

Middle Tennessee FFA Association

Agricultural Sales Handbook

2017-2021

Purpose

The purpose of the Middle Tennessee FFA Agricultural Sales Career Development Event is to evaluate and demonstrate skills that are essential for an individual to be successful in the agricultural sales career. Students will also develop an understanding of the opportunities available in the sales industry. The process of selling agricultural products is essential for production and marketing of agricultural products.

Objectives

The Agricultural Sales Career Development Event provides the opportunity for the participant to:

Develop verbal, written and interactive communication skills.

Demonstrate skills to build rapport with customers.

Discuss features and benefits of a product.

Identify potential customer objections.

Introduce the product to prospective customers.

Develop a sales call that determines and addresses customers' needs and objections.

Attempt to close the sale by asking for customer's buying decision.

Identify and demonstrate the use of questions throughout the sales process.

Develop active listening skills.

Event Rules

The team will be composed of four students, and all four individual scores will count toward the team total.

FFA Official Dress is required for this event.

Any participant in possession of an electronic device in the event area is subject to disqualification.

Business cards are not permitted and will not contribute to the individual or team scores.

Event Format

The event will be composed of three parts. Individual scores will be comprised of the written exam and individual sales activity. The team score will be comprised of the team activity and all individual scores.

The product(s) utilized in the event and activity examples will be announced during the summer prior to convention on the National FFA CDE webpage. Provided product information may include appropriate company information and price list.

Each participant will be allowed to bring a one-inch binder to the event containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant. Promotional items are allowed to be used during the CDE but all information must remain in the one-inch binder and cannot be removed during the presentation.

INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN EXAM (100 POINTS)

The written exam is designed to evaluate an individual's knowledge of sales skills. The listed resources will be used as a basic resource but the questions will be generated based on basic sales concepts. The test will not exceed 30 questions and 45 minutes. The questions will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer and essay format. Point values will be assigned to each question based on the skill level of the question. All questions for the written exam will come from the past five years National FFA Ag Sales Written Exam which can be found on ffa.org. A test bank containing the previous five years national exams will be maintained and updated annually by FFA state staff on tnffa.org under the Downloads tab.

TEAM ACTIVITY (150 POINTS)

Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork, group dynamics, problem solving, data analysis, decision making and oral communications.

Teams will be allowed to use their 1" binder for the event. Promotional items are allowed to be used during the CDE but all information must remain in the one-inch binder and cannot be removed during the presentation.

The following information will be provided to the team at the event as if they were a group of salespeople working together to develop the pre-call planning prior to conducting a sales call.

- Product information (before event)
- Profile of one or two customers
- The team will be provided with paper and pencils. No presentation equipment such as laptops, flipcharts or dry erase boards will be allowed.

The team will then develop the pre-call plan (for the product(s) provided prior to the event) necessary to sell the product(s) in a face-to-face sales call. This pre-call plan should include:

- Potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.
- Common interests that team members have with the customers.
- Identify questions that help determine the wants and needs of the customer.
- Identify active listening skills or techniques for determining needs and wants.
- Identify and match potential needs and wants of the customer to the products' features and benefits.
- Identify potential objections of the customer.
- Identify potential concerns of each customer.

Teamwork and involvement of team members will be judged during this event.

Students are expected to explain their decisions for the pre-call plan based on selling principles.

The team will be given 15 minutes to analyze the information and prepare to answer questions about the pre-call plan. During this 15 minutes, the team will be judged using the team activity

scorecard.

At the conclusion of the 15 minutes, team members will have an additional 15 minutes to individually answer questions from the judges and they will answer without assistance from their team members.

INDIVIDUAL SALES ACTIVITY (150 POINTS):

- Participants will directly sell the product(s) to judge(s).
- Students will be given one of the two preliminary customer profiles that come from Team Activity portion of the event and will have at least five minutes to review it prior to meeting with the judge(s).
- Each individual judge will assume the customer in the individual sale.
- The judge(s) will act as the customer which may include not buying the product.
- Participants will have to establish rapport, ask probing questions to ensure they meet the customer's needs, and clarify customer information as a part of the sales call.
- Participants will have 20 minutes to interact with the judge(s).
- Participants are allowed to use their one-inch product information binder during the individual activity.
- Product information is allowed to be used during the CDE but all items must remain in the one-inch binder and cannot be removed during the presentation.

Scoring

Activities	Individual Points	Team Points
Written Exam	100	400
Team Activity		150
Individual Sales Call	150	600
Maximum Points	250	1,150

TIEBREAKERS

INDIVIDUAL

In the event of a tie in individualized scores, the following events will be used in order to determine award recipients:

1. Written Exam
2. Individual Sales Call
3. Team Activity

TEAM

In the event of a tie in team scores, the following events will be used in order to determine award recipients:

1. Written Exam
2. Team Activity
3. Total Individual Sales Activity

References

This list of references is not intended to be all inclusive.

Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. Make sure to use discretion when selecting website references by only using reputable, proven sites. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation. The most current edition of resources will be used.

Past CDE materials and other resources are available by logging in to: ffa.org

ProSelling: A Professional Approach to Selling in Agriculture and Other Industries, W. Scott Downey, ISBN-13: 978-0978895211

Professional Selling, Rebecca L. Morgan, ISBN 0-931961-42-4

Sales Training Basics, Elwood N. Chapman, ISBN 1-56052-119-8

Closing, Virden J. Thorton, ISBN 1-56052-318-2

Ditzenberger and Kidney, Selling-Helping Customers Buy, South-Western Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992, 1-800-543-7972, ISBN 0538605316.

