



Agricultural Sales



Tennessee FFA | Career and Leadership Development Events

Purpose

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

Objectives

The agricultural sales career development event provides the opportunity for the participant to:

- Develop verbal, written and interactive communication skills.
- Demonstrate skills to build rapport with customers.
- Discuss features and benefits of a product.
- Identify potential customer objections.
- Introduce the product to prospective customers.
- Develop a sales call that determines and addresses customers' needs and objections.
- Attempt to close the sale by asking for a customer's buying decision.
- Identify and demonstrate the use of questions throughout the sales process.
- Develop active listening skills.

Event Rules

- The team will be composed of four students, and all four individual scores will count toward the team total.
- FFA Official dress is required for the event.
- Any participant in possession of an electronic device, except a calculator, in the event area is subject to disqualification.
- Business cards are not permitted and will not contribute to the individual or team scores.
- No promotional items should be left with the judges or taken out of the notebooks. Everything should stay within the sales notebook.

Event Format

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

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

Each participant will be allowed to bring a 1-inch binder to the event containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant.

Individual Written Exam (100 points)

The written exam is designed to evaluate an individual's knowledge of sales skills. All questions for the written exam will come from the past five years National FFA Ag Sales Written Exam which can be found on ffa.org. A test bank containing the previous five years national exams will be maintained and updated annually by FFA state staff on tnffa.org under the Downloads tab. Only 25 multiple choice and true/false questions will be utilized from the past national exams. No short answer, fill in the blank, or past product-specific questions will be used.

Team Activity (150 points)

- Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork, group dynamics, problem solving, data analysis, decision making and oral communications.
- Teams will receive a sales profile for the team activity from either one of the provided two options.
- Teams will be allowed to use their 1-inch binder for the event.

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

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

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

- Potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.
- Common interests that team members have with the customers.
- Questions that help determine the wants and needs of the customer.
- Active listening skills or techniques for determining needs and wants.
- Potential needs and wants of the customer and match them to the products' features and benefits.

- Potential objections of the customer.
- Potential concerns of each customer.
- As part of the pre-call activity:
- Teamwork and involvement of team members will be judged.
- Students are expected to explain their decisions for the pre-call plan based on selling principles.
- The team will be given 15 minutes to analyze the information and prepare to answer questions about the pre-call plan. During this 15 minutes, the team will be judged using the team activity scorecard.
- Team members, after the conclusion of the 15 minutes, will have an additional 15 minutes to individually answer questions from the judges, and they will answer without assistance from their team members.
 - o Questions will be as follows:
 - What question would you ask to build rapport with the customer?
 - Name one common interest you have with the customer.
 - What question would you ask the customer to find needs and wants and what active listening technique would you use when you phrase that question?
 - What potential need or want did you identify for the customer?
 - What potential objections (for two students) or potential concerns (for two students) do you think the customer could have?

Individual Sales Activity (150 points)

Participants will directly sell the product(s) to judge(s). Students will be given a preliminary customer profile and will have at least five minutes to review the preliminary customer profile prior to meeting with the judge(s). The judge(s) will act as the customer, which may include not buying the product. Participants will have to establish rapport, ask probing questions to ensure they meet the customer’s needs and clarify customer information as a part of the sales call. Participants will have 20 minutes to interact with the judge(s). Participants are allowed to use their 1-inch product information binder during the individual activity, as well as a calculator.

Scoring

Activities	Individual Points	Team Points
Written exam	100	400
Team activity		150
Individual sales call	150	600
TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE	250	1,150

Tiebreakers

Individual

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

- Written exam.
- Individual sales call.
- Team activity.

Team

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

- Written exam.
- Team activity.
- Total individual sales activity.

References

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

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

- Past CDE materials and other resources are available by logging in to FFA.org.
- ProSelling: A Professional Approach to Selling in Agriculture and Other Industries, W. Scott Downey, ISBN-13: 978-0978895211.
- Professional Selling, Rebecca L. Morgan, ISBN 0-931961-42-4.
- Sales Training Basics, Elwood N. Chapman, ISBN 1-56052-119-8.
- Closing, Virden J. Thorton, ISBN 1-56052-318-2.
- Ditzenberger and Kidney, Selling-Helping Customers Buy, South-Western Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992, 1-800-543-7972, ISBN 0538605316.
- Understanding Ag Sales instructional video, FFA.org

