

# RESEARCH BRIEFS



*Dr. Craig Martin*

## **Selling Ethics**

Dr. Craig Martin of the Department of Marketing in the Gordon Ford College of Business will spend the summer studying whether or not leadership and empowerment affect sales ethics. This topic is critical because as Dr. Martin writes, “the pressure to perform at the highest possible level is ever-present” in today’s competitive markets. Competition not only drives new marketing techniques but it can lead to unethical behaviors. As a result of his research, sales managers will ideally be able to “improve the ethical attitudes and behaviors of salespeople.”

Environmental variables play a key role in the ethical development of salespeople. Environmental variables that individuals encounter on a consistent basis include cultural, industry, and organizational environments. Of these three environmental forces, organizational variables appear to have the greatest ability to influence the ethical decision-making of salespeople. As business-to-business salespeople are often outside of the office, traveling to or preparing for sales presentations, their reference point for ethical dilemmas within the organization is often their immediate sales manager. The sales manager, therefore, plays a very important role in the ethical development and ethical performance of sales representatives.

Martin’s study seeks to identify specific sales manager leadership qualities that will directly or indirectly influence a salesperson’s ethical intentions and behaviors. Conceptually defined, transactional leadership revolves around managers clearly informing subordinates as to what their salient job activities are, how to perform these activities, and how successful completion of these activities will eventually lead to acquisition of organizational rewards. Conversely, transformational leaders raise their subordinates’ awareness of the worth of specified work outcomes, get employees to rise above their own self-interests for the benefit of the organization, and improve the subordinates’ desire for achievement.

Dr. Martin will gather his data through the National Association of Sales Executives who represent numerous industries. The executives consist of field representatives and sales managers. By analyzing the data from three hundred responses, he will try to uncover the ethics behind good sales relationships and explore the ethics between different genders and races of salespeople. The ethical intentions and behaviors of salespeople may be improved. Dr. Martin’s position at Western situates him to publish valuable research in this field as Western is the only university in Kentucky offering a marketing degree with an emphasis on professional selling. For more information on the sales concentration at Western Kentucky University, contact Dr. Martin via e-mail at [craig.martin@wku.edu](mailto:craig.martin@wku.edu).



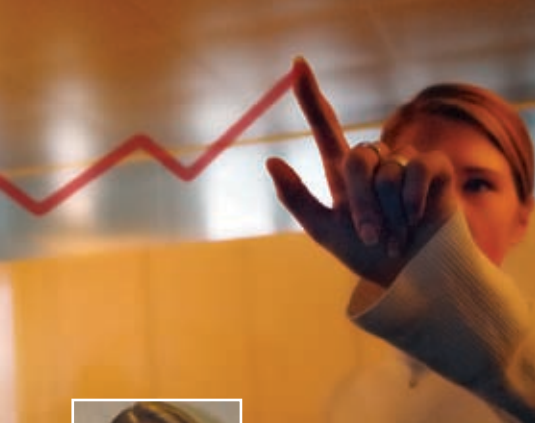
## **Support for Adolescents with Diabetes**

Dr. Ron Ramsing of the Department of Physical Education and Recreation in the College of Health and Human Services was awarded a Summer Faculty Scholarship to study how adolescents with diabetes can be supported through summer camps. This study is critical for building the esteem of adolescents with diabetes who struggle with “one of the most



*Ron Ramsing*

psychologically and behaviorally demanding chronic illnesses facing adolescents.” Research shows that adolescents who do not have effective diabetes management skills have a higher risk of acute and long-term complications than their diabetic peers who possess these skills. Effective diabetes control has been shown to slow the onset and progression of complications such as eye, kidney, and nerve diseases. In other words, adolescent diabetics with proper motivational and management training can control blood glucose to reduce the progression of the disease.



Dr. Kathi Miner-Rubino

## Secondary Victims in the Workplace

Dr. Kathi Miner-Rubino of the Department of Psychology in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences was awarded a Summer Faculty Scholarship to study the consequences of the mistreatment of women in the workplace. However, she is not studying the consequences for actual victims, but rather for those who simply observe or perceive their female colleagues being mistreated at work. Thus far studies have focused on the primary victims of abuse in the workplace; little is known about how observers of mistreatment are affected. Dr. Miner-Rubino intends to focus on these “secondary victims” of workplace mistreatment, who likely can’t help but be negatively affected by witnessing the mistreatment of their peers. Her research shows that these “vicarious mistreatment experiences” can lead

to serious outcomes similar to the outcomes for those who are directly mistreated.

