

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
香港城市大學

**Mechanism Analysis and Empirical Research
on Salespeople's Entrepreneurial Behavior in
Organization: A Study Based on Family
Motivation**

**銷售員組織內部創業行為的機理分析與實
證研究：基於家庭動機視角的研究**

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摘要

面對日益複雜和高速變化的環境，企業需要及時應對環境變化帶來的風險，前瞻性地識別環境變化蘊含的新機會，持續產生符合市場需求的創新。傳統的創新動力強調高層的視野和創新部門人員的參與。例如企業的重大方向變革被認為來自企業家的創業精神，機會的識別和利用被看成是高管的職責，而產品和服務的創新被認為是研發精英的工作。然而過長的決策鏈降低了企業對外部市場變化的及時回應，導致企業難以產生真正滿足不斷變化的市場需求的創新。當前全員創新模式下，員工的創業行為成為組織持續創新的關鍵動力。企業充分利用一線員工接近市場、掌握市場知識的優勢，鼓勵他們像企業家一樣積極主動地構思、識別創新機會，並敢於承擔風險努力推動新機會的實現。

儘管實踐中員工的創業行為越來重要，但員工創業的模式也面臨著很多挑戰。首先，從組織角度講，公司更希望員工在組織內部開發和利用新機會，提升組織創新活力。然而，新機會的探索需要自主權，而對員工放權容易失控，與公司戰略產生分歧，甚至損害公司利益。而且，市場機會為員工自我創業提供了便利，機會越新穎，未來盈利性越高，員工越可能不會將其分享給組織，而是離開公司。他們新創的公司也往往成長為公司最為棘手的競爭對手。其次，從員工的角度來講，機會識別和創業行為大多數是面向未來而非現在，很多情況下，同事並不能理解如此行為的好處，卻對現狀的改變等所帶來的挑戰有更直觀的感觸，因而員工的創業行為，會被看作是打破常規，挑戰工作規範，最終被同事甚至是領導者厭惡。因此，機會識別以及創業行為往往意味著改變現狀，脫離舒適區，面臨著風險。

總結現有文獻，目前創業行為的研究主要關注企業家或管理者，對員工創業行為研究較少，導致我們對員工創業行為的過程機制還不瞭解。特別是，一線銷售人員直接與市場打交道，在企業中最接近市場機會，他們的創業行為對於公司的創新發展至關重要。與此同時，銷售人員和一般人員不同，他們往往被公司外派駐紮各地開展銷售業務，公司很難對其日常行為進行很好的監控。因此，一線銷售人員往往是公司各種“代理問題”的多發人群。銷售

員工的創業行為動機是什麼？他們如何更好地從市場中識別機會？以及如何控制和協同銷售員工創業行為與公司利益？上述問題雖然非常重要，卻並不能為現有文獻所回答。

本論文討論一個長期以來被文獻所忽視的動機因素----家庭動機----對機會識別和創業行為的影響。相對於創業者和組織高管，對家庭的支撐往往是一線員工重要的工作動力。最近研究開始關注家庭動機這一因素對員工工作的影響，但是還沒有文獻關注員工的家庭動機如何影響他們在工作中的創業行為。因此，本研究在銷售情境下，系統分析家庭動機對員工創業行為的影響，來揭示銷售員工創業行為的過程機制。具體而言，本研究主要研究了以下三個問題：第一，家庭動機是否是員工積極識別新機會的影響因素，進而激發員工的創業行為；第二，員工的客戶導向有助於員工與客戶建立緊密關係，提供識別機會的市場知識，客戶導向與家庭動機的結合能夠更好地推動機會的識別。因此，我們探討了個體客戶導向是否會調節家庭動機與機會識別的關係；第三，支撐家庭的責任不僅會影響員工工作努力程度，還會影響員工行為選擇，如為了家庭犧牲公司利益，從而導致個體創業行為的失控。而員工的組織承諾有助於員工將家庭利益和組織利益結合起來。因此，我們還探討了個體的組織認同是否會調節員工家庭動機與機會識別的關係。

為了驗證本研究的理論框架，我們收集了 18 家公司 280 個銷售人員的兩輪、多來源匹配調查資料，研究結果發現：家庭動機通過增強員工的機會識別來推動員工的創業行為；客戶導向對家庭動機與員工機會識別的關係存在著積極的調節作用；個體的組織認同對家庭動機與員工機會識別關係存在著積極的調節作用。本文對家庭動機、機會識別以及創業行為等領域具有重要的理論貢獻，同時對組織促進一線員工的創業行為和機會識別也具有一定的現實意義。

