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SHAPING THE SELVES OF YOUNG SALESPEOPLE THROUGH EMOTION MANAGEMENT

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This article describes how a door-to-door sales company trains salespeople to engage in emotion management. Company managers and salespeople engage in emotion mining, the search for and development of potential emotional capital in salespeople's biographies. This emotional capital forms an emotional bridge between a salesperson's current self and the self that is supposed to be developed for the job. The article emphasizes the reflexive relationship between emotion management and the self. Salespeople manage their emotions in an attempt to develop a new, better self, which in turn will be better equipped to do emotion management.

Keywords: *emotions; identity; sales; narrative; organizations*

The explosion of social science interest in on-the-job emotion management over the past quarter century parallels significant trends in the American workplace and popular imagination: the expansion of the service sector and subsequent rise in interest in people who have unpleasant jobs but are required to be (or act) happy about them as they interact with customers. Take, for instance, the popularity of Barbara Ehrenreich's (2001) *Nickel and Dimed*, in which the middle-class author takes a series of poorly paying service jobs and reports on the frustration, anger, and sadness she feels in each of them. The service worker forced to act with superficial enthusiasm is joining the white-collar organization man and the direct sales marketer in the American pantheon of workers forced into inauthenticity by the demands of the capitalist workplace.

The social science literature, though, presents a more nuanced view of this trend. Although Arlie Hochschild (1983), in her seminal *The Managed Heart* emphasized the negative effects of emotional labor (emotion management for a wage), several scholars since then have shown that emotional labor can be satisfying for some service workers—particularly if a person's work role is central to his or her personal identity. Spencer Cahill (1999) made an important contribution to understanding the connection between the self and emotional labor by introducing the concept of "emotional capital." In his study of mortuary science students, Cahill found that all the students who could handle the emotional difficulties of working with the dead had "lived, played, and/or worked in and around funeral homes" (p. 111), most as children of funeral directors. No one without this emotional capital was able to successfully deal with the sights and smells of working with human

cadavers. While Cahill's case study demonstrates the importance of emotional capital in one profession, workers in most occupations have more biographical variety and, in all likelihood, a greater set of emotional experiences that they may draw upon in their emotional labor. None of the mortuary students had to convert emotional capital from another set of experiences, that is, not funeral home-related, into emotional capital suitable for getting through the program. The professors apparently did not help students develop emotional capital or realize its potential. Instead they weeded out those without the proper biographical experiences by, for example, using a gurney as a lectern.

In this article, we explore some of the complexities of emotional capital with a case study of the Enterprise Company, which trains and organizes college students to sell educational books door to door during their summer breaks. We used ethnographic and other research methods to examine the training and organization of salespeople over the course of a year. Managers at the company believe that the most difficult task for their student dealers is learning how to overcome negative emotions; thus, they speak of their training program as "emotional training." Importantly for our study, they train with students from a variety of backgrounds and work with these students to develop what are called *emotional purposes*—anything that students feel strongly about and can be used to sell books. One significant example of an emotional purpose is an *emotional other*, a term we derived from Mead's (1934) "generalized other." An emotional other is a person for whom a salesperson has strong feelings and who can be used, such as through imagined conversations, to motivate the salesperson to continuing selling books. We introduce two other terms that describe how managers and salespersons work with emotional capital. We use the term *emotion mining* to refer to the search for and development of potential emotional capital in workers' experiences that had not been previously recognized by the workers as related to their job. We use the term *emotional bridge* to describe how this new emotional capital is used to connect the worker's previous self to the new self that is being developed on the job. We emphasize the reflexive relationship between emotion management and the self. Workers manage their emotions in an attempt to develop a new, better self, which in turn will be better equipped to do emotion management. To make sense of these processes, we draw upon sociological work on emotion management and on Holstein and Gubrium's (2000) concept of the narrative identity.

EMOTIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND NARRATIVES OF THE SELF

Hochschild (1983) coined the term “emotion management” to refer to individuals’ efforts to make their own emotions correspond to those required by cultural or organizational “feeling rules.” The majority of emotion management studies focus on service work and feeling rules necessary to successfully interact with customers. Studies have been conducted on emotion management by airline employees (Hochschild 1983; Taylor and Tyler 2000; Williams 2003), bill collectors (Hochschild 1983; Sutton 1991), fast food workers (Leidner 1993), waiters and waitresses (Hall 1993; Paules 1996), hair stylists/beauty therapists (Parkinson 1996; Sharma and Black 2001), medical workers (Smith and Kleinman 1989; Olesen and Bone 1998), workers at animal shelters (Arluke 1994), mortuary science students (Cahill 1999), salespeople (Leidner 1993), paralegals (Pierce 1995), hospital workers and bankers (Wharton 1993; Bulan, Erickson, and Wharton 1997), convenience store and supermarket clerks (Sutton and Rafaeli 1988; Rafaeli and Sutton 1990), housing subsidy workers (Garot 2004), workers in a large cosmetics company (Martin, Knopoff, and Beckman 1998), and volunteer rescue workers (Lois 2001a, 2001b).

