

5-30-2024

## Effective Sales Education Training Delivery Methods: A Pragmatic Inquiry

Eunice N. Onyelobi-Miller  
*Walden University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

---

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu](mailto:ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu).

# Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Eunice Onyelobi-Miller

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Kim Critchlow, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Inez Black, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost  
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2024

Abstract

Effective Sales Education Training Delivery Methods: A Pragmatic Inquiry

by

Eunice Onyelobi-Miller

MBA, DePaul University, 2019

BS, University of Missouri-Columbia, 2016

Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

June 2024

## Abstract

Ineffective training delivery methods developed and delivered to Generation Z employees negatively impact a sales organization's overall profitability, causing the risk of reduction in force or business closure. Grounded in content, instructional design, programmed learning, and recommendation (CIP-R) framework, and diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational supports (DITTO) framework, the purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry was to explore effective strategies sales managers used to develop and deliver sales training for Generation Z employees to increase sales organizations' revenues. The participants were 10 sales managers in the United States who trained Generation Z employees and impacted revenues. Data were collected using semistructured interviews, public websites, public documents, and archival data. Through thematic analysis, six themes were identified: (a) timing, (b) impact of artificial intelligence, (c) training styles, (d) measurement, (e) building trust, and (f) understanding the generation gap between senior leadership and Generation Z employees. A key recommendation is for sales managers to understand their Generation Z employees' learning needs and optimal learning styles to increase selling skills and organizations' revenues. The implications for positive social change include the potential to promote diversity and inclusion within sales organizations from current sales leaders and engender future sales leaders who are conscious of the needs required for multigenerational teams.

Effective Sales Education Training Delivery Methods: A Pragmatic Inquiry

by

Eunice Onyelobi-Miller

MBA, DePaul University, 2019

BS, University of Missouri-Columbia, 2016

Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

June 2024

## Dedication

I dedicate my doctoral project to my late mother, Felicia Chinyere Onyelobi; my courageous father, Godwin Chukwujekwu Onyelobi, the world's best husband; my husband, Vincent Terrell Miller; my sister and dearest best friend who is currently pursuing her JD, Maureen Ndidiamaka Onyelobi; all of the sales leaders who have started with me in my technology sales journey, and later joined me in providing rich data for my research; and last but certainly not least my current growing leader of the future. Mommy and Daddy cannot wait to meet you!

## Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I must thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ for His unwavering love and promises to follow me all the days of my life. Joshua 1:9. I will be formally and publicly committing my life to Christ on July 7th, 2024, which is my late mother's birthday, 8 days before my 30th birthday, and 12 days before my doctoral commencement. Abundance and overflow. Thank you, Dear God!

Thank you to my phenomenal and God-sent husband, Vincent. Without your support, this feat wouldn't be nearly as possible. Thank you for your patience, listening to topics you didn't understand, carrying our family, and pushing me every step of the way. As I've always stated, this doctorate is as much yours as it is mine.

To my committee chairperson, Dr. Critchlow, thank you is simply not enough. I have submitted for the creation of a new word to describe how incredible and monumental you've been for me in my doctoral journey. She has been a pillar of motivation and a stellar mentor guiding me toward doctoral completion. Her impact is forever embedded in the pinnacle of my educational career.

Lastly, I acknowledge my entire professional learning network. Most importantly my second committee chairperson, Dr. Inez Black, for her support and expedited assistance in ensuring a quality project to be included in sales research, and the exceptional peers I was mentored alongside, the Critchlow Scholars. Run, walk, creep, or crawl.... succeed we must!

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	iv
List of Figures .....	v
Section 1: Foundation of the Project.....	1
Background of the Problem .....	1
Business Problem Focus and Project Purpose .....	2
Research Question .....	3
Assumptions and Limitations .....	3
Assumptions.....	3
Limitations .....	3
Transition .....	3
Section 2: The Literature Review .....	5
Review of the Professional and Academic Literature.....	5
Application to the Applied Business Problem .....	6
Conceptual Framework.....	6
Training Needs of Generation Z Employees .....	11
Difference from Multigenerational Employees .....	11
Training Delivery Methods.....	14
Digital and Emerging Technologies in Sales Training .....	15
Understanding the Need for Digital Transformation .....	15
Incorporating Artificial Intelligence .....	18
Different Types of Artificial Intelligence .....	19



Generation Z’s Innate Adoption of the Internet.....	22
Impact on Employee Productivity & Organizational Revenues .....	26
Sales Managers’ Impact on Gen Z Productivity .....	27
Incorporating Stakeholder Expertise & Generation Z Feedback .....	29
Current and Future Trends .....	31
Skills Needed .....	31
Sales Training for Adaptability and Growth.....	34
Trends for AI-powered Sales Education Programs .....	37
Transition .....	38
Section 3: Research Project Methodology .....	39
Project Ethics .....	39
Role of the Researcher .....	39
Informed Consent.....	40
Confidentiality .....	40
Nature of the Project .....	41
Population, Sampling, and Participants .....	42
Data Collection Activities.....	43
Interview Questions .....	44
Data Organization and Analysis Techniques .....	45
Reliability and Validity.....	47
Reliability and Dependability .....	47
Validity, Credibility, Transferability, Conformity, and Data Saturation .....	47

Transition and Summary .....	49
Section 4: Findings and Conclusions .....	50
Introduction .....	50
Presentation of the Findings.....	50
Development Strategies .....	53
Delivery Strategies.....	64
Business Contributions and Recommendations for Professional Practice .....	68
Implications for Social Change.....	73
Recommendations for Further Research.....	75
Conclusion .....	76
References.....	79
Appendix A: Interview Protocol.....	97
Appendix B: Participant Invitation .....	100

## List of Tables

Table 1. Number of Sources Used .....	6
Table 2. DITTO: Research-Based Policies and Practices to Leverage the Uniqueness of Gen Z .....	10
Table 3. Participant Demographics .....	51
Table 4. Strategy Contribution.....	53
Table 5. Training Styles Used.....	59

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Kim's (2022) CIP-R Framework..... 7

Figure 2. Participant Industry Diversity..... 51

## Section 1: Foundation of the Project

### **Background of the Problem**

Organizations invest in sales training learning tools and technologies, with spending reaching 16% of budgets in 2021 (Freifeld, 2022). Training programs involve retaining existing methods, abandoning traditional practices, adopting new methods, blending methods, or even completely overhauling the sales education program to support generational changes in the workforce as well. Effective training programs contribute to meeting market demands (Fazal et al., 2022), with sales managers playing a crucial role in delivery.

Generation Z, individuals born between the years 1996-2010, are the next incoming age group to the workforce, exhibiting a unique skill set that organizations are recognizing as either an opportunity or threat (Pichler et al., 2021). But sales managers who lack effective training methods for Gen Z employees are likely to yield suboptimal results (Hernández-De-Menéndez et al., 2020) and hinder organizational performance. Further, disruptive technology and its swift, forward-progressing trajectory are impacting education and sales fields with system advancements like AI-powered (virtual, augmented, and extended reality) training programs that help maintain a remote setting while interactively tailoring functionality for trainees' learning styles and speeds (Chen, 2022). Personalized training may be particularly significant for sales managers to develop training delivery strategies best suited for their Gen Z teams and their unique skills and needs. Considering this knowledge innovation, I planned to explore what sales training delivery methods sales managers of Generation Z teams use to impact organizational

revenue increase.

### **Business Problem Focus and Project Purpose**

The specific business problem is that some sales managers lack effective strategies to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizational revenues. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry project was to identify and explore strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizations' revenues. I used purposive sampling to select 10 sales managers from the population group within the United States. The eligibility criteria to take part in the project was that the candidate must have effective strategies to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizational revenues. Additional eligibility criteria for participants were (a) sales managers, (b) experience training Generation Z employees, (c) U.S. based, and (d) 3 years of managerial experience. I accessed the participants through LinkedIn, professional associations, and public directories that provide lists of sales organizations.

I engaged in semistructured interviews to collect primary data. Although it is not required, I followed IRB requirements and used public documentation and artifacts as secondary data. The participants aligned directly with the specific business problem and project purpose of this project. The conceptual frameworks used for this qualitative pragmatic inquiry project were Kim's (2022) content, instructional design, programmed learning, and recommendation (CIP-R) framework and Pichler et al.'s (2021) diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational supports (DITTO)

framework.

### **Research Question**

What effective strategies do sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z to increase organizations' revenues?

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

#### **Assumptions**

An assumption signifies a circumstance, phenomenon, or element generally treated as true without rigorous efforts to substantiate or critically examine its factual basis (Clair et al., 2022). The first assumption was that sales managers possess a thorough comprehension of the organizational revenue goals of their sales education programs. A second assumption was that sales managers were truthful in the information they disclose in reference to the interview questions.

#### **Limitations**

Limitations in a presented project are defined as weaknesses within a research design that may affect the outcomes and conclusions of the research (Kohler et al., 2021). One limitation may be the availability of participants. A limitation may arise if participants are unable to commit to the suggested timeframe of interviews, limiting the data collected. Another limitation is that participants may not be able to recall key elements of strategies used due to a lack of documentation of that strategy.

### **Transition**

In Section 1, I covered the background of the problem, the business problem focus and project purpose, the research question governing this project, and assumptions

and limitations. Section 2 consists of a review of the professional and academic literature. Section 3 comprises project ethics, the nature of the project, population, sampling, and participants, data collection activities, data organization and analysis techniques, and reliability and validity. Section 4 includes a discussion on the presentation of findings, business contributions and recommendations for professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for future research, and an overall conclusion.



## Section 2: The Literature Review

### **Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

The professional and academic literature review was based on the project's overarching research question designed to identify and explore effective strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z to increase organizations' revenues. The following keywords were used as part of an extensive search on my doctoral project topic: *artificial intelligence, training delivery methods, blended learning, eLearning, virtual learning, sales education program, sales training, generation z, sales managers, management and mentorship, sales success, lack of training, sales training failures, undergraduate sales training, leadership, business models, customer feedback, sales tools, theory/practice gap, sales post-pandemic, and baby boomers*. I used the keywords to search the following databases: Sage Journals, ResearchGate, EBSCO, Proquest, ScienceDirect, Directory of Open Access Journals, JSTOR, Business Insights: Essentials, Mergent Intellect, Data Axle Reference Solutions, Nexis Uni, Mintel Academic, Gartner Research, Statista, Entrepreneurial Studies Source, and Scopus. The use of these keywords and databases enabled me to ensure that the literature analysis was based on the most recent evidence in the literature with more than 87% of the articles being published within the past 5 years (see Table 1). I referenced 89 sources, 84 of which were peer-reviewed journal articles. Seventy-eight were published within the last 5 years, and 11 are over 5 years old. Ninety-four percent of the articles were peer-reviewed sources.

**Table 1***Number of Sources Used*

	Total Sources	Peer-Reviewed	Non-Peer-Reviewed	< 5-Years	>5-Years
Journal Articles	98	92	7	87	11
Books	2	0	0	0	2
Percentage	100	92	7	87	13

The professional and academic literature review begins with an opening narrative that includes an accounting of the keywords and databases searched on my business topic and a numerical and percentage representation of the same. The narrative is followed by an application to the applied business problem including a critical analysis and synthesis of literature pertaining to the conceptual framework and an analysis and synthesis of literature pertaining to potential themes and phenomena of study. I also compare and contrast different points of view and the relationship of the project to previous research and findings.

### **Application to the Applied Business Problem**

The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry study was to identify and explore strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organization revenues.

### **Conceptual Framework**

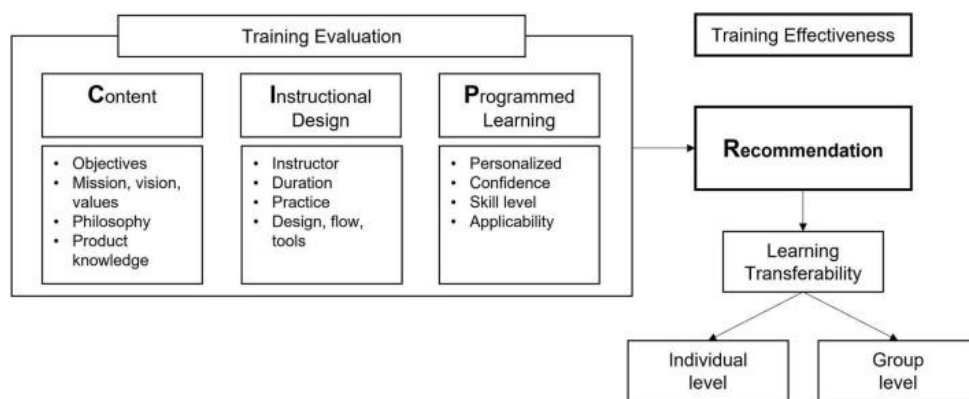
#### ***CIP-R Framework***

There are two frameworks I used to identify and explore strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to

increase organizations' revenues. Kim (2022) developed the CIP-R framework, advancing Stufflebeam's (2002) Context, Input, Process, and Product Evaluation (CIPP) model. The framework addresses three different methodologies—traditional, pure digital, and hybrid training—with findings that support the importance of human elements, the role of efficacy, and self-determination in generating learning transferability, leading to sustained performance in the digital age. Based on evolving literature and advancements, Kim modified the existing framework to rename elements of the model, group elements together, and add a new element (Recommendation) to transfer the program learning to either the individual or group level. Figure 1 shows the advanced model modified for trainees in the digital age, which is the period of time Gen Z employees are in the workforce.

**Figure 1**

*Kim's (2022) CIP-R Model*



*Note.* This figure depicts a framework derived from Stufflebeam's (2002) CIPP Model highlighting new elements for consideration in the digital age.

### ***DITTO Framework***

Recognizing the increasing presence of Generation Z employees in the workforce, Pichler et al. (2021) introduced the DITTO framework. This data-driven approach formulates a guide for organizations and managers to effectively leverage Gen Z's unique characteristics for mutual benefit. DITTO describes five key characteristic areas of Generation Z employees in the workplace. The constructs of the DITTO framework include diversity, individualism and teamwork orientation, technology, and organizational supports (Pichler et al., 2021). Further elaborating all constructs, the framework acknowledges Gen Z employees' inherent diversity by advocating for inclusive work environments that celebrate their varied backgrounds and perspectives. Cross-generational collaboration is recommended by the authors, with Gen Z potentially serving as role models for openness to diversity. To cater to their individualism and teamwork orientation, DITTO suggests tailoring training programs to individual learning styles and career aspirations while promoting collaboration through technological solutions like avatars for personalized communication. The framework emphasizes how utilizing technology for training and communication, including exploring innovative methods like virtual reality, could enhance engagement and learning experiences for this age group. Recognizing their need for clear career paths and support, DITTO highlights the importance of organizational supports, including mentorship, professional development opportunities, and a psychologically safe work environment where Gen Z feels empowered to voice their opinions and take risks.

By implementing the DITTO framework, Pichler et al. (2021) suggested that

organizations can bridge the generational gap and mobilize the full potential of Gen Z, fostering a more engaged, productive, and future-proof workforce. This approach aligns with current research that focused on understanding and managing generational differences within the workplace, offering practical strategies informed by scholarly evidence (Pataki-Bittó & Kapusy, 2021). Table 1 outlines the mnemonic DITTO by elucidating how Gen Z's unique workplace attributes can be strategically utilized by organizations and managers and formulate effective prescriptions via the principles in this framework.

