THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A DISCREPANCY NEEDS ASSESSMENT MODEL WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING SUPPLEMENTARY ADULT MARKETING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by

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THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Chapter I is concerned with identifying the problem of the study. This chapter contains sections on: (1) background of the problem; (2) problem statement; (3) research questions; (4) importance of the study; (5) delimitations of the study; (6) limitations of the study; (7) assumptions of the study; (8) definitions used in the study; and (9) chapter summary.

Background of the Problem

Vocational education has been an integral part of education for over sixty years. Vocational education is integral in the sense that it is not a separate aspect of education but rather a desirable part of the total education system. The major purpose of vocational education as described by the National Advisory Council in 1968 is:

> The skills and knowledges required of a person to perform the tasks of an occupation are of primary concern in vocational education. Mindful of the necessity for workers to acquire skill, knowledge, and understanding in a variety of related education contexts, it is the specific occupational tasks with which vocational education has primary concern. (p. 11)

Planning is essential for vocational education to accomplish its purpose. Diez-Hochleitner (1964) pointed out the need for planning, stating:

> Educational planning is a cohesive force that

> coordinates and directs many different components of an educational system and insures that widely accepted, long-term goals are approached more objectively. (p. 86)

The concept of planning is not necessarily new to vocational education. However, evidence indicates that vocational education planning has been less than adequate. Lamar et al. (1978) stated that, "A review of literature, covering the past two decades, indicates a general feeling that there has been inadequate planning for vocational education at the national, state, and local levels." (p. 14)

This concern was also evident in literature supporting the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the 1968 Amendments. A section of the Education Amendments of 1976 further indicated the need for, and apparent lack of, planning:

> The five year state plans shall be submitted to the Commissioner by the July 1st preceding the beginning of the first fiscal year for which such plan is to take effect, and shall -
>
> (1) assess the current and future needs for job skills within the State and, where appropriate, within the pertinent region of the country, through consideration of the latest available data of present and projected employment, including data available under section 161;
>
> (2) set out explicitly the goals the state will seek to achieve by the end of the five-year period of the state plan in meeting the need for particular job skills ... (section 107 (b)).

Furthermore, the federal government indicates its support of the planning function stating it will "... assist states in improving planning in the use of all resources available ..." (Section 101)

Marketing and distributive education officially became part of vocational education in 1936 with the enactment of the George-Deen Act.

The mission of marketing and distributive education as described by Sampson (1981) is:

> ... to develop competent workers in and for the major occupational areas within marketing and distribution; assist in the improvement of marketing techniques, and build understanding of the wide range of social and economic responsibilities which accompany the right to engage in marketing in a free enterprise system. (p. 298)

Enrollments in marketing and distributive education in 1978-1979 were 942,000 at all levels (Brown, 1981). Approximately one-third of these enrollees were classified as adult learners.

Historically, marketing and distributive education has served diverse client groups. Reece and Horan (1981) described the comprehensive nature of marketing and distributive education as follows:

> Historically, we have supported the belief that marketing and distributive education (M & DE) is a comprehensive program of instruction for secondary and post-secondary youth as well as preparatory and supplementary instruction for adults. (p. 65)

Preparatory and supplementary instruction for adults is integrated with other marketing and distributive education instructional levels through the following goals of adult marketing and distributive education (Reece, Trapnell and Hoffman, 1972):

1. To provide specialized educational programs which will assist in developing and upgrading individual employment competencies, thereby providing the individual with the knowledge and skills required for advancement and the self-confidence to assume greater responsibilities.

2. To offer educational programs which provide the field of distribution with a source of better-qualified personnel to meet business needs and demands, thereby contributing to improve efficiency in the marketing process and reduce business losses.

3. To provide formal instruction to individuals to supplement on-the-job employee, supervisory, and management training. (p. 5)

Program planning has received little attention in marketing and distributive education research. Berns, Burrow and Wallace (1980) concluded that there is little evidence within marketing and distributive education research that program development has been based on a careful assessment of human resource needs. In the specific area of overall program planning for marketing and distributive education, it appears that no dissertations have been completed. This lack of research seems to indicate a void in light of the recent national quest for improved program planning in vocational education.

An integral part of the overall planning process is the determination of adult learner needs. Mazmanian (1977) concluded:

> The goal of adult/continuing education administrators and program planners is to design and offer programs which fulfill the educational requirements of the target adult population. Successful attainment of this goal depends in part upon reliable information concerning the unmet continuing education needs and interests of adults. (p. 4)

Mazmanian (1977) further concluded that, "Program planning models of Bergevin, Morris, Smith, Easley, Houle, Knowles, Knox and Loudon corroborate the significance of educational needs assessment." (p. 5) Ahmann (1979) addressed the relationship between program planning, needs assessment and vocational education when stating,

> Long-range planning and associated evaluation in vocational education at the local, state, and national levels must improve. Needs assessment is a basic component of this planning and evaluation; practitioners should capitalize on its potential. (p. 3)

Furthermore, Witkin (1975) indicated that needs assessment is usually the first step in comprehensive program planning.