Scholars do not agree on whether the effects of this emotion management are negative or positive. In her classic work, *The Managed Heart*, Arlie Hochschild (1983) argues that emotion management can lead to emotive dissonance, alienation, and identity confusion. Robin Leidner (1993, 1999) echoes Hochschild’s concern about the risk of alienation and identity confusion in her research on emotion management by fast food workers and door-to-door salespeople. Other scholars argue that emotion management in service work can be satisfying (Abiala 1999; Bulan, Erickson, and Wharton 1997; Fineman 1993; Tolich 1993; Wharton 1993; Williams 1988). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) use social identity theory to argue that individuals who strongly identify with their organizational role can experience joy and satisfaction in their emotional labor. “Individuals who regard their [organizational] roles as a central, salient, and a valued component of who they are . . . are apt to feel most authentic when they are *conforming* to role expectations, including display rules” (p. 98). They argue further that even if that identity is weak, the effects may be positive if the role is consistent with some aspect of the individual’s personal identity, such as being

extroverted or sympathetic. They concur with Hochschild and Leidner in the sense that if the individual does not identify with the role, then the emotional labor will likely lead to dissatisfaction, emotive dissonance, and a loss of one's authentic self. However, while identification with the work may mitigate harmful effects of emotional labor, it carries its own "emotional risk: It may psychologically bind one to the role such that one's well-being becomes more or less yoked to perceived successes and failures in the role" (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, 107). In addition, the organizational "goals and images may or may not coincide with the interest of the employee" (Abiala 1999, 210).

Research suggests several strategies used to manage tension between the work role and the self. One strategy is to "distance" oneself from the role (Goffman 1961; Snow and Anderson 1993; Hochschild 1983). By giving the impression that one's self is not really reflected in the work role, people attempt to show themselves and others that the work role is not really who they are. Related to this is Hochschild's (1983) distinction between "surface acting," acting out the emotions without adopting them, and "deep acting," attempting to actually feel the required emotions. Workers may also accept the work role, or parts of it, as part of their identity, allowing them to display proper emotions genuinely with little effort (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993).

Organizations shape interactions by creating standard settings where actors act repeatedly and by providing sets of meanings for making sense of these settings and maneuvering within them (Blumer 1969; Fine 1991). Hochschild (1983) demonstrated that institutions create settings and propagate rules, strategies, and ideologies with an eye toward managing employees' emotions. Organizations may engage in "interpersonal emotion management" (Francis 1997), such as when support groups and counselors are able to shape emotions by constructing ideologies that make sense of clients' selves and situations (Francis 1997; Fox 2001; Rose 1996), or by engaging in strategies like group enactment and provocations (Thoits 1996), or when volunteer rescue workers manage the emotions of victims and their families (Lois 2001a). Organizations may have a "division of emotional labour" (James 1993), and coworkers may engage in reciprocal emotion management (Lively 2000) with each other. Interpersonal emotion management may also involve manipulating people to achieve organizational goals, as with the work of bill collectors (Sutton 1991) and criminal

interrogators (Rafaeli and Sutton 1991). Institutions may also attempt to recruit people who already identify with the work role and are more likely to be able manage their emotions successfully. Cahill (1999) coined the term “emotional capital” for his study of mortuary science students to describe the prior socialization that allowed some students to successfully deal with the training’s emotional challenges. “Different occupations clearly require different forms of emotion work and therefore trade on different forms of emotional capital. Thus individuals with different forms of emotional capital tend to select and to be selected for different careers” (Cahill 1999, 112).

NARRATIVE IDENTITY

To make sense of emotion management at the Enterprise Company, we also draw upon recent work on “narrative selves” and how these selves are constructed in organizations. Holstein and Gubrium (2000) claim that organizations “offer distinct senses of who and what we are, were, and can be. As we act and interact within the shadows of these concerns, their working understandings of personal identities supply the interpretive materials and the general instructions for assembling the selves needed to function effectively in the immediate scheme of things. Participants use these codes and materials to forge the selves they must evince to get on with life under the circumstances” (p. 13). Holstein and Gubrium (cf. Ezzy 1998; Randell 1995) direct our attention to narratives as the material from which selves are built. “Over and over, we are relearning that selves are constructed through storytelling” (p. 103). Institutions facilitate the storytelling by which individuals construct their selves by providing occasions for storytelling and repertoires of storylines. They also place limits on the types of stories that are allowed. A number of scholars have studied “institutional talk” (Drew and Heritage 1992), the discourses used by institutions, groups, and organizations to shape self-narratives (Gubrium and Holstein 2001; Holstein and Gubrium 2000; Irvine 2000). Institutions provide a “conversational environment—a set of methods and constraints—that circumstantially shape storytelling and self constructions” (Holstein and Gubrium 2000, 154). Selves, thus, are “institutional projects” (p. 95).

STUDY OVERVIEW

THE ENTERPRISE COMPANY

The focus of this study is the Enterprise Company, the oldest extant door-to-door sales company in the United States. Its student sales program began following the Civil War to help young Southern men earn money for college by selling Bibles and other religious books during the summer. Many of the contemporary features of the program were already in place by the 1910s. These included students selling in territories far from their hometowns, selling throughout the summer and delivering books shortly before returning to school, working six days a week and meeting in groups on Sundays, and having experienced student dealers recruit their friends and supervise them in the field. Although the company still offers some religious books, its main product line now consists of educational books designed to help elementary and high school students with their schoolwork. Potential student dealers are recruited on their college campuses, often by other students. Following the end of the school year, student dealers travel to company headquarters for a weeklong training session. Dealers are then sent with a team, which usually includes other students from their school, to an assigned sales area somewhere in the United States. Student dealers are expected to work at least thirteen and a half hours a day, six days a week, in all weather. Sundays they meet with their team for additional training and management and engage in some recreation.

Since salespeople work alone and are technically independent contractors (not employees), Enterprise is limited in its worker control strategies. The company relies primarily on what Perrow (1986) calls “premise control” or “unobtrusive control” (also called “normative control”; see Etzioni 1961; Kunda 1992), a worker-control strategy that focuses on changing the way workers think. Salespersons learn how to think about their products, their work routines, their potential customers, the company, and themselves. The goal of company managers is for students to successfully learn this new way of thinking—what we call “Enterprise Thinking”—so they will be able to make sense of and be committed to the sales job.

