

SIR - Retail Services Training Package

SIR30216—Cert. 3 in Retail



Unit

SIRXSLS001

Sell to the retail customer

*This is not a complete document.
SAMPLE ONLY*

PASSING

LANE

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STUDENT/TRAINEE DETAILS

Student/Trainee Name

Student/Trainee Email

Teacher / Trainer Name

School / Institution / Training Organisation / Employer

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INTRODUCTION

This manual was developed to provide training content that addresses the specific 'Unit of Competency' as outlined in the following pages.

We encourage you the student / trainee to take your time when reviewing this content and seek any assistance from your teacher/trainer should you have difficulty in understanding the information.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Also included in this Student / Trainee manual are a series of Learning Activities.

The learning activities in the student and/or trainee manuals are 'Form Enabled' so that if the resources are delivered online, the activities can be entered in using the computer keyboard.

Each learning activity is identified with the following icon.

A blue rounded rectangular button with the text "Learning Activity" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Learning activities come in the following forms.

- ☆ Questions
- ☆ Research
- ☆ Tasks
- ☆ Interviews

INTRODUCTION—CONT'D

Questions

Questions generally relate to the information presented on previous pages. Questions will also include multiple choice questions, 'Yes' and 'No' questions and/or 'True' and 'False' questions.

Research

This type of learning activity requires you to locate information by using research methods. The research methods could include:

- ☆ Internet searches
- ☆ Reading textbooks and other reference sources
- ☆ Location visits

Tasks

This learning activity type requires you to actually do something and some examples of tasks may include:

- ☆ Creating reports
- ☆ Visiting locations such as workplaces
- ☆ Performing an activity in a workplace

Interviews

This learning activity type would require you to interview person(s) in an actual workplace environment or a person(s) who are experienced in the industry sector which you currently are undergoing training.

You will be made aware of the type of learning activity by noting the learning activity type displayed under the learning activity icon.

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INTRODUCTION—CONT'D

USING THE FORM ENABLED FEATURE

If you are using this manual online, you can fill in some of the answers using your computer keyboard.

Your teacher or trainer will provide you with the information and instructions on how to use the 'Form Enabled' feature in this manual.

SELF ASSESSMENT

At the end of each manual is a series of questions that you should review and answer either Yes or No.

The term 'Self Assessment' means you will ask yourself these questions and therefore is no need to provide the answers to the self assessment questions to your teacher or trainer, unless they require you to do so.

This self assessment is to ensure you have reviewed and understood the information that was presented in this manual.

If you answered 'No' to any of these questions or are unsure of your understanding in any of the topics reviewed, you are encouraged to go back and review the information again and/or seek the assistance of your teacher or trainer.

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UNIT OF COMPETENCY OVERVIEW

The following pages are extracts from Training.gov.au website and outlines this specific 'Unit of Competency' including the 'Elements' and the 'Performance Criteria'. The content within this manual has been developed to address this unit.

SIRXSLS001 - SELL TO THE RETAIL CUSTOMER

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<p>1. Establish customer needs</p>	<p>1.1.Connect with the customer within designated response times and establish rapport 1.2.Use questioning and active listening to facilitate effective two-way communication 1.3.Observe and determine appropriate level of interaction based on customer verbal and non-verbal cues 1.4.Determine and clarify customer preferences, needs and expectations</p>
<p>2. Process refunds and exchanges</p>	<p>2.1.Use product and service knowledge to tailor options to specific customer needs, and offer alternatives when product is unavailable 2.2.Clearly explain and promote product and service features and benefits where relevant 2.3.Advise on promotional events where relevant 2.4.Provide additional information to address customer questions and objections 2.5.Offer comparisons to competitor product or service range as required 2.6.Collaborate with the customer to determine product or service option most suited to their needs 2.7.Take opportunities to upsell and cross sell products and services that enhance customer request and maximise profitability of sale</p>
<p>3. Facilitate the sale of products and services</p>	<p>3.1.Select and use appropriate techniques to close sale 3.2.Direct the customer to designated point-of-sale and process sale, as required, according to organisational procedures 3.3.Farewell customer on leaving, and invite to return 3.4.Provide any required after sales service according to organisational procedures</p>

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Section One

Establish Customer Needs

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SELL TO THE RETAIL CUSTOMER

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SECTION ONE—ESTABLISH CUSTOMER NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

The goal of all retailers is to make a sale to a customer. The sales process begins the very moment a customer enters the store.

This is the time that the customer begins to build an impression of the store as well as its staff. If this impression is positive, the store's chances of selling a product or service to the customer is good.

Conversely, selling becomes a great deal more difficult if the customer's first impression is a negative one.

Impressions are created by the staff knowing how to approach customers, make them feel welcomed and important.

This section looks at the ways this can be done..

SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this section you will learn information relating to:

- ☆ Connecting with the customer within designated response times and establish rapport
- ☆ Using questioning and active listening to facilitate effective two-way communication
- ☆ Observing and determining appropriate level of interaction based on customer verbal and non-verbal cues
- ☆ Determining and clarifying customer preferences, needs and expectations

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CONNECT WITH THE CUSTOMER WITHIN DESIGNATED RESPONSE TIMES AND ESTABLISH RAPPORT

When a customer enters a store, choosing the right moment to approach them takes some skill.

It should be your goal to begin the selling process as quickly as possible. The last response you want when approaching a customer is for them to refuse your assistance.

Watch for signs the customer may be displaying when choosing a time to approach them. Their body language and the way in which they move around the store will give you clues as to when to make the approach.

Watching closely, you will identify two types of shoppers just by the way they move around your store.

There are the ones that know what they want, or those that are not sure – the decided and undecided types.

- ☆ **Decided types** walk into the store and head straight for the product they are interested in. They move quickly and decisively. They will spend a few moments inspecting a product and then may look up to locate a staff member to assist them. This is the time to approach the decided type.
- ☆ **Undecided types** show degrees of indecision. Some are not quite sure – partially undecided and some are totally undecided.
- ☆ **Partially undecided** shoppers usually go to a certain area in the store with a common type of product being displayed, and remain in that area moving back and forth from product to product. This indicates that they have an interest in the type of product but may need assistance in choosing the right one. If this behaviour continues, it would be a good time to approach.

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Totally undecided customers are more difficult to pin down. They give no clues as to what they are interested in. They move around the store looking at all types of merchandise and when they do stop to inspect an item, it may be only for a few seconds then they move on.

The only sign that they may be interested in purchasing something is that they have remained in the store. The best time to approach this type is after they have browsed around the store for a while.

Most retailers will have an informal policy that suggests customers entering a store should be approached within a certain time period.

Approaching a customer who has entered the store is also a security tactic.

It is an unfortunate fact that some dubious customers are there to shoplift. So having a staff member approach them is a subtle way of letting these types know they are likely being watched.

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INITIATE CUSTOMER CONTACT

There are two types of initial contact with the customer – one is when they enter the store and are greeted and one when they are approached and offered assistance.

Welcoming the customer occurs when a customer enters the store. This can simply be a greeting such as 'Good Morning' delivered with a smile.

At this point, sales staff has presented the store and themselves as being friendly, however initiating contact through a simple greeting does not start the selling process. It can, however, make it easier when the time comes to approach them and begin the selling process.

Some customers, when greeted, will immediately request assistance and then the selling process begins. Others will come in, acknowledge the greeting and carry on without any further communication. These ones will need to be approached later.

Initiating contact to begin the selling process is also called opening the sale. Many stores have set procedures in how to approach a customer. They will often train sales staff on their proven methods.

The opening lines can be varied such as:

Hi!
Hello.
Good Morning/Afternoon.

For a customer that is just browsing or not focussed on a particular product, the opening line could be followed by:

Is there something I can show you?
Do you know about our special promotion today?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



In regards to a customer looking at specific products, the opening line could be:

***That is one of our best models. Can I take one out of the box so you can try it out?
Those are nice shoes. Would you like to try a pair on?***

It is important the sales staff keep the approach non-threatening and that they need to remember their facial expressions, body language and tone of voice should be friendly and show a sincere desire to help.

Remember, the greeting does not start the sales process. It is what is said afterwards that starts the process.

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ESTABLISH RAPPORT WITH THE CUSTOMER

Building rapport with your customers is one of the most important skills that you can develop as a sales professional.

To establish rapport you need to effectively use a combination of communication skills; both verbal and non-verbal. Building rapport started the minute you approached the customer.