Needs assessment also makes an important contribution to the training program development process in business and industry. When critiquing training needs analysis literature, Moore and Dutton (1978) stated:

> The training needs analysis is a function recognized as an integral part of any well-designed training program by training theorists and academicians. Its logic is simple. To utilize most efficiently training dollars and resources, one must first determine exactly the location, scope, and magnitude of the training need. (p. 532)

Although the literature clearly stated the importance of systematic, formal needs assessment procedures, these procedures appear to be conducted mainly on an informal basis. Moore and Dutton (1978) indicated the degree of informality by stating, "... training needs analysis is seldom the carefully developed investigation that the theorists propose." (p. 532) The needs assessment field is characterized by a lack of systematic, formalized procedures. Witkin (1975) concluded that the field is markedly and sadly lacking in almost any kind of research on the process of needs assessment. Furthermore, Ahmann (1979) stated that "Much work needs to be done to improve and systematize needs assessment in vocational education." (p. 2) Spitzer (1979) indicated the lack of research and formalized procedures may be an inherent measurement problem. "One of the factors that has led to the relatively slow development of the technology of needs assessment has been the fact that needs (real needs) are so difficult to measure." (p. 4) Also, Mazmanian (1977) indicated procedures may be hampering needs assessment development stated, "Few needs assessment models or instruments have been extensively field tested for validity or reliability." (p. 12)

Today, needs assessment is receiving increased attention in the education and business communities. This new interest is due in part to the increasing emphasis on accountability. Marrs (1977) pointed out, "The concern for accountability and the use of the concept of competence as an attempt to provide accountability have encouraged educational planners to employ needs assessment techniques and methodologies." (p. 24) Furthermore, Kaufman and English (1979) indicated that, "With a needs assessment and a meaningful planning process, we can become reasonably accountable for ends as well as means." (p. 32)

Although few needs assessment models have been empirically developed, modeling appears to be important in education. McElheny (1979) concluded that the systems approach to education and the use of modeling is accepted as a valid and reliable tool within education. Specifically, the use of models in marketing and distributive education should increase. McElheny (1979) indicated the economic advantages of systems modeling alone will encourage the development of model systems for the delivery of adult marketing and distributive education. In addition to economic advantages, Kraft and Latta (1969) indicated that models can:

1. Provide a simplified abstraction of a complex real-world problem.

2. Provide a frame of reference for consideration of a problem.

3. Sometimes suggest information gaps which before were not immediately apparent.

4. Provide a "handle" to evaluate and study complex problems.

5. Force one to truly analyze as many of the real-world attributes as possible.

6. Provide something which can be manipulated. (p. 25)

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study was to develop and evaluate a discrepancy needs assessment model that can be used by marketing and distributive education teachers to plan supplementary adult education programs. In addition, the study examined the relationship between supervisory competence ratings and self-assessment competence ratings of personal selling activities. Also, the study examined the relationship between supervisor importance ratings and self-assessment importance ratings of personal selling activities.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. Is the content discrepancy needs assessment model effective according to the evaluation criteria identified by Newstrom and Lillyquist?

2. Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self-assessment and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor?

3. Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self-assessment and the importance rating of his/her immediate supervisor?

4. Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor?

5. Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the salesperson's self-assessment competency rating?

Importance of the Study

A study of this nature had numerous benefits to marketing and distributive education. The major benefits were as follow:

1. To provide a procedure that can be used by marketing and distributive education teacher-coordinators to improve supplementary adult education program planning. The model may result in more accurate determination of employee training needs which would lead to improved program planning.

2. To provide a discrepancy needs assessment model that can be utilized by marketing and distributive education teacher-coordinators to assess employee training needs in various occupational areas within the marketing and distributive education taxonomy.

3. To develop an assessment model that provides for a collaboration process between marketing and distributive education teacher-coordinators and business people.

4. To add to an area of literature that is lacking in formal research. The literature indicates that needs assessment methodology requires more research application.

5. To provide a practical application of existing competency research findings. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the competencies performed by workers in various occupational areas. This model may provide a useful application of these research findings.

Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of this study that were controlled were as follow:

1. The study was delimited to department store sales and supervisory personnel employed in the state of Virginia.

2. The study was delimited to personal selling competencies.

3. The study was delimited to personnel employed by one store chain.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study that could not be controlled were as follow:

1. An assumption of the ANOVA procedure is that data be independent. This assumption may have been violated since supervisors working with most product lines rated more than one sales associate.

2. Supervisor ratings in product lines where there was only one supervisor may have been attributed to individual supervisor rating bias rather than to product line supervised.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were applied to this study:

1. It was assumed that the research findings of the study A Theoretical Framework for Instructional Programs in Distributive Education (Lynch et al., 1977b) represented a valid and reliable basis for the research instrument.