The Enterprise Company is an ideal site for investigating emotional management for several reasons. Company managers claim that the most difficult part of the job is handling emotions and have built their

training program around the idea of “emotional training.” Thus, managers and student dealers talk a great deal about emotion. A number of the key concepts in the article, like “emotional training” and “emotional purposes,” are *in vivo* categories (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Also, since Enterprise managers train students with a variety of backgrounds, goals, attitudes, and experiences, students enter the job with different types of potential emotional capital.

METHOD AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Our study followed a social constructionist/symbolic interactionist perspective to social organization, which guided our selection of the Enterprise Company as the focus of the study and our approach to investigating it. According to this perspective, social organization is possible because people share socially constructed meanings that guide individual and joint action. We attempted not to assume what these shared meanings were but to discover them through intensive fieldwork at the sites where these meanings were learned, discussed, and brought into play. Two attributes of the company aided our attempt to do this. First, because the company relied on premise control, the shared meanings that constituted Enterprise Thinking were explicitly and repeatedly discussed at every company gathering we attended. Second, the second author was herself a salesperson for Enterprise during the summers of 1990-1992, when she was an undergraduate. During two years as a “student manager” (a title given to all salespersons with at least one year of experience), she recruited and managed other salespersons. Therefore, she already had a familiarity with Enterprise Thinking and was viewed as a credible insider by company officials, managers, and salespeople. Through her contacts with the company, we gained permission from Enterprise in January 1997 to conduct this study, provided that the company not be named. (Enterprise and all names in the article are pseudonyms.)

Over the course of a year, we observed Enterprise managers and salespeople in a variety of settings. Our participant observation was supplemented at every stage of the study by formal interviews with informants we met during our ethnographic work and with many more informal conversations. We also analyzed a variety of company documents, including manuals, tapes, and historical records, and we conducted a series of focus groups. Data were collected and analyzed using

a grounded theory strategy (Strauss and Corbin 1998), which is consistent with our desire to discover social meanings inductively during the research. Thus, the focus of our observations and interviews changed as our research questions developed. Our major concepts, emotion mining and emotional bridge, emerged through comparisons between our data and the sociological literature on emotion work. For instance, emotion mining is an extension of Cahill's (1999) emotional capital. While his concept helped us make sense of salespeople's emotional purposes, the process of searching for and developing this type of emotional capital had not been described in the emotion work literature. We chose mining to describe this process because it connotes an organized and collaborative search for something valuable that already exists but is hidden.

From February through May, we focused on recruiting and training by observing three so-called full-timers, recent college graduates who moved to Midwestern University to recruit teams of college students. During this time, we observed interviews between these full-timers and potential salespersons and group training sessions; we also conducted interviews with the full-timers, the two sales managers who were supervising them, nine members of their teams, and four students who had joined but then quit their teams before the end of the school year.

During the summer, we attended two weeks of sales school. Since rookie and veteran dealers often attend different sessions, attending two weeks allowed us to observe both types of sessions. Following sales school, we conducted two types of observations of salespersons in the "book field." First, the first author observed seven salespersons for one day each. These days typically lasted around fifteen hours, including an early morning breakfast, twelve and a half to thirteen and a half hours of going door to door, and a return trip to the salesperson's residence. During these observations, the researcher took on the role of the "follower," a salesperson who trails and trains with a more experienced salesperson. During the summer, we also attended eight "Sunday meetings," group meetings of salespeople held during their only day off, in five different states. We sometimes participated in the recreational activities that followed these meetings.

At the conclusion of the summer, we attended three days of "check-out" at company headquarters to talk to student dealers who had just completed a summer of selling. We held nine focus groups (with a total of thirty-four participants) that focused on motivation in the book field.

We also re-interviewed eleven salespersons from the Midwestern University teams when they returned to school.

Consistent with our social constructionist/symbolic interactionist approach, we attempted to identify and understand the key meanings that the company attempted to construct in order to make this difficult job worth doing. Among these were self-transformation, teamwork, "positive mental attitude," and money. In other articles, we describe how the company constructs the meaning of money (Schweingruber and Berns 2003) and "positive mental attitude" (Schweingruber forthcoming-a) and how the principles of Enterprise Thinking are connected to the company's work routines (Schweingruber forthcoming-b). In the present article, we focus on self-transformation and its connection to emotion management.

EMOTIONAL TRAINING

Teaching emotion management is central to the Enterprise training program. In fact, Enterprise managers use the term "emotional training" (or "emotional preparation") to refer to the focus of its training program. Emotional training is the process of changing the way dealers think and feel so that they will be able to succeed on the book field. Enterprise managers contrast emotional training with "technical training," which consists of learning sales scripts and other work routines. Managers typically claim that training should be 80 percent emotional and 20 percent technical.

Managers stress the importance of emotional training because the job is viewed as one that produces strong emotions. The Enterprise sales job is often described as an "emotional roller coaster." Because the job is so physically, socially, and emotionally difficult, around a third of dealers each summer quit the job before finishing their twelve weeks of selling. Many others remain in the book field but fall "off-schedule," a negative designation that includes knocking on the first door after 8 a.m., quitting before 9:30 p.m., or taking breaks in between. Enterprise dealers regularly experience such emotional challenges as negative social interactions with prospects, loneliness, failure to sell, and fatigue. However, most dealers define the hardest part of the job in terms of their selves. This is the intention of their managers. Copp (1998) suggests that "people may fail to control their emotions when

they interact in situations that seem beyond their control” (p. 325). Enterprise’s strategy is to teach salespersons that everything is within their control: proper attitude and work habits will inevitably lead to success. Narratives suggesting that salespersons’ circumstances, for example, their sales territory, might affect their sales performance are discouraged. According to the sales manual, “You see, it is not the circumstances that happen to you in life; it is the ATTITUDE toward those circumstances that determines the kind of person you are going to be.” Thus, dealers talk about the difficulties of “keeping on schedule,” “staying positive,” “staying motivated,” “keeping focused,” and “controlling emotions.” These salespersons are attempting to build a self that will allow them to manage the emotions of the book field.

