



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2003

PRACTICE OF SELLING

General Comments

Overall this paper did not cause serious problems for the candidates, but some were remiss in their neglect of the scenario posed within which the answer was to be framed. Candidates had a chance to use their knowledge of two of the essential articles if they so wished. Examination technique is still an issue for some candidates and failing to attempt the necessary five questions significantly damages the overall grade.

Question 1

This question gave the candidates the scope to show their knowledge of the advantages of selling. The cost to a company of hiring two new representatives would be in the region of €150,000 therefore an estimate of the likely revenue stream and profit contribution would assist the argument. Some answers documented the likelihood of the company's marketing strategy not being achieved via non-personal communication methods. The answer was to be framed in the first person singular and would need to include the context such as outline of target markets, the competitive situation, the growth rate in the market and such like.

Question 2

Disappointing answers here despite the fact the required text deals clearly with this area. Qualitative evaluation criteria centre around sales skills, knowledge, self-management and personal characteristics. Measurement techniques include rating scales, self-reporting forms and the thorny issue of peer assessment. Most candidates referred to the obvious need for the sales manager to be able to travel out with the representatives in order to fulfil this evaluation.

Question 3

Candidates needed to nominate an export market and then deal with aesthetics, religion, education, language, social organization, politics and the market's general attitudes and values.

Question 4

This required the candidates to apply the Moncrief article which most did without any trouble.

Question 5

Required here was a description of a new task, straight rebuy and modified rebuy and the effect of each of these on the structure of the DMU and the length of the decision making process. Students came up with many relevant implications.

Question 6

This was a popular question which the candidates found easy to apply. It needed a discussion of what constitutes atmospherics, and the elements abilities in achieving the communication objectives of a forecourt operation. Examples were plentiful in the answers.

Question 7

This was not a popular question though it was based on a real-life example and those who did attempt it scored well.

Question 8

Once again, the candidates were required to think about the three groups of forces from this essential article and decide what still has relevance today as opposed to when the article was written. Some answers started slowly but got more confident as the answer progressed.