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Keller Center Research Report

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Best Practices in Onboarding Salespeople

Phillip Wiseman, PhD, Michael Ahearne, PhD, Zachary Hall, PhD, and Seshadri Tirunillai, PhD

New hires at firms invariably go through an onboarding program that introduces the firm, practices, standards, and cultural values, while also training new hires in the skills needed to perform the new role. The onboarding process acts as a foundation in new hires' perception of the company and sets the stage for their future at the organization. During this time, employees learn (formally and informally) about the expectations set and how they can be accomplished. Companies devote hours of time and millions of dollars each year to onboarding new employees and in trying to find the best way to induct new employees into the organization. Given this, our research examines different types of onboarding programs and determines which type best impacts the success of the salesperson.

Examining Onboarding Programs

Some programs are centralized, meaning that the entire process is highly structured, standardized across the firm, tends to be delivered at a greater scale (i.e., to more salespeople at a single time), and does not vary according to the experiences of the new salesperson. On the other hand, decentralized programs consist of on-the-job field training, empowering sales managers to take greater ownership of the process, and can be more specifically tailored to each new hire based on experiences and needs.

Another factor in the onboarding process is the prior role that the new salesperson had, primarily considering whether transitioning from school or from another job. This will influence how the new salesperson responds to the onboarding process. Research indicates that the initial period when a new hire begins at the firm is extremely uncertain.[1] Those fresh out of school will be even more uncertain, as the roles and expectations of a job are incredibly different than an educational institution. Thus, these new hires may appreciate the structure of a centralized program. However, new salespeople coming from another job may be eager to apply previously learned skills to their new job, and thus would benefit more from a decentralized onboarding program.

The final factor we examine that may affect the onboarding process is the number of employees who report to the specific manager. The number of employees that the manager leads directly affects the amount of time he or she can spare for the new employee onboarding program. Additionally, the manager may have more or less time to develop salespeople in the innovative roles and behaviors associated with creative selling techniques. A sales manager's time constraints may have particularly strong implications for salespeople who undergo decentralized onboarding programs. This is due to the critical role these sales managers play in helping to positively direct and channel a salesperson's more innovative efforts oriented towards developing effective selling techniques contingent on that salesperson's distinct strengths and weaknesses.

Findings

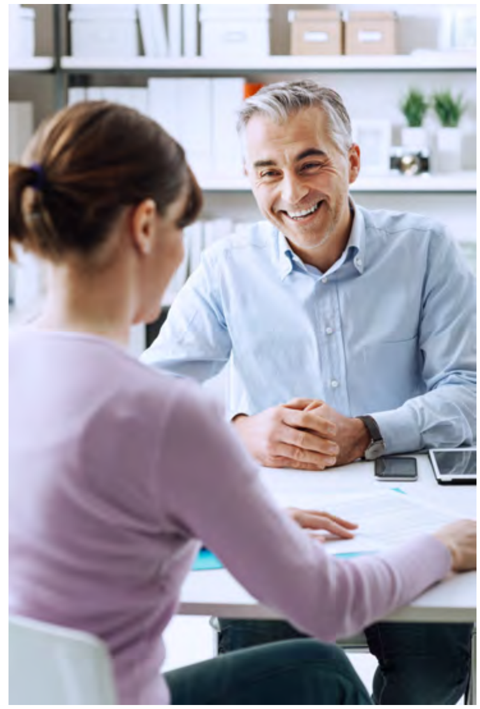
We conducted two studies in our research. The first measured the effectiveness of centralized and decentralized programs for furniture salespeople in the real world, while considering how the salesperson’s work-role transition and the sales manager’s span of control influence the relative efficacy of these programs. The second was an online experiment asking participants to complete a sales-related task after reading about and envisioning the experience of either type of onboarding—either centralized or decentralized.

Study 1 showed that, on average, decentralized programs led to 23.5% higher sales than for those who underwent a centralized onboarding program. This percentage jumped to 29.6% when the managers were responsible for fewer salespeople than their peers. When looking at the new hire’s prior experience, we found that those transitioning from another job received about the same 23% increase. If the hire was a recent graduate, the increase dropped to about 9%.

Study 2 was much simpler and intended to obtain deeper insights into how these onboarding programs influence important underlying factors that drive sales outcomes. Conducted on Amazon’s Mechanical Turk, participants were assigned to groups with either centralized or decentralized programs and were then asked to complete a test measuring their creativity in solving a relevant selling task (namely, coming up with different ideas for communicating and framing the benefits of a product to different types of customers). The effects of the study indicated a substantial boost to cognitive flexibility in the diversity of ideas and the novelty of those in the decentralized condition (compared to the centralized condition). As selling to each different individual is a creative process, these traits are critical for most salespeople.