2. It was assumed that all persons involved in conducting the needs assessment followed procedural instructions to assure accuracy in data collection.

3. It was assumed that the research findings of Task Validation of 16 General Merchandising: Department Store Occupations (Williams, Berns and Sipos, 1979) represented a valid and reliable basis for the research instrument.

Definitions Used in the Study

The following definitions were used in this study:

1. Adult Education - the process by which men and women (alone, in groups, or in institutional settings) seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, their knowledge, or their sensitiveness (Houle, 1972).

2. Adult Marketing and Distributive Education - a level of instruction within the Marketing and Distributive Education program designed to prepare individuals to enter, to progress, or to improve, their competencies in marketing and distributive occupations (Reece, Trapnell and Hoffman, 1972).

3. Content Discrepancy Needs Assessment - a needs assessment procedure that examines the difference in subject area content between a current and a desired situation.

4. Educational Need - the measurable discrepancy (gap) between current outcomes and desired or required outcomes (Kaufman, 1972).

5. Full-Time Sales Associate - person (working 30 or more hours weekly) responsible for direct contact and personal selling to customers (Leggett Department Stores).

6. Immediate Supervisor - person, usually department or assistant manager, responsible for supervising performance of full-time sales associates (Leggett Department Stores).

7. Needs Assessment - a systematic procedure for determining the discrepancy between existing and desired levels of attainment with respect to specific educational goals (Ahmann, 1979).

8. Program Development - a process including the standard steps such as establishing the need for a program, developing a curriculum, presenting the instruction, and evaluating the outcomes of the program based upon the objectives set forth in the initial stages (Eggland, 1980).

9. Purposeful Sampling - a strategy used when the researcher wants to learn something, or understand something, about certain select sites/individuals, and does not need to generalize to an entire population (Spirer, 1980).

10. Retailing - the marketing function that is the last step in the distribution of goods and services from the manufacturer to the consumer (O'Connor, 1981).

11. Training Need - stated as an equation: Standard or Desired Performance - Present or Actual Performance = Training Need (Moore and Dutton, 1978).

Chapter Summary

This chapter was concerned with identifying the problem of this study. The sections include: (1) background of the problem; (2) problem statement; (3) research questions; (4) importance of the study; (5) delimitations of the study; (6) limitations of the study; (7) assumptions of the study; (8) definitions used in the study; and (9) chapter summary.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of related literature and research is presented in this chapter. The presentation of information is divided into four sections: (1) introduction; (2) needs assessment methodology; (3) program development in marketing and distributive education; and (4) chapter summary.

Introduction

The needs assessment process has been an integral part of planning educational programs since the mid-1960's (Kominski, 1978). Witkin (1975) summarized the growth of needs assessment stating:

> Needs assessment actually goes back to ancient China, and it is not new on the American scene. What is new is the effort in the last decade to develop conceptual needs assessment models, to use systematic process for identifying needs and setting priorities, and to involve the non-school community in joint goal setting and planning efforts with educators and students. (p. 6)

Also, scholarly reports on needs assessment methodology have appeared since the 1960's.

As planning received increased attention in the 1970's (Ahmann, 1979), additional attention was focused on the needs assessment process. The needs assessment literature review revealed an increase of publications and studies occurring in the mid-1970's.

As an integral part of the program development process, needs assessments were specifically required by the Vocational Education

Amendments of 1976 (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1977). As early as 1972, needs assessment legislation was being formulated as indicated by Kaufman (1972):

> Both the requirement for needs assessment and the process characterizing it are receiving increased attention across the nation, with legislation for funding providing a good deal of the initial impetus. (p. 28)

A central concern evident in the literature (Kaufman, 1972; Mazmanian, 1977; Kaufman and English, 1979; Spitzer, 1979) was the problem of identifying needs and the needs assessment process. For the purposes of this study, need can be described as the measurable difference between actual or current performance and desired performance (Kaufman, 1972; Moore and Dutton, 1978). A needs assessment is a systematic procedure for determining the difference between actual and desired performance (Ahmann, 1979; Kaufman, 1972; Kaufman and English, 1979). Furthermore, Kaufman and English (1979) indicated that needs assessments are tools for constructive, positive change.

Adult marketing and distributive education is a component of a comprehensive marketing and distributive education program. At a specific level of instruction, adult marketing and distributive education courses are designed to prepare individuals to enter, to progress, or to improve their competencies in marketing and distributive occupations (Reece, Trapnell and Hoffman, 1972). Sampson (1981) articulated the overall mission of marketing and distributive education (MDE) stating:

> The mission of marketing and distributive education is to develop competent workers in and for the major occupational areas within marketing and distribution, assist in the improvement of marketing techniques, and build understandings of the

> wide range of social and economic responsibilities which accompany the right to engage in marketing in a free enterprise system. (p. 297)

In the state of Virginia, a large majority of the marketing and distributive education teacher-coordinators are responsible for planning, developing and implementing adult courses. Reece and Horan (1981) concluded that in many other states there is considerable support for the involvement of the local teacher-coordinator in adult course planning and delivery. Vivian (1978) stated the teacher-coordinator's involvement in adult education results in an improved secondary marketing and distributive education program.