Focus on your appearance and grooming. It is very difficult to establish a rapport with a customer if the first impressions of you are negative. A smile on your face and quick “Hello” and “How are you today?” breaks the ice and reduces the tension associated with meeting someone for the first time.

A little “small talk” works well as long as it is a safe topic such as the weather or about an up-and-coming holiday weekend and so on. Your tone of voice should be relaxed and friendly.

A little humour helps, but keep it clean. Joking about yourself is a good way to get the customer to smile, even laugh.

BENEFITS OF BUILDING A RAPPORT WITH CUSTOMERS

The first benefit is that having a rapport with a customer means they trust you.

As a representative of the store, you have built up the reputation of the store and this can only mean more sales revenue.

A customer that trusts the sales staff will more than likely be a return customer.

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY ONE

We learned in this section that approaching a customer in a store all comes down to timing.

There are types of customers that would determine the best time to approach them.

We mentioned the three types in this section.

In your own words describe each type and when the best time would be to approach each.

Type 1

--

Type 2

--

Type 3

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWO

What were the two types of initial customer contact?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY THREE

Fill in the missing words:

*It is important sales staff keep the approach _____ and that
they need to remember their _____ expressions, body _____
and _____ of _____ should be _____ and
show a _____ desire to help.*

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOUR

What is the meaning of the word “rapport”?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIVE

What is the meaning of the term “small talk”?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY SIX

When a sales person has developed a rapport with the customer, what feelings will a customer have toward the salesperson?

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



**USE QUESTIONING AND ACTIVE LISTENING TO FACILITATE EFFECTIVE TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION
AND
OBSERVE AND DETERMINE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF INTERACTION BASED ON CUSTOMER VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL CUES**

(Over the next few pages we cover two 'Performance Criteria' points at the same time to avoid repetition)

When a customer enters a retail store, it is very unlikely that the sales staff will know what the customer is looking for without approaching the customer, initiating contact and then asking questions to determine their needs.

The first rule is to help the customer become comfortable with the information gathering process.

This will require the sales staff to always be friendly, patient and courteous in their tone of voice, with their facial expression showing interest and a sincere desire to help.

For the next while they will be opening up to the sales staff member, so they need to feel relaxed with them and need to be able to place their trust in them.

This requires a bit of skill and involves both questioning and listening skills.

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



Here are some suggestions that you should consider when attempting to learn what a customer's needs are:

- ☆ Start the questioning with open-ended, general questions and slowly lead into more specific detailed questions
- ☆ Learn their name if possible and use it frequently throughout the sales process.
- ☆ Be a good listener – let them do most of the talking. Use active listening techniques – give the customer your full attention and use facial expressions and body language to show you are paying attention.
- ☆ The questions you ask them should be easy to answer, non-threatening and relevant.
- ☆ When a question is answered, repeat the answer back so that you are sure you got it right and the customer feels confident that you understand.
- ☆ Be patient. The customer may have difficulty in fully describing their needs or their wants.
- ☆ The actual needs of a customer are not always apparent, such as budgets, safety issues, cost of maintenance and ease of use. Skilful questioning will bring these issues out into the open.
- ☆ If the customer is unsure, ask questions like; “When were you hoping to have the work done by?” if it were a service you were selling, or; “Is there a particular reason why you like this style?” if it were a product.
- ☆ You may feel that the customer is making a wrong choice. Do not argue with the customer, instead, suggest alternatives by asking the customer “Have you considered this model?”, “Have you ever seen this product work?”

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

INTERPRET NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION CUES

What a customer does not say, is as important as what they do say.

This is called non-verbal communication.

A customer's non-verbal communication provides clues as to whether the sales assistant is being successful in getting information needed to close a sale, or if the customer's desire to move closer to a sale is being lost.

The customer's eyes are the best indication regarding whether the sales assistant is holding the interest of the customer, or is losing it.

If the customer's eyes are fixed and locked on to the sales assistant, the sales assistant is successful in holding the customer's attention.

If the customer's eyes are wandering, then the sales assistant may need to stop and ask more questions.

Crossed arms would show the customer is uncomfortable or resistant to the sales process and attempts to make the customer more at ease are important in order to create a smooth path towards a sale.

Frequent glances at their watch can show the customer is becoming impatient. The sales assistant may need to quicken their efforts without adding more pressure on the customer to make a purchase.

Positive non-verbal clues are when the customer is willing to handle the product, try the product or willing to read product information handed to them.

Other positive clues are the nodding of the head while listening, relaxed facial expression and facial reflection which means that if the sales assistant smiles, the customer automatically smiles too.

SAMPLE SAMPLE



Also watch for inconsistencies.

Non-verbal communication should reinforce what is being said. Is the person saying one thing while their body language is saying another?

The sales assistant must trust their instincts. If they get the sense that something is not adding up, they may be picking up on a mismatch between verbal and non-verbal cues.

However, do not judge the interaction on one non-verbal clue, in other words do not read too much into a single non-verbal clue.

Consider all of the non-verbal clues from the customer; from eye contact to tone of voice and body language. Taken together, are they consistent with the customer's words?

If for any reason the customer's non-verbal communication clues are negative, then it is important to stop and ask more questions to ensure you have fully understood the customer's needs and buying motives.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY SEVEN

In this activity we want you to summarise in a few word each of those nine suggestions that you should consider when attempting to learn what a customer's needs are.

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY EIGHT

In this activity we want you to describe in your own words what non-verbal communication is and give us examples of non-verbal clues.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY NINE

Why is it so important to be aware of a customer's non-verbal communication clues?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY TEN

It is not possible for a customer to verbally say one thing and their non-verbal clues are saying another thing.

Is this statement true or false and if false, what then needs to happen?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

DETERMINE AND CLARIFY CUSTOMER PREFERENCES, NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

SAMPLE

On the previous pages we learned about some suggestions in determining a customer's needs. Over the next few pages we go into some more detail about how to determine a customer's need, plus their preferences and expectations.

As the sales staff skilfully gathers the information from the customer, they will begin to get a feel for the issues that are important to the customer.

Professional marketers have identified several categories of buying motives, all have their own interpretation on what the buying motives are. However, the more common buying motives that all agree on are:

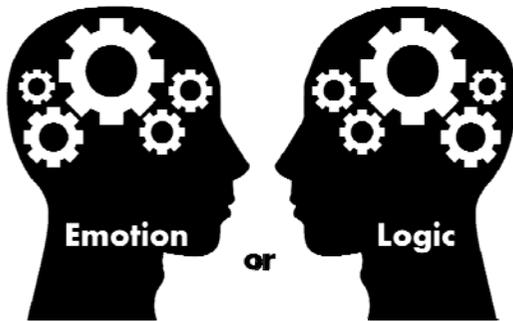
- ☆ **Personal gain** – this means a customer is buying a product that gives them something back. For example, a carpenter buys tools to help him do his job; a student buys a laptop to help them in university or TAFE, or the product will save them money such as an energy efficient appliance.
- ☆ **Comfort or pleasure** – there are many products in this category some which include furniture, entertainment systems, sporting products, beauty products, even food and beverages.
- ☆ **Love and affection** – this is when a customer is making a purchase decision based on someone else's feelings, or attention.

Example is buying flowers for someone, husband buying an anniversary gift for the wife, parents buying their child a birthday present.
- ☆ **Prestige or status** – this is when a customer buys products that they think make them look important, be recognised or the desire to be socially accepted.

Trendy clothes, expensive jewellery, the latest gadgets, the best sound system, expensive vehicles and so on.
- ☆ **Security and protection** – customers buying smoke alarms, security systems; safety clothing all based their purchase decisions with security and safety in mind.
- ☆ **Fear of loss** – this motive is when a customer buys a product that saves them time, or saves them money.

For example, a customer will choose a refrigerator because it has a higher energy saving rating saving them money on electricity, or a gardener will buy a newer model lawnmower that is more efficient because it will save him time.

SAMPLE



All buying motives are driven by either logic or emotions.

- ☆ **Logic** – this is when a customer is focussed on what the product does.
- ☆ **Emotion** – is when the customer is focussed on the emotions or the feelings associated with the use of the product.

So getting to know what is important to a customer (their buying motive) and why it is important (logic or emotion) the sales staff can then become closer in determining a customer's needs.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



For the customer's needs or requests to be adequately serviced, you must first fully understand what those needs are.