Real Estate Implications

Both studies in this paper clearly indicate that a decentralized onboarding process leads to an increase in sales success, particularly for salespeople transitioning into their new sales role from another job (as opposed to transitioning from school). In those cases where the costs of centralized programs are higher (e.g., for those programs that involve flying salespeople out to specialized training centers, putting them up in hotels, etc.), decentralized onboarding should be viewed as the preferred choice for either salespeople transitioning from another job or school in consideration of its ROI implications. Real estate firms should make every effort to incorporate more decentralized onboarding programs for their new hires to capitalize on these findings, particularly when most of their sales force has some prior work experience (as is often the case in real estate).



Additionally, sales increased even further for salespeople who underwent the decentralized program when their sales manager supervised fewer people. Managers responsible for new hires in real estate firms, particularly those utilizing decentralized onboarding programs, should be available to coach and guide new salespeople, especially in the initial months as salespeople map out their roles. The onboarding process for new employees is often fraught with uncertainty, but by establishing decentralized onboarding programs and providing sufficient management and guidance, new salespeople can significantly improve their sales and ramp up to higher performance levels faster.

Recommended Reading

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1. Cable, Daniel and Charles Parsons (2001), "Socialization Tactics and Person-Organization Fit," *Personnel Psychology*, 54(1), 1-23.

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Amoral Management: The Dark Side of Leadership

Matthew J. Quade, PhD, Julena M. Bonner, PhD, and Rebecca L. Greenbaum, PhD

Amoral management refers to a type of leadership approach that is devoid of ethical considerations, or simply, leadership's failure to respond to situations that have ethical implications. This leadership style is considered common in practice, but there is still limited research on the subject. We hypothesize that management's lack of response in ethical situations is just as detrimental as unethical leadership. Our research investigates the impact of amoral management on employees and organizations, while also exploring the theoretical concept of moral conation capacity, which is exemplified by moral courage. We also examine the connection between amoral management and unethical behavior, which has implications in the real estate industry.

Amoral Management Effect

Our study reveals that amoral management has a damaging effect on employees' moral courage and often encourages subsequent unethical behavior. This effect is even more pronounced when the organization has policies, practices, and procedures that support and promote ethics. In such a highly ethical environment, amoral managers appear to make an active choice to avoid ethics, given that the environment strongly endorses ethical adherence. This creates a saliency effect, in which case amoral managers are likely to be perceived as being even less supportive of or even indifferent to employees' morally courageous efforts, which further increases unethical conduct.

Organizational leaders should realize that ethical environments do not buffer against the negative influences of amoral management. In fact, our research reveals just the opposite. Higher-level managers cannot assume that an ethical environment in an organization is enough to propel both lower-level managers and employees to "do the right thing." Because lower-level managers are especially influential in dictating employees' attitudes and behaviors, organizations should pay attention to whether a manager's ethics-related leadership style supports that of the broader organization. Employees need consistency from both managers and the overall firm environment to garner enough moral courage to resist unethical behaviors. Therefore, our findings demonstrate the importance of ethical alignment at all levels of the organization, from executives to front-line managers.

Moral Conation Capacity

The concept of moral conation capacity is rooted in moral psychology and refers to an individual's ability to put moral beliefs into action. It is the capacity to act on one's values and principles, rather than simply holding them as abstract ideals. Moral courage is the willingness to do what is right, even if it is difficult or unpopular, and it requires individuals to act based on their ethical principles, even when faced with opposition or potential negative consequences, such as social disapproval, loss of status, or even legal repercussions.

Leaders with high moral conation capacity and moral courage are important for promoting ethical behavior and creating a positive organizational culture. They serve as role models for others and can inspire colleagues to act ethically and with integrity. In contrast, leaders with low moral conation capacity and moral courage may be more likely to make unethical decisions, engage in unethical behavior, or turn a blind eye to unethical conduct within their organization.

Amoral Management and Unethical Behavior

Our research explores the topic of amoral management and its impact on organizations. We developed a tool to measure amoral management and discovered that it can have negative consequences in the workplace, especially when the company has an ethical environment. Additionally, we found that employees with stronger moral courage are less likely to engage in unethical behavior, but amoral management can weaken an employee's moral courage.

Organizations should ensure managers' ethics-related leadership styles support that of the broader organization. Ensuring ethical alignment at all levels of the organization, from executives to front-line managers, is imperative to creating an ethical culture and promoting moral conation capacity. We find that amoral management could have long-term damaging effects on an otherwise ethical environment, and organizations should ensure management at all levels represent high ethical standards, regularly demonstrate that they care about ethics, and strictly enforce penalties for unethical behavior. Put simply, amoral leadership does not exert a neutral influence on employee ethics. In fact, it exerts an indirect but significant negative effect.