**Table 2***DITTO: Research-Based Policies and Practices to Leverage the Uniqueness of Gen Z*

Principles	Organizational policies and practices	Rationale
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be prepared for the inherent diversity coming with Gen Z recruitment</li> <li>• Recruit a more diverse workforce through programs such as targeted recruitment</li> <li>• Create generationally diverse teams where Gen Z can serve as role models for openness to diversity</li> <li>• Implement policies and practices that promote inclusivity such as nondiscrimination policies and diversity training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen Z is one of the most diverse generations</li> <li>• Gen Z is more open to diversity than other generations</li> <li>• Promoting diversity can increase firm performance</li> </ul>
Individualism & Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt socialization programs that will enhance person-organization fit</li> <li>• Promote meaningfulness through the understanding that being part of a team means being part of something that is bigger than oneself</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for Gen Z workers to serve as exemplars in terms of coordinated work with team members who are dispersed geographically and communicate electronically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen Z is used to learning and working individually</li> <li>• Gen Z is more individualistic than other generations</li> <li>• Meaningfulness can improve individual and team performance</li> </ul>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement opportunities that facilitate more virtual interactions through remote work and electronic communication technologies, which may become even more desirable in the post-pandemic workplace</li> <li>• Allow employees to create their own avatars for intra-organizational communications</li> <li>• Integrate technology with performance management and employee development systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology is a way of life for Gen Z</li> <li>• Gen Z is used to communicating through technology</li> <li>• Leveraging technology for social interaction can help employees feel supported</li> </ul>
Organizational supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider adopting formal benefits such as employee assistance (EAP) programs, as well as health benefits and deferred income and savings programs</li> <li>• Promote perceptions of organizational support through supportive work conditions (e.g., by recognizing individuals for their work)</li> <li>• Facilitate social support through electronic communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen Z grew-up in a financially precarious time</li> <li>• Gen Z has a need to feel socially supported by others at work</li> <li>• Perceptions of organizational support improve well-being</li> </ul>

*Note.* Summaries and interpretations from Pichler et al. (2021).

### *Synergy of Frameworks*

The CIP-R model and DITTO framework were used to guide the literature review through research and analysis. This project aimed to discover and explore strategies for developing and delivering sales training that leads to increased organizational revenue. The CIP-R framework is specifically used to search for research analyzing the effectiveness of a hybrid training design that blends human elements with digital tools, while the DITTO framework is used to search for literature that identifies strategies sales managers avail to capitalize on the unique attributes of Gen Z employees. Leveraging the frameworks proposed by Kim (2022) and Pichler et al. (2021) helped address the original business problem that some sales managers lack effective strategies to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizational revenues. A combined approach has the potential to unearth valuable research that not only underscores enhanced organizational performance and revenue growth but also makes inquiries into the specific strategies used by sales managers. Notably, such strategies may align with contemporary knowledge innovations like AI-powered training programs, supporting deeper resonance with the unique characteristics of Generation Z employees.

### **Training Needs of Generation Z Employees**

#### **Difference from Multigenerational Employees**

Although new generations such as Generation Alpha (Uhrig, 2021) are emerging, the current workforce, is comprised of individuals from each of the five major generations: traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, millennials, and Generation Z

(Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). The varying stages of professional development among these generations suggest that their levels of experience impact the dynamics of their interactions within sales teams (Klopota et al., 2020). These generations hold divergent views and convictions in a variety of areas, including the value of labor and work ethics orientations (Klopota et al., 2020). Accordingly, to foster a unified sales workforce, sales managers will need to proactively strive to reconcile the varied work styles and attitudes exhibited by these cohorts (Turner & Robinson, 2017). Sales managers would benefit from acknowledging several factors, including utilizing motivational strategies (Leslie et al., 2021) suitable for each generation and communication styles that transcend generational boundaries (Johnson & Smith, 2019) and enhance collaboration (Pataki-Bittó & Kapusy, 2021). Communication enables the interchange of thoughts and concepts within a team. In the absence of effective communication, coordination of diverse tasks and the exchange of ideas within the team may be impeded. The dysfunction that ensues within the team is primarily attributable to generational disparities in communication components such as attitudes (Mahmoud et al., 2021), directness in expression, and information decoding methods (Berge, 2022). Therefore, sales training programs should integrate components of successful intergenerational communication into the substance and manner of these programs.

To develop comprehensive and advantageous training initiatives for the Gen Z sales workforce, there is a need to acknowledge the subtleties of generational dynamics within multigenerational teams (Burton et al., 2019). Programmers of training programs need to effectively design initiatives that foster cooperation and capitalize on the



distinctive abilities of sales professionals from Generation Z. Researchers have suggested that multimodal training approaches, including traditional classroom sessions, online learning modules, and mentorship programs, can effectively accommodate the various learning preferences of Generation Z (Brown & Green, 2021). Therefore, sales managers may benefit from embracing adaptable communication approaches, capitalizing on digital platforms and social media channels to effectively engage Generation Z with relevant content and foster additional teamwork among sales personnel. Furthermore, by recognizing the distinctive traits of each generation and offering customized incentives, motivation and achievement can be increased (Chillakuri, 2020), bridging the generational gaps that may hinder productive learning. The performance of a sales team is contingent on the ability to bridge generational disparities and promote collaboration (Urick, 2019). Strategies that promote mentorship, collaboration, and knowledge exchange can reconcile the generational gap within a multigenerational sales team (Garcia & Mitchell, 2018). The sales manager should be the focal point of these strategies to establish an inclusive atmosphere in which members of Generation Z can contribute their ideas, strengths, and perspectives equitably to the team to increase revenue generation and ensure collective success. Multiple channels facilitate improved and more interactive communication among team members (Garcia & Mitchell, 2018), fostering greater mutual comprehension. Moreover, the provision of training and communication through a variety of channels demonstrates an understanding of diversity and promotes a feeling of inclusion, both of which may aid in the success of the collaboration.

## **Training Delivery Methods**

Additionally, sales managers must recognize the numerous obstacles that accompany conducting sales training for younger generation sales teams (Turner & Robinson, 2017). Wilson and Carter (2020) accurately acknowledged that to improve team performance and overcome these challenges, the sales manager must proactively employ multimodal approaches in communication and training that capitalize on the unique qualities and strengths of each generation and the concepts being transferred. The implementation of a wide range of training and communication approaches fosters objectivity among team members (Scholz, 2019), mitigating the potential impact of generational biases on their execution of fundamental sales functions. Consequently, delivery methods and sales training programs should actively encourage adaptable management practices. Wilson and Carter (2020) proposed several potential strategies: implementing personalized coaching to address the unique requirements of individual employees, establishing flexible work arrangements to enhance convenience and job satisfaction, and designing customized recognition programs that track the achievement of fundamental objectives (Oh & Johnston, 2023) such as periodic sales targets, in addition to training goal achievement. Various methodologies serve to amplify the engagement and retention of training program material among members of Generation Z. By retaining Gen Z employees, organizations can ensure that they perform their sales functions more effectively, increasing revenue generation.

Wilson and Carter's (2020) research validated how effective leadership and management for younger-generation sales teams are consistent with the earlier viewpoint

presented by LaForge et al. (1997). This comparison also constitutes evidence that evolution has occurred within the development of sales training between these publishing years. As argued by these authors, sales management content should be actively integrated into the various programs and delivery methods utilized to instruct sales teams. As a result, the resolution of the deficiencies in sales management training was perceived as a strategy to enhance collaboration and unity among the multigenerational team members (Turner & Robinson, 2017). Distributed through appropriate and engaging platforms, such training can enlighten Gen Z sales personnel about the fact that effective performance encompasses not only the fundamental principles of selling (O'Toole et al., 2023) but also the complexities associated with managing individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Therefore, through the integration of management training (Bronson, 2023) into various delivery methods, organizations produce a more unified sales team in which members of Generation Z are successfully integrated with the remaining generations, which can enhance the sales department's overall productivity. This directly increases the organization's generated revenues.

### **Digital and Emerging Technologies in Sales Training**

#### **Understanding the Need for Digital Transformation**

Technology, particularly its rapid evolution and disruptive potential, stands as the defining characteristic of the modern workplace, including the sales force (Si & Chen, 2020). Within the rapidly transforming sales landscape shaped by technology, Generation Z occupies a unique and critical position. This generation is the only one that has lived its entire existence interacting with digital and emerging technologies (McCrindle & Fell,

2019). Consequently, Chang and Chang (2023) noted that Generation Z is frequently labeled the "digital natives." Much like the initial phase in which certain technologies are being implemented in numerous sales environments at present, many Generation Z employees in sales are in the developmental stages of their professional lives. Irrespective of their limited professional background in sales, members of Generation Z possess an exceptionally profound understanding and practical expertise concerning the utilization and acquaintance with diverse digital and emerging technologies (Pichler et al., 2021). Concurrently, the various digital and emergent technologies have not been optimally integrated into the delivery methods of sales training programs. This could potentially engender a disconnection for Generation Z concerning their evaluations of the suitability of sales training. This in no way implies that the substance and timeliness of such programs' content are lacking. Instead, this implies that Generation Z and subsequent generations perceive the value of delivery methods as hindering their ability to retain and implement the knowledge gained from such programs in practical settings.

For this reason, sales training programs should consider updating their content to accommodate the requirements of Generation Z, which consists primarily of digital natives. A meta-analysis was conducted by Arthur et al. (2018) to examine the benefit of different training delivery methods in promoting content retention and application. This study investigates a range of instructional approaches, including traditional classroom instruction, e-learning, practical training in the field, and simulation utilization. Technological methods, such as virtual reality simulations, exhibit the most promising potential among these approaches, particularly regarding Generation Z (Arthur et al.,

2018). The increased levels of interactivity fostered by the technological methods enrich the experience of the trainees. Enhanced trainee experiences, particularly for technologically proficient trainee cohorts such as Generation Z, result in improved content retention (Arthur et al., 2018). Enhanced content retention enables apprentices to operate more efficiently in their fundamental sales responsibilities, thereby strengthening the organization's revenue generation capability. Acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of both tech and traditional training allows for the optimal design of multimodal approaches, uncovering the full potential of Gen Z-led sales teams and maximizing their productivity. Therefore, although sales managers ought to contemplate the heightened incorporation of technology into their training initiatives, this does not necessitate the complete disregard of conventional approaches.

Similarly, Brown and Green (2021) conducted a comparative analysis to determine the relative advantage of blended learning and traditional classroom training as delivery methods for sales training. Based on the findings presented in this article, the integration of online training and in-person classroom training modules resulted in additional improvements in learner engagement and content retention. This observation highlights the notion that while technology can serve as a valuable supplement to conventional training delivery methods, it cannot completely supplant them. Therefore, trainers should utilize conventional methods as foundational frameworks for the execution of sales education (Bolander et al., 2014). Traditional approaches furnish crucial frameworks for integrating technology-based methods. These frameworks comprise the characteristics and extent of the content, how the tone should be employed

during the development and dissemination of the content, and aspects of the trainer-trainee relationship (Brown & Green, 2021). Thus, traditional methods are essential because of their fundamental nature as physical delivery methods or as foundational elements for technological delivery methods.

### **Incorporating Artificial Intelligence**

The preponderance of technological advancements in the delivery of sales education is founded upon artificial intelligence (AI) and associated technologies (Gao et al., 2021; Luo et al., 2021). Gao et al. (2021) continued to share how these technologies are founded on complex computer programs and algorithms that aim to create computer systems that, to some extent, mimic human intelligence. Face recognition software and voice recognition are two prevalent types of AI systems (Sarker, 2022). These technologies optimize the implementation of training by increasing trainee convenience and facilitating interaction. An increase in the capacity to retain content results from this enhanced interaction. This is documented in Hall et al.'s (2022) research where the authors examined the impact of AI-generated feedback on the performance and adaptability of salespeople in business-to-business (B2B) sales environments. According to the findings of this study, the integration of AI-generated feedback enhances adaptive selling behaviors and sales performance. Although the delivery of sales education programs is the primary focus of this study, its findings suggest that utilizing AI-based interaction methods could be a viable strategy for improving the adaptability and effectiveness of sales personnel. Considering the study's findings, the effectiveness of AI-driven training delivery methods for Gen Z sales employees is validated in terms of

improved content retention, practical application, and adaptability. This improves the salesperson's ability to complete a greater number of deals, thereby increasing the organization's revenue generation.

Jelinek et al. (2020) concluded a longitudinal study of tech-based training delivery methods primarily rooted in AI and related technologies such as mobile learning applications and virtual reality simulations providing evidence that the use of tech-enhanced delivery methods with AI technologies improves the sales teams' achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs). Due to the findings derived from this research, establishments may utilize AI technologies to enhance the provision of training to improve the performance of the Generation Z sales force. As a result, it can be argued that artificial intelligence (AI) and associated technologies have become indispensable in the corporate landscape and should be preemptively integrated into sales training delivery methods. The implementation of these strategies is particularly imperative for the Gen Z sales force, given their digital nativeness and the need to engage them more effectively through approaches that align most closely with their personal experiences, work preferences, and outlooks (Pichler et al., 2021).

### **Different Types of Artificial Intelligence**

The primary characteristic of training delivery methods utilizing artificial intelligence is its ability to augment interactivity between the learner and the content (Kaplan et al., 2020). Kaplan et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative meta-analysis to compare the productivity of different interactive AI-driven training delivery methods utilizing the extended reality paradigm (XR), including mixed reality (MR), virtual

reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR). The researchers contrasted these XR models with conventional delivery approaches such as classroom sessions. The authors' research unexpectedly reveals that implementing AI-driven technologies for sales training does not yield substantial enhancements in content retention or effectiveness compared to conventional delivery approaches. Kaplan et al. (2020) concluded that XR-based delivery methods are equivalent to conventional methods in effectiveness. The results of this research challenge the prevailing claims made in practical applications, opinion pieces, and other studies (such as Jelinek et al., 2020 and Dwivedi et al, 2021) that AI-based technologies outperform conventional delivery methods in terms of improving the efficiency of sales staff, particularly among the technologically proficient Gen Z sales workforce. However, it is probable that the study conducted by Kaplan et al. (2020) fails to consider the advantages that XR-based delivery methods, like other AI-based approaches, provide beyond the confines of the conventional training setting. For instance, these technologies can enable mobile training that is convenient for each learner (Malodia et al., 2024). Moreover, because they are not hindered by distance or other impediments, these technologies can be utilized remotely. Luo et al.'s (2021) study demonstrated how optimal outcomes are attained when these technologies are integrated with conventional approaches to training delivery. When evaluated in the context of their potential for remote application and enhanced interaction beyond the capabilities of conventional methods, these findings suggest XR-based approaches may be more effective than conventional methods in retaining the knowledge and skills of the Generation Z sales workforce. This directly increases their productivity, which in turn



contributes to the organization's increased revenue generation.

Augmented reality and virtual reality technologies augment the learning experience by providing the student with a highly immersive environment (Dhimolea et al., 2022). Immersion is a crucial component of effective learning, according to Lonne et al. (2023), without reference to any particular field or discipline in which the learning occurs. Dhimolea et al. (2022), conducted a study to validate this assertion through the implementation of virtual reality-enhanced language learning, demonstrating that VR enhances learner motivation and engagement, both of which are fundamental requirements for successful content acquisition and retention. The study further establishes that VR technologies are effective facilitators of effective learning following multiple exposures. Furthermore, by augmenting the learner's perception of the learning's context and content, these technologies improve contextual learning. However, consistent with the conclusions drawn by Kaplan et al. (2020), Dhimolea et al. (2022) contend that the research remains equivocal regarding the advantages of virtual reality (VR) as a tool to augment immersion and learning effectiveness. Therefore, Dhimolea et al. (2022) recommended that the implementation of these technologies for enhancing content delivery in sales education be approached with prudence, considering the wider contextual elements that are essential to the learning environment. A few of these elements are the apprentice's prior technological experience, the content's intricacy, and the sales managers' particular prior encounters with utilizing these technologies to deliver sales training.