Common customer requests are generally in search of information relating to:

- ☆ Store products and services
- ☆ Location of specific products in the store
- ☆ Refunds or returns policies or procedures

Customer requests are generally instigated by the customer, so it would be the role of the store staff to provide answers or information to satisfy those requests.

Customer needs are less defined and the role of the store staff is to learn and meet those customer needs.

To do this, sales staff would need to ask questions and listen carefully to the answers. It must always remain a two-way conversation.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



It is also important that sales staff confirm the details with the customer by repeating them back to the customer and asking the customer to clarify details which are not completely understood. In this way the sales staff can be assured that they are assisting them in the most appropriate way.

Basically, these simple steps should be followed:

- 1) Ask the customer how you may assist them
- 2) Listen carefully to what they say
- 3) Ask questions to further clarify their requirements
- 4) Again, listen carefully to their answers
- 5) Clearly repeat the details back to the customer
- 6) Ask questions on details you still do not understand or may have missed
- 7) Listen carefully to their answers
- 8) Again, repeat the details back to the customer

A good communicator listens as much as they speak. It is important to keep following those steps until both the salesperson and the customer feel that each have a full understanding of their needs.

The above steps are especially important when a customer is unsure of his or her needs. They may not know exactly what they want.

In this situation, questions and resulting answers may start off in very general terms. However, as the questioning continues, the needs of the customer become more defined and the sales staff is then more able to satisfy those needs.

Sometimes in these situations a salesperson may feel frustrated. It is important, however, to always maintain a friendly facial expression, use a calm, courteous tone of voice and give the customer their undivided attention. This will keep the customer relaxed and in turn make them easier to serve.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



EXCEEDING THE EXPECTATIONS OF A CUSTOMER

Customers generally remember their purchasing experience by the service they received.

The retailer wants the customer to remember the experience, not just from receiving merely good service, but outstanding service. This will give the retailer the competitive edge and dramatically increase the chances of having this customer return and even have them recommending the retailer to others.

The simplest way that a salesperson can go from offering good service to offering excellent service is by exceeding the expectations of the customer.

Examples of exceeding the expectations of a customer often include:

- ☆ Let the customer try the product
- ☆ Provide samples
- ☆ Offer free, same day delivery
- ☆ Throw in a 'freebie'
- ☆ Give the customer a small, unexpected price discount
- ☆ Upgrade the product without an extra cost
- ☆ Show how the product can be used for other purposes or in different ways, thereby increasing the value of the product
- ☆ Illustrate the best ways to prolong the life of their product, through cleaning, maintenance, etc. (Giving them this extra information will show your knowledge of the product and pass it on to them)
- ☆ Follow up after the sale

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



REFERRING TO OTHER STAFF

It is at this point the salesperson must determine whether they have the experience, skills, product knowledge and in some cases, the authority to meet the needs of the customer.

If the salesperson feels this is the case, they must refer the customer to another staff member, such as the supervisor, it is important that this is explained to the customer, the reason why and introduce them to the supervisor or experienced salesperson. They will appreciate the salesperson's honesty, especially if the salesperson is a new staff member with little experience.

So that the customer does not have to re-illustrate their requirements, the salesperson should pass on all of the information they have received from the customer to their supervisor or experienced salesperson.

Before leaving the customer with the other staff member, ensure that the salesperson thank them and farewell them. This process should happen as quickly as possible so that the customer is not kept waiting.

The salesperson could also take this opportunity to learn from the more experienced staff member by listening in and hearing the answer provided.

If the salesperson is still training and it is not busy in the store, they may be permitted to listen on as the more experienced staff member helps the customer, so that next time the salesperson will be equipped to handle the situation themselves.

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**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY ELEVEN

What does the term “buying motives” mean?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Interview

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWELVE

In this activity you are to interview six people of varying ages and genders.

Ask each person the following questions:

- ☆ What products, merchandise or service have you bought in the past that you have bought based on emotions?
- ☆ What products have you bought that you would have used logic in your choice of the product or service?
- ☆ What products have you bought that was based on a love and affection motive?
- ☆ What products do you buy that you would think is based on the buying motive of personal pleasure?
- ☆ What products or services have you purchased that is considered for you and your families security?

Assemble your interview results in a report form.

In this report provide the first name of each person you have interviewed, their age, gender and the location they live in.

Present your interview report to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY THIRTEEN

When identifying the needs of a customer, the sales staff would need to confirm the details with the customer by repeating them back to the customer and asking the customer to clarify details which are not completely understood. In this way the sales staff can be assured that they are assisting them in the most appropriate way.

We mentioned eight simple steps that should be followed in order to confirm the details with the customer.

What were those steps?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOURTEEN

We mentioned nine ways that sales staff could use to exceed the expectations of a customer.

What were those nine ways?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIFTEEN

We mentioned that that in some cases sales assistants may need to refer a customer to their supervisor or manager.

Outline the steps in bullet point, how this referral could be done without the customer being frustrated or concerned.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Section Two

Provide Advice on Products and Services

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SELL TO THE RETAIL CUSTOMER

SECTION TWO—PROVIDE ADVICE ON PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The life blood of the retail store is the customer; no customers-no sales. Of course you also need products or services to sell to those customers. However, customers will be reluctant to purchase any product or service from a retailer if the staff cannot answer questions about the products or services they have on offer.

So product knowledge is very important. In this section we look at how to use product information to respond to customer's needs.

Also in this section we will learn why selling product benefits is as and in some cases, more important than just selling the features of a product.

We will also learn that the buying decisions of a customer are not only affected by the product's features and benefits, but also the customer's underlying needs.

SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this section you will learn information relating to:

- ☆ Using product and service knowledge to tailor options to specific customer needs and offering alternatives when product is unavailable
- ☆ Clearly explaining and promoting product and service features and benefits where relevant
- ☆ Advising on promotional events where relevant
- ☆ Providing additional information to address customer questions and objections
- ☆ Offering comparisons to competitor product or service range as required
- ☆ Collaborating with the customer to determine product or service option most suited to their needs
- ☆ Taking opportunities to upsell and cross sell products and services that enhance customer request and maximise profitability of sale



USE PRODUCT AND SERVICE KNOWLEDGE TO TAILOR OPTIONS TO SPECIFIC CUSTOMER NEEDS AND OFFER ALTERNATIVES WHEN PRODUCT IS UNAVAILABLE

In the earlier section we have learned how to use questioning and listening skills to determine a customer's requirements and buying motives.

We also learned that the information you have gathered would likely have given you a good idea of a customer's requirements and this would be the time to take the customer to the products and offer the services that align with those requirements.

The next step is to start the selling process.

Once the customer is directed to a product or service considered by the sales assistant as matching their requirements, it is now the time to fine tune the customer's actual needs.

Buying decisions are sometimes made when they feel their underlying needs are satisfied.

This may have nothing to do with the product itself. It may be safety issues, how the product performs, what the product looks like, whether or not it is durable enough, or how much it costs.

For example, it is pointless to start selling a customer a home entertainment system that cost \$1000, when the customer can only afford to spend \$500.

Or, it would not be in the best interest of the customer who is a tradesperson, to be sold a cordless drill designed for a home handyman and not for heavy duty usage.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



Let's look at some common underlying needs of customers in more detail:

Safety

- ☆ Is it safe for the home, children, and pets?
- ☆ Does the customer feel emotionally safe with the product?
- ☆ Will the customer have used similar products in the past, and therefore feel safe using it?
- ☆ Will the product avoid physical harm or danger?

Performance

- ☆ Does the product do as they claim?
- ☆ Will it do what the customer wants it to do?
- ☆ Is it easy to use?
- ☆ How does it compare with other products?
- ☆ Will the customer enjoy using it?

Appearance

- ☆ Does the customer like the look of the product?
- ☆ Does the customer feel good about the product or does it enhance their self-image?
- ☆ Is there a status element attached – prestige brand or product?
- ☆ Does the customer like the colour, style, size, shape and smell?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



Durability

- ☆ Will it last as long as the retailer says it will?
- ☆ Will it manage the hard use the customer may give it?
- ☆ Will it last as long if doing other things with it?
- ☆ What are the maintenance requirements?

Economics

- ☆ How much does it cost?
- ☆ If the customer spends more will it be a better product?
- ☆ What does it cost to use?
- ☆ Can it be used for many uses?

Services

- ☆ How can the customer pay for it?
- ☆ What are the warranties / guarantees?
- ☆ Where can the customer get it repaired?
- ☆ Can it be delivered?
- ☆ Can the customer lay-by it?
- ☆ Can I get loyalty points?

