

Agricultural Sales

A Special Project of the South Dakota FFA Foundation

Important Note:

Please thoroughly read the General Rules at the beginning of this handbook for complete rules and procedures that are relevant to all South Dakota FFA Leadership and Career Development Events.

Purpose

The purpose of the Agricultural Sales Career Development Event is to evaluate skills that are essential for an individual to be successful in the agricultural sales field. The process of selling agricultural products is essential for production and marketing of agricultural products.

Objectives

- Develop verbal, written and interactive communication skills.
- Discuss features and benefits of a product.
- Identify potential customer objections.
- Demonstrate knowledge of proper product use.
- Identify prospective customers through marketing data.
- Introduce the product to prospective customers.
- Develop a sales call that determines and addresses customers' needs and objections.
- Understand the basic business structure necessary to sell and deliver a product.
- Attempt to close the sale by asking for customer's buying decision.
- Establish and build customer confidence in the product.

Event Rules

- The team will be composed of four students and all four individual scores will count toward the team total.
- It is highly recommended that participants wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
- Any participant in possession of an electronic device in the event area is subject to disqualification.

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 four individual scores.

The products, related products, prices and discount schedule to be utilized in the event and activity examples will be announced by October 1 and posted on the SD State FFA Association webpage. Provided product information may include appropriate company information.

Individual Written Exam - 100 points (300 points total)

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 30 minutes. The questions will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and matching format. Point values will be assigned to each question based on the skill level of the question.

Team Activity - 100 points

- Each participant will be allowed to bring a one-inch binder to the team activity containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant. Business cards will be allowed but there will be no points for this and note that it is NOT allowed at the national level. NO other material or bribes will be allowed to be handed to the judges.
- Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork, group dynamics, problem solving, data analysis, decision making and oral communications.
- 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)
 - Profiles of different customers
- The team will be provided with paper and writing utensils. No presentation equipment such as laptops, flipcharts or dry erase boards will be allowed.

The team will then develop the strategy (for the product(s) provided prior to the event) necessary to sell the product(s) in a face-to-face sales call. This strategy should include but not be limited to:

- Determining potential customer needs and wants.
- Identify features and benefits of the product(s) that address the customer's needs and wants.
- Identify potential customer objections and prepare to address them.
- Identify possible related/complimentary products and their suggestive selling strategies.
- Develop information gathering questions to be utilized in clarifying the customer's needs and wants.
- Teamwork and involvement of team members will be judged during this event.
- Students are expected to justify their decisions based on selling principles.

The team will be given 20 minutes to analyze the information given and develop a presentation to provide the information listed above.

At the conclusion of the 20 minutes, the team will present to the judges who are acting as the team's immediate supervisors. The presentation will be no longer than 10 minutes. At the conclusion of the presentation, the judges will have 5 minutes to ask questions of all team members. The questions will be taken from all aspects of the team event.

Team scores from the judges will be averaged.

Individual Sales Activity - 150 points

Information and product(s) from the team activity will be used in the individual sales activity. (Individual activity will be conducted after the team activity.) Participants will directly sell the product(s) to judge(s). The judge(s) will fit one of the customer profiles identified in the team pre-call planning activity. The judge(s) will act as a real customer which may include not buying the product. Participants will have to establish rapport with the customer and ask probing questions to ensure they meet the customer's needs. Participants will have 10 minutes to interact with the judge(s). Participants are allowed to use their one-inch product information binder during individual activity.

Scoring

All four individual scores of a team and the team activity score will count towards the team score.

Individual Scores	
Written Exam	100
Individual Sales Activity	150
Total Possible Individual Score	250
Team Scores	
Team Activity (judges scores averaged)	100
Test Scores (total of all 4 team members)	400
Individual Sales Activity (total of all 4 team members)	600
Total Possible Team Score	1100

Tiebreakers

In the event of a tie in the team scores, the highest team activity score will break the tie.

1. If the tie cannot be broken using the team activity score, then the total individual sales activity scores will be used.
2. If a tie still exists, the total written exam scores will be used to break the tie.

References and Resources

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. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation.

National FFA Core Catalog – Past CDE Materials (<http://shop.ffa.org/cde-materials-c1289.aspx>)

CRISP Publications, 1200 Hamilton Court, Menlo Park, CA 94025-1427. 1-800-4427477. FAX 650-323-5800.

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

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

Closing, Viriden 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.