Understanding Ag Sales, ffa.org

Team Preparation Rubric

75 points

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Points Possible	Points Eared
Effective listening	7–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Clearly evident that all team members are listening.	Listening occurs but distraction is evident.	Not listening to each other and/or talking over each other		
Oral communication	5–7 points	3–4 points	0–2 points	7	
	Clearly evident that all team members are discussing the topic.	Communication occurs but side conversations are occurring or two to three members dominating.	One member dominating conversation.		
Demonstrated cooperation	7–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Clearly all team members completing tasks, sharing written and oral solutions.	Tasks primarily completed by two to three members, other members assist occasionally.	Tasks primarily completed by no member.		
Respect	8–12 points	5–11 points	0–4 points	12	
	Clearly all team members respected the input of other team members.	Most team members respected the input of other team members.	The team members did not respect the input of other team members.		
Participated in the team preparation	6–8 points	3–5 points	0–2 points	8	
	Clearly all team members are engaged, attentive, and making notes for the full term of event.	Members are engaged and attentive with two to three making notes, participation fades over time.	No members form the primary team, no other members participate.		
Product knowledge	5–7 points	3–4 points	0–2 points	7	

	Clearly all team members demonstrated knowledge of the product.	Most team members demonstrate knowledge of product.	None of the team members demonstrate knowledge of product.		
Completing team goal					
	Team identified at least four potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.	Team identified at least two potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.	Team identified no potential question to build rapport for the scenario.	3	
	Team identified at least four common interests that they have with the customer.	Team identified at least two common interests that they have with the customer.	Team identified no common interests that they have with the customer.	3	
	Team identified at least four questions to identify the wants and needs of customer.	Team identified at least two questions to identify the wants and needs of customer.	Team identified no questions to identify the wants and needs of customer.	3	
	Team identified four active listening skills or techniques to determine wants and needs.	Team identified two active listening skills or techniques to determine needs and wants.	Team identified no active listening skills or technique to determine wants and needs.	3	
	Team identified at least four potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	Team identified at least two active potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	Team identified no potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	3	
	Team identified at least two potential objections of customer.	Team identified at least one potential objection of customer.	Team identified no potential objections of customer.	3	
	Team identified two concerns of customer.	Team identified at least one concern of customer.	Team identified no concerns of customer.	3	
TOTAL POINTS					

Team Questions Rubric

75 points

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Points Possible	Points Earned
Rapport	4-5 points	3-2 points	0-1 point	5	
	All team members questioned provided a different question to build rapport.	Half of team members questioned provided a different question to build rapport.	None of the team members questioned were able to provide question to build rapport.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0–3 points	10	
	All questions for building rapport were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most questions for building rapport were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Questions for building rapport were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.		
Common interests	4-5 points	3-2 points	0-1 point	5	
	All team members questioned contributed common interests that team members have with the customer.	Half of team members questioned contributed common interests that team members have with the customer.	No team members contributed common interests that team members have with the customer.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0–3 points	10	
	All identified common interests were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most identified common interests were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Identified common interests were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.		
Questions to identify wants and needs	4-5 points	2-3 points	0-1 point	5	
	All team members questioned contributed questions to identify the wants and needs of the customer and identified the active listening technique.	Half of team members questioned contributed questions to identify the wants and needs of the customer and identified the active listening technique.	No team members contributed questions to identify the wants and needs of the customer nor did they identify the active listening technique.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0–3 points	10	

	All questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.		
Determine wants and needs	4-5 points	2-3 points	0-1 point	5	
	All team members questioned contributed potential needs and wants for the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	Half of team members questioned contributed a potential need and want of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	No team members provided potential needs or wants of the customer or how the product meets those needs and wants.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0–3 points	10	
	All potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.		
Objections and concerns	7-10 points	4-6 points	0–3 points	5	
	All team members questioned contributed potential objections and potential concerns for the customer.	Half of team members questioned contributed potential objections and potential concerns for the customer.	No team member contributed potential objections or potential concerns for the customer.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0–3 points	10	
	All potential objections and concerns identified are appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most potential objections and concerns identified are appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Potential objections and concerns identified are not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.		
TOTAL POINTS					

Individual Sales Call Rubric

150 points

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Points Possible	Points Earned
First impression	4–5 points	2–3 points	0–1 points	5	
	Individual identifies themselves with a good first impression.	Individual mostly identifies themselves with a good first impression.	Individual poorly identifies themselves with a good first impression.		
Personal rapport	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	Individual mostly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	Individual poorly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.		
Clarifying questions	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	Individual asks mostly questions to learn about the customer's business.	Individual poorly asks questions to learn about the customer's business.		
	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	15	
	Individual asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	Individual mostly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	Individual poorly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.		
Needs and wants	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	Individual mostly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	Individual poorly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.		
Features and benefits	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants to their product features.	Individual mostly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants to their product features.	Individual poorly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants to their product features.		

Matching needs and wants	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.	Individual mostly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.	Individual poorly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.		
Trial close	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	Individual mostly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	Individual poorly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.		
Objections	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Student listens and clarifies customers objections.	Student mostly listens and clarifies customers objections.	Student poorly listens and clarifies customers objections.		
Addressing objections	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	Individual mostly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	Individual poorly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.		
Close or advance sale	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Student closes or attempts to close the sale.	Student mostly closes or attempts to close the sale.	Student poorly closes or attempts to close the sale.		
Active listening	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual actively listens to comments and answers from the customer.	Individual mostly listens to comments and answers from the customer.	Individual poorly listens to comments and answers from the customer.		
TOTAL POINTS					