Emotional training involves storytelling. Managers tell stories to student dealers, and dealers share stories with each other. Stories within the company’s official discourse attempt to make sense of the Enterprise sales job and the selves of the people working there. Some of these stories may then become part of a dealer’s repertoire that she or he can use to make sense of her or his experience in the book field. Managers also attempt to help dealers develop their own stories that can be used in their work. They engage in emotion mining, the search for and development of potential emotional capital, to discover what personal experiences and attributes can become reasons to sell books.

At the heart of this training is the assertion that selling books door to door will make you a better person. Or, in the words of the company’s motto, the sales program is about “building character in young people.” This master narrative is described in the company sales manual: “What kind of person do you want to be a year from now? Or two years from now? Or five years from now? Or 10? Or 20? Right now you are in the process of becoming the person you will be in a year, or two, or five, or 10 or 20 years from now. The habits you have now will determine the kind of person you will become unless you change those habits now.” Although it does not hold true for everyone, the promise of a better self through door-to-door sales is not a fabrication. The company’s managers, who all began as Enterprise door-to-door salespersons, are true believers. Many dealers do report a transforming experience, as this dealer told us: “It was definitely the best experience of my life. You learn so much about yourself and other people, how to deal with people and problems. It’s a great thing: you learn so much and then you can

come back the next year as a student manager and learn even more” (white male, first-year dealer).

These dealers claim the job teaches them to better experience adversity, learn more about themselves, improve their “self-motivation,” gain increased knowledge about the world and human behavior, and improve their interpersonal skills. Their growth on the book field, they believe, will carry over to other aspects of their life. Although not all student dealers experience this personal transformation, this master narrative is dominant in managers’ and dealers’ institutional talk.

EMOTIONAL PURPOSES: PERSONALIZED NARRATIVES

Mandy, one of the Midwestern University full-timers, gathered her team in her motel room around 10 p.m., after a busy day of sales school, to share stories about the people who inspired them the most. Students discussed a grandfather who had risen from teller to bank president, a sister whose husband was killed, a grandmother who raised the student and her siblings after the death of their mother, and other relatives who had sacrificed for their families. Mandy told her team about her parents’ sneaking out of Laos and living for months in refugee camps in Thailand and the Philippines. They eventually made it to the United States. Mandy said she learned while living in the camps that when you have an opportunity, you can’t let go. “Don’t give up on anything you do,” she said. “Don’t take anything for granted.” After everyone had shared their stories, Mandy told them that as they go through hardship, they should keep these admired people in mind.

It was not obvious to college students beginning their sales training that an inspirational relative or a dramatic experience like escaping your native country in disguise can become a reason to sell books door to door. Enterprise managers help dealers turn these sorts of experiences into “emotional purposes” (also called “emotional incentives”) that can be used to sell books. Dealers describe the book field as a world of deep negative emotions that must be dealt with emotionally, not rationally. They believe, in fact, that money is an insufficient reason to sell books (Schweingruber and Berns 2003). Instead, company managers recommended they focus on “something more” than money. The term “emotional purpose” describes a personalized, nonmonetary reason to sell books. According to Robert, a popular sales manager, “an emotional purpose has a physical effect on you because it is so

important to you. . . . It is something important enough to you that when you think about it, it's a big deal. It makes your throat tighten and your eyes water."

During spring training meetings, Enterprise managers meet with their recruits and attempt to learn what motivates them. During this process of emotion mining, the manager and dealer attempt to develop a personalized narrative of what is important to the dealer and how that will get him or her through the summer. Although each dealer's narrative may be unique, the manager does not start from scratch in helping to develop this narrative. The manager has a standard list of possible emotional incentives in mind and tries to find out which ones will work for each dealer. An ideal narrative should describe how the Enterprise sales job will transform the student's self.

One type of emotional purpose focuses on creating a better self that can be carried into many future situations. These include becoming a "finisher" and a "professional" and developing a "positive mental attitude." For instance,

My purpose before I started this job was that I was . . . just afraid of responsibility, you know what I mean? But taking on this job you have to be very responsible and very committed. . . . You're doing this because you are helping yourself out or just becoming a better person. (black male, first-year dealer)

A second type of emotional purpose involves transforming a relationship with another person, whom we call an emotional other. These emotional others may include parents, friends, Enterprise teammates or managers, sales prospects, or people in the dealers' imagined futures, such as future employers or spouses. We describe these emotional others in more detail below.

A salesperson's personalized set of emotional purposes forms an emotional bridge between his or her old self and a new self who will be able to work hard in the book field and, salespeople are told, will serve them well in their future jobs and families. As managers learn about their salespeople, they find emotional capital that can be used to assemble the new self. Rejecting some of the possible emotional incentives is not a problem. If a dealer says he's not competitive, his student manager does not need to convince him to care about competitions, but if he is competitive, he can learn to be competitive about selling books. If a dealer's family supports her decision to work for Enterprise, she may

dedicate her summer to them. If they do not, she can focus on proving to these “skeptics” that they are wrong. The emotional purposes that a dealer chooses are reinforced through a variety of practices, including writing them down, sharing them with other dealers, repeating them aloud while going door to door, and incorporating them into ceremonies, competitions, and other social events.

