Dr. Blake A. Runnalls earned his Ph.D. in marketing from the Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University in 2017. He also received his master of arts in economics from the University of South Florida and his MBA from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He spent nearly five years working in the corporate world for companies such as Progressive Insurance, Credit Suisse, and General Electric. His research interests include personal selling and marketing management with a focus on sales training, organizational learning, and the customer-firm interface.

His dissertation is titled “The Impact of Social Networks on Sales Training Transfer and Performance,” which won the 2017 American Marketing Association Sales SIG Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Competition. Runnalls also won the 2017 Organizational Frontlines Research Young Scholar Research Competition.
1. Data Collection Journey
2. How to Create and Align ‘Value’
3. Lessons Learned
4. Sources of Contacts
5. Q&A and Open Discussion
Data Collection

Personal Journey
- Dissertation
- Trade Magazine List
- UNL Center for Sales Excellence
What is Our ‘Value’

- Gatekeepers of Knowledge
- Valid Research Design
- Data Collection Capabilities
- Advanced Statistical Analysis
‘Value’ Creation Process

- Start Slow ... 15-30 minute discussion
- Keep it simple
- Broadly explain your expertise and interests
- Try to understand the ‘buyer’s’ (e.g., practitioner’s) needs
- Be flexible and open to new research areas
- Identify mutual value-add projects
- Agree on next steps
Research Project Process

• Focus on moving the project forward
• If possible, communicate up the organizational ladder
• Execute
• Deliver
• Repeat
Considerations

- Sample Size
- Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Collaborators
Lessons Learned

- Lengthy ‘Sales’ Cycle
- Data Quality
- Responsive Point of Contact
- People Move, Things Change
- Protect Your Time
- Move Projects Forward
- Failure (Low ‘Hit’ Rate) = Learning
- Try, Try Again
Sources of Contacts

- CoB Advisory Boards
- Nebraska Alumni
- LinkedIn
- Prior Classmates (7+ years experience)
- Local Events
- Lincoln/Omaha Businesses
- UNL Center for Sales Excellence
Next Steps For You

- Locate a Prospect
- Establish Contact
- Identify Value
- Create and Submit a Proposal
- Follow-up
Next Steps For Us

Wish List

• Create a central location with CoB member’s interests and expertise.
• Understand what ‘ideal’ data look like for our colleagues.
• Keep each other in mind when talking with practitioners.
Q&A
Thank You For Your Time

Have a Great Weekend ... Go Big Red

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