Any one of the above questions can have a huge effect on the final decision to buy. It is important that as you ask the questions to determine their needs, you watch for signs of those underlying needs.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Up to this point we have learned how to use questioning and listening skills to determine a customer's requirements and buying motives. We learned that a customer's decision to buy a product is often affected by various underlying needs.

We also learned that when determining a customer's requirements, it is important that you are aware of those non-verbal clues that the customer may be displaying.

Using those skills and the information you have gathered, you would likely have a good idea of a customer's requirements and this would be the time to take the customer to the products, or to offer the services that align with those requirements.

In a retail store, the customer could be directed or taken to a display where specific merchandise that aligns with their requirements is located.

The customer could be taken to a display where merchandise is located and offered a selection of products.



If the merchandise is in a store room, the sales assistant would go and retrieve the merchandise.



SAMPLE SAMPLE

It could be a product inside a cabinet, such as jewellery that needs to be retrieved and presented to the customer.



SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

If it is a service being provided, then information about the service could be given to the customer.



SAMPLE SAMPLE

OFFERING ALTERNATIVES

There may be a specific product that the customer has in mind. However, the product may be out of stock, or not offered by the store.

In these cases you may want to offer an alternative product. It is important however that the alternative product still matches the needs of the customer.

Often the alternatives are a better product so the needs of the customer are exceeded by the alternative product.

If the customer accepts an alternative product, the sales staff would want to be assured that the customer leaves the store satisfied and confident they have made the right decision about taking the alternative product.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY ONE

What does it mean when a customer has underlying needs?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWO

We listed in this section the more common types of underlying needs that a customer would likely have.

What were those types of underlying needs?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY THREE

Below are some scenarios.

Tell us what a sales assistant would do next in order to start the sales process once they have an understanding of the customer's requirements.

Customer interested in a Foxtel plan.

Customer wants a new cordless drill

Customer interested in buying a takeaway sandwich

Customer interested in a pair of Adidas runners

**Learning
Activity**

Interview

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOUR

In this activity you are to interview six people of varying ages and genders. You want persons that have gone into a retail shop looking for a specific product but the store did not have it.

Ask each person the following questions:

- ☆ What was the product you were looking for?
- ☆ Were you aware that the store may have had similar products?
- ☆ Did the sales staff offer an alternative product?
- ☆ If yes, did you accept the alternative product?
- ☆ If no, would you have considered an alternative product?
- ☆ If you accepted an alternative product, were you happy with the decision?
- ☆ What would make you consider taking an alternative product?

Assemble your interview results in a report form.

In this report provide the first name of each person you have interviewed, their age, gender and the location they live in.

Present your interview report to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



CLEARLY EXPLAIN AND PROMOTE PRODUCT AND SERVICE FEATURES AND BENEFITS WHERE RELEVANT

The important thing to remember when presenting features of a product is that the features must be relevant to their needs.

Example

Business owner Harry wants to buy several digital tablets for his staff to use when on the road.

The features that are relevant to Harry are:

- ☆ Durability
- ☆ Easy to use
- ☆ Long battery life
- ☆ Relevant software installed
- ☆ Large screen

The features that are irrelevant to Harry are:

- ☆ Latest trendy style
- ☆ Irrelevant “apps”
- ☆ Comes with a waterproof case for the beach

You will have identified Harry’s most important needs and should start with the features that satisfies those needs and proceed to work down the list of needs. Only present relevant features that may add value to what he would already receive if he bought the tablets.

Example

Sales Assistant – “Your staff may attend meetings, so the phone feature on this tablet has an incoming call alert that vibrates rings, thereby not interrupting the meeting.”

A vibrating feature was not initially described as a need, however it may be a feature that Harry may consider.

An important rule is to avoid feature overload. Only provide information that is needed.



SELLING BENEFITS

As a sales assistant describes the features, they need to explain how the specific feature will benefit the customer and the sales assistant needs to continue to remember they are there to satisfy particular needs.

The sales assistant should always try and avoid trying to sell the product through its features.

Example

Sales Assistant – (Feature) “The battery life is 72 hours on this model of tablet, which means (Benefit) your staff will have enough battery life for a whole day’s work without worrying about it going flat.”

Sales Assistant – (Feature) “This model has a built in screen brightness adjustment, (Benefit) so your staff can use the tablet outdoors.”

Sales Assistant – (Feature) “The tablet is very durable and as the brochure shows, it can be dropped from a height of a metre without damaging the tablet. (Benefit) Your staff won’t have to worry about the tablet not working after the odd drop here and there as we all do.”

If the product can be demonstrated – then demonstrate it.

If the product can be tested by the customer then let them try it. Remember: customers shop with all their senses.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



DESCRIBING PRODUCT USE AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

There are products that would require sales assistants to fully explain their safe use and ensure the customer understands. These would include hazardous goods (weed killers, pest killers, cleaning agents) or products that require certain skill and operational knowledge (power tools, powered gardening tools).

It is appropriate and important that sales assistants highlight some of the safety features and dangers with the use of these products.

Although manufacturers are required to label and provide detailed instructions with hazardous or dangerous goods, however, it shows professionalism by sales assistants and most customers appreciate when this type of important information is provided by them.

By law chemical products or products that contain dangerous elements need to be sold with a document called “Material Safety Data Sheet”, or MSDS.

This document is provided by the manufacturer and it outlines the safe use of the product as well as how it should be stored.

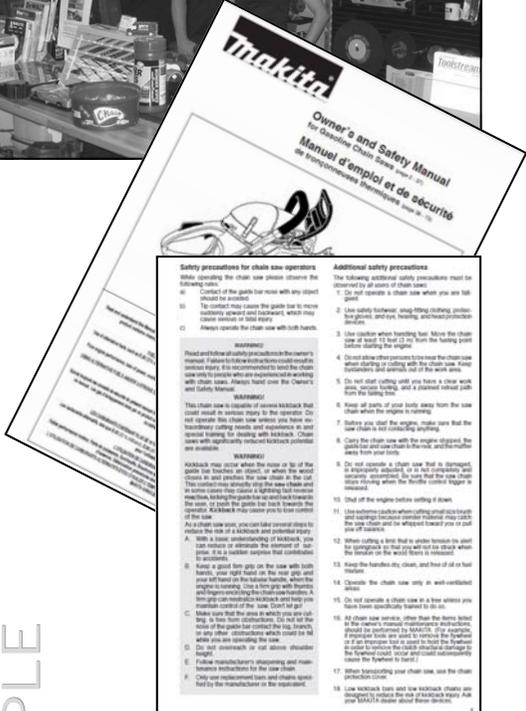
Many dangerous substances, such as chemicals can react to each other and sometimes these chemical reactions will cause explosions and fire.

Also, chemicals can contaminate other substances or materials including foodstuffs, so the storage of chemical products needs to be seriously thought out.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



PRODUCT SAFETY

There are numerous products that retailers offer which customers need to have a clear understanding on their safe and proper use.

Manufacturer's owner or user manuals are required to provide information about the proper use of their products, including any safety information related to the products use.

Sales assistants should learn and fully understand all safety information about the products they sell.

Sales assistants should also, whenever possible, direct the customer to the written safety information.

Safety information would include:

- ☆ How to use the product safely such as tools, appliance and electrical goods
- ☆ The need to use personal safety equipment such as gloves, eye protection, face protection and so on
- ☆ The use of any accessories
- ☆ Proper installation such as child restraints, child car seats
- ☆ Safe storage, such as chemicals and other hazardous goods

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE



KEEPING PRODUCT INFORMATION UNDERSTANDABLE

Sales assistants need to keep their explanations, terms and descriptions simple and easy to understand. They need to avoid overly technical terms or industry jargon.

Sales assistants are encouraged to pitch the information at the level they feel the customer is comfortable with and simplify the language if they have trouble with overly technical or complicated descriptions.

Conversely, if the customer is technically competent, then the sales assistants could raise the level of the communication more to their understanding.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIVE

Below and on the next pages are four products.

Under each product you are to list three features and three benefits.

Smartphone***Features******Benefits***

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Tennis shoes

Features

Benefits

A wheelbarrow

Features

Benefits

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Knitting needles

Features

Benefits

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY SIX

In this activity you are to pick any product you want.

The product however, needs to be one that both a young person would buy, as well as a pensioner.

The first part of this activity you are to write down how you would describe the features and benefits of the product you chose to a pensioner.