MR. MEDIOCRITY AND “WHAT-IFS”: GENERIC NARRATIVES

The evening before the start of sales school, the team from Midwestern University lined up in a classroom to practice their “approach” with Dan, their regional sales manager. They had been practicing with the full-timers throughout the spring, but with better results. Dan was brutal with them, yelling at them to get off his porch and kicking their book bags. The next morning, the students walked to a large municipal auditorium for the official start of sales school. Rich, the company’s vice president of marketing, greeted them by acting out, with great energy and humor, the day they had signed up to be a door-to-door salesperson and impersonating all the people—their roommate, their parents, and everyone at their college—who thought they were crazy to sell books door to door. The audience laughed in recognition of their experience. Then Rich spoke of the doubts that the salespersons themselves had and personified them as Mr. Mediocrity (or Mr. M.), who appears in company materials as a little green man and sits on students’ shoulders. “On your first day,” said Rich, “at your first door, [Mr. Mediocrity] will say, ‘This isn’t working out, is it?’ ” Rich instructs student dealers to knock Mr. M. off their shoulders and stomp on him. He stomps loudly and repeatedly on the ground and announces, “This will stun him.”

Although much of sales school resembles a pep rally emphasizing the joys of the company, its products, and the sales job, many sessions are aimed at informing student dealers of everything that can go wrong in the book field—and how they are supposed to react to it and feel about it. Enterprise managers, like Dan and Rich, engage in this preemptive emotional training because they believe if dealers are prepared for a negative experience, they are more likely to handle it correctly and less likely to quit the job. Managers use generic narratives to describe events that have happened to dealers (like getting made fun of for joining the company) and that are likely to happen to them. Although generic in the sense that they could apply to anyone, these narratives are

told or enacted with humor, pathos, or dramatized hostility (as in the practice approaches).

One technique for discussing potential problems and rehearsing emotion work is a storytelling exercise called “what-ifs.” For each what-if, the manager describes in great detail a situation that will be encountered in the book field. One manager’s description of rain included shoes that do not ever dry, socks fallen down to the middle of your foot, feet hurting from the wetness, and no one letting you in his or her house. The manager and dealers then discuss how dealers can manage emotions during this circumstance and continue selling. By the end of training, the student dealers are supposed to be able to finish the story themselves. The goal of the exercise is for the dealers to be able to repeat the story to themselves when they actually encounter the situation. Another variation is to have student dealers come up with three positive things about any problem. For example, a flood in the sales territory means that (1) people will need new books, (2) more people may be home, and (3) people will admire that you are out selling during a flood.

MOTIVATIONAL TALKS: SHARING NARRATIVES

Perhaps the most moving story the Midwestern University students heard at sales school was Robert’s description of being orphaned as a seventh grader and taken in by an aunt and uncle. Robert told his audience that he was a “confused young man” who did not get along with his uncle very well. During his first summer of selling books, however, he learned “things Uncle Frank was trying to teach me.” After a summer in the book field, Robert could appreciate for the first time his uncle’s hard work and the sacrifice he had made to take in Robert and his siblings. His uncle had a new respect for Robert after his hard work in the book field and could see the transformation he had undergone. The topic of Robert’s testimonial was the “Success Coin,” an award dealers can win by putting in seventy-five hours a week during their first two weeks in the book field. His talk was not uncommon in connecting an emotional personal story to whatever Enterprise award, principle, or work routine is being promoted.

During sales school, student dealers are exposed to numerous “motivational talks” that contain stories about selling books door to door or overcoming other great challenges. Former dealers at sales school

describe how sticking with Enterprise resulted in personal growth, self-confidence, money, success in future jobs, and healing of family conflict. Any claims Enterprise makes about its sales program can be incorporated into these narratives, which are also found in motivational books and tapes supplied by the company. These stories are intended to provide model narratives that student dealers can draw upon to make sense of their experiences in the book field and manage their emotions. One salesperson described to us how she compared her own experiences in the book field to stories found in a popular motivational book:

Some of the stories, like in *Now's Your Time To Win*. . . . You think about like the guy's car blowing up and some of the stuff he went through. And if you get frustrated about the situation you're in and you've got it right there on paper in your selling bag. You think about all the stuff they went through, you have to kind of laugh about how frustrated you are. I'm like, man, no one's home. OK, his car blew up, which was a little bit more serious. (white female, first-year dealer)

SUPPRESSING NEGATIVE NARRATIVES

Shortly before sales school, the full-timers at Midwestern University sponsored a "production meeting," a mini-sales school that included rookie dealers and their student managers from other nearby campuses. One of the speakers was a Midwestern University professor who had worked for Enterprise twenty years earlier. His talk covered a number of themes the rookie dealers had heard before: the job will give you persistence, sales ability that can be used in any profession, and the ability to stay on schedule. But he also said something that troubled the student managers: half the salespersons he sold with had quit. "Every day you have to decide: is it worth it?" he said. "If you quit, you aren't a failure. . . . Some people aren't cut out for it." One of his friends who had quit was now very successful in his job putting together initial public offerings. The message that quitting is okay or that any good can come of it is a serious departure from the official Enterprise storyline. During the Q&A that followed, the student managers attempted to repair the damage by eliciting information about why he did not quit and what kept him working. Afterwards, one of the full-timers told us that the professor's talk was the last thing she would want her rookies to hear.

Organizations like Enterprise that attempt to build particular selves through storytelling must place limits on what stories can be told.