Dr. Miner-Rubino will analyze data from her study which includes over one thousand law school faculty members as participants. Faculty members were asked about their vicarious experiences of mistreatment toward women at work, emotional reactions, and important job outcomes. More specifically, Miner-Rubino assessed the degree to which they observed incivility toward female colleagues and perceived sex discrimination in their law school. Incivility was defined as rude and condescending behavior, and sex discrimination was defined as inequity between male and female law school faculty, such as in preferential treatment in recruitment and promotion. She also assessed faculty members’ feelings of fear and empathy, and their degree of job satisfaction, commitment to their law school, feelings of job burnout, and thoughts about quitting their job

Professor Miner-Rubino’s conclusions will not only tell us more about gender dynamics at work, but also about how and why people who are vicariously exposed to the mistreatment of others also become victims.

Summer camps are a valuable experience for adolescents with diabetes to learn control measures for reducing the advance of the disease. Adolescents with diabetes can learn how to become more autonomous in managing the disease. Dr. Ramsing “will explore specific mechanisms” that enable this control at a summer camp in north central Kentucky that caters to male and female adolescents. He will interact with ninety-two subjects, examining several variables thought to influence perceptions of autonomy support inherent in the camp program. He will focus on diabetics in small and

large group activities, noncompetitive and competitive activities and instructional programs. Data will be gathered as a result of these interactions to better understand the relationship between individual characteristics and delivery mechanisms. Dr. Ramsing expects to find the best mechanisms at the camp that lead to greater feelings of autonomy among his subjects. From there these mechanisms can be extended to more everyday experiences to better the lives of adolescent diabetics.

## Nanotechnology Research



Tingying Zeng

Dr. Tingying Zeng of the Department of Chemistry in the Ogden College of Science and Engineering was awarded a grant of \$75,000 under the Kentucky Commercialization Fund through the Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation. She will study how to better clean up pollutants emitted from coal-fired power plants. Currently, the disposal of large amounts of activated carbon used to collect the mercury emitted from these plants is a critical issue because too much carbon in the waste renders it unsuitable for other uses. Dr. Zeng will try to surmount this problem by developing non-carbon sorbents for mercury removal in coal combustion.

Dr. Zeng’s work will focus on nanotechnology for the production of silica porous nanopowders. Nanotechnology involves research and technology development at the atomic, molecular, or macromolecular levels in the dimension range of approximately one to one hundred nanometers (one nanometer is one billionth of a meter). Her work not only provides fundamental understanding of phenomena and nanomaterials, but also creates and uses structures, devices, and systems at the nanoscale level.



The project will run for three years. In the first year of the three-year project Dr. Zeng will design and synthesize cost-effective nanopowder materials for evaluation. She will provide products for testing at a local power plant. Using the data collected in this experiment, she will spend the second and third years planning research and development to make the new generation of nanopowders capable of being manufactured to replace the currently used carbon sorbents.

The long-term goals of this research are equally significant. It will contribute to the goals of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy to limit mercury emission to protect our environment. The technology that Dr. Zeng will perfect will lead to a cost effective method of synthesizing a broad range of inorganic oxide materials for use in advanced applications. Moreover, commercialization of the nanopowder is an important

byproduct of Dr. Zeng's research. In all of these ways, the outcomes of the project will have important impacts on protecting Kentucky's environment, growing its economy through advanced technology, and perfecting high tech products.



## Crime Victims and Offenders

Dr. Jerry Daday, assistant professor of sociology, is working with a federally funded research team based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, tasked with studying violent crime in the community. They are comparing the demographic profile of the "typical victim" of violent crime to that of the "typical offender." Researchers have found that just as prior deviance and offending increase one's chances of future offending, they also increase one's chances of future victimization. Victims and offenders also tend to engage in a host of risky lifestyles and behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse. It is believed that these risky lifestyles bring potential victims in contact with willing offenders in the absence of capable guardians, thus generating criminal opportunities. These same researchers have also found that living or engaging in activities in socially disadvantaged or in high crime neighborhoods increases one's risk of offending and victimization.



*Jerry Daday*

While most earlier research compared all victims to all offenders involved in violent crimes, Daday and his colleagues from the University of New Mexico have spent the last few years examining the similarities and differences between victims and offenders involved in the same homicide and aggravated battery incidents in Albuquerque. Their research found that victims and offenders had a similar demographic profile and lived in equally disadvantaged neighborhoods. Both groups also had similar offending and medical utilization histories.

When developing violence reduction initiatives and intervention programs in communities and neighborhoods, practitioners often consider separate strategies for victims and offenders. Daday's research suggests that separate interventions for victims and offenders may not be necessary, but that intervention programs that target both victims and offenders could potentially provide the most effective strategy for reducing interpersonal violence.