The second part of this activity you are to write down how you would describe the features and benefits of the product you chose to a teenager.

What you write down should be in a form of a script, in others words it should sound like you were actually speaking with the customer if it were to be read out loud.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Part One

[Empty rectangular box for Part One content]

Part Two

[Empty rectangular box for Part Two content]

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Research

LEARNING ACTIVITY SEVEN

In this activity you are to do some research.

Below are three products.

For each product you are to locate a user/owner's manual on the Internet.

Find the page that has the safety information about the product and print this page out.

Present your printouts to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

- ☆ Inkjet printer
- ☆ Microwave oven
- ☆ Garden weed trimmer (electric)

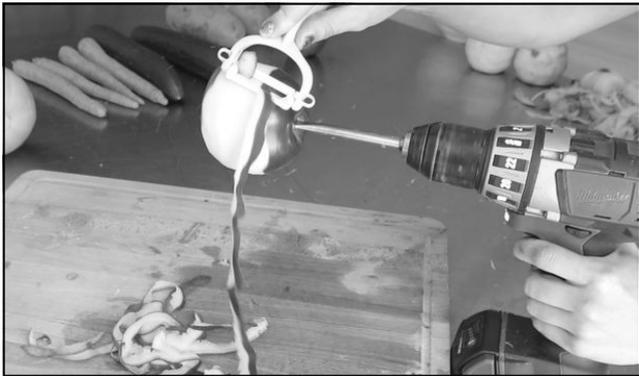
**Learning
Activity**

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY EIGHT

Below are three pictures.

What are these pictures demonstrating?



SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Research

LEARNING ACTIVITY NINE

In this section we talked about a product document called a MSDS.

Any product considered hazardous is required to have a MSDS available from the manufacturer.

Even products that are often considered simple household products could have a MSDS.

In Australia there is a popular laundry powder called OMO Concentrate.

Do some research on the Internet, locate the MSDS for OMO Concentrate, print it out and present this MSDS to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



ADVISE ON PROMOTIONAL EVENTS WHERE RELEVANT

Retailers as part of their marketing activities would often put on promotional events. These include:

- ☆ Seasonal sales
- ☆ Holiday periods (Christmas, Easter)
- ☆ Back to school or financial yearend
- ☆ Special occasions (Mother's day, Father's day, Valentines)
- ☆ Inventory reduction, such as stocktake sales

Other promotional activities can also include:

- ☆ Customer loyalty schemes
- ☆ Customer referral rewards
- ☆ Trade-in or upgrade options
- ☆ Online shopping
- ☆ Surveys
- ☆ Price matching guarantees
- ☆ Discount vouchers for future purchases

SAMPLE SAMPLE

There would have been a reasonable amount of time and effort put into the creation of a promotion, so the staff would be required to ensure that the customer is informed about the promotion, what's on offer and how they, the customer, could benefit from taking advantage of the promotion.

The first step would be to engage the customer is a casual conversation by asking if they are aware of the store's promotion. This would often lead to an interaction between the customer and the staff member and result in providing details about the promotion.

Again, it is important that any information that is provided is clear, accurate and follows all consumer law guidelines.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY TEN

What are seven of the most common general promotional activities that a retailer would offer on a regular basis?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO ADDRESS CUSTOMER QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIONS

Sales staff would encounter routine customer questions on a regular basis that often include questions about:

- ☆ Pricing and discounts
- ☆ Product features and benefits
- ☆ Questions about quality
- ☆ Product availability
- ☆ Warranties

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

These routine questions can come at any time and sales staff need to respond to these questions quickly, accurately and honestly.

If a customer interrupts a sales staff's presentation and asks a basic routine question, it could mean they are interested and are just clarifying a few issues they may have, or they may have doubts about the product or a particular feature.

Sales staff would need to stop immediately and answer customer's questions or address their concerns.

A sales person may be well down the sale process and anxious to close a sale, however, it still requires them to answer routine questions accurately and honestly.

If a sales person is unable to answer a routine question, they should refer the customer to a more experienced staff member.

It should be explained to the customer that the reason they are being referred to another staff member is because they are unable to provide a suitable answer.

The sales staff should also take this opportunity to learn from the more experienced staff member by listening in and noting the answers provided.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



There are products that could be considered technical, or products that are sold for specific uses or applications.

For example, some digital devices such as computers, smartphones or tablets have numerous technical features that require a sales person with a high level of technical knowledge about these products.

There are products that are sold for specific applications.

For example, there are many types of paints each formulated to be used for different application such as interior surfaces, exterior surfaces, wood stains and so on.

There are products that are sold for specific uses.

Examples of these products could include tools used by a tradesperson, kitchen appliances and so on.

A sales assistant in a store may not have a sufficient level of product information to answer customer questions or adequately demonstrate or describe its use.

In these instances, the customer should be referred to a qualified product specialist in the store.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



For example, a person wants to paint some old outdoor furniture and needs to buy the best type of paint for the job.

The customer is referred to the paint product specialist in the store and the customer is provided information on the best type of paint to use.

A product specialist is a person who:

- ☆ Has a high level of technical and general product information
- ☆ Is able to confidently describe and/or demonstrate the products use
- ☆ Understands the features and the limitations of the product
- ☆ May have been trained by the product manufacturer
- ☆ May be a representative of the product manufacturer

Also, a product specialist could be a product category specialist as well.

In the paint example, this product specialist would have likely been a product category specialist able to provide information about paint, solvents, wall or surface preparation products and painting tools.

In cases where sales assistants are unable to assist a customer with certain product information, it may be better to refer them to a product specialist. Suggested steps include:

Explain to the customer there is someone else in the store that is more experienced with the product and is better able to assist them.

Take them to this individual personally (if at all possible) and introduce the customer to the product specialist.

Provide the product specialist with any information already gathered from the customer.

Give the customer confidence that the person they are now with can take care of their needs.

Thank them for their patience and bid them farewell.

.

SAMPLE

SAMPLE



CUSTOMER OBJECTIONS

Most objections are not really objections or reasons not to buy and therefore easy to resolve. They could be because:

- ☆ The customer misunderstood the information you gave them about the product or service.
- ☆ You misunderstood their real needs, or missed some important underlying needs.
- ☆ Customer's lack of knowledge about a particular product or service.
- ☆ Uncomfortable with some aspect associated with the purchase, such as payment terms.

When an objection arises, it is important that the sales staff deals with it immediately and using the knowledge of the product and services to overcome their concerns.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



ACKNOWLEDGING THE OBJECTIONS

Sales staff would deal with objections the same way as they would when gathering information from the customer and that is with 'Active Listening' and 'Skilful Questioning'.

Below are some suggested steps to use to find out and understand the customer's real concerns:

- 1) Listen to what the customer has to say. Sales staff should ask tactful questions to clarify anything they are unsure of. Encourage the customer to talk through their objections.
- 2) Acknowledge the objections. Do not try to ignore the objections and never argue with the customer. Sales staff needs to show that they respect their concerns or point of view. It is important that the sales assistant continue to communicate – talk it through in a friendly open manner and not appear to be defensive. Say things like:

“That’s a valid point you just made”

“I am glad you mentioned that”

“I can see how you might feel that way”

- 3) Sales staff would be encouraged not to rush and try to overcome the objection. They should reflect awhile on why the objection has come up. Was it the way the features or benefits were explained? Was some important information not provided to the customer? Is the customer misunderstanding something said? Has the sales assistant misunderstood their needs?

Not rushing in with a response to the objections will give the customer confidence that the sales staff are not just trying to brush off their concerns.

- 4) Staff must use a calm and friendly tone of voice and not make it sound like they are annoyed that they have to deal with their concerns. The sales assistant needs to speak clearly and with confidence and impress on the customer that they are there to assist them and do not make them feel they are just being pushed into a sale.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE



Objections can arise throughout the sales process, however most start to occur when the customer is getting close to making a decision on the purchase of a product or service.

Objections will occur when the sales assistant:

- ☆ Asks feedback on certain features or benefits of the product you are presenting.
- ☆ When you are testing the customer to see if they are ready to buy (called a trial close which is explained in the next section) by asking a question to see how interested they are.
- ☆ As you try to close the sale

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



Types of Objections

TYPES OF OBJECTIONS

Types of objections are usually the pricing, the timing of the purchase or the suitability of the product based on the customer's needs.

- ☆ **Price** - The customer either feels they can get it cheaper somewhere else, or the product is too expensive – value for money perception.