Real Estate Implications

Real estate professionals are often faced with ethical dilemmas, such as conflicts of interest or disclosure requirements; it is important to have strong moral courage to navigate these situations with integrity. Amoral management, as discussed in this article, could have negative effects on employees' moral courage and subsequent unethical behavior, which could have negative implications for agents, firms, and the real estate industry as a whole. Therefore, it is important for real estate leaders to prioritize ethical leadership and promote a highly ethical environment to prevent such negative outcomes.

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Men vs. Women: Who Holds Bargaining Power?

Duong T. Pham, PhD, Geoffery K. Turnbull, PhD, and Bennie D. Waller, PhD

The ways in which gender affects negotiations and business interactions has been studied extensively in the past and remains a topic of interest across various fields. Research has not, however, previously applied these ideas to the real estate industry, where the majority of agents are female, in contrast to many other industries which tend to be male dominated. Our research aims to address this gap and answer how agent gender and interactions with agents of the same or different gender affect bargaining power in real estate transactions.

The Study

In conducting this study, we reviewed data drawn from multiple listing service (MLS) records for the Lynchburg area in central Virginia. This data contained sufficient information to identify the characteristics, including gender of agents representing both sellers and buyers, the list and sale prices of homes in the sample, as well as the characteristics and location of those homes. All of this and more data was aggregated for the period from 1999 to 2009 to cover a variety of market conditions and trends. This data was thoroughly cleaned and culled for incomplete, missing, or illogical data. We analyzed this data set to determine ex ante beliefs about bargaining power, determined by observing correlations between listing price and agent gender, and ex post results, determined by observing actual sale price and time on the market matched against different combinations of selling and buying agent genders.

The Findings

Our study revealed that, as expected, there are some differences in the relative bargaining power of male and female real estate agents, especially based on the sex of the other agent involved in the transaction. While male and female agents tend to list different types of properties, we found that on average, houses listed and sold by males as dual agents sell for lower prices and with a longer marketing time. We found also that male listing agents exhibit weaker relative bargaining power when dealing with either male or female selling agents when compared with female listing agents. All of this and our other data taken together indicate that male agents exhibit weaker bargaining power in the role of listing agents regardless of counterparty agent sex, while female agents generally enjoy greater bargaining power when bringing the buyer to the transaction than when bringing the seller to the transaction. This contradicts ex ante beliefs that male agents would enjoy greater bargaining power, and it is interesting to note that sellers do not seem to fully apprehend the differences in ex post bargaining power.

Our findings also indicate that in the case of male dual agents—that is, male agents on both sides of the transaction—houses sell at a discount and with a longer marketing time. However, this result held only in a declining market and not in a rising market.

Implications

Our study illustrates the very real effects of gender differences on real estate transactions, consistent with other literature on the subject of sex as it relates to negotiation, bargaining power, and behavior in general. We found that at the end of the day, both men and women behave differently in mixed-sex environments than they do when only interacting with the same sex. This is important for real estate agents to be aware of when representing buyers or sellers, as the trends observed in this study are just that, trends, and not set in stone. As such, agents have the ability to recognize their own behavioral trends and adjust negotiation tactics or general approach to a transaction in order to get the best deal for clients. The results of our study should also be helpful to managers seeking to understand how best to staff their agents and employees with respect to different objectives. By knowing that agent performance differs according to the sex of the selling agent and the sex of the buying agent, a manager can utilize their talent in an optimal way to reach firm objectives.

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Pham, Duong T., Geoffery K. Turnbull, and Bennie D. Waller, (2022), "Sex and Selling: Agent Gender and Bargaining Power in the Resale Housing Market," *The Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics*, 64, 473-499.

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Impact of Team Diversity on Consumer Perceptions

Uzma Khan, PhD and Ajay Kalra, PhD

Previous research has demonstrated the positive benefits of diversity on organizational culture and decision-making, while changing views among consumers and companies has led to widespread support for increased diversity in the workforce. Having employees of various backgrounds and experience is vital to increasing access to markets, translating to a higher chance of marketplace success. Furthermore, diversity is supported by legislation that supports such hiring practices, and public perception is molded by information such as Fortune 500 rankings of companies based on their diversity.

Although industry has noticed the impact that a diverse workforce can have on an organization's success, we studied whether consumers notice workforce diversity and whether diversity affects consumer response to the firm.