In 1979-1980 the adult education component of the marketing and distributive education program served 316,471 persons (Smith, 1981). Smith (1981) further stated that ten states accounted for over 75 percent of the total persons served.

The review of literature revealed the need for additional study of the adult marketing and distributive education program. Berns, Burrow and Wallace (1980) indicated that research on instruction devoted to updating and retraining marketing personnel was needed. Reece and Horan (1981) indicated that successful future program expansion in marketing and distributive education will require special attention to this underdeveloped area of adult education.

Finally, Sampson (1981) provided a challenge to improve the status of adult marketing and distributive education stating: "The static or even stagnation of adult marketing and distributive education needs to be overcome with a new commitment to meaningful programs at the adult level." (p. 8)

Program Development in Marketing and Distributive Education

The program development process in adult vocational-technical education is characterized by numerous program planning models. However, adult marketing and distributive education program planning models are few. In general, Eggland (1980) identified eight generic constraints to the program development process in marketing and distributive education. The following constraints relate to adult marketing and distributive education as well as secondary and post-secondary levels.

1. A general inability to attract and retain sufficient students for marketing and distributive education programs in relation to labor market demand.

2. An inadequate liaison with the natural constituency of marketing and distributive education-- the employment community.

3. An inability of marketing and distributive teacher education programs to supply adequate numbers of teachers.

4. A lack of national consensus regarding optimal program objectives, standards, organization, and curriculum in marketing and distributive education.

5. The fact that strategies for competency development have not met with what their proponents feel to be their potential for success.

6. Inadequate government and private fiscal support to promote healthy program development.

7. Difficulty in providing an appropriate level of instructional and programmatic services to the special and various groups who might be served by marketing and distributive education.

8. Concerns for territorial prerogatives plus adherence to tradition which have constrained creative and cooperative programming in marketing and distributive education. (p. 7)

Eggland (1980) also indicated a major constraint to the program development process was the standard way of thinking and describing marketing and distributive education at the high school, post-secondary and adult levels. He further stated that the profession should make an effort to break away from the traditional mold and explore creative programming techniques particularly with external agencies.

Two program planning models relating to adult marketing and distributive education are available. Trapnell (1979) identified a five-step critical decision process resulting in more systematic MDE programming. Her program design model featured decisions concerning curriculum base, delivery system, organizational plan, type of instruction, and client group. Through various combinations of the critical decision areas, Trapnell indicated 2,464 different marketing and distributive education programs could be created.

A program development model for adult marketing and distributive education was developed in 1976 by Virginia adult MDE personnel (Reece and Horan, 1981). The original goals of the program model were to: (1) improve the quality of the adult marketing and distributive education programs in Virginia, (2) to increase adult enrollments, and (3) provide secondary teacher-coordinators with an opportunity to teach adult classes. The planning model is illustrated in Figure 1.

To determine the application of the Operation 1000 planning model, an adult course, "Contact: Making Positive First Impressions," was developed in Virginia. The course was monitored at each stage of the Operation 1000 planning model. After three years of monitoring the course and the planning model, Reece and Horan (1981) drew the following conclusions:

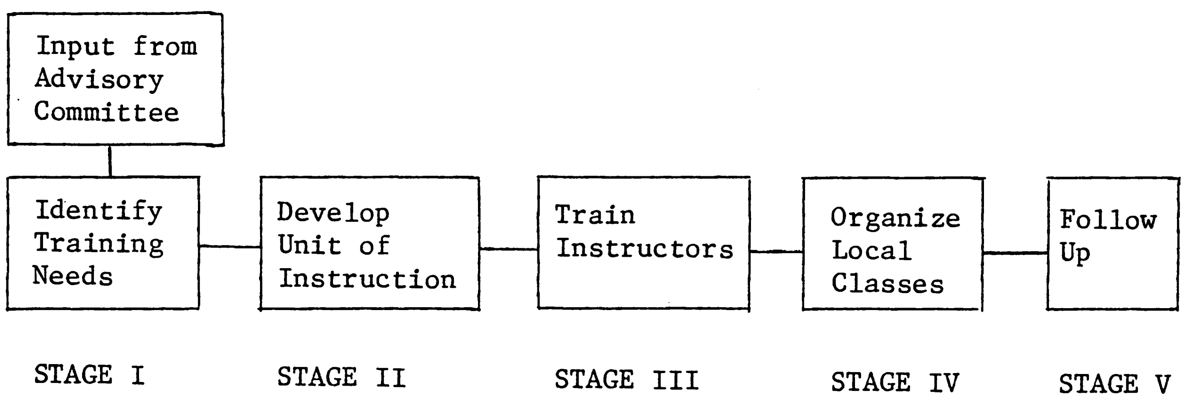

Figure 1. Operation 1000 Planning Model

Source: Reece, Barry L. and Horan, James. "Applying the Marketing Concept to the Adult M & DE Program," Marketing and Distributive Educator's Digest, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Spring, 1981).

