

Sales Call Reluctance, social anxiety and phobias: What Makes Them Different?



To the uninitiated, they're indistinguishable. Lacking depth and precision, broad-based personality tests used for sales selection, for example, often lump one or more radically different call reluctance diagnostic types in to one big glob.

Research recently presented at the 2004 Annual Convention of the Southwestern Psychological Association by Behavioral Sciences Research Press and Baylor University's Hankamer School of Business confirmed once again that sales call reluctance is not your plain vanilla personality disorder or social distress psychopathology. Using SPQ data, the investigators found that it's quite distinct from generic psychological concerns such as social phobias, stress or anxiety and also different from the way it is represented in less scientific, superficial sales assessment tests. The study concluded that diagnosed properly, the overwhelming majority of reluctant salespeople are more likely to benefit from training protocols designed to target the twelve forms of sales call reluctance and that more pathologically oriented clinical management is rarely necessary. "The concepts offered by some prominent sales training marketeers is not correct and is not supported by evidence. It's not the result of some unseen mysterious mechanism. There is no underlying unconscious process at work in most cases," BSRP co-founder, George Dudley, said. "The symptoms- avoiding making sales calls- are the problem. That means that sales call reluctance is an appropriate issue for sales training."

The study of over 4,000 call reluctant salespeople confirmed that 33 percent experienced career-limiting fear prior to making first contact with prospective buyers. But, the study also demonstrated that for a whopping 97 percent of the afflicted salespeople, the fear subsided once contact was made. This shows that for most salespeople, sales call reluctance is not a systemic, long-term pathology like anxiety, but is frequently, if not usually, narrow and limited.

To help differentiate between fears that require only training, practitioners should rely on comprehensive diagnostic procedures purposefully designed to measure all twelve forms of call reluctance. Once type and degree have been properly identified, call reluctant salespeople should be provided with specific, field-tested countermeasures as a routine matter of prevention or correction. Behavioral Sciences Research Press is the publisher of SPQ*GOLD the world's only specialized psychological test designed to measure call reluctance, and the Fear-Free Prospecting Workshop format, the world's only specialized format designed to neutralize sales call reluctance in the shortest possible time. BSRP's procedures are used by more organizations world-wide to counter sales call reluctance than any other procedures.