Levels

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Cite as:

Kim Yenee, McFarland Richard (2019), Adapting Sales Influence Tactics Based on Customer Expertise Levels. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 48th, (8810)

Paper presented at the 48th Annual EMAC Conference, Hamburg, May 24-27, 2019.



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## **Abstract**

This research strives to understand the interpersonal influence mechanism through argument structure theory. Specifically, we investigate how the adaption and usage of different sales influence tactics (information exchange vs. recommendation vs. rationality) can impact salesperson manifest influence based on product expertise levels of customers (i.e., experts vs. novices). Results from our experiments reveal that information exchange tactics are most effective to experts, whereas rationality tactics are most effective to novices, leading to higher salesperson influence manifest and ultimately, to higher product attitude. We attempt to extend theory by developing a theoretical framework on the interaction between customers' product expertise level and salesperson's influence tactic on salesperson manifest influence through argument structure theory. Further, we advance our understanding of the interpersonal influence mechanism through information diagnosticity.

**Keywords:** *Customer Product Expertise; Sales Influence Tactics; Adaptive Selling*

**Track:** Sales Management and Personal Selling