Diversity itself refers to including individuals of a variety of social and ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, and other aspects. As such, it is necessary to distinguish between surface-level and deep-level diversity. Surface-level diversity refers to observable differences like ethnicity, gender, race, or age while deep-level diversity refers to differences in attitudes, expertise, beliefs, personalities, etc., characteristics that are not easily observable. Since deep-level diversity is difficult to measure, surface-level diversity is used as an indicator of the deeper differences. Likewise, we believe that consumers largely notice and consider surface-level diversity.

Connecting Diversity and Morality

Increasing knowledge of socioeconomic conditions, climate change, political challenges, etc., has led to consumers lending support to companies that align with consumers' personal and moral views. Corporations have taken notice and have leveraged this knowledge. For example, Coca-Cola sells drinks in sustainable packaging; Apple pledges funds to underserved American schools; and Starbucks now uses paper straws. Yet, how can consumers judge a company's morality with many undisclosed factors to be considered? How can judgments be made when firms and consumers have little direct interaction? And yet we know that consumer perceptions—even those based on limited information—affect consumer decisions that, in turn, affect a firm's success.

We hypothesize that firm diversity signals morality to the consumer, as a greater range of perspectives will be considered for company decisions. Since teams with deep-level differences have access to a larger range of perspectives and experiences, they likely consider more information in the process of consensus-building. We believe consumers account for this when estimating the marketplace morality of a corporation: the balance a company finds between its self-interest and the greater good. All this information contributes to a consumer's decision to favor or disfavor a company. We focused on how the diversity of a consumer-facing team positively influences moral perceptions of the team and, in turn, consumer attitudes and behavior toward a firm.

Study Background

Our investigation into how the diversity of a consumer-facing team influences moral perceptions and the consumer response to the firm began with an assumption that consumers consider diverse teams to be more moral. Consumers increasingly factor moral concerns into consumption decisions, accounting for the societal benefit a corporation provides as well as its historical ethical lapses. Due to this perceived association on the part of consumers, many companies attempt to differentiate themselves on a moral basis. We aim to determine if firms can leverage diversity to engender a positive consumer perception of the firm's overall morality.

Within the factors consumers consider with respect to a diverse team's higher morality, compared to a homogenous team, is its level of perspective taking. Perspective taking is a collaborative ability of a team that relates to the number of world views or perspectives that a team can consider. It is logical to say that a more diverse team integrates more perspectives from team members while a homogenous team will be restricted to similar perspectives, potentially ignoring valuable information. Our studies point to this factor as the basis for why consumers consider a diverse team as more moral than a homogenous team.

Our Study

We conducted six different studies that incorporated racial and gender diversity, and we recruited samples of individuals for each study. Participants were introduced into a situation that replicated a real-world environment and that would allow us to test specific aspects of our hypothesis. Additionally, certain studies had extra controls to ensure outside factors such as biases or motivations would not influence study results and to strengthen the validity of our conclusions.

With a focus on racial diversity and a context of brand transgressions, study 1 showed that diversity improves perceptions of the perspective-taking ability and the morality of a team, subsequently improving consumer responses to the firm. Study 2 recreates the real-life context of a suspected brand transgression for participants and demonstrates that a team's racial diversity affects perceptions of a team leader's morality and consumer responses.

Study 3 (in the environment of COVID-19 vaccine development) tested uniform nationality of team members against diverse nationalities of team members and found that consumers believed that the more diverse team would more be more moral in its actions. Study 4 demonstrates that gender diversity among a minority race also results in positive consumer responses and that, once again, consumers believe that broader perspectives exist within a gender-diverse team than in a gender-homogenous team. Study 5 directly challenged what consumers perceive for the perspective-taking abilities of diverse teams. When participants were told that a diverse team and a homogenous team had the same level of perspective-taking ability, they were viewed as equally moral. This indicates that the benefits of diversity can be neutralized if perspective-taking is equally observed by consumers. Finally, study 6 examined how team diversity can increase consumer donations, proving that consumer responses are affected.

Our six studies, in short, demonstrate that team diversity impacts the perceptions of morality by consumers and should be considered when firms build consumer-facing teams. Increasing diversity of race, gender, and nationality in teams will contribute to positive perceptions and consumer responses toward a firm.

Real Estate Implications

These trends of morality influencing consumer decision-making extends to real estate. The prevalence of news sites and dissemination of information via social media means that the average customer is more informed than ever. It is essential that real estate firms keep our findings in mind when building consumer-facing teams. A more diverse sales team will likely increase the appeal of a firm to potential clients, as they will feel that client needs and the needs of the community are being more widely considered. Concerns that buyers' and sellers' needs might be neglected will be reduced as they are served by more diverse teams.

A perception of morality will help a firm, not hurt it. The implication of reducing the impact of past transgressions is a particular concern for larger, public corporate firms. These companies' public perceptions will improve if consumers recognize their morality, potentially growing market success.