Although nonapproved narratives are not entirely eliminated, a number of measures are taken to limit and suppress them. Most speakers at Enterprise events are current or former salespersons who are expected to tell the right kinds of stories. Storytelling by rookie dealers takes place under the supervision of managers who can correct or re-interpret their stories. During the summer, rookie dealers are all assigned to live with a student manager and while at “headquarters,” they are not supposed to tell any “negative” stories. They are also not to indicate how well they sold since their failures are negative and their successes can be negative for someone who is not doing as well. The need to tell nonapproved stories—gripes, complaints, accusations—is met during one-on-one “personal conferences” or “PCs.” During the summer, these take place on Sundays. Each rookie dealer “PCs” with a student manager, who is instructed to listen to whatever he or she has to say without interrupting or correcting. After the rookie is done talking, the student manager attempts to make sense of and re-interpret negative narratives into positive ones. Student managers “PC” with each other or with higher-level sales managers. All negative narratives are supposed to go up the chain of command; no one is supposed to hear a non-approved story from someone above them.

EMOTION MANAGEMENT IN THE BOOK FIELD

Stories that student dealers hear during training only guide their actions to the extent that they are able to repeat them to themselves on the book field—or create their own stories that are shaped by those provided to them. In this section, we examine how student dealers make use of these stories to perform emotion management while going door to door. There are two aspects of this process. First, student dealers use these narratives in the book field because they are useful—or dealers hope they will be useful—in dealing with their practical concerns. Second, the use of these narratives functions as a form of “premise control.” Salespersons are supposed to engage in “a constant and intense self-scrutiny, a continual evaluation of [their] personal experiences, emotions, and feelings” (Rose 1990, 254) in relation to the narratives of self-actualization and autonomy endorsed by the company. The second aspect depends on the first. If the narratives provided by company

managers don't work in the book field, they will cease to guide salespersons' behavior.

SERVICE-MINDEDNESS AS AN EMOTIONAL PURPOSE

The idea of "service-mindedness," one of the most common emotional purposes, reframes the job as providing a service. Salespersons who adopt this definition of the job can feel positive about the services they provide in the book field—even if they are not selling books. Successfully defining the job this way can act as a hedge against negative feelings resulting from rejection by prospects as well as many salespersons' previously held beliefs that door-to-door sales is an impolite activity. One type of service dealers claim to provide is helping students by selling them educational books that would aid them in school. Student dealers believed in their products. Although we heard them complain about almost every aspect of the job, rarely was a bad word ever said about the company's line of educational books. One student dealer described to us the importance of service-mindedness and how he incorporated it into an affirmation he repeated to himself.

My big thing is I'd just tell myself I'm going to show this to thirty families a day. I've had so many people, especially this summer, [who] are just like, "Steve, thanks so much for stopping by and showing us books because my kids just need help in math and these books look like they're really going to help." And so then I just drive around all day saying, "So many people out here want books. I just have to find them. So many people out here want books. My job is just to find them." Just take the pressure off because I know I'm supposed to be doing what I'm doing and I really am helping people out. People are excited about me stopping by.
(white male, third-year dealer)

However, student dealers also believe they can provide services even to prospects who do not buy any books. One of these services was simply to have a talk with the family about the importance of education, a theme of the official sales talk. Enterprise managers encouraged dealers to think of themselves as "professional educational consultants." Dealers were also taught they could serve prospects by being the most positive person they would encounter all summer. Thus, the dealer's positive emotions can rub off on the prospects. This idea was expressed in a popular positive affirmation, which is printed on a large red card

included in dealers' sales kits: "This is the best day I've ever had! I can, I will, and I'm going to help 30 people today live a richer, fuller, more meaningful life because I stopped by and showed them my books." Focusing on creating positive emotions for sales prospects can lift dealers' own spirits, as with this dealer who connected service-mindedness with her larger emotional purpose of regaining her confidence:

My emotional purpose was to, like, regain [my confidence]. I had a really rough school year and I lost a lot of my confidence. And that was really my main purpose, was to go out there and to get something nontangible for Mrs. Jones and to give her something. So that kinda served as my attitude too, but just, you know, I wanted people when I walked in the room to feel happy that I was there. . . . I wanted that confidence. (Asian female, second-year dealer)

EMOTIONAL OTHERS

Another popular type of emotional purpose involves an emotional other. Mead (1934) argued that people carry on internal conversations with a "generalized other," which is a mental representation of a community with which each person interacts. Likewise, an Enterprise dealer visualizes conversations with emotional others and otherwise incorporates them into his or her thoughts as part of emotion management. Emotional others can be specific people from salespersons' pre-Enterprise network, other Enterprise workers, or imagined future others, like employers, spouses, and children (since the sales job will make salespersons better employees, husbands, wives, and parents). Service-mindedness can be thought of as making sales prospects into emotional others. Perhaps the most popular emotional others are a salesperson's parents, who can be symbolically "sold for" as part of a "dedication." To help keep Mom and Dad in mind, dealers may post a picture of them in their car or even call them in the morning to tell them they will be selling for them that day. Some pretend the recipient of the dedication is present and have imaginary conversations with him or her, as this dealer reported: "When I choose somebody to work for on a certain day . . . I would talk to them in the car, I would call them on the [toy] cell phone [he had won in a contest] when I was walking down the sidewalk. I would pretend like they were there" (white male, first-year dealer). These supportive family members also receive training. Managers coach parents on the proper narratives to use when talking to their

children during the summer. Managers warn parents that their son or daughter will call them at some point in the summer saying they hate the job and want to quit. Parents are offered some suggestions for how to respond—all of which end in the parents' encouraging their children to stay with the job. Narratives for making sense of the sales job are often provided by parents of experienced or former dealers, whom managers arrange to meet with parents of rookie dealers with the expectation that they will talk about their own skepticism and fear about the company and their current understanding of what a wonderful experience selling books actually was for their child.

