

Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers

Agricultural Sales CDE

Purpose of the Event

The purpose of the Agricultural Sales Career Development Event is to evaluate skills that are essential for an individual to be successful in the agricultural sales field. The process of selling agricultural products is essential for production and marketing of agricultural products.

Objectives

The objectives are to develop the skill sets necessary for students to be successful in sales. These would include the following:

1. Develop verbal, written and interactive communication skills.
2. Discuss features and benefits of a product.
3. Identify potential customer objections.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of proper product use.
5. Identify prospective customers through marketing data.
6. Introduce the product to prospective customers.
7. Develop a sales call that determines and addresses customers' needs and objections.
8. Understand the basic business structure necessary to sell and deliver a product.
9. Attempt to close the sale by asking for customer's buying decision.
10. Establish and build customer confidence in the product.

A. General Information

1. **Team:** A team shall consist of *four* (4) members. All four scores will count toward the team total. A school may compete with less than four participants, but is only eligible for individual awards.
2. **Awards:** All scores will be added to calculate the team score. Individual awards will be based upon the total of the Written Exam and the Individual Sales Activity scores.
3. **Miscellaneous:**
 - a. The event host will provide information about the product to be utilized in the team activity will be announced 60 days prior to the event.
 - b. No one will be allowed to observe any presentation.
5. **Registration:** This event shall be open to any school desiring to participate. Pre-registration for this career development event is expected by a deadline to be announced on the *Ag Ed Listserve*. Entry fees are not refundable.
6. **Additional Information:** Refer to the current National FFA Career Development Events manual.

B. Career Development Event Format

The career development event shall consist of three parts: 1) Written Exam - 50 points, 2) Team Activity - 150 points, and 3) Individual Sales Activity - 150 points.

C. Career Development Events Divisions

1. Written Exam: (50 points)

The written exam is designed to evaluate an individual's knowledge of sales skills. The listed resources will be used as a basic resource but the questions will be generated based on basic sales concepts.

- a. Team members will work individually.
- b. The test will consist of 25 multiple-choice or True/False questions.
- c. Thirty minutes will be allotted to complete the Written Exam, with each question worth two points for a total of 50 points.

2. Team Event: (150 points)

- a. Each participant will be allowed to bring a one-inch binder to the team activity containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant.
- b. Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork and group dynamics, problem solving, data analysis, decision making and oral communications.
- c. The following information will be provided to the team at the event as if they were a group of salespeople working together to develop the pre-call planning prior to conducting a sales call.
 - Product information (before event)
 - Profiles of different customers
- d. The team will be provided with paper and writing utensils. No presentation equipment such as laptops, flipcharts or dry erase boards will be allowed.
- e. The team will then develop the strategy (for the product(s) provided prior to the event) necessary to sell the product(s) in a face-to-face sales call. This strategy should include but not be limited to:
 - Determining potential customer needs and wants.
 - Identify features and benefits of the product(s) that address the customer's needs and wants.
 - Identify potential customer objections and prepare to address them.
 - Identify possible related/complimentary products and their suggestive selling strategies.
- f. E. Develop information gathering questions to be utilized in clarifying the customer's needs and wants.
- g. Teamwork and involvement of team members will be judged during this event. Students are expected to justify their decisions based on selling principles.
- h. The team will be given twenty (20) minutes to analyze the information given and develop a presentation to provide the information listed above. During this twenty (20) minute period, the team will be judged using the team activity scorecard.
- i. At the conclusion of the twenty (20) minutes, the team will present to the judges who are acting as the team's immediate supervisors. The presentation will be no longer than ten (10) minutes. At the conclusion of the presentation, the judges will have ten (10) minutes to ask questions of all team members. The questions will be taken from all aspects of the team event.

3. Individual Sales Activity: (150 points)

- a. Information and product(s) from the team activity will be used in the individual sales activity.
- b. The Individual Sales Activity will be conducted after the Team Activity.
- c. Participants will directly sell the product(s) to judge(s).
- d. The judge(s) will fit one of the customer profiles identified in the team pre-call planning activity.
- e. The judge(s) will act as a real customer which may include not buying the product. Participants will have to establish rapport with the customer and ask probing questions to ensure they meet the customer's needs.
- f. Participants are allowed to use their one-inch product information binder during individual activity.
- g. Participants will have twenty (20) minutes to interact with the judge(s).
- h. Official FFA dress is required.

E. Recommended References

Career Development Events Handbook 2012-2016. National FFA Organization, P.O. Box 68960, 6060 FFA Drive, Indianapolis, IN.46268-6060.