1. Yearly enrollment increases indicate the course is meeting a training need.

2. Teacher-coordinators who are provided with a pre-packaged adult course and in-service training can be effective adult instructors.

3. Teacher-coordinators involved in the adult course received a number of personal and professional benefits from their involvement. (p. 68)

The Operation 1000 planning model requires need identification prior to program development. Kaufman (1972) also believed that planning should begin with the identification of needs. "Defining the gaps between current ends and desired/required ends is a useful starting place for humane, responsive, and responsible planning." (Kaufman and English, 1979)

Needs Assessment Methodology

Ahmann (1979) described the purpose of a needs assessment stating:

> By studying the results of a needs assessment, decision makers in education are better able to assign priorities and to plan and evaluate educational programs so that personnel, funds, and facilities can be used in the most productive way. This is the primary purpose of a needs assessment. (p. 3)

Barbulesco (1976) further stated that needs assessment provides an empirical basis for decision making in education.

The literature review revealed numerous benefits to be derived by educational planners who use systematic needs assessment. Generally, educational planners receive benefits from needs assessment as described by Morgan and Feldman (1977):

> Needs assessment, if properly done, can: (1) determine a process for identifying and documenting valid measurable objectives, (2) provide a realistic, empirical basis for the selection of programs and resources, and (3) provide measurable criteria for evaluation of educational programs, projects, and services. (p. 49)

More specifically, systematic needs assessment can benefit program developers and educational planners in the following seven major ways (Mazmanian, 1977; Kaufman and English, 1979; Ahmann, 1979):

1. The quality of subject matter and the design of educational activities can be more focused, more timely, and increasingly more relevant.

2. Guiding the program planning process by attempting to identify specific needs within a more general notion of what is what ought to be.

3. An organization can use acquired information to continuously update organizational goals and objectives.

4. Provide a tool for establishing greater accountability.

5. Assist in program evaluation.

6. Improve the overall planning process by increasing school and community involvement.

7. Assist in assigning educational priorities to better utilize resources.

Clearly, systematic needs assessment has numerous benefits for educational planners and program developers.

To achieve the above mentioned benefits, educational planners and program developers can select a needs assessment model from various needs assessment categories. McKinley (1973) identified three needs assessment categories: individual self-fulfillment, individual appraisal and system discrepancy.

Individual self-fulfillment models are characterized by two types: random appeal and selective appeal. Random appeal models assume all adults in a particular community can benefit from a certain educational offering. The educational planner offers the course or program to the local citizenry. If a prescribed number of persons agree to enroll in the course or program, the educational planner concludes that a need existed. Selective appeal models use a strategy similar to the random appeal models. Selective appeal models differ because they appeal to a specific segment of the total population such as lawyers, children, or elderly.

McKinley's second category of needs assessment models, individual appraisal, consists of two types: collaborative individual appraisal and self-appraisal. When learner and educational planner consult with one another regarding learner needs, the collaborative individual appraisal model is being used. Self-appraisal models generally utilize a research instrument. Learners assess themselves on a particular instrument that determines need in a particular area.

A third category of models, according to McKinley, is the system discrepancy category. Models in this category are classified as problem-need approach and goal identification. The problem-need approach assumes that educational needs are deficiencies in knowledge or skill. Also, this type of model generally utilizes educational planners and members of a local group to identify the current behavior of a specific knowledge or skill area. The goal-identification type of model assumes that the identified general goals and objectives of an educational program represent required learning outcomes. Needs can be identified by having selected, appropriate groups identify detailed program objectives derived from existing general goals and objectives.

Kaufman and English (1979) identified two major classifications of needs assessment models: internal and external. The internal type of needs assessment model assumes that the goals and objectives of the educational organization are correct and essentially unchangeable. Needs are identified as the gaps between current behavior and the preconceived goals and objectives of the educational organization.

The second category of needs assessment models, according to Kaufman and English, is the external category. External needs assessment models assume that there are no common absolutes in education. Rather, needs assessments must reflect specific situations, learners, and behaviors. Kaufman and English summarized the role of external needs assessment stating:

> ... there should be a different one (needs assessment) for each application. There might be some elements in common with other settings and applications; but the selection of tools, techniques, vehicles, instruments and procedures should be based upon the unique characteristics and requirements of the community, schools, and mission, not upon what is available from other settings or publishers. (p. 207)

Within each individual situation, criteria for actual performance must be determined. The external models generally develop these criteria from sources outside the educational community.

Methods of Determining Needs. Numerous methods for determining needs have been identified. The literature review indicated considerable overlap in the needs assessment methods identified by prominent researchers on the subject.

