

Dealing with Customer Demands in Business-to-Business Markets:  
Leveraging the Alleviating Effects of Salesperson and Firm Sales Task  
Resources

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## **Abstract**

Salespeople in B2B markets face overwhelming workloads from complex customer demands, which impact their job satisfaction and sales performance. Drawing on job demands-resources theory, the authors investigate salesperson (achievement orientation) and firm (product portfolio breadth) sales task resources, which serve as safeguarding mechanisms in face of high customer demands. We posit that both sales task resources are of ambivalent nature and that salespeople's self-efficacy is a key boundary condition acting as a resource catalyzer to leverage their alleviating effects. Data from 161 B2B salespeople and objective sales performance is used to test the proposed model. Results show that high customer demands lead to lower job satisfaction and sales performance. The effectiveness of salespeople achievement orientation is contingent on their self-efficacy. However, higher product portfolio breadth alleviates the negative effect of customer demands irrespective of levels of self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** *customer demands; sales performance; job demands-resources theory*

**Track:** Sales Management and Personal Selling