Recommended Reading

Khan, Uzma, and Ajay Kalra (2022), "It's Good to Be Different: How Diversity Impacts Judgements of Moral Behavior," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 49(2), 177-201.

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Don’t Settle for Less: Using Negations in Advertising

Todd Pezzuti, PhD and James Leonhardt, PhD

The intent behind advertising is never just to spend money, but to engage consumers. Our research links the use of negations to increased consumer engagement. Negations, which advise what not to do, are created by using words like no, not, can’t, don’t, never, couldn’t, and such. Slogans using negations are common, such as Snickers’ “You’re not you when you’re hungry” or Old Spice’s proclamation “If your grandfather hadn’t worn it, you wouldn’t exist.” Negations make the slogans more interesting: compare “You’re you when you’re full” and “You exist because your grandfather wore it.” Our paper examines how the use of negations impact consumer engagement, while also considering negations’ effect on how powerful brands seem. First, we briefly discuss the importance of consumer engagement in business.

Consumer engagement in social media refers to comments, likes, shares, or retweets about the brand and its message. In the context of email marketing, engagement can refer to responding to the company’s email or spreading positive word-of-mouth. Positive consumer engagement is proven to increase customer loyalty and referrals, both of which are critical to real estate firms.[1,2] Despite its importance, limited research has been conducted on how to increase consumer engagement, especially online.

Negations Signal Brand Power

Brand power represents how influential a brand is perceived to be. Recent research indicates brands can appear more powerful by imitating communication styles of powerful people, such as using negations.[3] Negations often make the communicator seem more powerful by deviating from common norms by speaking negatively.

Historically, the majority of research around negations has been from linguists and does not consider the marketing implications of using negations in advertising. Our research links negations directly to consumer engagement. It also shows that negations are linked to consumer engagement by influencing how powerful a communicator seems. We conducted four distinct studies, all of which found a positive relationship between negations and consumer engagement. Our studies accounted for other factors that could influence the effect of negations on consumer engagement. Despite these types of statistical controls, the effect of negations and brand power and consumer engagement persisted.

For example, Study 1 focused on brand messaging on Facebook. Using 52 million unique customer interactions with brands, we analyzed the relationship between using negations in brand messages and the number of likes, comments, and shares a message receives. The results show that using negations related to increased consumer engagement.

In Study 2, we used the same textual analysis program and evaluated over 8,000 tweets made by brands in various industries. Even after accounting for the number of words in the tweet, sentiment, expressing certainty, and the tweets' readability, negations related to increased consumer engagement.

To dive deeper into the effect, Study 3 used a controlled experiment and measured consumers' reactions to messages. Participants in the experiment read one of two versions of an online advertisement styled as Facebook posts. One message contained negations, the other one did not. Participants were asked how likely they would be to like, comment, or share the post. They also rated how powerful the brand seems. Participants noted that the brand seemed more powerful after reading the ad that included negations. Because people want to engage with powerful brands, they also reported that they would be more likely to engage with the brand that used the negation.

Study 4 was similar to the prior experiment, but focused on email marketing rather than social media marketing. Participants read one of two emails, one with negations and one without. The purpose of the email was to encourage readers to subscribe to a newsletter. Participants indicated their word-of-mouth intentions. Again, using negations made the brand seem more powerful and increased intentions to engage with the brand by spreading positive word-of-mouth.

Across all the studies, negations resulted in more consumer engagement. And the results show that this occurs because negations make communicators, including brands, seem more powerful and because people want to engage with powerful brands. The final experiment showed that this effect is even stronger when communicating with people that desire status.

Real Estate Implications

The implications for real estate professionals are straightforward: real estate professionals should use negations in advertising. One of the most powerful and oft-cited phrases in real estate contains a negation: "Don't let your dream home slip away!" From park benches to posts on Facebook, the strategic use of negations can amplify the effectiveness of real estate advertisements across a variety of media platforms. Even simple changes in wording, from "We fight for you" to "No one fights harder for you" can boost consumer engagement. While these details may seem trivial, our studies show that even small changes can significantly boost consumer engagement.

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Dr. Todd Pezzuti's (PhD – University of California, Irvine) research lies at the intersection of marketing and consumer psychology, particularly in how the linguistic features of marketing communication and culture influence consumer behavior. His areas of expertise include digital and social media marketing, international marketing, and social influence. His research has been published in the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *Journal of International Marketing*, *Journal of Business Research*, and *Journal of Services Marketing*, among others.