Moore and Dutton (1978) identified fifteen techniques for obtaining data on the training needs of individuals within an organization. The methods are classified as:

1. Performance Data Appraisal (e.g., absenteeism, tardiness, grievances, waste, down time, customer complaints, repairs, and product quality)

2. Observation - work sampling

3. Interviews

4. Questionnaires

5. Tests - job knowledge, skills, and achievement

6. Attitude Surveys

7. Checklists or Training Progress Charts

8. Rating Scales

9. Critical Incidents

10. Diaries

11. Devised Situations - role play, case study, business games

12. Diagnostic Rating

13. Assessment Centers

14. Coaching

15. Management by Objectives. (p. 536)

Knowles (1970) identified six methods of need determination. Table 1 lists the methods as well as the advantages and limitations of each method.

In addition to those methods identified by Moore, Dutton and Knowles, other needs assessment methods include:

1. reports, publications and records

2. external consultants

3. observation

4. personal contacts with community leaders.

Newstrom and Lillyquist (1979) developed a contingency model for assessing various needs assessment methods. Their model, presented in Table 2, indicated that questionnaires and skill inventories are the most effective needs assessment methods.

Table 1

General Methods of Need Determination

Method	Advantages	Limitations
Interview	Reveals feelings, causes and possible solutions of problems as well as facts Affords maximum opportunity for free expression of opinion, giving of suggestions	Is time-consuming, so can reach relatively few people Results may be difficult to quantify Can make subject feel he is "on the spot"
Questionnaire	Can reach many people in short time Is relatively inexpensive Gives opportunity of expression without fear of embarrassment Yields data easily summarized and reported	Little provision for free expression of unanticipated responses May be difficult to construct Has limited effectiveness in getting at causes of problems and possible solutions
Tests	Are useful as diagnostic tools to identify specific areas of deficiencies	Tests validated for many specific situations often not available
Skill Inventory	Helpful in selecting from among potential trainees those who can most profitably be trained Results are easy to compare and report	Results give clues, are not conclusive Tests are second-best evidence in relation to job performance
Group Problem Analysis	Same as for interview plus: Permits synthesis of different viewpoints Promotes general understanding and agreement Builds support for needed training Is in itself good training	Is time-consuming and initially expensive Supervisors and executives may feel too busy to participate, want work done for them Results may be difficult to quantify

Table 1, continued

Method	Advantages	Limitations
Job Analysis and Performance Review	Produces specific and precise information about jobs, performance Is directly tied to actual jobs and on-job performance Breaks job into segments manageable both for training and for appraisal purposes	Time-consuming Difficult for people not specifically trained in job analysis techniques Supervisors often dislike reviewing employee's inadequacies with them personally
Records and Reports Study	Provide excellent clues to trouble spots Provide best objective evidence of results of problems Are usually of concern to and easily understood by operating officials	Do not show causes of problems, or possible solutions May not provide enough cases (e.g., grievances) to be meaningful May not reflect <u>current</u> situation, recent changes

Source: Knowles, Malcolm. <u>The Modern Practice of Adult Education</u>. New York: Association Press, 1970, p. 100.

Table 2

Contingency Model of Needs Assessment Methods

Methods	Criteria Incumbent Involvement	 Management Involvement	 Time Requirement	 Cost	 Relevant Quantifiable Data
Advisory Committees	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
Assessment Centers (external)	High	Low	High	High	High
Attitude Surveys	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Group Discussions	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Employee Interviews (by trainer)	High	Low	High	High	Moderate
Exit Interviews (by personnel dept.)	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Management Requests	Low	High	Low	Low	Low
Observations of Behavior (by trainer)	Moderate	Low	High	High	Moderate
Performance Appraisals	Moderate	High	Moderate	Low	High
Performance Documents	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	High
Questionnaire Surveys and Inventories	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High
Skills Tests	High	Low	High	High	High

Source: Newstrom, J. W. and Lillyquist, J. M. "Selecting Needs Analysis Methods," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 32, No. 10 (October, 1979).

Although numerous methods are available, the literature reveals that needs assessment continues to be somewhat unscientific. When discussing the topic of needs assessment as an art of as a science, Cross (1979) stated:

> ... conducting and utilizing survey information is as much an art as a science. The needs assessor needs the sensitive observations and experiences of the adult educator as much as the adult educator needs the technical expertise of survey researchers. But what all of us need is more imaginative, creative approaches to the art of needs assessment. (p. 16)

Since needs assessment is a dynamic subject area, its procedures and techniques are in a constant state of change as Kaufman (1972) indicated:

> It would be inappropriate to list a 'hard and fast' process along with tools for doing a needs assessment, for the procedures are too new and are constantly evolving. Tools and techniques for needs assessment must be selected, evolved, or invented based on the unique conditions and circumstances of each educational context. (p. 46)

The literature also indicated the needs assessment methodology required more scholarly research. Moore and Dutton (1978) summarized the state of training need literature stating:

> Currently, this field of training needs analysis, as a scholarly endeavor, suffers from several major deficiencies. Little theory development has occurred addressing the issue of how to diagnose performance problems and ascertain that they are caused by some lack of knowledge and that some variant of training represents the optimal solution set. A second failing is that organizational strategic planning considerations have been traditionally ignored or assumed as given. There has been little explicit knowledge between organization planning modalities and training needs decisions. (p. 532)

<u>Discrepancy Needs Assessment</u>. Discrepancy assessment may be classified as one "school" of needs assessment methodology. The discrepancy needs analysis refers to a process of determining and

documenting a measurable difference between two states of affairs, one of which is hypothesized (Kaufman, 1972). The two states of affairs are often referred to as "where we are" and "where we want to be." Kaufman, 1972; Kaufman and English, 1979) described the discrepancy needs assessment process as consisting of the following three characteristics:

1. The data must represent the actual world of learners and related people, both as it exists now and as it will, could, and should exist in the future.

2. No needs determination is final and complete: we must realize that any statement of needs is in fact tentative, and we should constantly question the validity of our needs statements.

3. The discrepancies should be identified in terms of products, or actual behaviors, not in terms of processes. (p. 26)

Kaufman (1972) identified three major categories of discrepancy models: inductive (Type I), deductive (Type D), and classical (Type C). Inductive models are those that base program planning upon goals and expectancies determined by citizenry in a school community. The goals and expectancies are then compared to the current learner behavior. The existing discrepancies represent potential for program development. Inductive models are similar to the problem-need type identified by McKinley.

The deductive model of needs assessment starts with existing goals and outcomes developed by educational planners and proceeds to "deduce" an educational program. The deductive model encourages participation from community members to evaluate the initial goals. Then, actual performance data are collected to determine the extent to which the goals were being accomplished. An educational program is developed upon the discrepancies that were determined. This process is similar to the goal-identification model identified by McKinley.

Kaufman described the classical model of needs assessment as often used but the least scientific. The classical model usually begins with very general statements and proceeds directly to program development. Kaufman recommends that educational planners not use the classical needs assessment model.

In the case of the inductive and deductive type discrepancy models, a measurable standard must be established. Actual performance can then be assessed relative to the established standard.

Needs Assessment in Vocational-Technical Education. A variety of needs assessments have been conducted in vocational-technical education, thereby making it difficult to report all assessments (Ahmann, 1979). In general, vocational-technical education needs assessments are classified into two categories: subjective discrepancy analysis and objective discrepancy analysis. The subjective discrepancy analysis models utilize only the opinions of a particular group to determine the discrepancy between actual and desired performance. The models often result in summarized group subjectivity.

Objective discrepancy analysis models utilize an objective measurement standard such as labor market data or standardized performance tests. Actual performance or behavior is measured relative to a predetermined objective standard. The resulting difference indicates a need. Three major needs assessment studies in vocational-technical education that utilized an objective discrepancy approach are detailed.

Adams (1977) conducted a study of the critical needs of vocational education in urban areas. The study addressed three questions:

1. What are the perceived needs for vocational education programs in large cities?

2. What is the relative priority of these needs as perceived by urban vocational educators?

3. How do vocational education priorities of cities differ in terms of their size, geographic level and minority level? (p. 11)

The researcher utilized personal interviews, open-ended mail survey and literature review procedures to identify 30 major goals and 260 specific needs representing four areas of urban vocational education:

1. curriculum and instruction

2. administration

3. personnel

4. guidance and counseling. (p. 12)

Using the goals and specific needs as a basis, five survey instruments were developed and mailed to vocational personnel in 160 cities. The major findings of the study were:

1. Sixty percent of the ten highest national priority goals were related to improving linkages between the world of work and vocational programs.

2. The highest ranked national goal focused on an adequate and equitable funding base for vocational education programs in large cities.

3. The vocational education priorities for cities with different minority levels were highly similar. (p. 13)

The Iowa Department of Public Instruction developed the Career Education Needs Information System (CENIS). CENIS gathered data on four areas:

1. labor demand
2. labor supply as measured by training output
3. student interests
4. student outcomes as determined by follow-up studies.

CENIS was implemented in Iowa in three cycles beginning in 1972 and concluding in 1978. Research was conducted in each of the four areas. The significant information from each area was combined to formulate a manpower/vocational education profile for each taxonomy area identified by the U.S. Office of Education. The results of the CENIS study have been used in determining manpower planning, manpower replacement needs, and the effectiveness of vocational education programs in terms of attrition and placement.

A third example of objective discrepancy analysis in vocational-technical education was the needs assessment system developed in the State of Florida (Fishkind, Milliman, and Ellson, 1976). In this study, data generated from agencies outside of education were used to estimate vocational education needs in Northeast Florida. The system gathered data to determine shortages and surpluses in manpower by various occupations. Also, field surveys of local vocational education programs, teachers, students, funding, and facilities were conducted. The five major steps utilized in the study were:

1. Conduct overall economic analysis and growth (economic and population) potential.
2. Project labor demand by occupation.
3. Project labor supply by occupation.
4. Identify shortages and surpluses from combination of forecasts.