XR-related technologies facilitate immersive learning experiences that hold

significant value across diverse business and management education domains, including sales education (Kaplan et al., 2020). While the full potential of these training technologies is still under exploration, Sosnilo et al. (2021) highlighted their revolutionary potential in today's tech-driven era marked by widespread adoption of revolutionary technologies. In addition to enhancing content engagement and immersion, these technologies may also enable cost savings in training (Luo et al., 2021). Although the primary emphasis of Sosnilo et al. (2021) is on the potential applications of AR and VR in management and sales, these observations can be precisely duplicated through the implementation of these technologies as sales training delivery methods. Consequently, to enhance the effectiveness of training content for Gen Z sales personnel, AR and VR should be actively investigated in conjunction with other AI-based technologies and conventional approaches, despite the inconclusive results that may yield from the field's relative understudy in the existing literature. It is possible to extend the advantages of these technologies to other technological advancements, particularly among Gen Z, which is more technologically proficient than preceding generations. This enhances organizations' revenue generation potential directly.

### **Generation Z's Innate Adoption of the Internet**

An additional pivotal advancement that highlights the progress of the technological age is the widespread adoption of the Internet to facilitate communication and interpersonal engagements (Li et al., 2022). In contrast to earlier stages of the internet era, during which text-based systems such as social media text messaging and email predominated over online communications, Singh et al. (2021) discussed how the

online environment has undergone revolutionary transformations. The expansion of interactive internet platforms, including user portals and chatrooms, in addition to virtual communications like videoconferencing, creates an optimal setting for the dissemination of sales training content in the online space (Singh et al., 2021). Online interactions are favored by members of Generation Z more than any other generation, particularly in the fast-paced world of the twenty-first century, where physical meetings may not always be possible (Pichler et al., 2021). As a result, online training delivery, which might or might not incorporate supplementary technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality, emerges as a highly effective approach to imparting content to this demographic.

According to Yu's (2020) research, because Generation Z is a digital native, they are exceptionally well-informed and familiar with the online environment; therefore, they can benefit significantly from training delivered online. Nevertheless, the author argued that the benefits of online tools amongst Generation Z are contingent upon a multitude of factors. These factors comprise the scheduling of online training programs, the accessibility of the internet during training (as measured by aspects such as the trainee's location's stable internet connection), the characteristics of online interactions (synchronous or asynchronous online learning modes), and the trainee's level of proficiency as described by Yu (2020).

Yu (2020) asserted that sales training for Generation Z is more effective when the following conditions are met: the training should be delivered in real-time, the trainee should have immediate access to the internet and the training sessions themselves, multimedia resources should be incorporated to enhance the learning experience, the

scheduling should be flexible to accommodate the convenience needs of Gen Z trainees, and the trainees should possess the necessary critical thinking skills. The study underscores the significance attributed to online courses that incorporate multimedia resources, flexible scheduling, immediate access, real-time interactions, and critical thinking abilities. Singh et al. (2021) asserted that implementing real-time interactive online sessions and incorporating multimedia resources are exceedingly effective approaches to online learning. Multimedia content serves as a supplementary mechanism that reinforces understanding acquired through alternative methods, such as voice-activated notes and videoconferencing with the instructor (Abdulrahman et al., 2020). By integrating multimedia components such as videos, images, animations, infographics, quizzes, and gamified content including challenges and incentives, Gen Z learners are more effectively captivated and encouraged to actively participate in the online sales training sessions. By fostering increased engagement in virtual sessions, multimedia supplements aid in the retention of information and the cultivation of specific fundamental abilities that are intended to be developed through the training programs' content. To create a more immersive online learning environment, multimedia supplements may also be intimately connected to fundamental concepts, such as simulations and virtual laboratories (Kaplan et al., 2020). By utilizing this type of online experience, trainees can take advantage of the benefits offered by online technologies while avoiding the inconclusive results associated with XR technologies, as described by Kaplan et al. (2020). Therefore, online sessions provide an opportunity to integrate learning with online interactions, mitigating the drawbacks and vulnerabilities associated

with conventional modalities and other technological approaches. This results in increased revenue generation through improved retention of training materials, which Gen Z sales personnel can more effectively apply to increase sales volumes and other pertinent key performance indicators (KPIs).

In addition, the integration of AI and machine learning technologies into online training delivery methods can facilitate improved learning outcomes by enabling personalized and contextualized instruction (Zhang et al., 2020). Within Zhang et al.'s (2020) framework, personalization denotes the customization of program components to accommodate the distinct requirements of an individual trainee. Conversely, contextualization entails the customization of the program to suit the needs that are both specific and comparable to those of a group or groups of trainees, predicated on contextual factors such as language and culture, level of professional experience, and work performance accomplishments. Although it is possible to personalize and contextualize these elements using conventional delivery methods, the utilization of AI and algorithm-based technologies in the online environment enables ongoing monitoring of the trainees, enabling the content to adapt to their changing needs (Gao et al., 2021). This increases the efficacy of enhanced online training in assisting Gen Z sales personnel to meet the specific training requirements necessary to enhance their marketing and sales deployment effectiveness. Therefore, enhanced online learning may serve as an efficient method to augment the efficiency of Gen Z sales personnel, resulting in increased revenue generation for organizations. Sales managers and organizations should contemplate adaptive online delivery methods to develop and distribute more effective

sales training specifically designed for their Generation Z sales personnel. Although these technologies may require substantial upfront financial investments, enhanced revenue generation provides sufficient rationale for the organization to consider such investments feasible and enduring.

### **Impact on Employee Productivity & Organizational Revenues**

Sales managers focusing on organizational revenue growth will need to consider effective training delivery methods to consider how these methods affect Generation Z's knowledge retention, alignment, and continuity with the organization. Even more so, it is critical to consider how the method of delivery influences the professional growth and leadership development of the Generation Z sales workforce (Yu, 2020). This is especially significant given that most Generation Z members are just beginning their professional careers. Thus, there may be a need to develop instructional materials and delivery methods that can efficiently prepare this cohort to assume leadership roles and provide comprehensive support in their future professional pursuits making it crucial for both the organization and the individual. This observation and advocacy suggest that the effectiveness of the program is equivalent to the content and context of the training, irrespective of the delivery method employed by sales managers. Therefore, employing an appropriate delivery channel without suitable content to distribute constitutes a counterproductive zero-sum endeavor for the organization. An organization that fails to allocate sufficient resources towards sales training for the purposes of management, leadership, and professional development ultimately incurs expenses on a training program that fails to adequately prepare the personnel for the intended enhancements in

productivity (Nguyen et al., 2018). By incorporating the findings of LaForge et al. (1997) into the DITTO framework developed by Pichler et al. (2021), the organization can capitalize on novel approaches to deliver support and teamwork to improve the performance of the Gen Z sales force. Subsequently, generating increased revenue for the organization.

### **Sales Managers' Impact on Gen Z Productivity**

Although customizing delivery methods to improve the retention of content and engagement of Generation Z sales personnel is of utmost importance, it is equally important to acknowledge that their effectiveness can only be maximized under the guidance of adequately trained sales managers (Nguyen et al., 2018). To successfully equip Gen Z for leadership roles and career advancement, LaForge et al. (1997) argued that formal sales management training for sales managers is required and should be assessed regularly to fit the needs of their teams. Considering this observation, the author argued in favor of a greater emphasis on sales management training delivered through a variety of modalities. Organizations should require sales managers to receive training that focuses on enhancing their ability to lead sales teams through the utilization of effective content and delivery methods (Wilson & Carter, 2020). This involves proficiently mentoring members of Generation Z to enhance their performance as members of the sales teams. Sales managers are responsible for providing direction and authority to sales teams; as such, they necessitate specialized instruction customized to their specific responsibilities (Brown & Williams, 2021). Strategic training for sales managers involves improving their ability to communicate information about fundamental concepts such as

pipeline management, risk management in sales, sales forecasting and planning, and strategic account management which have been substantiated as necessary elements of a sales training program (Sheahan, 2020). This can solely be accomplished by initially targeting the sales manager with an appropriate combination of training delivery methods, in conjunction with collaborating with experts both within and outside the organization. After attaining a comprehensive understanding of these concepts, the sales managers will be able to better impart that knowledge to their Gen Z sales teams. Moreover, by ensuring that sales managers comprehend their responsibilities and the intricacies of their teams, they can formulate suitable means of communication and content dissemination to efficiently engage Generation Z (along with other generations) with strategic information and content on sales forecasts, attainable sales objectives, and optimal resource allocation for each team member to support both individual and collective progress.

In addition, Brown, and Williams (2021) argued that to effectively communicate with all members of a multigenerational sales team, the leadership of contemporary sales teams must demonstrate multigenerational competency. When guiding multigenerational sales teams, transformational leadership, servant leadership, and other key leadership styles are a few of the most effective ways to cultivate such agility and competence (Itani et al., 2019). These leadership styles directly impact the multigenerational sales team's cohesion by fostering increased motivation, job engagement, collaboration, and conflict-resolution capabilities among team members. By implementing these strategies, the team can enhance its unity and efficiency, notwithstanding the intrinsic generational



disparities. Organizations will benefit from integrated leader development programs that emphasize the significance of acknowledging generational diversity and inclusion as assets that contribute to the sales team's overall strength rather than as causes of distinctions between individuals and groups (Berge, 2022). This perspective is further supported by Johnson and Smith (2019), who emphasize the value of acknowledging generational strengths when managing potential conflicts and variations in work approaches. By integrating these strategies into interactive training delivery programs, Generation Z is better able to acknowledge and value the pivotal contribution that preceding generations made to nurturing a collaborative atmosphere. Therefore, Generation Z members can increase their level of involvement in team activities and dedication to their primary responsibilities within the sales teams, thereby directly enhancing the teams' ability to generate revenue. The enhanced revenue generation capability of these teams directly augments the organizational revenue generated by Gen Z sales professionals.

### **Incorporating Stakeholder Expertise & Generation Z Feedback**

Although intra-team collaboration is critical to the multigenerational team's success, the team must forge long-lasting partnerships with stakeholders outside the organization to maximize its revenue-generating potential (Fogel et al., 2012). Fogel et al. (2012) highlighted the significance of collaborative alliances between academic institutions and organizations. This is primarily because decisions regarding appropriate dissemination methods and content development adhere to curriculum development paradigms that are prevalent in academic institutions. Academic partners, being

authorities in curriculum development and content delivery, can guide organizations on how to engage Generation Z effectively as a pivotal component of sales departments or operational processes. Such expertise includes formulating suitable content, utilizing appropriate delivery channels, and piloting implementations of AI-powered technologies in sales training. Collaborations of this nature necessitate intentional endeavors from sales managers and other sales team leaders to improve the delivery models of training for members of Generation Z. Therefore, the findings of Fogel et al. (2012) shed light on the evolution of the business environment and the fact that sales managers and their teams within the organization cannot make decisions unilaterally regarding the most suitable channels of training delivery. Incorporating external knowledge and expertise into decision-making processes is crucial for effectively enabling the Gen Z sales force to capitalize on the boundless potential of markets, hence enhancing organizations' sales and revenue generation.

In addition to enlisting the support of academic collaborators, sales managers should proactively seek the perspectives of the sales personnel, particularly members of Generation Z. The feedback provided by this group aids in the customization of delivery approaches that not only follow scholarly best practices but also caters to the specific requirements of the target demographic – sales professionals belonging to Generation Z. The convergence of academic best practices and the workforce requirements of Generation Z directly improves the efficiency of Generation Z sales personnel, thereby increasing the revenues of the organization (McCrindle & Fell, 2019). Furthermore, the sales team's input concerning delivery methods facilitates collective learning by

encouraging the exchange of ideas during the practical training sessions (individuals are more likely to propose delivery methods with which they are familiar and can contribute freely to the learning experiences associated with them). Such collective learning enhances sales expertise and understanding, making it more attractive to Gen Z employees and easier to adapt along with advanced technologies built in.

### **Current and Future Trends**

#### **Skills Needed**

Although the primary objective of sales training is to improve fundamental abilities such as sales forecasting and the capacity to close actual sales, it is important to recognize that effective salespersonship also requires the cultivation of professionalism and competencies that extend beyond the technical aspects of the position (Marcos-Cuevas et al., 2014). Therefore, when selecting content delivery methods for sales training, consideration should be given to how effectively these methods can support the growth of professionalism and soft skills that are essential for the success of the salesperson. A study by Smith and Johnson (2020) indicates that sales professionals must possess the proper professional mindset to be successful and effective in their respective positions. Other success factors, such as the hard abilities required for the sales profession, are built upon the professional mindset (Marcos-Cuevas et al., 2014). It comprises the conduct, mindset, and principles that motivate individual superiority in the workplace. The resilience of a sales professional in the face of the challenges that are inherent to the field is also influenced by the professional perspective and related soft skills, such as emotional intelligence (Smith & Johnson, 2020). To thrive in a

multigenerational sales workforce, Gen Z professionals should embody a professional mindset that emphasizes the value of ongoing education, prioritizes customer satisfaction as a critical success factor in the sales industry, and fosters adaptability and resilience amidst team diversity (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Sales programs can benefit from using AI-enhanced tailored training to provision Gen Z with these necessary skills (Gao et al., 2021). By increasing the success of sales transactions, such customer-centricity and enhanced relational dynamics within the sales team increase organizational revenues and productivity.

Additionally, the sales professional acts in accordance with the utmost moral and ethical principles to inspire public confidence in the sales team, the organization, and its products because of the professional mindset. A successful salesperson must incorporate ethical considerations into their professional and personal conduct, as Wilson and Turner (2021) emphasized. Each decision the salesperson makes ought to indicate a high moral standard. Consumer and public confidence in the sales team and the organization is bolstered by the ethical conduct of the individual or group (Itani et al., 2019). By instilling such confidence, the organization can potentially enhance customer loyalty and attract and retain a larger customer base from the wider market. By increasing its customer base, the organization gains a direct advantage in terms of sales volume, which in turn leads to a direct increase in its revenues. By utilizing delivery methods that efficiently reinforce the acquisition of ethical knowledge by Gen Z trainees (sales professionals), training programs can augment the generation's comprehension of the ethical terrain particular to their industry and the broader business environment in which

they function. As a result, they are more likely to make ethical decisions, which helps to increase sales and revenue. Given the growing consciousness and preference of communities and customers for businesses founded on responsible values, it is critical that sales professionals, particularly those belonging to Generation Z, which comprises the youngest and least experienced segment of the workforce, possess the necessary skills and knowledge to make ethical judgments that safeguard the organization's standing and increase revenue. This is contingent upon the degree of engagement that Gen Z professionals have with the material covered in ethical sales training programs; this engagement is determined by the training delivery method.

Establishing a training delivery method that fosters a professional perspective is a fundamental requirement outlined in the CIP-R framework proposed by Kim (2022). Sales professionals belonging to Generation Z require delivery methods and content that support the development of their personal and professional values, ethical behavior while performing work-related responsibilities, adaptability to the sales team and market environment, and accountability. In addition to the benefits of professional demeanor and attitude, members of Generation Z must also cultivate adequate emotional intelligence. Like other soft skills, sales managers must use training delivery methods that encourage the augmentation of their emotional intelligence. This encourages comprehensive emotional intelligence training to improve soft skills for sales success (Garcia & Rodriguez, 2019). Including these elements in training programs improves employees' interpersonal competencies while also reflecting the fundamental principles upheld by Generation Z. Emotional intelligence comprises the capacity to identify, evaluate, and

employ one's own emotions in addition to those of others across various contexts. Emotional intelligence fosters positive interpersonal connections with clients and colleagues, augmenting the overall sales experience (Jelinek et al., 2020). Gen Z sales professionals can enhance their ability to recognize and resolve conflicts, demonstrate empathy in all circumstances, cultivate self-awareness and self-control, acquire social skills that facilitate successful sales interactions, and foster intrinsic motivation to collaborate with customers and colleagues in pursuit of increased organizational revenues and productivity. The instructional program content and the trainer's proficiency contain practical advice on cultivating emotional intelligence and other soft skills. However, the extent to which a Generation Z employee is invested in the material—as determined by the delivery method—ultimately dictates whether the sales professional retains and internalizes the skill for professional growth.