ITCS Instructional Materials, University of Illinois, 1401 S. Maryland Dr., Urbana, IL 61801.
U6030 *The Relationship of Sales to Agriculture*
U6031 *Careers in Agricultural Sales*
U6032 *Agricultural Sales Communications*
U6033 *Steps in Preparing for an Agricultural Sales Call*
U6034 *Conducting an Agricultural Sales Call*

Instructional Materials Service, Texas A&M University, F.E. Box 2588, College Station, Texas
77843-2588.

8746 Agriscience 312, *Personal Skill Development in Agriculture*

Ditzenberger and Kidney, *Selling-Helping Customers Buy*. South-Western Publishing
Company, Cincinnati, Ohio. 1986.

To order: 1-800-543-7972 - Stock number: S-20

Samson and Little, *Advertising Planning and Techniques*. South-Western Publishing
Company, Cincinnati, Ohio. 1985.

To order: 1-800-543-7972 - Stock number: D-20

OPTIONAL REFERENCES

Agricultural Business Sales and Marketing, Curriculum Guide, Instructional Materials
Laboratory, University of Missouri, Columbia. 1989.

To order: 1-800-669-2465; Instructional Materials Laboratory, 2316 Industrial Drive,
Columbia, Missouri 65202. Student handout available.

Samson and Little, *Visual Merchandising - Planning and Techniques*. South-Western
Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio. 1985.

To order: 1-800-543-7982 - Stock number: D-21

CRISP Publications, 1200 Hamilton Court, Menlo Park, CA 94025-1427 1-800-442-7477) FAX
650-323-5800)

- *Professional Selling*, Rebecca L. Morgan ISBN 0-931961-42-4
- *Sales Training Basics*, Elwood N. Chapman ISBN 1-56052-119-8
- *Closing*, Virden J. Thorton ISBN 1-56052-318-2
- *Calming Upset Customers*, Rebecca L. Morgan ISBN 1-56052-384-0
- *Telephone Courtesy & Customer Service*, Loyd Finch ISBN 1-56052-064-7

Sales and Service, Mike Martin, Ditzenberger and Kidney.

Selling- Helping Customers Buy. South-Western Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio,
1992, 1-800-543-7972) ISBN 0538605316

Brown and Kirkwood, *Developing the Agricultural Sale Professional* (video tape series),
Farm Credit Services, St. Paul, Minnesota. 1990.

To order: 1-612-221-1458; Farm Credit Services, Education Training Department, 375
Jackson, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55102.

ITCS Instructional Materials, University of Illinois, 1401 S. Maryland Dr., Urbana, IL 61801.

Video Titles: *Building Persuasive Sales Skills*
Assessing Customer Needs
Communicating Product Benefits
Getting and Giving Commitment

A Facilitator's Guide and student materials are available for each videotape.

F. Sample Scorecards

Agricultural Sales CDE Team Event Scorecard	Name _____	
	Chapter _____	
	Points Possible	Points Earned
Skills		
How well did each team member participate by analyzing and providing input to the solution?	8	
How well did each team member communicate with the rest of the team members?	10	
How well did each team member demonstrate effective listening skills?	10	
How well did each team member respect the input of other team members?	9	
What level of knowledge did the team have of the products they are selling?	12	
Did the team accurately analyze all the information for each customer type?	12	
Did the team identify the customer needs and wants, and prepare quality questions to help clarify the customer's needs and wants?	12	
Did the team identify products for each customer type based on their product's features and benefits and the customer's anticipated needs and wants?	15	
How well did the team identify potential objections for each customer type and how to address them?	12	
Were complimentary/related products also identified?	10	
Were the decisions made by the team based on sound sales principles using the information they were given?	12	
Was the presentation delivered professionally?	8	
Did all team members participate in the presentation?	8	
Were the questions answered correctly by all team members?	12	
Total	150	

Agricultural Sales CDE Individual Sales Call Scorecard	Name _____ Chapter _____	
	Points Possible	Points Earned
Skills		
Did the sales person identify them with a good first impression?	5	
Did the student ask questions/dialogue in an attempt to build rapport with you?	8	
Did the student actively listen to your personal comments when you answered?	8	
Did the student use the information from your answers to further establish personal rapport?	8	
Did the student ask questions to learn about your business?	10	
Did the student listen to the answers about your business you provided?	10	
Did the student confirm and discover your needs and wants?	12	
Did the student apply the features/benefits of their product to your needs/wants?	16	
Did the student allow you to participate in matching your needs/wants to their product features?	15	
Did the student effectively use trail close (gain acceptance on a point, identify customers willingness to buy or a closing opportunity)??	11	
Did the student listen to and clarify your objections?	14	
Did the student apply and discuss the features/benefits of their product to address your objections?	13	
Did the student clearly close or attempt to close the sale?	20	
Total	150	