Parents and others in a salesperson's pre-Enterprise network can be transformed into another type of emotional other, the skeptic. Skeptics are a salesperson's emotional others who believe that selling books door to door is a mistake. During the summer, the salesperson can visualize interactions with these skeptics when he tells them how much money he made. According to one salesperson, "I think skeptics motivate me. . . . I want to be able to tell these people, yeah, it was a pretty good summer. I made about \$14,000 but I'm coming back next summer. I want to rub it in" (white male, second-year dealer).

Student dealers use other salespersons as emotional others. Dealers may focus on beating friendly rivals (a practice promoted by publishing sales statistics from around the country in a weekly newsletter) or on demonstrating their commitment to their managers and teams, which they may have made in a sales school commitment ceremony or put into writing. Student managers may attempt to set a good example for the rookies in their organization. Finally, student dealers who are religious may focus on God as an emotional other who wants to "sculpt" them through the challenges of the book field (Schweingruber forthcoming-a).

LETTERS FROM ONE SELF TO ANOTHER SELF

Earlier we described how salespeople can draw on their pre-Enterprise selves to create new and improved selves that will serve them well on the book field and beyond. Emotional capital discovered and developed through emotion mining forms an emotional bridge between the old and new selves. Enterprise managers have developed techniques allowing communication from one self to the other. As student dealers develop personalized emotional purposes and goals during

sales school, they put them into writing. This allows a student dealer's sales school self to communicate with her book field self. Sales school is a bridge between the pre-Enterprise self and the book field self. Students at sales school are learning Enterprise Thinking, but they have no actual experience on the job. Thus, the book field self might be assumed to be more informed about being a door-to-door salesperson. However, Enterprise managers tell dealers that their thoughts during sales school are clear and rational because they are not contaminated by the negative emotions of the book field. They are also in regular contact with managers and teammates who can help them maintain the company's official definition of the situation. Messages from this "rational" sales school self can then be used by salespersons to manage their emotions on the book field. One manager, for instance, had dealers fill out a "persistence card," which was to begin with the lines, "Dear X, I wrote this when my head is clear. This is what I want to get out of this summer." This letter was given to the sales manager at sales school and then mailed to the salesperson during the fourth week of the summer. Another manager had student dealers write letters to themselves that they were to open only when they were about to quit the job.

Dealers also make lists that are used similarly to the letters in emotionally bridging the two selves. The dealer and his or her sales manager refer to the lists during the summer to help the dealer stay motivated. According to one dealer, "We wrote out a list of emotional purposes and then whenever I got to the point—why am I doing this?—then you go back to the list and think: there's twenty-five reasons I'm doing this job. I need to do this job. I want to do this job for these reasons" (white female, second-year dealer).

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

Julie, one of the dealers followed by the first author, had twenty "positive phrases" taped to the dashboard, ceiling, sun shade, and steering wheel of her car. These included

Don't think—just put your head down & work!
 Winners perform consistently regardless of how they feel!
 Success is measured by what you do compared to what you're *capable* of!
 You good lookin' thing, don't you ever die.

Throughout the day, Julie commented on how “positive” things are. These included things that seemed positive to me, like drinking ice water or a sale, but Julie also used “positive” to note, for instance, a pile of dead worms and a sales prospect wearing a swimsuit in her backyard. After accidentally turning the wrong way onto a one-way street, she announced, “That’s the most positive thing to happen to me today.”

Enterprise managers promote the use of positive phrases and positive self-talk as a way for student dealers to discipline their thoughts. Many sales managers and dealers claimed that it is impossible to think a negative thought if you are saying something positive out loud. Because of this belief, student dealers are advised to repeat positive phrases aloud as they go between doors. Undisciplined thinking can be counterproductive to maintaining proper emotions in the book field.

Some positive phrases focus on dispelling negative emotions, such as “Feel fear and do it anyways” and “This too shall pass.” Others focus on creating positive emotions, like “I’m a powerhouse of enthusiasm” and “I love people and I love my job.” Other positive phrases were used just because they sound funny. One dealer claimed to use the phrase “I feel like I just ate a bagel” because “it’s just so corny it makes me smile.” Many positive phrases simply describe future success on the book field, such as “Everyone’s getting them,” “Who’s next?” and “Get your checkbook ready—here I come.”

Positive phrases can also be tailored to a dealer’s particular emotional purposes. For instance, a dealer focusing on service-mindedness may use phrases like “The kids out here need me to work” and “I’m so excited about helping families and helping children.” During “Dad’s Week,” dealers may work Dad into their positive self-talk. While most positive phrases were short, other dealers used longer ones, such as “It doesn’t matter if I have one customer a day, it doesn’t matter if I have ten customers a day. One customer isn’t going to break my summer and ten customers isn’t going to make my summer. It’s the work habits and the attitude that I’m forming today that are going to last me forever. That’s why I sell books.”

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The people of the Enterprise Company are storytellers, and the ability to tell a good story is held in high regard. Storytelling is important,

of course, to make sales (which has not been the focus of this article). But Enterprise salespersons also tell stories to each other and to themselves as part of building and maintaining new selves. In this article, we have shown the interconnections between the narrative selves of the salespersons and their emotion management. In this section, we summarize our argument and suggest how the concepts we have developed may sensitize researchers to similar processes in other settings.