### **Sales Training for Adaptability and Growth**

Ybarra (2023) established that sales training should place considerable emphasis on the programs' capacity to foster the sales professional's adaptability and development. The author developed a new employee evaluation framework called C+MAC (Cognition + Motivation, Action, and Connection) to assist with this implementation (Ybarra, 2023). As a result of this new information to research, training programs should adopt a more comprehensive approach to improve employee experiences and satisfaction within the organization. An increase in employee contentment resulting from improved opportunities for development and flexibility increases the likelihood that employees will demonstrate organizational citizenship and be more dedicated to achieving the objectives

established for their positions. These assertions are specifically relevant to Generation Z and the purpose of sales training. To foster development and adaptability, the sales training content and delivery methods can benefit from facilitating the transformation of the attitudes and behaviors of sales personnel from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset (Raska & Weisenbach Keller, 2021; Brown & White, 2018). According to the research of Lee and Park (2017), a growth perspective is an indispensable trait in an employee. To advance in their sales career and increase their effectiveness in closing deals and generating revenue for the organization, capability is shown when a sales professional demonstrates a growth mindset. The growth mindset is distinguished by an unwavering determination to overcome obstacles and a persistent anticipation of difficulties as chances for ongoing development (Macnamara & Burgoyne, 2023). Therefore, the sales professional's growth mindset and ability to adjust to evolving workplace dynamics and the business environment are inextricably linked.

The growth mindset advocates for ongoing learning to adapt to and achieve success, which ultimately results in enhanced abilities and performance (Raska & Weisenbach Keller, 2021). Prioritizing the lifelong pursuit of sales expertise for Gen Z professionals within these programs has its value. This motivates sales professionals to pursue new information with vigor and determination concerning the hard and soft skills required for their positions within the organization (Drewery et al., 2020). As a result, sales professionals who effectively cultivate a growth mindset are more likely to remain informed about evolving operational environments and diverse aspects of their work (Brown & White, 2018). This includes the implementation of novel sales strategies, such

as third-party selling and online sales. By maintaining a steadfast dedication to ongoing education, Gen Z sales professionals can effectively address the changing demands of a diverse and evolving customer base, thereby ensuring their continued relevance and competitiveness in an ever-changing operational environment. By implementing these revised sales methodologies, the growth-oriented Gen Z employee generates increased revenues for the organization directly.

For Gen Z professionals to navigate new and emerging technologies successfully, sales training programs and delivery methods should foster growth-orientedness and resilience, enabling them to adapt and develop effectively despite any learning challenges they may encounter. Additionally, it is crucial to note that adaptability and a growth mindset are significant precursors to strategic restructuring, productivity enhancements, and innovation (Raska & Weisenbach Keller, 2021). Proactively harnessing the value of adaptation and the growth mindset for innovation among Generation Z can be achieved through the implementation of suitable AI-powered training delivery methods that align and appease their respective learning styles and speeds (Cabual, 2021). In the contemporary era, innovation predominantly necessitates the proficiency of technological literacy and critical thinking, both of which are significant defining attributes of the Generation Z workforce (Pichler et al, 2021). Therefore, by implementing a delivery approach that promotes growth orientation and adaptability, organizations can leverage the innovative capabilities of Generation Z to transform their sales teams using technologically advanced strategies, including complex e-marketing and sales strategies that target online customers (Jaas, 2022). This increases the organization's customer base



directly, thereby enhancing revenue generation.

### **Trends for AI-powered Sales Education Programs**

An effective sales training program and delivery method should not only facilitate the enhancement of revenue generation through the promotion of hard and soft skill development but also permit easy monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation to the sales team's changing training requirements (Kim, 2022). The implementation of sales training programs is crucial for improving the overall effectiveness of sales teams (Attia et al., 2021; Lupton et al., 1999). To ascertain the advantages of these programs in augmenting sales performance, it is critical to assess the responses of sales managers toward the training's content, as well as other pertinent metrics, including the methods employed for delivery. According to Attia et al. (2021), such a response can be discerned by examining the feedback provided by both the manager and the seller. By utilizing the results obtained from these assessments, it is possible to enhance the training programs to maximize sales performance (Lupton et al., 1999). Nevertheless, the inability to measure, monitor, and assess the delivery method employed for said training would render any efforts to enhance the sales training programs futile. As Attia et al. (2021) elaborated further, sales managers will benefit from establishing criteria for Gen Z sales metrics. In addition to sales managers, coaches should collaborate actively in measuring the effectiveness of AI-incorporated training delivery methods within these programs.

The emphasis placed by Attia et al. (2021) is consistent with Kim's (2022) CIP-R model's stipulations concerning the significance of training evaluations in determining the transferability of expertise. Furthermore, the historical perspectives presented by

Honeycutt and Stevenson (1989) underscore the progression of sales professional training methodologies throughout time. The progression from traditional in-person classroom sessions to online learning modalities, blended learning, AI-based learning, and XR-based training can be attributed directly to the ongoing process that sales training specialists have undertaken to assess the effectiveness of delivery methods and consistently develop innovative and groundbreaking strategies to enhance the capacity of training content delivery and boost sales personnel productivity. Had the methods of delivering sales training remained as basic as they were in the 1970s, for instance, organizations would not have achieved the progress they have thus far in terms of integrating advanced technologies to enhance content delivery in sales training.

### **Transition**

In Section 2, I reviewed the professional and academic literature by introducing a discussion of the content to demonstrate the depth of breadth of my research inquiry, explained the organization of the review, followed by critically analyzing and synthesizing the research business problem pertaining to the conceptual frameworks, potential themes, and phenomena I identified in the purpose statement. Section 3d included the exploration of project ethics, the nature of the project, data collection and analysis activities, and reliability and validity. In Section 4, I discussed the findings and the implications for business practice, social change, and further research.

### Section 3: Research Project Methodology

Section 3 includes project ethics, the nature of the project, population and sampling, interview protocol and questions, and lastly, data collection, organization, and analysis techniques.

#### **Project Ethics**

##### **Role of the Researcher**

Qualitative research prioritizes understanding life events through participants' lived experiences. By interpreting their narratives, researchers seek to illuminate the *why* behind their words, requiring methods that foster open and unconstrained expression (Busetto et al., 2020). My role as the researcher was to synthesize participant responses, common themes, and explore the interviewees' professional experiences as they relate to the research questions. My relationship to the topic stems from my career in sales and advanced technologies exposure, allowing me access to sales managers who have effective strategies to mitigate the phenomena. Although we no longer work together, we are still connected through professional networks.

My research project adhered to the ethical principles outlined in the 2014 *Belmont Report*, ensuring the protection of human subjects (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, & National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 2014). The *Belmont Report* outlines requirements of the researcher in the research process such as, respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, as the basic ethical principles. I safeguarded the welfare and rights of all participants involved and conduct the research in compliance with all relevant guidelines provided

within the *Belmont Report* and the university's IRB regulations (the Walden University IRB approval number for this study is # 04-15-24-1134870).

### **Informed Consent**

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the project. There is a need for clearer communication and more comprehensive informed consent procedures within clinical trials and research studies (Pietrzykowski & Śmiłowska, 2021). The consent form associated with my project was clear, concise, and written in language easily understood by all participants, outlining the rights and responsibilities of both parties. I went over the informed consent and the particulars of the research project with the participants prior to obtaining their signature on the form.

Participants had the right to withdraw from the project at any time without penalty or prejudice. The procedures for withdrawal were clearly explained to participants during the informed consent process and interview protocol. The procedure for participant withdrawal was to notify me by email so adequate steps could be taken to discard their active informed consent form. Additionally, I followed the recommendation that any participant who exhibits a lack of communication for over 7 days should act as a withdrawal from a project (Grant, 2021). I did not offer incentivized participation.

### **Confidentiality**

I took several measures to ensure the ethical protection of participants. Ethical protection includes (a) respecting their privacy and keeping their private information confidential, (b) respecting their right to change their mind or decide that the research does not match their interests, and (c) respecting their right to withdraw without a penalty

(Poth, 2020). First, I masked the identity of the participants and their sales organizations by labeling them SM1 or SM2 for Sales Manager 1 and Sales Manager 2. The use of pseudonyms protected the confidentiality of the organization and its employees. Second, I anonymized all data collected during the research including names of individuals and organizations. Keeping data anonymous ethically protects participants by relaying ambiguity to the reader (Andrew et al., 2023). Only I have access to the original data. I stored the data securely for 5 years to protect the confidentiality of participants. By adopting these measures and adhering to the 2014 *Belmont Report* and Walden University ethical guidelines, I conducted this research with the utmost respect for the rights and well-being of all participants involved.

### **Nature of the Project**

I performed a qualitative pragmatic inquiry study to investigate the research question. A qualitative study is a type of research that explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems which involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences (Ramanadhan et al., 2021). Pragmatic research prioritizes adaptability by incorporating *what works best* into its design, enabling researchers to navigate dynamic situations and find effective solutions (Bazen et al., 2021). This methodology and design is suitable for this research endeavor. Qualitative research comprises an iterative exploratory approach to gain comprehension of the phenomenon under investigation (Aspers & Corte, 2019). By exploring sales managers' strategies for delivering current training methods, my project sought to provide insights into how sales managers can enhance organizational

revenues through the development and delivery of sales personnel training for Generation Z employees. By employing a qualitative method with a pragmatic inquiry design, this research aims to navigate dynamic situations lived by sales managers, find effective solutions, and extract practical insights that can be utilized to identify strategies used to enhance sales training and increase organizational revenue.

### **Population, Sampling, and Participants**

I interviewed sales managers with effective strategies to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizations' revenues for my qualitative pragmatic inquiry study. The eligibility criteria for participants were a) sales managers, (SM), b) SMs with experience training Generation Z employees, c) US-based, and d) 3 years managerial experience. Sales managers with experience developing and delivering training methods encompassing artificial intelligence (AI) is not mandatory but encouraged to participate.

Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, involves the intentional selection of units exhibiting predefined characteristics for inclusion in the research sample (Campbell et al., 2020). I used purposive sampling identify a target sample comprising 10 sales managers. Hennink & Kaiser's (2022) study showed how a sample size of 9-17 interviews will substantiate a researcher's study while allowing the researcher to reach data saturation.

I accessed the participants through my professional networks and associations. I built a working relationship with my participants by directly contacting them via the professional social networks to introduce myself and my project and establish rapport.

Building rapport increases engagement and participation in research studies (Horsfall et al., 2021; Dantec & Fox, 2015).

Data saturation is the most common guiding principle for assessing the adequacy of purposive samples in qualitative research (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Burke, 2023).

Data saturation occurs when no new information is revealed through the interview process. When data saturation occurred before all the planned interviews were conducted, I conducted an additional interview to ensure there was no new information available.

### **Data Collection Activities**

I was the main data collection instrument as the researcher of my qualitative research project. I conducted semistructured interviews to collect the primary data. Semistructured interviews utilize a pre-set algorithmic question list to establish consistency across participants (Grant, 2021). I used public websites, public documents (such as product sales reports, individual salespersons reports, and sales training plan reports that may be reported in 10-K reports.), and archival data to gather secondary corroborating data.

I used an interview protocol (See Appendix A) to guide my semistructured interviews to complete my data collection. Following an interview protocol is significant in research studies to make its findings reliable as it is the key to obtaining good quality interview data (Yeong et al., 2018). I provided a step-by-step process of the interview process in its entirety. The steps included a) participant recruitment via LinkedIn connections and other professional networks, b) participant invitation sent via email (See Appendix B), c) participant is sent informed consent form and must be returned before

scheduled interview, d) conduct scheduled audio recorded interview, e) plan and conduct follow up meeting for transcript review and member checking with participant, and f) continuously evaluate my storage plan of data collected for ease of organization and analyzation. Patino and Ferreira (2018) reminded researchers there should be a goal to enhance data storage and security to increase internal and external validity. I increased internal and external validity by including proper data storage and security, careful study planning, and adequate quality control and implementation strategies.

My primary strategies to ensure the reliability and validity of answers provided by each participant included utilizing transcription review and member checking. Transcript review is a way to share and check interview transcripts with research participants while member checking is where data or results are returned to participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences (McMullin, 2021 & Motulsky, 2021). I shared my interpretations of the participants' responses with them and ask that they verify its accuracy. Once verified, this concluded the interview protocol and data collection process per engagement.

### **Interview Questions**

I used semi-structured interviews to collect the data. A full list of questions can be found in Appendix A. The targeted interview questions included the following:

1. What effective strategies did you use to develop sales personnel training for Generation Z employees?
2. How did you measure the effectiveness of these strategies?
3. What challenges did you experience when developing sales personnel training for



Generation Z employees?

4. How did you overcome these challenges?
5. What effective strategies did you use to deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees?
6. How did you measure the effectiveness of these strategies?
7. What challenges did you experience when delivering sales personnel training to Generation Z employees?
8. How did you overcome these challenges?
9. How do you recognize Generation Z sales personnel for their individual contributions?
10. How do you recognize Generation Z sales personnel for their teamwork contributions?
11. How have the strategies you used to develop Generation Z sales personnel training impacted revenues?
12. How have the strategies you used to deliver Generation Z sales personnel training impacted revenues?
13. Is there anything more you would like to add pertaining to the project that we have not already covered?

### **Data Organization and Analysis Techniques**

During the data analysis process, researchers often use various methods and systems to store, organize, and track the contents. Cloud computing platforms like Google Cloud Platform (GCP) have applications like Google Docs that researchers have

used to store and keep track of data from anywhere and while on-the-go (Hamed & Preece, 2020). To ensure data security, research logs, reflective journals, and labeling systems are stored in both physical (dedicated storage bag) and password-protected electronic formats (Google Docs). This dual approach offers accessibility for online and offline use. I also used an encrypted USB drive and lockable, fireproof 3-layered file organizer bag to store data and documents obtained from each interview.

My data analysis process included thematic analysis and narrative analysis to dissect the data collected. Thematic analysis is an exploratory process that looks at patterns of meaning in a data set (Naeem et al., 2023). Narrative analysis allows the researcher to listen to the participant's story or professional experiences and then attempt to analyze what it means (Raifman et al., 2022). I used both techniques to analyze the data I collected. I coded the data and looked for emergent themes amongst the data after recording the participants' genuine explanations of experiences in their field through guided open-ended questions.

Research by Clarke et al. (2021) revealed that 81% of participants who used data analysis software for qualitative data analysis reported a positive user experience and found these tools to be effective for both inferential coding and theory generation within their respective studies. I used data analysis software as a conceptual planning tool for data analysis. Specifically, I used Nvivo and manual analysis to aid me with organizing, analyzing, coding, mind-mapping, and recognizing and identifying common themes in the data. Creswell and Creswell (2018) rationalized conducting an exploratory sequential and logical design in the data collection process that requires schematic strategies crafted

to address potential order effects. They recommended the researcher ensure no new information is deduced and to create reliability within the collection process. Through thematic and narrative analysis, I did the following a) became familiar with the data, b) generated initial codes, c) searched for themes, d) reviewed themes, e) defined themes, and f) wrote up my report.

I identified key themes and correlated the findings back to the business problem, project focus, research question, and conceptual frameworks governing this project. My focus was on key themes, providing salient data unique to sales training delivery strategies for Gen Z employees from the interview responses of sales managers. Upon completion of my analysis, I stored all raw materials securely for 5 years and will immediately deconstruct them after this period.

## **Reliability and Validity**

### **Reliability and Dependability**

Critical analysis of research involves certifying the reliability and validity of data collected in the research process (Rose & Johnson, 2020). A data audit before analysis can ensure dependability (Megheirkouni & Moir, 2023). My strategy to increase dependability included using data analysis software as data audit tools.

### **Validity, Credibility, Transferability, Conformity, and Data Saturation**

Validity is prioritized in qualitative research. Validity is the act of determining whether the findings accurately reflect the data collected and incorporate respondent validation (Hayashi et al., 2021). By sharing my initial interpretations, member checking, with the participants, I created a loop of feedback and refinement. The proposed data

analysis techniques allowed me to work with the participants to confirm or contest the findings, potentially refining my understanding and ultimately strengthening the validity of the research. I reviewed interview transcriptions and performed member checking with the participants during a follow-up meeting to ensure the validity of the data collected.

