

# Managing Salesperson Turnover in Direct Selling: The Role of Performance-Contingent Leadership and Salespeople's Occupational Employment Levels

**Jan Altenscheidt**  
University of Bochum  
**Christian Schmitz**  
University of Bochum

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## **Abstract:**

Voluntary salesperson turnover has been identified as a major problem for direct selling organizations across industries. However, previous literature missed to point out that the satisfaction drivers of turnover may vary immensely between various employment levels. Therefore, we investigate the interplay of salespeople's levels of occupational employment and contingent leadership behaviors in preventing turnover behaviors. Building on the special conditions in direct selling, we expect the satisfaction drivers of turnover to differ between employment types, which notably change the effectiveness of contingent leadership behaviors. Results of the empirical studies comprising 1,015 direct selling salespeople show that, while contingent leadership behaviors are effective for full-time salespeople, part-timers' propensity to leave can rather be lowered by improving their working conditions. Thereby this study extends salesperson turnover and gives clear guidance for sales managers.

*Keywords: Voluntary Salesperson Turnover, Occupational Employment Level, Performance-Contingent Leadership Behavior*

*Track: Sales Management and Personal Selling*