Cahill's (1999) discussion of "emotional capital" focused on one type of emotional experience that was useful for people entering a specific profession. Our concept of emotion mining is an extension of Cahill's concept. We suggest that emotional capital is not just something that people own but something they produce and use. The process of emotion mining is akin to the attempt of "method" actors to tap into previous emotional experience to create performances. Rookie salespersons at Enterprise do not have any idea that their relationships with their parents, their religious faith, or their competitiveness can become potent reasons to sell books. Working in conjunction with their managers, they discover which of their attributes and experiences can become "emotional purposes" and how to use these purposes in the book field. Through conversations with managers and other dealers, positive phrases posted on dashboards and repeated aloud between doors, and other techniques, dealers turn this emotional capital into immediate reasons to knock on the next door. If the mortuary training represents one extreme—only one type of emotional capital is relevant and easily accessed—Enterprise represents another extreme. Enterprise managers have developed a set of practices for translating anything salespersons feel strongly about into reasons for selling books. Although few organizations may approach the situation at Enterprise, we suspect that emotion management in many other settings requires some sort of emotion mining to translate past experiences into useable emotional capital.

The emotional capital developed through Enterprise's program of emotional training acts as an emotional bridge between two selves—the pre-Enterprise self and the self that is supposed to be gained by selling books door to door. Although the salesperson role is quite different from anything most of these college students have performed, they can draw upon things they already feel strongly about in order to support this new role. Selling books now becomes a way to love Mom and Dad, impress friends, improve job prospects, and so on. The primary emo-

tional socialization strategy is not role distancing or surface acting but the transformation of the self into one who can better engage in the required emotional labor without the negative consequences highlighted by Hochschild (1983) and others. The role of the door-to-door salesperson is made a “central, salient, and a valued component of who [salespersons] are” (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, 98), leading to feelings of authenticity. However, this process may “psychologically bind [salespersons] to the role such that one’s well-being becomes more or less yoked to perceived successes and failures in the role” (p. 107). This is apparent in the difficulty many salespersons who quit have in not perceiving themselves as failures. The concept of the emotional bridge could profitably sensitize researchers to the importance of the reflexive relationship between emotion management and the self. At Enterprise, the relationship between the program of emotional training and building a better self is spelled out. Salespersons attempt to manage their emotions to create a new self, which, in turn, is supposed to be better equipped to do emotion work on and off the job. The goal is a “frame transformation” (Snow et al. 1986). At other workplaces, this reflexive process may not be intended or recognized, but the workers doing emotional labor may become the types of people for whom this emotional labor becomes easier to do. Or, as at Enterprise, the process of emotional labor may select out those who are unable to make the transformation.

Our analysis also highlights the importance of storytelling in emotional socialization. Emotional training at Enterprise consists largely of storytelling. Managers use a variety of storytelling techniques to provide narratives that make sense of life on the book field. Managers also help student dealers develop their own narratives through emotion mining. Dealers then attempt to use their narratives during their work, sometimes repeating abbreviated versions of them aloud while going door to door. Nonapproved narratives are corrected or limited to times, like personal conferences, when the audience is small and trained to reinterpret them. As suggested by scholars like Holstein and Gubrium (2000), the Enterprise Company provides a set of narrative materials for assembling selves. The primary purpose of this process at Enterprise is emotional socialization—the creation of selves who can handle the emotions of the book field.

Our findings also demonstrate the potential importance of multiple others in existing and new social networks for emotion management,

adding to an already rich body of work on interpersonal and reciprocal emotion management (e.g., Cahill and Eggleston 1994; Francis 1997; James 1993; Lively 2000; Thoits 1996). Emotional training at Enterprise is organized by sales managers operating out of company headquarters. These managers speak at sales school and have intermittent, although sometimes intense, interactions with student dealers to train them and help them develop emotional purposes. Much emotional training is also carried out by other student dealers. Every student with at least a year of experience receives the title "student manager" and is responsible for the emotional training of rookie dealers even if they have not recruited any themselves. Rookie dealers themselves are enlisted to share their own stories. Even people on the outside of the company, like parents, are taught strategies to shape the emotions of salespersons. Since dealers work alone, though, the company has developed techniques for turning people into emotional others whom salespersons attempt to keep in mind when they are alone in the book field. Those who are supportive may be recipients of dedications; others may be neutralized by defining them as skeptics. Teammates, managers, sales prospects, and even hypothetical future spouses can be used as emotional others. Examples of emotional others can be found in research on therapeutic groups. For instance, Thoits (1996) describes participants in a psychodrama workshop doing "lone enactments" addressing imaginary persons, and Francis (1997) describes members of a grief support group attempting to "incorporate" the deceased into their selves. Our findings regarding emotional others point toward the importance of understanding how people may attempt to manage their own emotions on the job by focusing on people for whom they have strong feelings. Since motives for work include providing others with financial support, seeking prestige or recognition by others, competing with others, and so on, we ought to understand how these relationships may be used as a form of emotional capital.

Finally, this study raises questions about the use of emotion management as a form of worker control, a topic that has not been thoroughly explored. Jacoy (2003) examined emotional labor as a method of "motivating employees to accept the conditions of capitalist work relations." Kunda's (1992) focus, which is closer to our own, was on how the positive emotions of employees for the company may function as a form of premise control. Kunda's study and ours suggest that Perrow's (1986) conceptualizing premise control in terms of "cognitive" pre-

mises needs to be broadened to include emotion. Future research should address the many ways that emotion work can direct workers toward company goals. For instance, at Enterprise, managers attempt to instill in salespersons positive emotions toward the company itself, its managers, its other salespersons, its products, its customers, and the sales process. All these foci of emotion management may be found in other organizations. Also of interest are in what types of companies and jobs these types of emotion management can be found and what structural properties affect their utility as control mechanisms.

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