關鍵字：家庭動機；機會識別；創業行為；客戶導向；組織認同

Abstract

Faced with an increasingly complex and rapidly changing environment, companies need to innovate quickly and continuously to cope with the risks and to identify new opportunities brought by environmental changes in a timely manner. The traditional innovation model emphasizes the vision of top management and the responsibility of innovation department. For example, radical changes are assumed to be initiated by entrepreneurial spirit of entrepreneurs. The identification and utilization of opportunities are regarded as the responsibility of executives. Innovation is considered as the work of the R&D elites. However, the decision-making chain under this model is too long, which reduces the company's response speed to the external market and makes it difficult to produce innovations that truly meet changing market demands. The entrepreneurial behavior of employees has become a key driving force for the organization's continuous innovation, which can make full use of the advantages of front-line employees to access the market and master market knowledge, and encourage them proactive in conceiving and identifying innovative opportunities, and then taking risks to promote the realization of new opportunities.

Although the entrepreneurial behavior of employees is increasingly important in practice, such practices are also faced with many challenges. First, from the organization's perspective, the company wants employees to develop and take advantage of new opportunities within the organization to promote organizational vitality. However, the exploration of new opportunities requires autonomy, and decentralization of employees can easily get out of control, diverge from the company's strategy, and even harm the company's interests. Moreover, once employees recognize market opportunities, they may leave the company to start their own businesses and become competitors. Second, from the employee's perspective, opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial behavior are mostly future-oriented rather than present. In many cases, colleagues do not understand the benefits of these behaviors, but they are more sensitive to challenges by changes in the status quo. In such case, the entrepreneurial behavior of employees will be considered as breaking the rules and challenging the work norms, and even disgusted by colleagues and even leaders. Therefore, for employees, entrepreneurial

behavior often means changing the status quo, leaving the comfort zone, and facing great risks.

Summarizing the existing literature, the current research on entrepreneurial behavior mainly focuses on entrepreneurs or managers, and there is little research on employee entrepreneurial behavior, which leads us to have little understanding on the process mechanism of employee entrepreneurial behavior. In particular, the front-line sales staff directly deal with the market, and thus, their entrepreneurial behavior is critical to the company's development. At the same time, the sales staff is different from the general staff. They are often stationed outside the company to carry out sales business, and it is difficult for the company to monitor its daily behavior well. Therefore, the front-line sales staff are often a frequent occurrence of various "agent problems". What is the motivation of entrepreneurial behavior for sales staff? How can they better identify opportunities from the market? And how to control and coordinate employee entrepreneurial behavior and company interests? Although the above questions are very important, they cannot be answered by existing literature.

This paper discusses the effect of a long-neglected motivation factor-family motivation on opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial behavior. Compared with entrepreneurs and organizational executives, family support is often an important motivation for front-line employees. Recent studies have begun to focus on the impact of family motivation on employees' work, but no literature has examined how employees' family motivation affects their entrepreneurial behavior at work. Therefore, this study introduces the concept of family motivation to reveal the process of employees' entrepreneurial behavior in the context of salespeople. Specifically, this study focuses on the following four issues: First, whether and how employees' family motivation could affect their entrepreneurial behavior through the identification of new opportunities; Second, customer orientation helps employees to establish a close relationship with customers and provides market knowledge for identifying opportunities. The combination of family motivation and customer orientation can better promote the identification of new opportunities. Therefore, we explored whether customer orientation will moderate the relationship between family motivation and opportunity recognition. Third, the responsibility of supporting the family will not only affect the work effort of employees, but also

affect their behavior choices. For example, the employees may gain the benefits for family at the expense of organizational benefits. Therefore, organizational commitment may help employees synergy family interests and organizational interests. Therefore, we also explored whether the organizational identity will moderate the relationship between family motivation and opportunity recognition.

To test the theoretical framework of this study, we conducted empirical research on sales personnel. Sales staff deal directly with the market, and their entrepreneurial behaviors are critical to the company's innovative development. Using two waves, multi-source survey data from 280 salespeople, we find that family motivation promotes employees' entrepreneurial behavior by enhancing their opportunity recognition. Further, we also find that customer orientation and organizational identification positively moderate the relationship between family motivation and opportunity recognition. This study has important theoretical contributions to the fields of family motivation, opportunity recognition, and entrepreneurial behavior. It also has practical significance for organizations to promote frontline employees' entrepreneurial behavior and opportunity recognition.

Key words: Family motivation; Opportunity recognition; Entrepreneurial behavior; Customer orientation; Organizational identification

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