EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2009

MANAGEMENT OF SALES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

General Comments

The standard of the answers was higher this year than last year. Students used the text well to answer some questions. However, applying the theory posed more difficulties and there were too few practical examples. In some cases students did not answer the questions fully, neglecting to cover all the points asked and thus lost possible marks.

Overall the results were:

PASS:	82.7%	A: 3.4%	B: 3.4%	C: 37.9%	D: 37.9%
FAIL:	17.2%	E: 6.9%	F: 10.3%		

The overall pass rate was higher than last year.

Question 1

This was the most popular question with Question 4. Most students answered parts of it reasonably well, but failed to secure all the marks they could. The answer should have included: the role of the sales manager and the role of the sales person and how it helps to have a good sales person; the attributes of successful salespeople, according to at least 2 to 3 research findings; and the difficulties in selecting the right person. Most students gave some of the above, but few answered the question in sufficient detail.

Question 2

This was the least popular question and the answer was a mixture of very good and poor answers. It should have included an explanation of what is meant by salesforce organisation; the six principles of good salesforce organisation; and 4 diagrams of four different salesforce structures as requested in the question.

Question 3

Question 3 was the fifth most popular question. The general marks are just over the pass grade, a number of answers mixed up the job description with an advertisement for an area sales representative. The question should have explained the purpose and content of a sales job description and then provided the details job description for an area sales representative (see Donaldson for details, page 193).

Question 4

This question was the most popular question with Question 1. Generally the answer was very good and most answers are between 50% and 75%. The answer should have included an explanation of motivation, an explanation of at least three models of motivation, application of the models in practical situations, and a final discussion of how to best motivate a software sales person.

Question 5

This was the second least popular question. Some students gave a good answer, but others gave poorer answers. The answer should have included the purpose of sales targets, an explanation of sales targets in practice and how to develop them, and an explanation of how set targets, i.e. quantitative and qualitative targets, and how sales targets are used to monitor and measure sales performance.

Question 6

This was the fifth most popular question. It was answered well. The answer should have included a brief discussion of the differences between home sales and international sales; and an assessment of the different methods of international sales. This last point should have covered the advantages and disadvantages of a number of different sales methods including the Internet, direct sales force, use of an agency, use the distributor, direct sales from the home country. Finally, there should have been a conclusion on which method is most appropriate in different circumstances.

Question 7

This was the fourth most popular question. This question was generally answered poorly with most results being under 50%. Most students were not familiar enough with the text. The answer should have included an explanation of what a sales channel is; how to identify customer buying behaviours; the channel selection and key buying criteria; provide flexible channel options; monitor and respond to changes in buying behaviour (see The Channel Advantage, page 31).

Question 8

This was the third most popular question. Most of the answers were good to very good. The answer should included the following: why undertake training; measuring the training gap in terms of knowledge, skills and competences; and assessment of the different types of training methodologies such as lectures, role-playing, observation on the job (kerbside training). Some answers included the benefits of treatment and content of different types of training programmes. The answer should also included consideration of how different training methodologies could be evaluated in practice.