



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2002

PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL SELLING

General Comments

Due to small numbers, it is difficult to draw general conclusions. It is notable that the average mark achieved was only 38%. This however is a significant improvement on the performance in the equivalent examination last year.

Question 1

For some reason candidates largely presumed that the person employed in a telesales capacity is not a salesperson. The answers that garnered higher marks identified that it is not an either/or situation. It should not be a case of companies employing either a field sales team or a telesales team but maybe an appropriate combination of those two. It was particularly important to emphasise the various roles fulfilled by the field salesperson in addition to selling.

Question 2

This was quite a well-answered question that required an explanation of any two of the rational-emotional approach, the self-concept approach, or the problem solving approach. The attempts made demonstrated that this area of the textbook had been read in detail. Marks were lost in some cases because the student outlined the approaches rather than explaining them.

Question 3

This was the most popular question on the paper but unfortunately received only one good answer. In contrast to question two above the attempts to answering this question demonstrated that this section of the textbook had apparently been ignored. Buskirk and Buskirk specified that the appropriate tactics for identifying hidden objections were: 'asking questions', 'what else is bothering you?' 'appeal for fair play', 'habeas corpus technique', 'the four nos technique', 'and perception'. The majority of candidates were not aware of these.

Question 4

This question was subject to the worst answers on the paper. In addressing the issues raised in the statement it was important for the candidate to note that there were two separate claims made, (1) all closing techniques are hard-sell approaches, and (2) because they are hard-sell approaches they are inappropriate in a customer-oriented environment. No candidate adequately handled this separation of issues. In attempting this question there was no need to explain, outline, or even list a variety of closing techniques, just discuss the issues involved.

Question 5

Only one candidate attempted this question and performed particularly well. The strategies that were called for were demonstrations, trial orders, guarantees, and references. Their application may need some adaptation to suit the specifics of the consumer or industrial market but the same generic strategies will be utilised.

Question 6

To gain high marks on this question it was important to evaluate the use of showmanship in selling as the question demanded. This would have involved presenting the merits and demerits of using showmanship. Candidates however typically chose to describe the various showmanship options that are available.

Question 7

Both candidates who attempted this question examined the importance of follow-up quite well. However, they failed to examine the other aspect of the statement that an in-depth discussion demanded. That aspect being that 'follow-up' is possibly not the most important stage of the selling process. After all without prospecting, presenting, and so on there would be no need for follow-up.

Question 8

Only two candidates attempted this question. Even without reference to a textbook or lecture notes, common sense, logic, or a rudimentary understanding of the consumer process would have indicated that the industrial buying process started with 'problem recognition' and ended with 'evaluation of outcome'. Unfortunately textbooks are not always referred to and common sense is not always applied.