



Agricultural Sales

Updates

Below is a summary of updates to the Agricultural Sales CDE Handbook for the 2026-2027 cycle.

HANDBOOK UPDATE:

No changes

Purpose

The Tennessee FFA Agricultural Sales Career Development Event aims to evaluate and demonstrate the skills essential to an individual's success in an 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 to their production and marketing.

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 the 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
- Apply sales process and knowledge to service customer needs
- Determine a relevant solution and maintain a relationship in the case of a customer concern
- Ability to apply guidelines and policies to customer situations

Event Rules

Review the Career and Leadership Development Event Policy and Guidelines for information on eligibility, selection, certification, team member changes, disqualification and more.

- Each team will be comprised of four members.
- FFA official dress is required for this event.
- Any participant in possession of an electronic device, except a calculator, in the event area is subject to disqualification.
- Students must be in at least 7th grade at the time of the state qualifying event.
- 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. If items are left, the student/team will be subject to a 5% penalty from the overall score in the appropriate practicum.

Event Format

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

The product(s) utilized in the event any relevant company policy and activity examples will be announced during the summer before the convention on the CDE webpage. Provided product information may include appropriate company information and price lists.

Each participant will be responsible for bringing a 1-inch binder to the event containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant. This product information will not otherwise be provided to the students during the event.

Individual Written Exam (100 points)

The written exam evaluates an individual's knowledge of sales skills. The test will be 25 questions and it will come from a test bank from past National FFA exams (2017-2022).

Team Activity (175 points)

- The Team Activity is 30 minutes long with two components.
- Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork, group dynamics, problem-solving, data analysis, decision making and oral communications.
- Teams will be allowed to use their 1-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 before conducting a sales call.

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

*The team as a group will have **12 minutes** to develop a pre-call plan (for the product(s) provided before the event) necessary to sell the product(s) in a face-to-face sales call. During this 12 minutes, the team will be judged using the first page of the team rubric.*

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.
- Potential needs and wants of the customer and match them to the products' features and benefits.
- Active listening skills or techniques for determining needs and wants.
- Potential objections of the customer.
- Potential concerns of each customer.

*After the conclusion of the first 12 minutes, team members will have an additional **18***

minutes to answer questions individually from the judges. Students cannot use the same answer a teammate has given during the questioning. Judges will ask clarifying questions to ensure they can accurately assess each student.

As they answer the judges' questions:

- They will answer individually, without assistance from their team members.
- Students are expected to explain their decisions for the pre-call plan based on selling principles and product knowledge.
- 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 the 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 and how does the product meet that need or want?
 - What potential objections or potential concerns do you think the customer would have?
 - **In addition, clarifying questions regarding the team pre-call can be asked if time allows.**

Individual Sales (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 before 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 during the sales call. Participants will have 20 minutes to interact with the judge(s). Participants may use their 1-inch product information binder during the individual activity.

NO ITEMS SHOULD BE LEFT WITH THE JUDGES. Any items left with the judges will result in a deduction of 5% of the total score from the individual sales call.

Scoring

Activities	Individual Points	Team Points
Written exam	100	400
Individual sales call	150	600
Team activity		175
TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE	250	1,175

Tiebreakers

In the event of a tie, the following components will be used to determine award recipients:

Individual

1. Individual sales call
2. Written exam
3. Team activity

Team

1. Team activity
2. Total individual sales activity total
3. Total written exam

Awards

Awards will be presented to individuals and teams at the awards ceremony based on their rankings. Advisors of cash award recipients will receive information about claiming their award following the convention. Guidelines for amounts and recipients of cash awards can be found [here](#).

References

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

Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to use the best instructional materials available. Make sure to use discretion when selecting website references by using only 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 on 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
- Ditzenberger and Kidney, Selling-Helping Customers Buy, South-Western Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992, 1-800-543-7972, ISBN 0538605316

Team Rubric

175 POINTS

Chapter		State		Team Number	
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	6–8 points	3–5 points	0–2 points	8	
	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		
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		

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill	Moderate evidence of skill	Weak evidence of skill	Points Possible	Points Earned
Completing Team Goal					
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.		
	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.		

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill	Moderate evidence of skill	Weak evidence of skill	Points Possible	Points Earned
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.		
Product Knowledge/ Scenario Clarifying Questions	11-15 points	6-10 points	0-5 points	15	
	All team members questioned were able to provide applicable and knowledgeable answers for the customer.	Half of team members questioned were able to provide applicable and knowledgeable answers for the customer.	No team member was able to provide applicable and knowledgeable answers for the customer.		
	21-30 points	11-20 points	0–10 points	30	
	All individual answers were satisfactory.	Most individual answers were satisfactory.	Individual answers were less than satisfactory or inappropriate.		
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 175 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.		

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill	Moderate evidence of skill	Weak evidence of skill	Points Possible	Points Earned
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	
	Individual listens and clarifies customers objections.	Individual mostly listens and clarifies customers objections.	Individual 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	
	Individual closes or attempts to close the sale.	Individual mostly closes or attempts to close the sale.	Individual 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					