Sales staff may explain that the product they are suggesting is a higher quality item and that the price reflects the quality.

The store may have the policy of discounting certain items or discounts for cash purchases. Some stores offer to match any competitor's price.

- ☆ **Timing** - They might like the product, even need the product but they may feel that the time is not now to purchase the item. This could be due to insufficient funds. They might feel they do not need the product right away and can wait to buy it at a later date.

Tactful questioning will help the sales assistant find out why the timing is an issue. There may be a way to solve their timing problem, such as lay-by or payment plans.

- ☆ **Suitability of the merchandise** – The sales staff need to be clear on the customer's needs to match the product to those needs. Objections raised about the products are usually a result of a misunderstanding of those needs or the information provided was not clear enough to the customer.

The sales assistant would have to re-establish what those needs are and this would be done by skilfully asking questions to clarify what the sales assistant knows, or in order to pick up on what they may have missed.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



EXAMPLES OF CUSTOMER OBJECTIONS

The types of objections vary as much as the types of customers raising them. However it is the way an objection is presented that is usually quite common. It is usually in the form of a question or a negative statement.

- ☆ ***It could be about the product itself*** – ‘I’m not sure I like that style’ or ‘Are you sure this looks good on me?’
- ☆ ***It could be about timing*** – ‘I’m not sure I can afford it right now.’ or ‘Is it alright if I come back tomorrow after I think about it?’
- ☆ ***It could be about pricing*** – ‘This is more than I wanted to spend’ or ‘Will the price go down if I wait a little while?’

Be assured that until these objections are overcome, the sale will not go ahead.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE



OFFER SOLUTIONS TO CUSTOMER OBJECTIONS

Earlier we mentioned that the sales staff need to be clear on the customer's needs to match the product to those needs and would have to re-establish what those needs are.

Once the sales assistant feels that they have the proper information, then they can start to overcome the objection by re-explaining or re-presenting the product.

Example

The business owner we mentioned earlier as an example who is buying tablets for his staff raises an objection. He states that the battery life is not long enough because his staff are in the country a lot and will not be able to charge the batteries.

Sales Assistant – Yes that would be a problem and it is good you brought that up. You did mention that your staff travels to the country areas a lot.

Customer – Yes I did.

Sales Assistant – That would mean that they are in their cars a great deal.

Customer – Yes they are.

Sales Assistant – Well I did forget to mention that this model comes with a USB car charger so while they are driving it can be plugged into the cigarette lighter and stay fully charged. Would that solve the problem?

Customer – That's perfect!

Sales Assistant – Should I get the tablets out of stock and get them ready for you?

Customer – Yes please do.

SAMPLE SAMPLE



EXAMPLES OF SOLUTIONS

There could be a wide range of solutions which could be applied to the customer's objections.

Examples could include:

- ☆ Price discounts
- ☆ Payment terms
- ☆ Lay-bys
- ☆ Offered different product models
- ☆ Checking other stores for stock availability
- ☆ Product modifications or alterations

It is important to remember, that customer objections can only be overcome if the customer has been presented with a product or service that has clearly met their needs.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY ELEVEN

In this section we mentioned five common routine questions that many customers will ask.

What were those five routine questions?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Interview

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWELVE

In this activity you are to interview six people.

Ask each person when buying a product, what the three most commonly asked questions would be.

Tell us the first name of each person, their age and location they live in.

Put your interview results into a report and present the report to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY THIRTEEN

In this activity we want you to list ten products that you can think of that would require a product specialist by a retailer to sell.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOURTEEN

In this activity we want you to list six services that you can think of that would require a specialist by a retailer to sell.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIFTEEN

In this section we mentioned four points that most common customer objections are based on.

What were those four points?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY SIXTEEN

In this section we mentioned four steps that should be considered when trying to identify and acknowledge customers.

Summarise those four steps.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY SEVENTEEN

Customers generally base their objections on what three issues?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY EIGHTEEN

Customer objections often occur when?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY NINETEEN

Below are three scenarios where the customer has come up with an objection.

Under each objection gives us what you think would be a simple solution.

I like that TV, but it's too big to fit in my car.....

I saw almost the same jacket down the street that was far cheaper.....

Thanks, but I am not sure it is the model I want.....

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWENTY

In this activity we want you to tell us a personal example of when you went into a store, raised some objections and ended up buying the product(s).

Tell us the objections you raised, the responses you got back and the product(s) you purchased.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



OFFER COMPARISONS TO COMPETITOR PRODUCT OR SERVICE RANGE AS REQUIRED

One type of objection could be the customer preferring a competitor's product or service to the one that you are offering.

Although this training unit has not gone into any detail about developing product knowledge, it is important that we touch on the subject. We know that having product (or service) knowledge is very important. Without it you would be unable to offer suitable products or services that would meet the needs and expectations of the customer.

Almost of equal importance is knowing what products the competitors have on offer. Many retailers send out their sales staff to visit the competitor's store and look at what products or services are on offer, the features of those products and pricing. Other sources of competitor's products (services) include:

- ☆ Online sources
- ☆ Advertising materials from the competitor
- ☆ Social media reviews
- ☆ Manufacturer/supplier catalogues, brochures and specification manuals

From your competitor, you should find out:

- ☆ The products/services on offer
- ☆ The pricing of products/services
- ☆ The services provided (and costs for these services)
- ☆ Any perceived competitive advantage such as pricing, product range, or level of customer service

You can also ask the supplier of your products how they match up with other products on the market.

Once you have gathered sufficient information about the competitor's products, you can make comparisons as to the differences in features and the benefits associated with your products (or services) in comparison to those of the competitor's.

It goes without saying that you are wanting to convince the customer to buy your product or service instead of the competitor's. However, it is very important that when you make those comparisons that the information is accurate, truthful and clear. Customers are protected by law from sales staff providing false and/or misleading information for the sake of a sale.

SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Research

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWENTY ONE

As you now know many retailers offer not only products, but also services.

In this activity you are to do another type of comparison; that of three retailers' services.

They have to be offering the same types of products.

You are free to choose the type of retailer you want.

In a report form we want you to tell us the name of each retailer, their location and the types of products they offer.

We also want you to tell us what services they offer.

Then on a separate page we want you to lay out a brief comparison summary of all three retailers.

Assemble your report and summary and present the examples to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



COLLABORATE WITH THE CUSTOMER TO DETERMINE PRODUCT OR SERVICE OPTION MOST SUITED TO THEIR NEEDS

AND

TAKE OPPORTUNITIES TO UPSELL AND CROSS SELL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT ENHANCE CUSTOMER REQUEST AND MAXIMISE PROFITABILITY OF SALE

(Over the next few pages we cover two 'Performance Criteria' points at the same time to avoid repetition)

As we mentioned earlier, the interaction between the sales staff and the customer must be a two way interaction.

The customer needs to feel they have been a part of the sales process and not pushed into something they are not comfortable with.

To collaborate with a customer is to work together in determining the best suited product or service that meets the needs and expectations of the customer. During this interaction a significant amount of time may have been spent and probably a significant amount of information exchanged.

Interaction with customers is often for an extended period, especially when the products being offered are either technical, or of high value.

Many retailers will train their sales staff to maintain contact with a customer until the sale is complete if the salesperson believes there is a high probability of a sale. The sales staff would determine the probability of a sale through skilful questioning.

An experienced sales person would have successfully resolved any objections, clearly answered the customer's questions and has begun the final step of closing the sale.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



“Do
you
want
fries
with
that?”

UP SELLING AND CROSS SELLING

Sales staff is often encouraged to watch for opportunities where they may be able to increase the value of a sale being completed.

The two common ways of doing this is by up-selling and/or selling add-ons.

Some salespersons find the concept of selling add-ons or up selling hard to deal with. They feel that the initial sale is enough and that any further attempt to sell more to the customer is taking advantage of them. They believe that if the customer wanted more, they would have mentioned it.

However, the customer is usually quite open to suggestions that will make the product more enjoyable, easier to use, function better or purchase an item of better quality. In fact, you would find that most customers want to be informed of available accessories or complementary items, or have a more expensive item suggested because it will last longer.

You can never assume that they will ask about something they probably do not know about. So, it is up to the salesperson to inform the customer of additional items or accessories or quality differences. This is maximising your sales opportunities and leads to greater customer satisfaction.

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UP-SELLING

Up-selling the customer is convincing the customer to pay more for a product or item.

