



EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2007

PRACTICE OF SELLING

General Comments

This paper obviously appealed to the candidates as the results are pleasing to the examiner. An overall comment would be that too few candidates reference the source of their material, be it the essential text or recommended articles. This is an academic examination process and academic answering style is most suitable. Candidates are good at bringing in real-life examples to illustrate their answers, this is always welcome. Discursive answers should always have a broad introduction to the area in question, then a strong focus on the specific knowledge required, concluding with a summary of the information given and tied back in to the question asked. This approach gives one the maximum chance of obtaining marks.

Question 1

This question posed little difficulty with most candidates identifying the specific issues of intangibility, perishability, non-standardisation, inseparability, variability, and ownership. Some candidates used material they met in the marketing subjects to assist their answering, this cross-fertilisation is always welcomed.

Question 2

Atmospherics was a popular area and most candidates dealt with the main components including music, lighting, merchandising, smell, use of colour, corporate wear etc. There was a requirement in the question to focus on a retail shopping outlet, some candidates failed to deal adequately with this context.

Question 3

Another question which posed little difficulty and again allowed for cross-fertilisation from marketing subjects. Examples of how advertising supports personal selling abounded.

Question 4

This question was drawn from the "Sales Responsibilities and Preparation" chapter and also allowed candidates use material they met in the first year selling subject on this certificate. Every answer was adamant that prior preparation was key to a successful sales process.

Question 5

This subject is close to the hearts of practicing sales people and strong opinions were expressed with regard to the necessity of alignment between these two functions. Interestingly no candidate proposed job rotation – sales person going in to marketing and vice versa, maybe professional sales people don't trust marketers!

Question 6

A very unpopular question surprisingly as all it required was personal observation on the technological, behavioural and managerial forces Rolph Anderson identified. Ten years on a lot of what he forecasted has actually come to pass.

Question 7

Again candidates working in sales and marketing roles were very familiar with the practice of evaluation and some very strong answers emerged here. Principally, there are two approaches to evaluation, quantitative and qualitative. Most candidates could propose a number of quantitative approaches but some wisely included the need for some qualitative measures in order to capture the relationship building elements of the salesperson's job today.

Question 8

Again a very popular question, with candidates obviously very familiar with the concept of KAM, both in theory and in practice. Some material from the course article by McDonald was evident though for a pragmatic presentation as this, the Lancaster and Jobber content was more evident. Practical examples about the operation of KAM in a company were used to make the presentation more meaningful, with plenty of actual examples of working key account relationships given.