James Leonhardt, PhD
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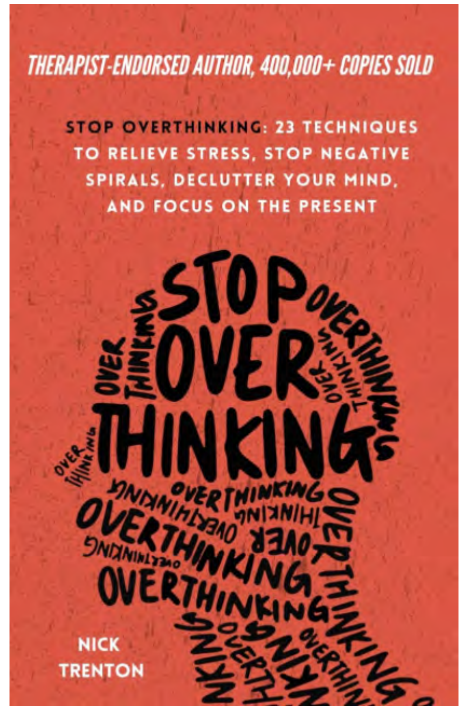
Dr. James Leonhardt's (PhD – University of California, Irvine) research interests and expertise are in consumer behavior, specifically cross-cultural consumer information processing using an interdisciplinary, multi-method approach to inform traditional and digital marketing communications strategies, as well as transformative marketing initiatives in areas such as health, sustainability, and public policy. Dr. Leonhardt's research has been published in leading academic journals, such as the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, and *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, and has been featured in popular outlets, such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *US News*, and Medscape. For

his scholarly contributions, Dr. Leonhardt received the Phil & Jennifer Satre Endowed Professorship in Marketing (2023), and he is the recipient of the Dean's Research Professor Award (2021-2023), a three-year award for sustained excellence in research. His research has been supported through several grants and fellowships, most recently the Harold and Muriel Berkman Charitable Foundation and the Ozmen Institute for Global Studies.

INSIDER: Stop Overthinking

Dominic Alioto, MBA Candidate



Do you frequently find yourself second guessing past decisions or succumbing to negative thoughts? Are you unbearably stressed or anxious over various events? If you experience any of these—and most of us do, occasionally—you may struggle with overthinking. In the book *Stop Overthinking*, Nick Trenton outlines several key strategies to combat stress, rumination, and overthinking.

First, we must address the root causes of overthinking. An important observation is that causes of overthinking are rarely the focus of overthinking. For example, if you often feel guilty about forgetting a friend's birthday twenty years ago, your feelings of guilt may stem from a general sense of unworthiness, rather than the actual event. Additionally, overthinking might be a result of being overburdened with too many tasks. If you feel you have a million tasks to do, then it is no surprise that a million thoughts are running through your head.

Environmental stress and pressure become problematic only when we allow them to be. Some jobs are stressful by nature—consider firefighters, EMTs, and surgeons, who are constantly put in stressful situations. Yet, Trenton emphasizes—and the research echoes—that it's not the size of the load, but how you carry it. *Stop Overthinking* includes several methods to stop overthinking. Trenton's 23 different techniques is a bit much to examine in a short summary (and would be counterintuitive to the idea of reducing overthinking by simplifying). Thus, we have included three different methods than can help reduce stress in the moment, manage your time more effectively, and rewire your thinking to better handle stress. One point to remember is that recommendations are no substitute for professional medical advice. Some cases of overthinking may require help from a licensed professional.

THINK POINT #1: Reducing Stress in the Moment with the 5-4-3-2-1 Method

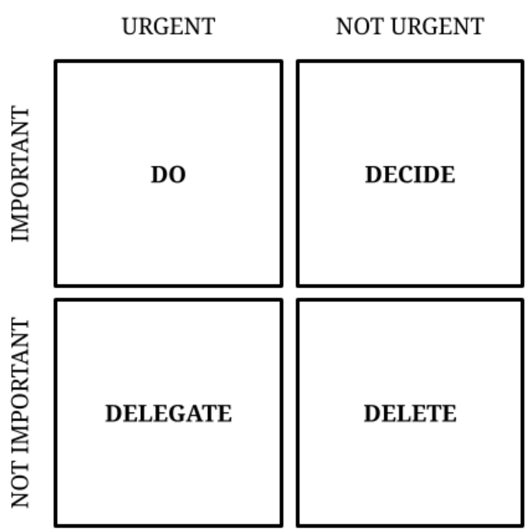
This method is designed for moments when you feel yourself spiraling or beginning to spiral, such as during anxiety attacks. First, look around and name five things that you can see. Then, listen to four different sounds. Touch three distinct objects. Inhale, and note two scents you can smell. Finally, identify a single taste. Doctors will frequently use this technique to help those who suffer from anxiety, as it physically grounds you in the environment. When you activate your senses, your mind is focused on something other than overwhelming thoughts. One note:

the actual order/ number of the senses is not important, so long as you are consciously focusing on elements in your physical environment.

