



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2001

PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL SELLING

General Comments

As only six candidates sat this examination it is difficult to draw any reliable conclusions from the outcome. However, the fact that the average mark achieved was 35% speaks volumes of the overall performance. With the subject having been on the curriculum for so many years now it is very disappointing to still read scripts that speak of salespeople selling product features rather than customer benefits.

Question 1

Only two people attempted this question which is somewhat surprising given that many marks could have been garnered from the application of common sense without any recourse to formal learning. Answers should have described how call reports function as a control tool, an evaluation tool, a market information source, and so on.

Question 2

All candidates attempted this question and with possibly one exception performed very poorly. Instead of outlining sales closing tactics as they were asked, candidates outlined sale closing techniques. Given that the mistake was universal a small number of marks was awarded for good outlines of closing techniques. The textbook clearly differentiates between the two so this generosity shouldn't have been necessary.

Question 3

Two out of the three attempts at this question were quite good. Though it was important to note that it was the motives of a retailer that were important and not of a consumer, the candidate should still have emphasised both rational and emotional motives.

Question 4

This was the best-answered question on the paper. Part A sought an outline of Need, Authority, Means and Eligibility criteria while Part B required students to apply knowledge to specific situations. Better answers offered some innovative means of developing prospect lists rather than depending on the Golden Pages. It was particularly important to note that the student was required to talk about developing lists of prospects rather than lists of sales leads.

Question 5

This question was very poorly attempted by the few who attempted it. There are many approaches that could have been adopted but to gain marks it was particularly important to fulfil the question's requirement to discuss the issues. There are many positives to be gained

from rejection but many negatives also. Candidates seemed to concentrate on one or two of the positive aspects only.

Question 6

In addressing the issue of personal characteristics required by salespeople in different job categories, candidates failed to refer to any of the research that has been conducted in this area. Additionally they failed to emphasise the absolute importance of product knowledge as a characteristic of success.

Question 7

A question straight from chapter one of the text book. To gain high marks candidates should have presented a more extensive list than they did and should have fulfilled the requirement to examine the myths rather than just listing them or outlining them.

Question 8

This question was subject to the weakest answers on the paper. Most candidates were not in a position to evaluate the use of testimonials as a selling strategy or to outline the other risk reduction strategies – trial orders, demonstrations, guarantees, and follow-up – in any coherent manner.