



## EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2002

### MANAGEMENT OF SALES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

#### General Comments

Nearly 60% of those sitting the examinations passed, while one third of those not achieving 40% only marginally failed. The results were similar to the August exams last year.

Generally August students continued to reveal two important weaknesses in their knowledge. Firstly, they displayed an inability to apply the theory to practical situations, particularly in relation to the application of motivational theory. Secondly, many students failed to use practical examples to support the theory discussed, e.g., in Question 7 on monitoring one's customers.

#### Question 1

Q.1 and Q.5 were the joint second least popular question. This was the third least popular question answered with Q.5. Most answers were not good. Those that answered the question were better at talking about internal interfaces rather than external interfaces. The internal interfaces should have included the different business functions (production, supply chain management, etc.). The external interfaces should have included customers, market, competitors, etc. Virtually no student addressed the issue of what could go wrong and consequently what should the sales manager do.

#### Question 2

Q.2 and Q.8 were the joint third most popular questions. Most answers were good, but a number of answers focused on the total role of the sales manager, rather than what the sales manager did with the sales force. The answer should have covered: motivating, training, particularly kerbside training, leading, assisting, defining roles, receiving feedback, and monitoring and controlling – discussed from the viewpoint of what and why.

#### Question 3

This was the second most popular question and it was generally answered well. Students understood traditional selling techniques and the recent change to relationship management and partnership. They were less sure of the implications for salespeople selection, their training (this part was answered best) and their remuneration (poorest answer).

#### Question 4

This was the least popular question and only one person answered it. The answer should have included a definition of a leveraged sales force, a description of its main features and a description of how to establish a leveraged sales force for an insurance company – see *"The Channel Advantage"* by Friedman and Furey, published by Butterworth & Heinemann, 1999.

**Question 5**

Q.1 and Q.5 were the joint second least popular questions. The answers were generally good, but not thorough enough. The answer should have included a description of leadership, the four leadership theories, types of leadership styles and the implications for sales management. Few students offered practical examples.

**Question 6**

This was the most popular question and the answers were generally good, particularly on the theory, weak enough on the practical aspects. The first part of the answer should have defined motivation and included indicators of good motivation such as low staff turnover, positive atmosphere, good sales performance and work effort, punctuality, few complaints, etc. The second part of the answer should have included an explanation of, at least, three motivation theories and how they could be implemented in practice.

**Question 7**

This was the fourth most popular question and it was not well answered. Many answers were wider than that asked and some ignored the question asked. The answer should have covered what is a monitoring system, what is its purpose, how will it work, and how does it assist the sales manager.

**Question 8**

Q.2 and Q.8 were the joint third most popular questions. The answer to the first part of the question on organising a salesforce should have included: territory, product, client/market type (public sector, private sector, international), client size (National Accounts, small accounts), or mixed. The answer to the second part of the question on the criteria for assigning sales people to markets should have included: salesperson's attributes (capabilities, qualifications, motivation and effort), nature of the sales task, nature of the clients, and physical location of the salesperson.