THINK POINT #2: Managing Time More Effectively

Sometimes it feels as if all our problems would be solved if we had a few more hours in the day. Unfortunately, that will never be the case. We have only 24 hours each day to spend however we see fit, and we often use that time to accomplish unimportant tasks. The closest we can get to gaining extra time is by learning to manage our time more effectively. One method discussed is the Eisenhower Decision Matrix. If you find yourself spending all your time 'putting out fires' without getting to the important or necessary work, this is an ideal method.

The Eisenhower Decision Matrix is a system that sorts tasks into a "pecking order" of sorts. The matrix is divided into four quadrants and based on urgency and importance. The first quadrant on the top left are tasks that are both urgent and important, like filing taxes or meeting with senior management at your firm. This box should be your top to "DO" priority. Next, there are important—but not urgent—tasks, usually things that have little to no consequence if not done immediately but that shift into the urgent category when not completed. Examples include working out, taking out the trash, laundry, or a project due in several weeks. Thus, we must "DECIDE" when to do these in the future. The majority of tasks, especially those that initiate the most stress, are those that are urgent, but not important. Try to avoid unnecessary tasks and commitments that do not add value to your life. These tasks ought to be "DELEGATED" to others. Finally, eliminate the tasks that aren't urgent or important. Mindless internet scrolling, pointless TV shows, and TikTok may be fun distractions, but they do not add value, and should be "DELETED." By using this method, you can effectively parcel up your highest priority items and make sure that what's most important—and urgent—gets accomplished.



THINK POINT #3: Rewiring Thought Patterns

Worry has only as much power as we give it. While in some instances we should be paying full attention to our worry, such as "I hope that car barreling towards me in my lane moves over," but often we'll worry about things that are either unimportant or out of our control. These may include, "I wonder if that waiter liked me," or "What if I get hit by a meteor on my way to work?" Even if either of those scenarios were the case, the first isn't of great importance, and the second is completely out of anyone's control. Unfortunately, while you may correctly recognize both worries as being both unimportant and uncontrollable, it often feels impossible to rid yourself of these intrusive thoughts. Fortunately, research from the University of Leiden in the Netherlands indicates that you always don't need to eliminate worry, only postpone it. The idea is simple, acknowledge that the worry is important, and then schedule a later time to worry about it. This acknowledges that yes, your worries are important, but also that they aren't the highest priority. At its core, worry postponement is an intentional choice to put off worrying until a more convenient time. It's important that you not only set aside time to worry, but be productive during that time and find ways to effectively tackle these problems rather than agonize over them.

Real Estate Implications

Real estate agents and brokers frequently juggle multiple tasks and priorities. Unnecessary worrying and overthinking only adds to the stress already present in accomplishing the necessary work.

Stress and overthinking affect millions of people across America. Though the three methods above were the most effective in the author's opinion, there are 20 other methods discussed in the book that you may find more helpful or applicable to your own life. If you find yourself frequently struggling with overthinking, Trenton's *Stop Overthinking* may be a good read for you.

Recommended Reading

Trenton, Nick (2021), *Book Stop Overthinking: 23 Techniques to Relieve Stress, Stop Negative Spirals, Declutter Your Mind, and Focus on the Present*, Independently Published.

About the Author

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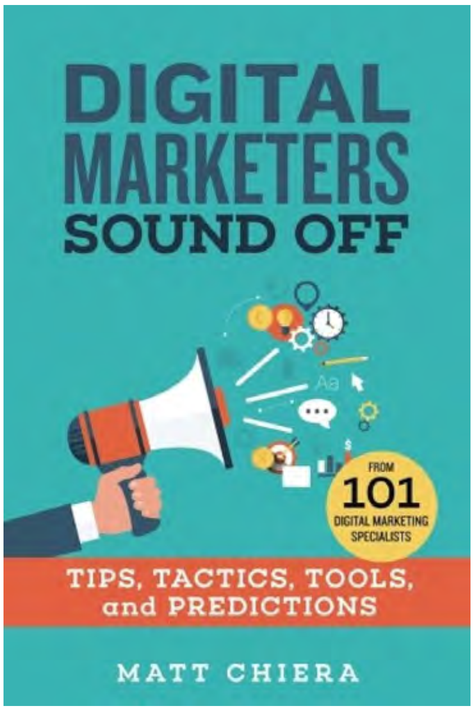
Dominic Alioto is currently pursuing his MBA in Healthcare Administration. He earned his BBA from Baylor University with majors in Business Fellows, International Business, and Economics, also completing the Honors Program and a minor in Mathematics. Dominic aims to work several years as a hospital executive, then return to school for a PhD in the health economics field.