Credibility is whether the research findings represent plausible and accurate information drawn from the participants' responses to the phenomenon under study (Johnson et al., 2020). I conducted member checking, transcript review, and data triangulation to ensure credibility. Data triangulation is the use of multiple datasets, methods, theories, and/or investigators to address a research question (Zelcane & Pipere, 2023). I triangulated the data to develop a comprehensive understanding of the problem under study and test the validity of the data.

Transferability of qualitative data suggests the project findings apply to similar settings or individuals (Munthe-Kaas et al., 2020). Transferability can be demonstrated by clear assumptions and contextual inferences about the research setting and participants. My interview protocol and data analysis allowed the reader and future literature the ability to determine if the inferences, findings, and conclusions made in my project are substantial and can be extended beyond my research.

Confirmability is the last criterion of trustworthiness and relationship building that a qualitative researcher must establish (Megheirkouni & Moir, 2023). Achieving confirmability involves researchers taking deliberate steps to mitigate bias in data and findings. I completed repeated checks and verifications during data collection and analysis, leading to results that are likely reproducible by others.

Data saturation is the point when continued data collection yields minimal new insights, signaling that sufficient data has been gathered to draw conclusions (Guest et al., 2020). Once I reached data saturation, I conducted an additional interview after initial data collection to ensure data saturation had been reached.

### **Transition and Summary**

In Section 3, I focused on the research methodology of this project. Overall, I stated the problem and the purpose, described the nature of the project, and detailed project ethics governed by the 2014 Belmonte Report protocol. I also discussed the population and sampling of participants, data collection activities, data organization and analysis techniques, interview questions, and reliability and validity of my project. In Section 4, I provided a synthesized overview of findings after data collection completion. Practical implications, impacts on social change, and recommended practices and actions for sales managers will be disclosed. Also included are recommended areas and topics for further study, reflections, and summaries, and overall project conclusions.

## Section 4: Findings and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

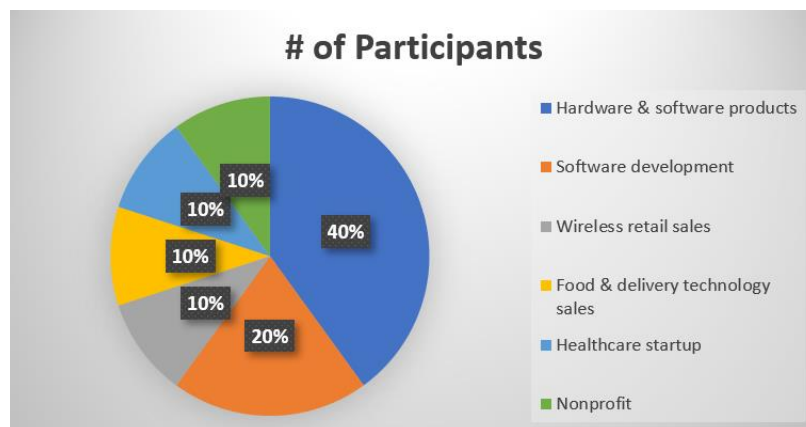
The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry was to explore and identify effective strategies sales managers used to develop and deliver sales personnel training to Generation Z employees to increase organization revenues. During my data analysis process, I uncovered two sets of themes belonging to development strategies as well as delivery strategies used by the participants. The development and delivery themes included (a) timing, (b) impact of AI incorporation, and (c) training styles, while delivery themes included (a) building trust and (b) understanding the generation gap between senior leadership and Generation Z employees. Each set of themes is attributed to both conceptual frameworks used to govern my project. Kim's (2022) CIP-R framework helped me understand the development strategies explored in data collection, and Pichler et al.'s (2021) DITTO framework helped me understand the delivery strategies the participants shared.

### **Presentation of the Findings**

The overarching research question was "What effective strategies do sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training to Generation Z employees to increase organization's revenues?" I gathered data by conducting 10 semistructured interviews to gain insight into strategies sales managers used to develop and deliver sales personnel training to Generation Z employees to increase organization's revenues. Table 2 illustrates the participant demographics of the project while Figure 2 illustrates a comparative view of which industries the participants practice.

**Table 3***Participant Demographics*

	Gender	Length of Service	Industry	Role
SM1	M	28	Wireless retail sales	Director of sales
SM2	F	5	Food & delivery technology sales	Sales manager
SM3	F	10	Software development	Sales manager
SM4	F	12	Healthcare startup	VP of sales
SM5	M	11	Hardware & software products	Sr. sales manager
SM6	M	4	Nonprofit	Sales manager
SM7	F	20	Hardware & software products	Regional director of sales academy Sales coach
SM8	F	8	Hardware & software products	Sales manager
SM9	F	7		Regional sales manager
SM10	M	15		

**Figure 2***Participant Industry Diversity*

The two major sets of themes uncovered through data analysis were development strategies and delivery strategies. Development strategies were defined to the participants as strategies used to develop training materials, courses, or any value inputs that contributed to the improvements of an organization's sales training program. Delivery strategies were defined to the participants as strategies used to deliver sales training to Generation Z employees based on training environment such as in-classroom settings, remote training, or a blend of training methods. Most organizations design its sales manager roles to focus primarily on the delivery of training while maintaining a sales training development department (sales enablement) to efficiently onboard new sales training personnel (Kim, 2022). Each participant effectively contributed strategies used in the delivery of training to Generation Z employees since they all qualified as sales managers under the project's eligibility criteria. However, information pertaining to development strategies was also revealed by a select number of participants due to previously held roles. Table 4 depicts whether a participant added insight to development, delivery, or both strategies.



**Table 4***Strategy Contribution*

	Development	Delivery	Both
SM1		X	
SM2			X
SM3		X	
SM4			X
SM5		X	
SM6		X	
SM7			X
SM8		X	
SM9		X	
SM10			X

**Development Strategies***Theme 1: Timing*

Onboarding new sellers is usually associated with a specific timeframe dependent upon an organization's program design. Most sales training programs last, on average, from 6 weeks to 1 year (Cabual, 2021). The program is designed to replicate daily job duties when the seller is on their own. Six of the 10 participants noted the timing of the day when training is given to Generation Z helps to retain the information. SM2 and SM7 both disclosed they found the greatest retention of training material when strategic information was taught in the morning. Sales training programs that design heavy training courses to occur in the first half of the day saw positive results in the reduction of exhaustion from both trainers and sellers (see Chaker et al., 2024). SM7 confirmed this

claim as well by sharing a documented survey showing the reduction of exhaustion from trainers when ramified throughout the training week. However, SM9 disclosed a neutral stance on the timing of the day for training. They attributed retention mostly to engaging material for Generation Z employees, which is covered further in Theme 3.

Another aspect of timing brought up by three participants focuses on the length of each training. SM4 and SM10 had comparable views on keeping the attention of Generation Z when teaching sales training. Traditionally, sales training courses were 60-minute modules comprising information and knowledge testing (Kaplan, 2020). When considering Generation Z employees, however, shorter, more concise training is required to keep them engaged. SM7 presented information regarding social networks that align with Generation Z's interest: "We are in the world of TikTok. Where six-second entertaining videos capture the attention of our youth and increase replay value." SM10 also noted the awareness of a narrowing attention span across all generations, even among sales managers. SM4, SM7, and SM10 all suggested designing a sales training program that has multiple 10-minute training courses versus Kaplan's (2020) notation of 60-minute trainings.

Emphasis was also placed on ensuring the training modules were interactive, perhaps with the use of AI technology and 3<sup>rd</sup>-party applications. Asynchronous and synchronous learning, online learning, small group learning, social interaction, virtual classes, and Zoom are training strategies that enable virtual learning to become more engaging and interactive (Sweetman, 2020). Successful incorporation of interactive training strategies paired with short training sessions may improve knowledge retention

for Generation Z employees.

***Theme 2: Impact of AI Incorporation***

Seven of the 10 participants referenced AI incorporation in their training programs and strategies used to reduce reliance on this technology. Several concerns were expressed in their respective interviews and patterns of negative contributions emerged during data analysis. The first and most prevalent pattern emerged where all seven participants disclosed a concern for Generation Z employees becoming too reliant on AI technology to solve problems for them. This is comparable to Monod et al. (2023) describing unintended consequences of AI sales assistants. SM6 discussed that an increase of AI-assisted training incorporated into the computing systems was slowly replacing the need for human sales trainers. This inadvertently is causing Generation Z employees to rely on outputs from AI technology. Consequently, a lack of fact-checking of the AI is present. SM4 elaborated on this claim by introducing the following: “Generation Z trusts information from computers more than from human sales leaders.”

Five participants noted how they are constantly questioned about the purpose of a training or the “why” behind its importance. They further continued to mention how this slows the training process, having to frequently explain the purpose of every directive given to them. It also impeded learning progress, sometimes requiring trainers to start from the beginning of a topic by utilizing a new approach to gain understanding and acceptance of their teaching style. However, this reluctance was not given to AI-assisted training, confirming Generation Z’s trust in computing systems versus human sales managers and coaches. SM10’s strategy to reduce AI dependency was to enforce hand-

written note taking along with no use of laptops during sales trainings. This strategy allowed sellers to not engage in non-sales activities on their laptops, as well as be fully engulfed in the classroom. They saw an immediate change in how engaged their team was and could recognize when sellers were struggling to understanding the material being facilitated to them. SM1's strategy included having the sales personnel regurgitate the explanation they give to the employee to inspect their comprehension. Depending on their response, SM1 can effectively assess whether to move on to new topics or spend more time ensuring the employee understands the current training topic.

SM5 talked mostly about the lack of critical thinking skills when Generation Z employees rely too much on AI technology to help sales deals. They mentioned how their organization has incorporated conversational intelligence. Conversational AI, or conversational artificial intelligence, is a type of AI that can understand and respond to human speech or text. It uses machine learning, natural language processing (NLP), and foundation models to mimic human interactions and translate human conversations into a language that machines can understand (Mariani et al., 2023). SM5 expressed concerns they have noticed with their Generation Z employees interacting with conversational AI:

Sellers no longer go to Google. They have AI chatbots at their fingertips for help. Asking for help from peers and managers is reducing while they are holding conversations with the AI system. The technology does the thinking for them and they simply regurgitate those conversations to the stakeholders of their sales deals.

This statement attributed the viewpoints of other participants noting the inability to

problem solve to help close sales cycles. This also helps to confirm the previous claims by SM4 and SM1 that Generation Z employees trust AI technologies without the need to fact-check the information given to them. SM4's strategy was to create problem-solving activities among small training groups without being able to use their computers. The employees were to work among themselves, combining solutions they had previous knowledge of within a specific timeframe. SM4 was happy to share positive results by incorporating this strategy among their employees.

The last impacting concern of AI incorporation regards the lack of relationship building. All seven participants discussed a lack of relationship-building and effective communication as a trend visibly notable in their employees. Relationship-building and effective communication are critical components of sales training (Garcia & Mitchell, 2018). SM3, SM5, SM7, SM8, and SM10 all reported employees having a lack of interest in talking on the phone. Earlier sales training programs involved cold-calling clients to prospect and acquire new business for the company (Kaplan, 2020). SM8 accredited the shift of cold calling to other forms of communication to forced remote learning post-pandemic:

They're not picking up their phones anymore. They would rather send a slew of emails, texts, or instant messages to their clients than to engage in a phone conversation. Sellers are missing out on the benefits of holding a conversation. You can dig deep on a phone call and see what other pain points a client is experiencing, resulting in a new sale. You can hear what a client truly thinks about the products and solutions they're being sold and pivot according to their

opinions. Imagine being ghosted on a half-of-a-million-dollar deal because you didn't take the time to listen to the needs of the customer. Someone else did, and they got the deal.

Without the possession of relationship-building and effective communication skills, Generation Z may be seeing a decline in closed sales deals. Reliance on AI technology and digital experiences is increasing their inability to hold in-person conversation. SM5 and SM6 summarized Generation Z employees' inability to hold in-person conversation as a causation to not being able to identify stakeholders in a sales deal. Stakeholders in a sales deal can be defined as any individual who can give the approval of a sales transaction (Hall et al., 2022). The inability to hold an in-person conversation and identify stakeholders creates difficulty in closing sales deals.

All seven participants shared similar strategies used to increase relationship building by having employees partake in simulations and in-person calls/interactions, identify opportunities, review actions taken, and integrate feedback for future transactions. In essence, incorporating artificial intelligence has helped organizations efficiently train larger groups of new sales personnel. However, the opportunity costs based on these findings suggest a negative impact on the quality of training received by Generation Z employees, impeding skills and, ultimately, revenue generation.

### ***Theme 3: Training Styles***

The overarching consensus from all participants when asked about strategies regarding training styles was distinguished as there not being a "one size fits all" solution. When considering Generation Z, several participants noted the various learning

styles amongst their teams and quickly realized the adaptation required to ensure effective training is being delivered. Table 4 depicts the assorted training styles gathered from all participants and the number of times it was confirmed as a strategy used.

**Table 5**

*Training Styles Used*

Training Style	<i>n</i> of participants who contributed data to theme ( <i>N</i> =10)
Based on learning-style	6
Observation	10
Use of 3rd-party applications	8
Theory-practice gap	7

Participants who guided their training for Generation Z employees based on their unique learning styles recorded increased retention from their teams. Learning styles can be described as how learners gather, sift through, interpret, organize, come to conclusions about, and “store” information for further use (McDaniel, 2010). These styles are often categorized by sensory approaches: visual, auditory, kinesthetic (hands-on), and verbal (reading/writing). SM2 recalled working with their training development team to have training modules include more visuals, leading to immediate hands-on training activities based on a productivity observation amongst her team. SM2 explained how many trainings were primarily aural, causing a lack of connection and focus from her employees. This led to decreased productivity and prompted SM2 to research solutions to reengage her team. SM9 and SM10 reported self-guided trainings and environment

flexibility (in-person, remote, blended methods) as effective training styles when considering learning styles for Generation Z sales personnel.

Every participant reported the use of observation as a strategy to understand the training needs of their Generation Z employees. Focusing on the response from SM6, they detailed how their observation strategy grew through the challenges of training a younger generation and their new and unique needs.

I'm old-school. I like the basics. Simply observing your team and being in the moment will help you understand who they are individually and their specific needs for success. Don't assume what they want; ask them what they want to get out of their training.

SM6 continued to explain how this allowed them to experience growth as a sales leader. After realizing Generation Z employees had increased inquiries for the purpose of each training, they began to ask the employees to regurgitate their understanding of the purpose after it was explained to them. This approach forced their employees to go from a reactive, leader-reliant learning approach to a proactive, independent learning approach.

Eight of the ten participants discussed the use of 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications in their training programs as a training style that assisted with training Generation Z employees. Applications included Mindtickle, Salesforce, 360Learning, and TalentLMS. SM10 added the incorporation of vendor partners to also assist with the facilitation of specific product and services trainings. The interviewees endorsed the positive impact on engagement and interactions with the use of these applications. Sales leaders discussed noticing the increase of technology to assist in training programs to efficiently train the



influx of sales personnel. They described their need to adapt to company technological changes and incorporate these changes to fit the needs of Generation Z employees. This aligns with Pichler et al.'s (2021) DITTO framework, which highlights the technology construct as one of the key attributes most desirable by Generation Z. Sales leaders' adaptation to the training needs of their younger teams enforces inadvertent growth of training styles. Expanding their knowledge through utilizing 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications aids in navigating new solutions to training retention.