Team Preparation Rubric

75 POINTS

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

Revised: June 2022

Product knowledge	5-7 points	3-4 points	0-2 points	7	
	All team members clearly demonstrated knowledge of the product	Most team members demonstrate knowledge of the product	None of the team members demonstrate knowledge of the product		
Completing Team Goal					
Building rapport	Team identified at least four potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.	Team identified at least two potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.	Team identified no potential question to build rapport for the scenario.	3	
Establish common interests	Team identified at least four common interests that they have with the customer.	Team identified at least two common interests that they have with the customer.	Team identified no common interests that they have with the customer.	3	
Discover through questioning	Team identified at least four questions to identify the wants and needs of the customer.	Team identified at least two questions to identify the wants and needs of the customer.	Team identified no questions to identify the wants and needs of the customer	3	
Active listening	Team identified four active listening skills or techniques to determine wants and needs.	Team identified two active listening skills or techniques to determine wants and needs.	Team identified no active listening skills or techniques to determine wants and needs.	3	
Identifying needs and wants	Team identified at least four potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants	Team identified at least two active potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	Team identified no potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	3	
Objectives	Team identified at least two potential objections of the customer.	Team identified at least one potential objection of the customer.	Team identified no potential objections of the customer.	3	
Concerns	Team identified two concerns of the customer.	Team identified at least one concern of the customer.	Team identified no concerns of the customer.	3	
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE OUT OF 75 POSSIBLE					

Team Questions Rubric

75 POINTS

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

Revised: June 2022

Questions to identify wants and needs (cont.)	7-10 points	4-6 points	0-3 points	10	
	All questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.		
Determine wants and needs	4-5 points	2-3 points	0-1 point	5	
	All team members questioned contributed potential needs and wants for the customer and explained how the product meets those needs and wants.	Half of team members questioned contributed a potential need and want of the customer and explained how the product meets those needs and wants.	No team members provided potential needs or wants of the customer or explained how the product meets those needs and wants.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0-3 points	10	
	All potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.		
Objections and concerns	4-5 points	2-3 points	0-1 points	5	
	All team members questioned contributed potential objections and potential concerns for the customer.	Half of team members questioned contributed potential objections and potential concerns for the customer.	No team member contributed potential objections or potential concerns for the customer.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0-3 points	10	
	All potential objections and concerns identified were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most potential objections and concerns identified were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Potential objections and concerns identified were not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.		
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 75 POSSIBLE					

Individual Sales Call Rubric

150 POINTS

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill	Moderate evidence of skill	Weak evidence of skill	Points Possible	Points Earned
First impression	4–5 points	2–3 points	0–1 point	5	
	Individual identifies themselves with a good first impression.	Individual mostly identifies themselves with a good first impression.	Individual poorly identifies themselves with a good first impression.		
Personal rapport	8–10 points	4–7 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	Individual mostly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	Individual poorly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.		
Clarifying questions	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	Individual mostly asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	Individual poorly asks questions to learn about the customer's business.		
	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	Individual mostly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	Individual poorly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.		
Needs and wants	8–10 points	4–7 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	Individual mostly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	Individual poorly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.		
Features and benefits	8–10 points	4–7 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants.	Individual mostly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants.	Individual poorly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants.		

Revised: June 2022

Matching needs and wants	11-15 points	6-10 points	0-5 points	15	
	Individual allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.	Individual mostly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.	Individual poorly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.		
Trial close	8-10 points	4-7 points	0-3 points	10	
	Individual uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	Individual mostly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	Individual poorly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.		
Objections	11-15 points	6-10 points	0-5 points	15	
	Student listens and clarifies customers objections.	Student mostly listens and clarifies customers objections.	Student poorly listens and clarifies customers objections.		
Addressing objections	11-15 points	6-10 points	0-5 points	15	
	Individual applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	Individual mostly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	Individual poorly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.		
Close or advance sale	11-15 points	6-10 points	0-5 points	15	
	Student closes or attempts to close the sale.	Student mostly closes or attempts to close the sale.	Student poorly closes or attempts to close the sale.		
Active listening	11-15 points	6-10 points	0-5 points	15	
	Individual actively listens to comments and answers from the customer.	Individual mostly listens to comments and answers from the customer.	Individual poorly listens to comments and answers from the customer.		
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 150					