

Assignment 2: Identifying Threats to Internal Validity

You are charged with evaluating a new sales training program that promises to dramatically improve the sales effectiveness of poor performing salespeople. You feel this may be a good program for new salespeople so that they have the best chance of being successful within your company. You give all the salespeople hired within the last year a paper-and-pencil test on their responses a variety of sales scenarios and select the twenty who had the worst results. These twenty salespeople are subjected to the new program which requires them to attend class once a month for the next year. After the end of the year-long program, you give the salespeople in the program another set of similar sales scenarios to see how they respond to these scenarios now. You hypothesize that any gain in the scores on the sales scenarios test is due to the new sales training program. Your null hypothesis is that the sales training program had no effect on the performance of the salespeople.

What are the threats to the internal validity of your study? For each threat, you should (a) identify the threat, (b) describe the threat in the context of your study (explain exactly how it is a threat in your study), (c) briefly explain how you could control for this threat, and (d) if relevant, explain how controlling for the threat may introduce other problems or threats.