The first thing to remember is the customer's needs and the up-selling should never distract you from that objective. However, you may see an opportunity where if the customer pays more they will not only satisfy their needs, but also end up with a better product that would last longer.

There may be a situation where it is questionable that a cheaper product will totally satisfy a customer's needs. So you should take the time to point out a more expensive product that would be more appropriate to the customer's needs than the less expensive choice.

A customer may need to know that if they paid more for a certain product it would be cheaper to operate or maintain, saving money in the long run.

It may turn out cheaper per item if they buy the product in larger quantities.

All these reasons are justifiable reasons to up-sell to a customer.

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**TIMING**

The best time to sell an add-on or an up-sell is when the customer has decided to make a purchase.

Up-selling is not asking 'Is there anything else you need?' The answer will probably be 'No'.

Selling an add-on or up-selling requires the same skills that were required to sell the original product – present the features and sell the benefits.

Selling add-ons and up-selling should become a natural extension to your selling skills, so take every opportunity to use those skills to maximise your sales.

For selling add-ons it begins by simply asking a question or making a quick suggestion.

Examples:

“Do you have enough brushes to do your paint job?”

“If you use this ink cartridge you will get better quality prints.”

“Have you seen the carry case that would be ideal for your new laptop?”

Up-selling as well, is by simply asking a question or making a quick suggestion.

Examples:

“You can get this item cheaper if you buy an even dozen.”

“This model is easier to operate and to maintain for just a fraction more of the cost.”

“Have you ever considered upgrading to a larger model?”

If the customer shows little or no interest in your suggestions, or are not answering your questions positively, then proceed with the original sale. Avoid trying too hard. The customer may begin to feel pressured.



PROMOTING COMPLEMENTARY PRODUCTS OR SERVICES

Earlier we mentioned a method of maximising a sale was by selling add-ons.

Add-on means items, products, or merchandise that is an accessory for, or complementary to a product that has already been purchased by the customer.

These items increase the functionality of the product, increase the enjoyment, allow the product to last longer, or are required to operate the product.

Examples:

Original Purchase	Add-on
Paint	Brushes, thinners, buckets
Toys	Batteries
Printers	Ink cartridges, paper
Shoes	Polish, protecting spray, innersoles, socks

There may be opportunities to interest the customer in some other unrelated products. They could be newly released products, discounted items, or promotional sale items.

Examples:

“While you are here you may be interested in having a look at our new line of summer hats. As a promotion they are on special today for 20% off.”

“I hope your fence painting project goes well. While you are here you may be interested in our new barbeque line. They just came in last week.”



IMPULSE BUYING

You will have noticed that many retailers will place items at the point of sale counters.

These are often smaller and more inexpensive merchandise that are there to entice the customer one last quick purchase.

Often these items are complementary to the product theme of the retailer.

For example, a shoe store may have shoe polish, sole inserts, shoe laces and deodorants and so on.

A hardware store may have inexpensive measuring tapes, superglue tubes, batteries and so on.

A sales assistant may often casually point out these items as the sales are being finalised.

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**Learning
Activity**

Interview

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LEARNING ACTIVITY TWENTY TWO

In this activity we would like you to interview six people of varying ages and genders.

Ask each the following questions:

Have you ever experienced an attempt by a sales assistant to up-sell you?

If so, what was the product or service you were being sold and what were the details associated with the up-selling?

How did you feel about being up sold?

If you have never experienced up-selling, how would you feel if you were?

Put your interview responses in a report form and include the first name of each person, their age, gender and the location where they live.

Present your report to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWENTY THREE

Below are six different products.

Under each product list at least 3 add-ons that would complement the product.

Lawnmower

--	--	--

Tennis racket

--	--	--

Digital tablet

--	--	--

Microwave oven

--	--	--

Barbeque

--	--	--

Tent

--	--	--

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SAMPLE SAMPLE

Section Three

Facilitate the Sale of Products and Services

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SELL TO THE RETAIL CUSTOMER

SECTION THREE—FACILITATE THE SALE OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

All retailers rely heavily on the abilities of their sales staff to sell products and/or services.

A sales assistant may be very knowledgeable on the products and has strong skills in gathering information about customer's needs, but if they are unable to know when to close a sale, the efforts of the sales assistant is a waste of time.

In this section we look at the common and simple techniques of closing a sale.

SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this section you will learn information relating to:

- ☆ Selecting and using appropriate techniques to close sale
- ☆ Directing the customer to designated point-of-sale and processing sale, as required, according to organisational procedures
- ☆ Farewelling customer on leaving and inviting them to return
- ☆ Providing any required after sales service according to organisational procedures

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SELECT AND USE APPROPRIATE TECHNIQUES TO CLOSE SALE

For most salespersons, closing the sale is the hardest step in the sales process.

Common feelings with salespersons at this point are:

“I don’t want a negative response – I don’t want to hear NO.”

“I feel like I’m being too pushy.”

“I feel like I should keep talking.”

“I’m still not sure if I have fully sold the customer.”

Experienced salespersons know exactly when to close a sale and they close the sale with confidence.

Experience will show you that:

- ☆ If a customer has decided not to buy, there is nothing you can do about it.
- ☆ Customers will not be pressured into buying something they do not need.
- ☆ Customers will not listen to a whole sales presentation unless they were interested to begin with.
- ☆ Most customers expect (and are quite used to) having a salesperson request they purchase.

As an experienced sales person, you will need to develop skills to close a sale. A professional salesperson knows what to watch for in order to determine the right time to begin to close the sale.

Let’s learn some of those techniques.

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BUYING SIGNALS

Buying signals are verbal and non-verbal signals given by the customer throughout the buying process. These signals can include questions, reactions and actions.

Let's look at each signal in detail.

Questions - The type of questions that a customer asks can give the salesperson a strong indication that the customer is ready to buy.

These questions can relate to specifics about the product such as:

“Can I get this one in red?”

“Do you have this model in the back in the original packaging?”

“I need two, do you have two in stock?”

Questions to watch for can relate to payment terms or payment methods such as:

“Can I lay-by the item?”

“Do you take American Express cards?”

“Do you have payment plans?”

Also, questions on services that the store may provide such as:

“If I take it now can I get a discount?”

“Can I get the item delivered tomorrow?”

“Can you gift wrap it for me?”

Any of the above questions can be a strong indication that the customer is ready to buy.

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Reactions - Reactions come in verbal and non-verbal forms. Verbal reactions come usually as answers to questions such as:

“Yes, that’s what I needed.”

“I didn’t know it could do that. That’s good.”

“That’ll do the job perfectly.”

Non-verbal reactions are the facial expressions and gestures such as:

- ☆ Nodding in agreement as you speak.
- ☆ Smiling and showing interest.
- ☆ Focusing on the product being presented.

Actions - You watch for what they do while going through your presentation such as:

- ☆ Trying out, touching, tasting or handling the product.
- ☆ Being involved in the demonstration.
- ☆ Taking the product from the display or from your hands.

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ENCOURAGING CUSTOMERS TO MAKE PURCHASE DECISIONS

As you are picking up on the buying signals you will be trying to determine if this is the right time to begin the closing process.

Some of the signals seem strong enough, but you are still unsure if the timing is right.

Experienced salespersons know that it is not **how** you close a sale; it is to know **when** to close the sale.

This would be a good time to do a 'trial close'. A trial close is another method of getting feedback from a customer, however in this case it is used to see whether they are ready to purchase the item. It takes skilful questioning.

Here some examples of questions you could use in a trial close:

“Would you like me to see if I have this item in stock?”

“Will you want the product delivered?”

“Is there any other features you would like to know about?”

A trial close is to find out where the customer actually sits in the buying process – are they ready, or do they need more information?

Trial closes are best tried after the objections of the customer have been overcome.

If you get a positive response to a trial close, then it would be time to begin to close the sale.

SAMPLE

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SAMPLE SAMPLE



Closing the sale is simply asking the customer to decide whether or not they wish to buy the product at this time. You would have decided the timing is right by observing the buying signals so it would require you to take the initiative and ask the customer what their decision is.

Experienced salespersons have fine-tuned their techniques over time. All closing techniques are based on closed ended questions requiring only a 'yes' or a 'no' answer. To get you started, here are some questions that could be asked as suggestions:

“Shall I complete an order form for you?” or “Shall we go to the counter and arrange payment?”

