

Sweating the Stress Away: How Exercise Restores Charisma in Anxious Salespeople

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Abstract

Sales roles are inherently anxiety-provoking, yet little is known about how this anxiety shapes how salespeople are seen by their managers. Survey evidence from 176 salesperson-manager dyads demonstrates that for the salesperson, their selling anxiety undermines how charismatic their manager sees them which subsequently diminishes their performance evaluations. Importantly, we identify exercise as a non-cognitive buffering mechanism such that diminishes the negative anxiety-charisma relationship and indirectly shuts down the negative anxiety-performance relationship. These findings introduce exercise as a job performance-relevant resource rather than merely a health behavior, advancing understandings of salesperson well-being and offers actionable insight: in anxiety-provoking selling environments, the body may be just as important as the mind in shaping success.

Track: Sales Management and Personal Selling