Participants repeatedly reported a disconnect in their sales personnel learning. The transition from the formal classroom setting to the experience of applied practices exposed an area of opportunity for sales leaders to tailor their training for their teams. This disconnection is confirmed by the theory-practice gap. The theory-practice gap is the lack of ability to relate the knowledge acquired in academics to work with practice (Arteaga et al., 2024). The findings revealed several strategies to overcome this challenge. SM1 used the strategy of taking digital training and practicing role-playing sales scenarios in person. SM8 supported call blocks as a strategy for employees to practice seller pitches learned in the classroom segment, to then be applied on phone calls to clients for an interval of time during their workday. SM7 reported positive interactions and increased learning when breakout rooms (via Zoom) occurred during training. Employees were able to share knowledge acquired and discuss best practices amongst themselves in smaller intimate groups away from the larger training class. SM3 advocated for their successful strategy of live call training, where trainers listen in on live calls with clients while advising their sellers on how to ask probing questions and handle

objections. These findings may be helpful for sales leaders who are tasked with training Generation Z, who have limited reach to their teams due to learning environment restrictions.

#### ***Theme 4: Measurement***

One of the supporting questions to the research question asked to all participants in this project was: How did you measure the effectiveness of these strategies? This question is a follow-up to a core question referencing the development strategies sales managers used to train their Generation Z employees. Data analysis revealed common patterns of tools, applications, and keywords suggesting recommendations mentioned by the interviewees. The measurement patterns are (a) employee engagement and participation, (b) analytic tools, (c) surveys/tests, (d) post-training sales impact, and (e) nonverbal communication based on the training environment.

Employee engagement was a common pattern displayed among all interviews to help sales leaders measure the effectiveness of training material. SM7 noted increased clarifying questions asked, no questions asked, and lack of notetaking as indicators for improvement of training development. However, a meta-analysis denied solely depending on employee engagement and participation as a measurement indicator for effective training (Blut et al., 2023). The article suggested combining measurement strategies to get an accurate understanding of sales training effectiveness.

Another training measurement mentioned by three of the participants was the analytical tool Microsoft PowerBI. This measurement tool allows a sales organization to collect and analyze smaller data sets of information to form key performance indicators

or KPIs and objectives and key results or OKRs. SM1 and SM9 discussed reviewing reports from PowerBI as a strategy to understand which training courses received positive or negative feedback. Based on their findings, they tailored their training agendas and suggested further improvements to the development teams not discovered by business data analysts.

Surveys and tests were another effective training measurement strategy for sales leaders. Surveys and knowledge checks were built into training courses, usually toward the end of the training to gather feedback and assess retention from the sellers. Although every interviewee reported utilizing surveys and tests, studies contrast the effectiveness of this measurement strategy. Crick (2024) argued that surveys and knowledge checks were no longer credible due to observations of a “click-through-to-finish” approach. Sellers either provided biased feedback or no feedback at all OR used a guess-and-check approach to quickly finish knowledge checks. This not only hindered training knowledge attainment for sales personnel but also provided unreliable results to developers of the training courses.

The next effective training measurement strategy discussed was post-training sales impact. SM7 shared the results of a report they developed capturing sales numbers as it related to particular trainings. They sanctioned how sales leaders should be able to determine their attainment to goal within three months. This enabled a comprehensive overview that SM7 shared with developers and financial teams to showcase the correlation between trainings and financial success. These findings led to improvements or omissions of sales training courses to shape the overall training program for

Generation Z sales personnel.

Lastly, nonverbal communication surfaced frequently in data analysis. SM4 and SM5 stated how they used nonverbal cues as a strategy to help them identify how sellers felt or were responding to certain trainings. They observed body language as a response to determine the validity of their examination. However, SM4 stated how inspecting body language has been a less effective strategy when training sales personnel virtually. Employees can turn off their video cameras, limiting sales managers' ability to evaluate employee perceptions of the trainings. These strategy recommendations can be used by sales leaders without the use of tools and resources while enhancing people skills and managerial expertise.

### **Delivery Strategies**

#### ***Theme 1: Building Trust with Generation Z***

A prevalent theme that emerged when evaluating the findings of this project was building trust with Generation Z employees. Every participant contributed insight concerning interpersonal upskilling required for their managerial expertise to be able to connect with their younger teams. Building trust with internal customers, or employees, increases the sales value of a company (DeTienne et al., 2022). This article confirms trust as a key element that factors into the overall success of sales for an organization. Several strategies and recommendations were shared to enhance the seizure of content delivery through trust building. SM2 recommended gathering their team's feedback in the form of short surveys. Feedback could also be gathered from one-on-one coaching sessions, which was stated as more effective than direct content delivery. SM7 recommended

focusing on building confidence within their teams. They stated, “A confident seller is a successful seller”. A few of the participants detailed the impact of Generation Z employees’ wanting to build training together rather than creating and facilitating material without their input. SM10 discussed successful feedback when training included humor and heightened energy levels from presenters. They cautioned to ensure that the training was still impactful, but for the purposes of engagement, humor and energetic facilitation of training kept their teams more engaged.

SM7 highlighted the need to show their team how much they cared. They developed this notion while receiving feedback from their employees: “No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.” SM7 deemed this quote invaluable to their training practices when working with their Generation Z teams. SM7 gathered feedback through check-ins with each individual team member, which were named “pulse checks”. These pulse checks allowed SM7 to configure the strategy of emphasizing an element of care within their delivery of training to Generation Z. SM3 shared a trust building strategy that centered around reducing conformity and increasing inclusivity. They recognized in their training that training courses had a set structure that didn’t allow employees to be their authentic selves while learning. SM3 quickly realized Generation Z was not fond of structure and needed feel included in all aspects of the training being delivered to them. They worked with their teams to discuss ways to customize training topics for the weeks ahead and altered content delivery as needed. Lastly, SM1 repeatedly discussed the importance of buy-in from Generation Z employees. Buy-in in sales can be defined as the acceptance or willingness to support or

participate in sales processes within an organization (Zeiss & Chapman, 2021). SM1 elaborated on how this strategy factored into trust building by sharing how oversharing needs to be initiated by the sales managers. They shared previously that Generation Z has an overwhelming need to understand the why or purpose behind certain trainings or tasks they're given. Oversharing this purpose leads to the trust of their sales managers, thus leading to buy-in and willingness to participate in sales processes for the company.

***Theme 2: Generation Gap Between Senior Leadership & Generation Z***

Only 3 of 10 participants shared information on understanding the generational gap between older generation leadership and their Generation Z teams. However, it was a resounding pattern that showed in the data collected for delivery strategies. The strategies shared for this theme relate seniority to age rather than tenure or position within a company. SM1 noticed that direct communication did more harm than good when working with their Generation Z teams. Instead, their strategy leaned toward shared communication that can be administered to the entire group. This lessened the intensity of constructive feedback, increased acceptance of the feedback, and increased awareness for the entire team. SM9's strategy included revising training material before it is delivered to their Generation Z employees. The goal of the revisions was to ensure the relatability of the content to a younger team. SM9 noted that developers do not keep in mind the generations they are creating for, so it places the obligation then on sales managers to enrich the training with relatable content to be better absorbed by their younger sales personnel.

SM6's discussed how they were challenged with helping their Generation Z

employees understand that the customers they are selling to are typically older than them. This requires a mindset shift of understanding their customers' needs rather than their own needs to feel comfortable executing a sale. To reduce becoming self-centered in their sales transactions, SM6 recommended the strategy of delivering training that strengthened small talk with customers. This strategy will allow Generation Z sales personnel to understand the needs of their customers and build a trusted advisor role in the partnership, hold conversations with stakeholders from older generations, reduce catering to their personal needs, and ultimately lead to more closed sales deals. Lastly, SM7 and SM8 talked about the reduction of repercussions for missing sales goals. Instead, these sales leaders interpreted missed sales goals as areas of improvement that needed personalized attention. SM7 stated, "Repercussions given to Generation Z employees lead to them voluntarily departing from the company. Harsh discipline is a thing of the past and less effective on Gen Z because of their flighty employment nature."

However, SM8 noted that the challenge of not being able to directly correct mistakes encourages coddling of the employee. SM8's delivery strategy was to help build resiliency after an employee received constructive criticism. SM7's delivery strategy included helping this generation become better conversationalists. By getting them to talk through conflict and struggles they are experiencing, they are reducing the level of handholding required, building resiliency, and upskilling themselves in conversations that may be held with other levels of management and their customers.

The project findings align with both conceptual frameworks governing this project. Kim's (2022) CIP-R framework, which focused on content, instructional design,

programmed learning, and recommendations for training programs, was addressed in the development strategies shared by all participants in this project. Each construct of this framework helped to gather data to answer the overarching research question presented to interviewees. Pichler et al.'s (2021) DITTO framework focused on diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational support. The findings primarily addressed individualism and teamwork as well as technology as the focal attributes desired by Generation Z employees. Participants provided delivery strategies that maintained the value of these constructs for their Generation Z teams.

The project findings verify development and delivery strategies used by sales managers to effectively train Generation Z employees to increase organizations' revenues. Findings are consistent with previous and future studies, extending the knowledge within the sales field. Strategies that involve developing and facilitating sales training are crucial to generating revenue for a company (Honeycutt & Stevenson, 1989). Studies conducted that focused on delivery strategies solely, revealed organizations suffered from increased training and development training costs (Sawad & Andrews, 2022; Bronson, 2023). Sales managers who used effective strategies to develop and deliver sales training to Generation Z employees successfully increased skills amongst their sales personnel, improved their overall training program, and contributed to increased organizational revenues for their respective companies.

### **Business Contributions and Recommendations for Professional Practice**

This project's findings may be advantageous for current and future sales leaders seeking effective strategies to develop and deliver sales training to Generation Z sales



personnel. The lack of these effective strategies may inadvertently negatively impact revenue generation for an organization. Cultivating a training environment that enables sellers to enhance sales skills increases the sales value of a company (DeTienne et al., 2022). Therefore, effective strategies uncovered in this project may benefit sales managers who will develop and deliver sales training to Generation Z sales personnel to increase organizations' revenues. I will brief on the 6 themes unveiled in the project's findings to aid in recommending actions to develop and deliver sales training. These themes are (a) timing, (b), artificial intelligence (AI) incorporation, (c) training styles, (d) measurement, (e) building trust, and (f) understanding the generation gap between senior leadership and Generation Z. Additionally, I will include business contributions and recommendations for professional practice from the participants that were also revealed in the data analysis but did not align with the categorizing of development and delivery themes. These additional recommendations are (a) financial considerations and (b) motivation for Generation Z sales personnel.

Based on the findings of this project, I propose numerous actions for current and future sales managers to take to help them effectively develop and deliver sales training for their Generation Z sales personnel to contribute to the overall profitability of their organizations. First, current, and future sales managers should be conscientious of timing when developing sales training for their Generation Z employees. Environmental training of salespeople has a spillover effect or indirect impact on sales if they are not able to retain pertinent training knowledge in a given amount of time (Singh et al., 2022). I discovered through several participants that the length of time for a training should be

especially considered when developing sales training for Generation Z employees. Due to decreased attention spans in both trainers and sellers, shortened trainings should be considered to reduce failed retention of training knowledge and avoid burnout from both sales managers and employees. The timing of the day in which training is delivered was also discovered as a critical element when developing sales training for Generation Z employees. Ensuring that more strategic and substantial material is given toward the beginning of a training day and less arduous training delivered toward the end of the day. The addition of breaks throughout the day was also deemed useful for retention.

Second, current and future sales managers should take action to reduce the dependency on AI that's been incorporated into training programs. Various forms of Generative AI incorporated into sales training programs can help organizations efficiently train more salespersons at once (Kaplan, 2020). However, the findings of this project suggest more of a negative impact in contrast to this article. I discovered that Generation Z employees were becoming too reliant on AI technologies to problem solve for them, decreased their ability to critically think on their own, and hindered relationship-building skills. Incorporating the action to reduce dependency on AI may help to improve the aforementioned hindrances. Participants shared strategies like handwritten notetaking and closing their laptops during training to get employees more engulfed with the material being presented to them.

Third, current and future sales managers should adopt different training styles to fit the needs of their specific Generation Z teams. Participants described training for this generation as there being no "one size fits all" solution. This action is applicable to

businesses that may have training environments encompassing multigenerational teams. Being able to provide training to multiple generations under one training program flexes diversity and inclusion within that company. Evaluating sales training effectiveness at different learning levels is vital for tailoring training to fit unique learning styles (Attia et al., 2021). Recommended training styles included, (a) self-guided/self-paced trainings, (b) environment flexibility, (c) options based on learning styles, (d) observation, (e) use of 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications, resources, and vendors, and (f) understanding theory-practice to enable a training style to resolve the disconnection. Fourth, current and future sales managers should take action to increase measuring effectiveness of trainings developed for Generation Z employees. Current metrics are not practical for evaluating developmental interventions, mainly because of measurement difficulties, data accessibility issues, and the longitudinal nature of training (Oh & Johnston, 2023). Therefore, the findings of this project provided recommendations for measuring effectiveness via (a) employee engagement and participation, (b) analytic tools, (c) surveys/tests, (d) post-training sales impact, and (e) nonverbal communication based on the training environment. This action is relevant for businesses to ensure practical training development with effective training measures.

Fifth, current and future sales managers should focus on delivery strategies that build trust with their Generation Z employees to increase the likelihood of gaining buy-in. Linking authentic leadership to younger generations improves team innovativeness and selling performance (Asim Shahzad et al., 2022). Authentic leadership encourages authentic participation from Generation Z employees, making this action crucial for

gaining buy-in. Participants recommended gathering feedback, building confidence, creating training based on their wants, using humor and energized presenters, showing how much a sales manager cares, and reducing conformity to increase inclusivity. Lastly, current, and future sales leaders need to take action to understand the generational gap between senior leadership and Generation Z sales personnel. This is especially critical for businesses to practice reducing bias in the workplace. Understanding that Generation Z employees need shared communication, relevant content delivered, understanding of the age gap with their customers, and that fewer repercussions reduce employee turnover. More conversation can be put into practice from sales managers.

The additional actions current and future sales managers should take relating to development and delivery strategies include business reminders that may impact company financial goals and the motivation of Generation Z sales personnel. Ineffective sales training programs cost organizations billions of dollars in annual revenue and profits (Bronson, 2023). One of the participants confirms this by noting how costly it is to hire then fire sales personnel so retaining their talent helps to predict the unit of the economics of how much each employee contributes to the organization. Retention of employees equals retention of customers. This makes it easier to track how much each client is spending with the business and accounts for each client being attended to, increasing revenue tracking efficiency. More financial business considerations presented by participants include (a) Generation Z employees accelerate faster in a training program when training is delivered in person, (b) companies can become more cost-efficient by training more employees simultaneously through a virtual delivery training method, and

(c) frequent evaluation given at certain training levels to determine if certain content fits at specific stages in a training program.

The next action businesses can take is to find motivators for Generation Z sales personnel to willingly partake in training programs. Gen Z is more strongly purpose-driven than previous generations, and less motivated by money (Dreyer & Stojanová, 2023). Trying to motivate Generation Z employees with compensation may yield less participation, reduced buy-in, and employee dissatisfaction. Financial rewards alone will not motivate this generation (Dwivedula & Singh, 2021). Participants recommended having their teams take personality tests to help identify the strengths on their teams and creating themes for smaller groups to encourage friendly sales competition amongst teammates. Generation prefers time off and work-from-home days due to the hybrid program designs and mandatory return-to-office orders by organizations. Daily scorecards that display employee sales accomplishments for the day can motivate sellers to attain or exceed the same feat. Generation Z is motivated when they receive direct recognition from their managers and executive-level leaders. Participants shared they honor public praise that is witnessed by their peers. They are also motivated when they are acknowledged for sales wins that their managers did not know were occurring or wins behind the scenes. Lastly, Generation Z employees are motivated when they are recognized for accomplishments, they've apprised their managers of areas they want to grow in, relating to promotions and position changes.

### **Implications for Social Change**

This research project explored effective strategies sales managers used to develop

and deliver sales training to Generation Z sales personnel to increase organizations' revenues. It has implications for positive social change (PSC) including (a) promoting diversity and inclusion of multiple age groups and (b) engendering future sales leaders who are conscious of the needs required of multigenerational teams. One of the challenges that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives face is the difficulty of measuring their impact on organizational performance (Van Linden et al., 2024).