If they are deciding between two alternatives, you can ask:

“Would you like the red one or the blue one?” or “Do you want to book the delivery service for Tuesday or is Wednesday better?”

Sometimes a purchase will be made if you offer additional value-added service or the customer has made the purchase conditional on something. You could start the closing process by asking:

“If I can get the discount you wanted will you take the item today?” or “Will you go ahead with the order if I can guarantee that you can have it delivered by tomorrow as you wanted?”

The techniques used should be a seamless extension to the selling process and feel natural to both you and the customer. This will be accomplished if the time is right; you choose your questions carefully and remain confident and relaxed throughout the process.

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**Learning
Activity**

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Question

LEARNING ACTIVITY ONE

What were the three common buying signals that a customer will show and give us one example of each?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWO

Below are three scenarios.

In each one a customer has been introduced to a product that the sales person believes fits their needs.

Tell us what would be the likely buying signals that the customer may display if they were going to go ahead with the purchase.

Scenario 1 - A mother has had the sales assistant try on several pairs of runners on her young son.

Scenario 2 – A tradesman has looked at several styles of toolboxes for the back of his utility truck.

Scenario 3 – Woman has tried on three party dresses.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY THREE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Below are those same three scenarios.

In each one a customer has been introduced to a product that the sales person believes fits their needs.

Give us an example of a trial close that the sales assistant may try for each scenario.

Scenario 1 - A mother has had the sales assistant try on several pairs of runners on her young son.

Scenario 2 – A tradesman has looked at several styles of toolboxes for the back of his utility truck.

Scenario 3 – A woman has tried on three party dresses.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOUR

Here is one last activity using those same three scenarios.

In each one a customer has been introduced to a product that the sales person believes fits their needs.

Tell us how the sales assistant would close the sale for each scenario.

Scenario 1 - A mother has had the sales assistant try on several pairs of runners on her young son.

Scenario 2 – A tradesman has looked at several styles of toolboxes for the back of his utility truck.

Scenario 3 – A woman has tried on three party dresses.

SAMPLE SAMPLE



**DIRECT THE CUSTOMER TO DESIGNATED POINT-OF-SALE AND PROCESS SALE, AS REQUIRED, ACCORDING TO ORGANISATIONAL PROCEDURES
AND
FAREWELL CUSTOMER ON LEAVING, AND INVITE TO RETURN**

(Over the next few pages we cover two 'Performance Criteria' points at the same time to avoid repetition)

Concluding or finalising the sale involves the payment of the items and the packaging, wrapping or bagging of the merchandise.

The customer must leave the store feeling satisfied with the purchase as well as a good impression of you and the store.

Always thank the customer for their purchase. Give them confidence that they have made the right decision by making positive comments about their purchase.

Always ensure you invite them back.

Example:

"Thank you very much for stopping in. I am sure you will be very happy with the DVD player."

"Those shoes look great on you. Thanks for coming in. Hope to see you back soon."

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Task

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIVE

In this activity we first want you to describe a time when you made a purchase in a store and the shopping experience especially at the end made you feel good and would want you to come back. Tell us the name of the store, what you bought and why the experience was so good.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Now we want you to describe a time when you made a purchase in a store and the shopping experience especially at the end made you feel uncomfortable; so much so that you would not go back. Tell us the name of the store, what you bought and why the experience was so bad.

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PROVIDE ANY REQUIRED AFTER SALES SERVICE ACCORDING TO ORGANISATIONAL PROCEDURES

As a salesperson in a retail operation, you will quickly learn that satisfying customer needs does not only mean selling them products.

Customers will make a purchase decision not only on the products they want, but also on the ongoing support they will get after making the purchase.

This ongoing support can take many forms and some include:

- ☆ Delivery
- ☆ Assembly services (furniture)
- ☆ Installation (entertainment products, whitegoods, etc.)
- ☆ Warranties
- ☆ Assistance (help on using the product, installing the product and so on)
- ☆ Training (some kitchen appliances, digital products)
- ☆ Repair and maintenance services
- ☆ Alterations (clothing)

...and many more.

Evidence of this ongoing support could include:

- ☆ Copies of delivery documents
- ☆ Warranty agreements and procedures
- ☆ Appointment confirmations for installations
- ☆ Training schedules
- ☆ Help desk details
- ☆ Service department contact details
- ☆ Sales staff contact details
- ☆ Alteration forms

A customer's confidence in a retailer significantly increases when they know that after purchasing a product the retailer is there to offer after sale support.



EXPLAINING BACK-UP SERVICE AND REASSURING CUSTOMERS

Earlier we went through some of the types of ongoing support a retailer could offer.

We also went through some payment options that a customer could take advantage of.

Many of these services, especially financing plans and warranties contain significant information, terms and conditions and the customer by law needs to be fully aware of what they are signing.

For example, a financing plan would require regular payments that are directly debited from the customer's bank account or credit card.

They would need to beware of the amount each month they will be debited, the day of each month they will be debited and the number of months the debit will take place.

Another example would be warranty agreements and extended warranties.

The customer would need to know what is covered by the warranty agreement, how to make a warranty claim and who the claim goes to. It may also require the customer to deliver the product to a certain location for warranty repairs.

By law a customer entering into an agreement, whether it is financing or warranties, needs to have all the terms and conditions explained to them.

Giving misleading or inaccurate information can see the retailer fined under consumer protection laws.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE



Consumer protection laws also require the retailer's staff to inform customers of their right to return, exchange products and/or seek a refund.

Taking the time to explain documentation that contains detailed information, terms and conditions will also be appreciated by the customer and they will be reassured that the retailer has a genuine interest in satisfying customers.

Explaining other back up services could also include any installation services.

The customer would need to know when the installation will be done, what is required of them when the product arrives to be installed, any possible disruptions and for how long.

Technical support is another area that would need to be explained to the customer.

For many products it is the manufacturer that would provide technical support.

The sales assistant would need to provide the contact details of the technical support desk of the manufacturer and if required explain to the customer that some technical support attracts a fee.

If a product is being delivered, the sales staff would need to gather all the relevant information from the customer; transfer this information to the delivery documents and have the customer review the accuracy of the delivery information.

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**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY SIX

Customers will make a purchase decision not only on the products they want, but also on the ongoing support they will get after making the purchase.

What are some of those examples of ongoing support a retailer could provide?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY SEVEN

There are many types of documents that have detailed information, terms and conditions.

In a retail environment what types of documents would be those that have detailed information, terms and conditions and that the salesperson would need to take the time and fully explain the information, terms and conditions to a customer?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

**Learning
Activity**

Question

SAMPLE SAMPLE

LEARNING ACTIVITY EIGHT

If one of the back up services is installation of a product, what would the salesperson need to explain to the customer about the installation?

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SAMPLE SAMPLE

SELF ASSESSMENT

SAMPLE SAMPLE

Self assessment is where you ask yourself certain questions to ensure you have understood what you have learned while reading this manual and completing the learning activities.

This unit requires you the student or trainee at the completion of your training to have a certain level of 'Required Knowledge' in which you would be need to have acquired and in which you will be assessed on.

This self assessment section reviews this required knowledge by way of questions and if you are able to say YES to all of them you can be confident your assessment will be satisfactory.

- ☆ After reviewing the information in this unit can you confidently say that you understand the following:
 - 1) Connecting with the customer and establishing rapport?
 - 2) How to use questioning and active listening skills?
 - 3) Observing and determining appropriate level of interaction based on the customer's verbal and non-verbal cues?
 - 4) How to determine and clarify customer preferences, needs and expectations?
- ☆ Do you now see the importance of being able to:
 - 1) Use product and service knowledge to tailor options to specific customer needs?
 - 2) Offer alternatives when product is unavailable?
 - 3) Clearly explain and promote product and service features and benefits?
 - 4) Be able to advise on promotional events?
 - 5) Provide additional information when addressing customer questions and objections
- ☆ Did you understand how you would offer comparisons to competitor product or service range?
- ☆ Did you understand what it means to collaborate with the customer?
- ☆ If asked could you explain what it means to take opportunities to upsell and cross sell products and services?
- ☆ Do you remember the various techniques to close sale?
- ☆ Did you understand the importance of the steps that included:
 - 1) Directing the customer to designated point-of-sale and process sale?
 - 2) Farewelling customer on leaving and inviting them to return?
 - 3) Providing any required after sales service?

If there were any questions that you were unable to confidently say YES to, we encourage you to review the information again in this manual and if needed seek the assistance of your teacher or trainer.

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NOTES

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