INSIDER: Digital Marketers Sound Off

Jude Enajero, MBA/MSIS Candidate

The rise of technology has transformed the way businesses market products and services, making it essential for marketers to stay up to date with the latest trends and techniques in digital marketing. In *Digital Marketers Sound Off*, Matt Chiera interviews some of the most successful and innovative digital marketers in the industry, sharing their experiences and offering insights into the strategies that have helped lead to success.



In addition to providing insights from experienced professionals, Chiera also includes case studies and real-world examples of successful digital marketing campaigns. Readers can learn from the successes and failures of others, gaining a deeper understanding of what works and what doesn't in the world of digital marketing. Whether you're a seasoned digital marketer or just starting out, Chiera provides a wealth of knowledge and inspiration to help you succeed in the digital landscape.

THINK POINT #1: Adapt to Change

As digital marketers, it's crucial to adapt to the ever-evolving landscape of marketing. Staying up to date with the latest technologies, platforms, and trends is essential for success. Embracing change and being willing to try new approaches can lead to innovative and effective marketing strategies. Additionally, maintaining a growth mindset can help digital marketers stay adaptable and open to new ideas.

In addition to highlighting the importance of adapting to change, Chiera's interviewees also emphasize the value of collaboration and community in the digital marketing industry. By sharing insights and experiences, digital marketers can learn from one another and develop a deeper understanding of the ever-changing landscape. Whether it's through attending conferences, participating in online forums, or networking with peers, building a strong community can provide invaluable support and resources for navigating the complexities of digital marketing.

THINK POINT #2: Prioritize Data-Driven Decision Making

Data-driven decision making is an essential component of effective digital marketing. Collecting and analyzing data enables marketers to make informed decisions and measure the success of their campaigns. It's important to understand key performance indicators (KPIs) and to use them to track progress and adjust strategies and tactics as needed. Additionally, using tools and software to collect and analyze data can streamline adaptation to the digital marketplace and provide more accurate insights.

Data can also be used to identify patterns and trends in consumer behavior, allowing marketers to tailor their campaigns to the needs and interests of their target audience. With the help of advanced analytics tools and machine learning algorithms, digital marketers can gain a deeper understanding of trends in consumer behavior and preferences, leading to more effective marketing strategies and higher returns on investment. Ultimately, data-driven decision making is critical to the success of any digital marketing campaign and should be a key focus for marketers looking to stay ahead in today's competitive landscape.

THINK POINT #3: Build Strong Relationship

Building strong relationships with customers and other industry professionals is critical for success in digital marketing. Creating personalized and engaging content can help foster connections with customers, while networking and collaborating with other professionals can lead to valuable partnerships and opportunities.

Another way to build strong relationships is by leveraging social media platforms to engage with customers and followers. Responding to comments and messages in a timely and personalized manner can help establish trust and foster a sense of community around your brand. Additionally, email marketing campaigns can help build stronger connections by providing targeted and relevant information to subscribers.

THINK POINT #4: Stay Agile and Creative

To stand out, digital marketing requires agility and creativity. Being willing to experiment with new ideas and take risks can lead to innovative and successful marketing campaigns. Additionally, creative techniques, such as storytelling and visual content, can help capture the attention of audiences and make a lasting impact.

Staying agile and creative is crucial in the fast-paced world of digital marketing. With new technologies and trends emerging constantly, it's important to remain adaptable and willing to experiment with new ideas. Being willing to take risks and push boundaries can open doors to new market segments and new consumer services ideas.

Real Estate Implications

When it comes to real estate, digital marketing plays a crucial role in connecting buyers and sellers. By applying the insights and strategies offered by *Digital Marketers Sound Off*, real estate professionals can effectively leverage digital channels to reach target audiences and showcase properties. This includes using data to track performance to build relationships with clients and other professionals, and to embrace creativity to create engaging content. Digital marketing tools can also be used to facilitate mortgage qualification and closings. As the real estate market continues to evolve, staying agile and adaptable in digital marketing will be key to success. With the right approach, digital marketing can be a powerful tool for driving growth and achieving success in real estate.

Recommended Reading

Chiera, Matt (2018), *Digital Marketers Sound Off*, Independently Published: Lexington, KY.

About the Author

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Jude Enajero is an MBA Finance/MSIS candidate at Baylor University experienced in excel modeling, financial statement analysis, risk modeling, project management, and market evaluation. He has four years of experience in supporting the implementation of effective debt and equity program for both private and listed companies and working in cross functional teams with ability to develop and deliver quality presentations. Jude earned his Bachelor of Finance (Honors) degree from the University of Lagos, in Lagos, Nigeria.

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