However, new studies also indicate measuring DEI efforts amongst employees belonging to Generation Z may overcome this challenge due to key attributes they desire in the workplace. The first construct of Pichler et al.'s (2021) DITTO framework describes diversity as the first characteristic a company must possess to attract Generation Z employees. These employees would like to see processes and initiatives that welcome their generation and integrate their needs among the other generations that make up an organization's sales environment. This signals to businesses that if they are trying to attract Generation Z employees and reduce the possibility of them seeking employment elsewhere once onboarded, they should pay attention to the age dynamics of their sales teams and ensure inclusivity to retain talent long-term.

Another potential positive social impact relates to cultivating a new generation of sales leaders who are conscious of multigenerational teams' needs to further promote diversity and inclusion. Due to more than 75 million Baby Boomers retiring by 2026, employers will need a vigorous workforce plan for replacing existing workers (McFadden, 2022). According to Pichler et al. (2021), Generation Z employees will take up most of the workforce by 2031. Preparing this generation now for leadership roles

may be beneficial while older generations are still active in the workforce. Generation Z employees preparing for leadership can combine skills and knowledge gathered from older generations' influence with the social needs of their current and future generations to improve management as different age groups transition in and out of the workplace. Ultimately, developing and delivering sales training to Generation Z employees can encourage a culture of continuous improvement through impacting internal customers, promote positive social change with the inclusivity of Generation Z teams, cultivate conscientious sales leaders, and contribute to the academic understanding of sales and training dynamics, making it a vital area of investigation.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This qualitative pragmatic inquiry explored effective strategies to develop and deliver sales training to Generation Z employees to increase organizations' revenues. The project's population consisted of US-based sales managers who have at least 3 years of managerial experience training Generation Z employees. Limitations of this project included (a) select sales managers who did not contribute substantial data to development strategies (b) regional restriction, and (c) sales managers' inability to recall strategies used due to a lack of documenting steps, progress, and impact. Future research exploring training development and delivery strategies for Generation Z employees may be able to address the limitations of this project by (a) ensuring participants have effective strategies for both training development and delivery, (b) exploring training programs in different geographical locations, and (c) confirming participants have documented strategies showcasing its steps and impact.

Future researchers should study the positive and negative impact of the growing incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) in training programs. The findings of this project suggested more negative impacts and strategies to help reduce the negative effect placed on Generation Z sales personnel. However, future researchers can conduct studies providing a critical analysis that goes further in-depth comparing and contrasting the impact of AI technologies. Another recommendation for future studies is to perform quantitative research to develop concrete strategies and metrics to measure the correlation between employee productivity and a company's financial success. Although most participants in this research project was unable to provide data regarding this topic, the few participants who did make this a potential area of study if perhaps higher-level, financial employees were asked questions to uncover data confirming or denying this correlation. Lastly, another form of measurement was presented in this project but did not appear enough in the findings to generate a theme. Future researchers can explore customer engagement as a form of measurement for effective sales training. Post-sales feedback via customer surveys and reviews of employee-customer interactions may be a great indicator for sales organizations to identify if their training programs are producing effective sellers to generate revenue for the business.

### **Conclusion**

Sales managers who possess successful development and delivery strategies to train Generation Z employees play a crucial role in increasing an organization's financial success. The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry was to explore effective strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales training to Generation Z sales



personnel to increase organizations' revenues. This project was governed by two conceptual frameworks; Kim's (2022) content, instructional design, programmed learning, and recommendation framework (CIP-R) and Pichler et al.'s (2021) diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational supports framework (DITTO). These frameworks are parallel in conducting research that provides insight into development and delivery strategies.

The 10 participants were sales leaders in various industries who have contributed successful training strategies for Generation Z employees in sales organizations. Data were collected using 10 semistructured interviews, public websites, public documents, and archival data to gather secondary corroborating data. The data analytic procedure included Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis and Labov & Waletzky's (1967) narrative analysis.

The six major themes that emerged included (a) timing, (b) impact of artificial intelligence (AI) incorporation, and (c) training styles, while delivery themes included (a) building trust and (b) understanding the generation gap between senior leadership and Generation Z employees. A few key recommendations to retain and motivate Generation Z employees as well as financial business considerations concerning training and development are affirmed in this project. The implications for positive social change included promoting diversity and inclusion of multiple age groups and engendering future sales leaders who are conscious of the needs required of multigenerational teams. For sales organizations to sustain profitability amidst economic challenges, sales managers with effective development and delivery strategies for training Generation Z

employees can enhance new and established training programs and cultivate a positive environment for future generations.

## References

- Abdulrahman, M. D., Faruk, N., Oloyede, A. A., Surajudeen-Bakinde, N. T., Olawoyin, L. A., Mejabi, O. V., Imam-Fulani, Y. O., Fahm, A. O., & Azeez, A. L. (2020). Multimedia tools in the teaching and learning processes: A systematic review. *Heliyon*, *6*(11), e05312. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05312>
- Andrew, J., Eunice, R. J., & Karthikeyan, J. (2023). An anonymization-based privacy-preserving data collection protocol for digital health data. *Frontiers in public health*, *11*, 1125011. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1125011>
- Arteaga, E., Biesbroek, R., Nalau, J., & Howes, M. (2024). Across the great divide: A systematic literature review to address the gap between theory and practice. *Sage Open*, *14*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241228019>
- Arthur, W., Bennett, W., Edens, P. S., & Bell, S. (2018). Effectiveness of training in organizations: A meta-analysis of design and evaluation features. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*(2), 234–245. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.2.234>
- Asim Shahzad, M., Iqbal, T., Imad Ud Din Akbar, M., Bakhsh, K., & Ahmad, B. (2022). Linking Authentic Leadership to Transactive Memory System, Team Innovativeness, and Selling Performance: A Multilevel Investigation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 884198. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.884198>
- Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2019). What is qualitative in qualitative research? *Qual Sociol* *42*, 139–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>
- Attia, A. M., Honeycutt Jr., E. D., Fakhr, R., & Hodge, S. K. (2021). Evaluating sales training effectiveness at the reaction and learning levels. *Services Marketing*

*Quarterly*, 42(1), 124–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332969.2021.1948489>

Bazen, A., Barg, F. K., & Takeshita, J. (2021). Research techniques made simple: an introduction to qualitative research. *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, 141(2), 241–247. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jid.2020.11.029>

Benítez-Márquez, M. D., Sánchez-Teba, E. M., Bermúdez-González, G., & Núñez-Rydman, E. S. (2022). Generation Z Within the Workforce and in the workplace: A bibliometric analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.736820>

Berge, Z. L. (2022). Designing workplace training for generational differences: Does it matter? *Merits*, 2(4), 400–407. <https://doi.org/10.3390/merits2040028>

Blut, M., Kulikovskaja, V., Hubert, M., Brock, C., & Grewal, D. (2023). Effectiveness of engagement initiatives across engagement platforms: A meta-analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 1–25. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-023-00925-7>

Bolander, W., Bonney, L., & Satornino, C. (2014). Sales education efficacy. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 36(2), 169–181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475314536733>

Bronson, W. (2023). Training strategies to improve salesperson confidence and production. *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies*. 14016. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/14016>

Brown, C., & White, E. (2018). Nurturing a mindset for success: Developing future sales leaders. *Journal of Marketing and Sales Development*, 15(3), 78–92.

- Brown, C., & Williams, D. (2021). Leading sales teams across generations: A study of leadership approaches and effectiveness. *International Journal of Sales Leadership, 12*(2), 78–94.
- Brown, L. A., & Green, K. C. (2021). Comparing blended learning and traditional classroom training in sales: A case study approach. *Journal of Sales Education, 72*, 103037. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amsu.2021.103037>
- Burke, K. (2023). *Life Trends 2024: Emerging Trends in business*. Accenture. <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/song/accenture-life-trends>
- Burton, C. M., Mayhall, C., Cross, J., & Patterson, P. P. (2019). Critical elements for multigenerational teams: A systematic review. *Team Performance Management, 25*, 369–401. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TPM-12-2018-0075>
- Busetto, L., Wick, W., & Gumbinger, C. (2020). How to use and assess qualitative research methods. *Neurological Research and Practice, 2*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42466-020-00059-z>
- Cabual, R. A. (2021). Learning styles and preferred learning modalities in the new normal. *OALib, 08*(04), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1107305>
- Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing, 25*(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Chaker, N. N., Habel, J., Hewett, K., & Zablah, A. R. (2024). The future of research on international selling and sales management. *Journal of International Marketing,*

32(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069031X231224712>

Chang, C.-W., & Chang, S.-H. (2023). The impact of digital disruption: Influences of digital media and social networks on forming Digital Natives' attitude. *SAGE Open*, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231191741>

Chen, Z. (2022). Artificial Intelligence-Virtual Trainer: Innovative Didactics Aimed at Personalized Training Needs. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 1–19. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-022-00985-0>

Chillakuri, B. (2020). Understanding Generation Z expectations for effective onboarding. *J. Organ. Chang Manag.* 33, 1277–1296. doi: 10.1108/JOCM-02-2020-0058

Clair, C. A., Melvin, T. J., Taylor, J. L., & Saylor, M. A. (2022). "Researcher" bias: How our assumptions on technology affect research of older adults. *Frontiers in public health*, 10, 1034497. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.1034497>

Dhimolea, T. K., Kaplan-Rakowski, R., & Lin, L. (2022). A systematic review of research on high-immersion virtual reality for language learning. *TechTrends*, 66(5), 810-824. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-022-00717-w>

Clarke, S. O., Coates, W. C., & Jordan, J. (2021). A practical guide for conducting qualitative research in medical education: Part 3-Using software for qualitative analysis. *AEM education and training*, 5(4), e10644.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/aet2.10644>

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Mixed methods procedures. In *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed., pp.

213-246). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

See [NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research](#).

Crick, J. M. (2024). Analyzing survey data in marketing research: A guide for academics and postgraduate students. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 32(2), 203–215.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2023.2176533>

Dantec, C. A., & Fox, S. E. (2015). Strangers at the Gate: Gaining Access, Building Rapport, and Co-Constructing Community-Based Research. *Proceedings of the 18th ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing*.

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, & National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. (2014). The Belmont Report. Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research. *The Journal of the American College of Dentists*, 81(3), 4–13.

DeTienne, K. B., Alessandri, A., Aleo, A., & Agle, B. (2022). Building Value through Sales Ethics. *Journal of Creating Value*, 8(1), 10-24.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/23949643221093455>

Dhimolea, T. K., Kaplan-Rakowski, R., & Lin, L. (2022). A systematic review of research on high-immersion virtual reality for language learning. *TechTrends*, 66,

810–824. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-022-00717-w>

Drewery, D., Pretti, T. J., & Church, D. (2020). Contributions to work-integrated learning programs to organizational talent pipelines: Insights from talent managers.

*International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 21(3), 275–288.

[https://www.ijwil.org/files/IJWIL\\_21\\_3\\_275\\_288.pdf](https://www.ijwil.org/files/IJWIL_21_3_275_288.pdf)

Dreyer, C., & Stojanová, H. (2023). How entrepreneurial is German Generation Z vs. Generation Y? A Literature Review. *Procedia Computer Science*, 217, 155–164.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2022.12.211>

Dwivedi, Y. K., Hughes, L., Ismagilova, E., Aarts, G., Coombs, C., Crick, T., Duan, Y.,

Dwivedi, R., Edwards, J. S., Eirug, A., Galanos, V., Ilavarasan, P. V., Janssen,

M., Jones, P., Kar, A. K., Kizgin, H., Kronemann, B., Lal, B., Lucini, B., &

Williams, M. D. (2021). Artificial Intelligence (AI): Multidisciplinary

perspectives on emerging challenges, opportunities, and agenda for research,

practice, and policy. *International Journal of Information Management*, 57,

101994. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2019.08.002>

Dwivedula, R., & Singh, A. (2021). A qualitative approach to understand Generation Z work motivation. *European Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 4(2), 1–17.

<https://doi.org/10.33422/ejbs.v4i2.542>

Fazal, U., Syed, A., Sikandar, M., & Mohideen, M. (2022). Sales training as a critical path to a company's success in post COVID-19 era. 27. 1-9.

Fogel, S., Hoffmeister, D., Rocco, R., & Strunk, D. (2012). Teaching sales. *Harvard Business Review*. 90.

Freifeld, L. (2022). *2022 training Industry report*. Training.

<https://trainingmag.com/2022-training-industry-report/>

Gao, P., Li, J., & Liu, S. (2021). An introduction to key technology in artificial



- intelligence and big data driven e-learning and e-education. *Mobile Networks and Applications*, 26(5), 2123-2126. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11036-021-01777-7>
- Garcia, L., & Mitchell, R. (2018). Bridging the generation gap in Sales: Strategies for improved team performance. *Journal of Selling Excellence*, 7(4), pp. 56–68.
- Garcia, M., & Rodriguez, L. (2019). Cultivating emotional intelligence in sales education: A pathway to professional mindset enhancement. *International Journal of Sales Education*, 8(1), pp. 25-40.
- Grant, S. C. (2021). Informed Consent—We can and should do better. *JAMA Network Open*, 4(4), e2110848. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.10848>
- Guest, G., Namey, E., & Chen, M. (2020). A simple method to assess and report thematic saturation in qualitative research. *PloS one*, 15(5), e0232076. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0232076>
- Hall, K. R., Harrison, D. E., Ajjan, H., & Marshall, G. W. (2022). Understanding salesperson intention to use AI feedback and its influence on business-to-business sales outcomes. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 37 No. 9, pp. 1787-1801. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-04-2021-0218>
- Hamed, P. K., & Preece, A. S. D. (2020). Google Cloud Platform Adoption for Teaching in HEIs: A Qualitative Approach. *OALib*, 07(11), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1106819>
- Hayashi, P., Jr., Abib, G., Hoppen, N., & Wolff, L. D. G. (2021). Processual Validity in Qualitative Research in Healthcare. *Inquiry: a journal of medical care organization, provision and financing*, 58, 469580211060750.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00469580211060750>

Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research:

A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social science & medicine (1982)*, 292,

114523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523>

Hernández-De-Menéndez, M., Escobar, C. A., & Morales-Menéndez, R. (2020).

Educational experiences with Generation Z. *International Journal on Interactive Design and Manufacturing (IJIDeM)*, 14(3), 847–859.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12008-020-00674-9>

Honeycutt, E. D., & Stevenson, T. H. (1989). Evaluating sales training

programs. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 18(3), 215–222.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/0019-8501\(89\)90038-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0019-8501(89)90038-2)

Horsfall, M., Eikelenboom, M., Draisma, S., & Smit, J. H. (2021). The Effect of Rapport

on Data Quality in Face-to-Face Interviews: Beneficial or

Detrimental?. *International journal of environmental research and public*

*health*, 18(20), 10858. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182010858>

Itani, O. S., Jaramillo, F., & Chonko, L. (2019). Achieving top performance while

building collegiality in sales: It all starts with ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics*,

156, 417-438. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3598-z>

Jaas, A. (2022). E-Marketing and its Strategies: Digital Opportunities and challenges.

