

SUMMARY

Contemporary social life causes traditional concepts such as *the market* or *the sales representative* to acquire new meaning. Based on the review of literature on the subject and my own experience (because I have been operating on the sales market for the past 15 years), the effective functioning of sales representatives requires not only professional competences, but above all social competences, which determine their relations with a potential client and the effectiveness of actions taken. Especially important are the ability to connect, openness to social exposure, assertiveness, cooperative and social competences, social resourcefulness.

Guided by these premises, I undertook research on the social competences of sales representatives and their selected conditions. As it turns out, social competences have numerous subjective and environmental determinants, but in the field of my research interests there are only subjective determinants, which, in my opinion, play a key role.

The subject of my research was the social competence profiles of sales representatives, which I considered in the context of selected subjective conditions, such as: personality traits, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, sense of control, coping with stress. The main aim of the research was to determine the relationship between the profiles of social competences of sales representatives and their subjective determinants.

When solving the first detailed research problem rooted in the diagnosis of social competency profiles of the respondents, it was found that sales representatives are most often characterized by an average level of social competences and self-esteem. Then, detailed working hypotheses were verified.

In the case of the first detailed working hypothesis, it should be stated that the social competence profiles of the surveyed sales representatives show a significant relationship with their personality traits defined in the so-called The Big Five.

The second detailed working hypothesis was positively verified in its assumptions. It was found that sales representatives who hardly believe in their own strength, capabilities and professional competences, are only to an average extent characterized by dispositions to act effectively in social situations, achieve their own goals and present behaviors in line with social expectations, especially in terms of assertiveness, cooperation, social competences, social resourcefulness and social skills.

The third working hypothesis was confirmed in the analyzed empirical material. The surveyed sales representatives who do not have the ability to recognize their own and other people's emotional states, as well as those who are characterized by low ability to use their own emotions in social situations and to cope with the emotional states of others to an only average degree, show generic social competences.

The fourth of the verified working hypotheses, assuming a significant relationship between the social competency profiles of the surveyed sales representatives and their sense of control, was positively verified. It turns out that people characterized by an external sense of the locus of control, and therefore having little belief in their agency and capacity to create reality, show average ability to achieve their own goals or exert influence on others, defend their own point of view, display cooperativeness consisting of interpersonal skills enabling effective collaboration with others.

The last of the working hypotheses put forward, assuming significant relationship between the profiles of social competences of sales representatives and their styles of coping with stress, has also been confirmed. It was also found that the correlation structure is slightly different than the hypothetical assumption.

The conducted research led to the following conclusions:

1. Sales representatives are characterized by only an average level of social competences and analyzed profiles: social competences, assertive and cooperative competences, social resourcefulness and social activism which seem to be insufficient in the situation of their constant contact with a potential client and the need to build trust and exert social influence in such a way that will ensure their effectiveness.
2. The differentiation in terms of social competences of sales representatives indicates the need to improve the selection for this profession, in the course of which the level of social competences should be tested as a key competence for functioning on the sales market.
3. The system of professional development of sales representatives should include trainings in the field of social competences, especially in the field of shaping pro-social attitudes, openness to others and coping with stress, preferring constructive styles and actionable strategies in difficult situations.

4. It seems advisable to introduce apprenticeships for people aspiring to perform this difficult professional role. Such internships should be carried out under the supervision of experienced employees in this industry who achieve the highest sales results and with experience resulting from the sale of a different range of products.

5. In the system of assessing professional effectiveness, both sales effectiveness and the ability to build a social network with current and potential buyers of goods and services recommended by the parent company should be assessed to a greater extent.

It seems that the presented suggestions do not exhaust the possibilities of increasing the social competences of sales representatives, especially as this study only analyzed subjective conditions of their functioning.