*Open Journal of Business and Management*, 10(02), 822–845.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2022.102046>

Jelinek, R., Ahearne, M., Mathieu, J. E., & Schillewaert, N. (2020). A longitudinal

- examination of individual, organizational, and contextual factors on sales technology adoption and job performance. *The Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 14(1), 7–23. <https://doi.org/10.2753/mtp1069-6679140101>
- Johnson, J. L., Adkins, D., & Chauvin, S. (2020). A Review of the Quality Indicators of Rigor in Qualitative Research. *American journal of pharmaceutical education*, 84(1), 7120. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7120>
- Johnson, M., & Smith, A. (2019). Managing a multigenerational sales team: Strategies for success. *Journal of Sales Management*, 20(3), pp. 123–140.
- Kaplan, A. D., Cruit, J., Endsley, M. R., Beers, S. M., Sawyer, B. D., & Hancock, P. A. (2020). The effects of virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality as training Enhancement Methods: A Meta-Analysis. *Human Factors*, 63(4), 706–726. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018720820904229>
- Kim, S. (2022). Innovating workplace learning: Training methodology analysis based on content, instructional design, programmed learning, and recommendation framework. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 870574. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.870574>
- Klopotan, I., Aleksic, A., & Vinkovic, N. (2020). Do business ethics and ethical decision making still matter: perspective of different generational cohorts. *Bus. Syst. Res. J.* 11, 31–43. <https://doi.org/10.2478/bsrj-2020-0003>
- Köhler, T., Smith, A., & Bhakoo, V. (2022). Templates in qualitative research methods: Origins, limitations, and new directions. *Organizational Research Methods*, 25(2), 183-210. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10944281211060710>

- Labov, W. & Waletzky, J. (1967). Narrative Analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. *University of Washington Press, Seattle and London*, pp. 3-38.
- LaForge, R., Anderson, R., Mehta, R., & Strong, J. (1997). Sales training and education: An empirical investigation of sales management training programs for sales managers. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*. 17(3), 53-66. [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rajiv-Mehta-4/publication/261626971\\_Sales\\_Training\\_and\\_Education\\_An\\_Empirical\\_Investigation\\_of\\_Sales\\_Management\\_Training\\_Programs\\_for\\_Sales\\_Managers/links/5c7599fea6fdcc47159e63fe/Sales-Training-and-Education-An-Empirical-Investigation-of-Sales-Management-Training-Programs-for-Sales-Managers.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rajiv-Mehta-4/publication/261626971_Sales_Training_and_Education_An_Empirical_Investigation_of_Sales_Management_Training_Programs_for_Sales_Managers/links/5c7599fea6fdcc47159e63fe/Sales-Training-and-Education-An-Empirical-Investigation-of-Sales-Management-Training-Programs-for-Sales-Managers.pdf)
- Lee, S., & Park, J. (2017). Developing a growth mindset in sales education: Strategies for encouraging adaptability and resilience. *Journal of Sales Transformation*, 14(4), pp. 56-68.
- Leslie, B., Anderson, C., Bickham, C., Horman, J., Overly, A., & Gentry, C. (2021). Generation Z perceptions of a positive workplace environment. *Empl. Responsib. Rights J.* 33, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10672-021-09366-2>
- Li, C., Ning, G., Xia, Y., Guo, K., & Liu, Q. (2022). Does the Internet Bring People Closer Together or Further Apart? The Impact of Internet Usage on Interpersonal Communications. *Behavioral sciences (Basel, Switzerland)*, 12(11), 425. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12110425>
- Lonne, T. F., Karlsen, H. R., Langvik, E., & Saksvik-Lehouillier, I. (2023). The effect of immersion on sense of presence and affect when experiencing an educational

scenario in virtual reality: A randomized controlled study. *Heliyon*, 9(6), e17196.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e17196>

Luo, X., Qin, M. S., Fang, Z., & Qu, Z. (2021). Artificial intelligence (AI) coaches for sales agents: Caveats and solutions. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(2), 14–32.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242920956676>

Lupton, R. A., Weiss, J. E., & Peterson, R. T. (1999). Sales training evaluation model (STEM). *Industrial Marketing Management*, 28(1), 73–86.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/s0019-8501\(98\)00024-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0019-8501(98)00024-8)

Macnamara, B. N., & Burgoyne, A. P. (2023). Do growth mindset interventions impact students' academic achievement? A systematic review and meta-analysis with recommendations for best practices. *Psychological Bulletin*, 149(3-4), 133.

<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/bul0000352>

Mahmoud, A. B., Fuxman, L., Mohr, I., Reisel, W. D., & Grigoriou, N. A. (2021). Motivational standpoint of job insecurity effects on organizational citizenship behaviors: a generational Study. *Scand. J. Psychol.* 62, 267–275.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12689>

Malodia, S., Islam, N., Kaur, P., & Dhir, A. (2024). Why do people use artificial intelligence (AI)-Enabled voice assistants? *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 71, 491–505. <https://doi.org/10.1109/tem.2021.3117884>

Marcos-Cuevas, J., Critten, P., Squire, P., & Speakman, J. I. (2014). Enhancing the professional mindset of future sales professionals. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 36(2), 144-155. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475314531964>

- McCrindle, M., & Fell, A. (2019). Understanding Generation Z: Recruiting, training, and leading the next generation. *McCrindle Research Pty Ltd.*
- McDaniel, R. (2010, June 10). Learning styles. *Vanderbilt University*.  
<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/learning-styles-preferences/>
- McFadden, S. (2022). Strategies for succession planning of retiring Baby Boomers. *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies*. 11546.  
<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/11546>
- McMullin, C. (2021). Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for third sector research. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 34(1), 140–153. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-021-00400-3>
- Megheirkouni, M., & Moir, J. (2023). Simple but effective criteria: rethinking excellent qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.5845>
- Mariani, M. M., Hashemi, N., & Wirtz, J. (2023). Artificial intelligence empowered conversational agents: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 161, 113838.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113838>
- Monod, E., Watson-Manheim, M. B., Qi, I., Joyce, E., Mayer, A. S., & Santoro, F. (2023). (Un)intended Consequences of AI Sales Assistants. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 63(2), 436–448.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2022.2067794>
- Motulsky, S. L. (2021). Is member checking the gold standard of quality in qualitative

research? *Qualitative Psychology*, 8(3), 389–

406. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000215>

Munthe-Kaas, H., Nøkleby, H., & Lewin, S. (2020). The transfer approach for assessing the transferability of systematic review findings. *BMC Med Res Methodol* 20, 11.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0834-5>

Naeem, M., Ozuem, W., Howell, K., & Ranfagni, S. (2023). A Step-by-Step Process of Thematic Analysis to Develop a Conceptual Model in Qualitative Research.

*International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231205789>

Nguyen, T. D., Paswan, A. K., & Dubinsky, A. J. (2018). Allocation of Salespeople's resources for generating new sales opportunities across four types of customers.

*Industrial Marketing Management*, 68, 114–131.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2017.10.006>

O'Toole, J., Adcock, A., & Bullock, C. D. (2023). Influence of online Professional learning networks on Teacher Self-Efficacy for using Information

Communication Technology. *Research Square (Research Square)*.

<https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-2507369/v1>

Oh, J., & Johnston, W. J. (2023). New evaluation metric for measuring sales training effectiveness. *Journal of Business Research*, 156, 113458.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113458>

Pataki-Bittó, F., & Kapusy, K. (2021). Work environment transformation in the post COVID-19 based on work values of the future workforce. *J. Corp Real*

*Estate* 23:3. doi: 10.1108/JCRE-08-2020-0031

- Patino, C. M., & Ferreira, J. C. (2018). Internal and external validity: can you apply research study results to your patients?. *Jornal brasileiro de pneumologia: publicacao oficial da Sociedade Brasileira de Pneumologia e Tisiologia*, 44(3), 183. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1806-37562018000000164>
- Pichler, S., Kohli, C., & Granitz, N. A. (2021). DITTO for Gen Z: A framework for leveraging the uniqueness of the new generation. *Business Horizons*.
- Pietrzykowski, T., & Śmiłowska, K. (2021). The reality of informed consent: empirical studies on patient comprehension—systematic review. *Trials*, 22(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-020-04969-w>
- Poth, C. N. (2020). *Research ethics: Little Quick Fix*. SAGE.
- Raifman, S., DeVost, M. A., Digitale, J., Chen, Y., & Morris, M. D. (2022). Respondent-Driven Sampling: a Sampling Method for Hard-to-Reach Populations and Beyond. *Current Epidemiology Reports*, 9(1), 38–47. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40471-022-00287-8>
- Ramanadhan, S., Revette, A., Lee, R. M., & Aveling, E. L. (2021). Pragmatic approaches to analyzing qualitative data for implementation science: an introduction. *Implementation Science Communications*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43058-021-00174-1>
- Raska, D., & Weisenbach Keller, E. (2021). Turning marketing classrooms and a student organization into an engine of economic empowerment. *Marketing Education Review*, 31(2), 175-182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10528008.2021.1901234>



- Rose, J., & Johnson, C. W. (2020). Contextualizing reliability and validity in qualitative research: toward more rigorous and trustworthy qualitative social science in leisure research. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 51(4), 432–451.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2020.1722042>
- Ross, P. T., & Bibler, N. L. (2019). Limited by our limitations. *Perspectives on medical education*, 8(4), 261–264. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-00530-x>
- Sarker, H. (2022). AI-Based Modeling: Techniques, Applications and Research Issues Towards Automation, Intelligent and Smart Systems. *SN computer science*, 3(2), 158. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42979-022-01043-x>
- Sawad, A., & Andrews, K. (2022). Marketing training strategies that pharmaceutical sales managers use to reduce unethical behavior. *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*, 11(1), 202. [https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp\\_1081\\_21](https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp_1081_21)
- Scholz, C. (2019). The Generations Z in Europe – an introduction. In *Generations Z in Europe (The Changing Context of Managing People)*, (Eds). C. Scholz and A. Rennig (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited), 3–31.
- Sheahan, K. (2020). Developing and empirically testing a sales pipeline execution process framework. *Technological University Dublin*.  
<https://arrow.tudublin.ie/busdoc/40/>
- Si, S., & Chen, H. (2020). A literature review of disruptive innovation: What it is, how it works and where it goes. *Journal of Engineering and Technology Management*, 56, 101568.
- Singh, S. S., Sen, R., & Borle, S. (2021). Online training of salespeople: Impact,

- heterogeneity, and spillover effects. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 59(1), 230-249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222437211048498>
- Smith, A., & Johnson, B. (2020). Enhancing the professional mindset of future sales professionals: Strategies and challenges. *Journal of Sales Education*, 12(2), pp. 45–60.
- Sosnilo, A. V., Kreer, M. Y., & Petrova, V. V. (2021). AR/VR technologies in management and education. *Управление*, 9(2), 114-124. <https://doi.org/10.26425/2309-3633-2021-9-2-114-124>
- Stufflebeam, D. (2002). The CIPP model for evaluation. 10.1007/0-306-47559-6\_16.
- Sweetman D. S. (2020). Making virtual learning engaging and interactive. *FASEB bioAdvances*, 3(1), 11–19. <https://doi.org/10.1096/fba.2020-00084>
- Turner, R., & Robinson, K. (2017). From conflict to cohesion: Building strong multigenerational sales teams. *Journal of Sales and Marketing Management*, 22(2), pp. 89–102.
- Uhrig, S. (2021). Generation Alpha: Diapers, training wheels, and Artificial Intelligence. *Symposium Publications*, 180, 12. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cye-pubs/12>
- Urick, M. J. (2019). *The Generation Myth: How to Improve Intergenerational Relationships in the Workplace*. New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
- Van Linden, C., Roberts, P., & Warren, D. L. (2024). DEI maturity: diversity, equity, and inclusion at a Not-for-Profit organization. In *NeilsonJournals Publishing eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071932025>

- Wilson, J., & Carter, E. (2020). Navigating sales management challenges in a multigenerational workforce. *Sales Leadership Journal*, 15(1), pp. 34-48.
- Wilson, J., & Turner, R. (2021). Shaping ethical mindsets: Integrating ethics education into sales training. *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, 18, pp. 125–142.
- Ybarra, O. (2023). The skills that help employees adapt: Empirical validation of a four-category framework. *PLOS ONE*, 18(2), e0282074.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0282074>
- Yeong, M. L., Ismail, R., Ismail, N. H., & Hamzah, M. I. (2018). Interview Protocol Refinement: Fine-Tuning Qualitative Research Interview Questions for Multi-Racial Populations in Malaysia. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2700+. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A568913411/AONE?u=anon~1a4d6688&sid=googleScholar&xid=931181f4>
- Yu, E. (2020). Student-inspired optimal design of online learning for Generation Z. *Journal of Educators Online*, 17(1). <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1241579.pdf>
- Zelcane, E., & Pipere, A. (2023). Finding a path in a methodological jungle: a qualitative research of resilience. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being*, 18(1), 2164948. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2023.2164948>
- Zhang, L., Basham, J. D., & Yang, S. (2020). Understanding the implementation of personalized learning: a research synthesis. *Educational Research Review*, 31, 100339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100339>
- Zeiss, J. and Chapman, J. (2021). The underlying states of salesperson product buy-in and product strategy buy-in. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 36 No.

6, pp. 977-989. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-12-2019-0551>

## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

### **Primary Business Research Phenomenon Under Study and Overarching Research Question**

The topic for my research project is *Effective Sales Education Training Delivery Methods: A Pragmatic Inquiry*. The overarching research question is *What effective strategies do sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z to increase organizations' revenues?*

### **Primary Research Goal to Achieve from This Interview**

The purpose of this interview is to identify and explore strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizations' revenues.

### **Introduction**

1. Thank you for participating in my project. Your participation to identify and explore strategies sales managers use to develop and deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees to increase organizations' revenues will aid me in this educational project.
2. Please be reminded that your participation is voluntary. You can stop or withdraw from the interview at any time. If you decide to withdraw from the project, then I will destroy the information you provided up to that point.
3. With your permission, I will audio record the interview to supplement my note

- taking.
4. You do not need to go on camera for this interview. This also will help to anonymize your participation.
  5. This project may be shared with faculty members however, your identity will be masked with the use of pseudonyms.
  6. I will keep the information you share confidential and securely stored for 5 years after which time all the information will be destroyed.
  7. I have scheduled you for a 60-minute interview. Does that allotted time still work for you?
  8. Do you have any questions before we get started?
  9. Let's begin.

### **Targeted Interview Questions**

1. What effective strategies did you use to develop sales personnel training for Generation Z employees?
2. How did you measure the effectiveness of these strategies?
3. What challenges did you experience when developing sales personnel training for Generation Z employees?
4. How did you overcome these challenges?
5. What effective strategies did you use to deliver sales personnel training for Generation Z employees?
6. How did you measure the effectiveness of these strategies?
7. What challenges did you experience when delivering sales personnel training to

Generation Z employees?

8. How did you overcome these challenges?
9. How do you recognize Generation Z sales personnel for their individual contributions?
10. How do you recognize Generation Z sales personnel for their teamwork contributions?
11. How have the strategies you used to develop Generation Z sales personnel training impacted the revenues?
12. How have the strategies you used to deliver Generation Z sales personnel training impacted the revenues?
13. Is there anything more you would like to add pertaining to the project that we have not already covered?

### **Closing**

1. Thank you for participating in my project. The information you provided is valuable and will help me successfully complete my project. I would like to schedule a follow-up meeting with you (informal and may be held via telephone) to review and discuss the audio transcript and my notes to ensure alignment to your responses. Will you please list 2-3 available times within the next 2 weeks?
2. Thank you. I will provide you with the transcript and notes at least three days in advance to allow you sufficient time to review. Again, thank you for participating in my research project.

## Appendix B: Participant Invitation

### **Invitation Template for email, social media, and flyer formats**

There is a new study about training delivery strategies that could help sales managers better develop and deliver training to Generation Z employees. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences and strategies used to deliver training to Generation Z employees.

#### **About the study:**

- One 60-minute video conference interview that will be audio recorded only (no videorecording)
- You are welcome to share experiences working with advanced technologies in training programs (not mandatory)
- To protect your privacy, the published study will not share any names or details that identify you or your organization.

#### **Volunteers must meet these requirements:**

- Sales manager
- Manage or have managed Generation Z employees.
- Delivered 1 or more training delivery methods to a sales team.

This interview is part of the doctoral study for Eunice Onyelobi, MBA, a DBA student at Walden University. Interviews will take place during April 2024.

Please reach out via LinkedIn or by direct email contact (eunice.onyelobi@waldenu.edu) to let the researcher know of your interest. You are welcome to forward it to others who might be interested.