5. Conduct extensive field surveys of vocational education programs, facilities, students, teachers, and administrators.

From the study results, implications for planning vocational education programs in Northeast Florida were developed.

The preceding three studies indicated that the discrepancy analysis logic (i.e., desired situation - current situation = need) has been used in vocational-technical education. This same logical procedure has been utilized by others outside of vocational-technical education (Kaufman, 1972; Kaufman and English, 1979; McKinley, 1972; Mazmanian, 1977).

Chapter Summary

Chapter II of the study features subject information related to the development of a needs assessment model for assessing the training needs of department store sales personnel. The chapter gives background information on adult marketing and distributive education and the history of needs assessment as a field of inquiry. Also, the program development process and its relationship to needs assessment are detailed. Background information on needs assessment methods, their benefits, and their purposes are included. Also, the specific area of discrepancy needs assessment was presented. Finally, information on prominent needs assessment models was detailed.

Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter III is concerned with the design and methodology of the study. Specifically, the chapter contains the following sections: (1) statement of the problem; (2) populations of the study; (3) development of the needs assessment model; and (4) chapter summary.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to develop and evaluate a discrepancy needs assessment model that can be used by marketing and distributive education teachers to plan supplementary adult education programs. In addition, the study examined the relationship between supervisory competence ratings and self-assessment competence ratings of personal selling activities. Also, the study examined the relationship between supervisor importance ratings and self-assessment importance ratings of personal selling activities.

Populations of the Study

Two populations were used in this study. One population consisted of full-time sales associates from ten retail outlets of the Leggett Department Store chain. A total of 260 subjects were in the sales associate population. This population completed the self-assessment component of the needs assessment.

The second population was comprised of the immediate supervisors of the 260 sales associates. The supervisors completed an assessment of each sales associate under their supervision. This assessment was designed to determine the supervisors' assessments of their subordinates relative to specific selling activities. Thirty subjects were included in this population. Both populations were selected from Leggett Department Store outlets within the State of Virginia. The subjects in both populations at each site were assigned numbers to assure anonymity.

Development of the Needs Assessment Model

Kaufman and English (1979) identified seven steps to conducting a discrepancy needs assessment. The steps are presented in an adapted form:

1. Decide to conduct a needs assessment.
2. Identify partner groups to participate in needs assessment.
3. Communicate with partner groups.
4. Partner groups identify needs in terms of results, not processes or techniques.
5. Bring partner groups together and reconcile differences.
6. Rank needs in priority order.
7. Begin educational planning.

The above steps provided the foundation for the model developed in this study. A decision was made to develop a needs assessment model that would assess competence of department store sales personnel. Department store sales personnel were selected since this occupational group is one of the largest groups served by marketing and distributive education.

The model for assessing training needs of department store sales personnel is presented in six steps. The steps are:

1. Obtain commitment to conduct assessment.
2. Develop the assessment instrument.
3. Survey populations.
4. Analyze assessment data.
5. Develop training outline.
6. Evaluate training outline.

Each step is presented as it was conducted.

Step One: Obtain commitment to conduct assessment. In order to gather training needs data, a population of department store sales personnel was needed. Kaufman (1972) indicated that training needs information is best when it is obtained from the "real world" outside of education. Eggland (1980) also indicated the importance of working with the business community stating:

> Marketing and distributive educators agree that they have failed to build adequate relationships with their most capable and viable constituency-- the marketing and distributive business community. It is clear that this segment of the business sector has a great deal to offer and a great deal to gain from an improved relationship with marketing and distributive education. The relationship has only to be exploited and nurtured for both parties to benefit. (p. 11)

Therefore, the researcher made telephone and personal contacts with corporate management to explain the needs assessment model. Appendix A represents correspondence with the personnel department of Leggett Department Stores.

After obtaining the commitment to assess training needs from Leggett management, the actual training needs assessment began.

Step Two: Develop the assessment instrument. A review of the literature failed to reveal a suitable instrument with which to assess the selling competence of the sales associate population. Therefore, it was necessary to construct an instrument that could be used to assess selling competence. The inventory of items representing selling competence was developed from a review of the literature with emphasis placed on three studies: Williams, Berns and Sipos (1979), Lynch et al. (1977a), and Russell (1971).

Williams, Berns and Sipos (1979) conducted a study to provide task information for 16 occupations in the General Merchandising Department Store area. The salesperson occupation was included in the 16 occupations that were analyzed. Ninety task statements relating to the department store salesperson resulted from the study. The list of 90 task statements appears in Appendix B.

Lynch et al. (1977b) conducted a study to determine the broad content outlines (objectives) for 19 instructional programs in marketing and distributive education. The broad content outlines (terminal and enabling objectives) were determined by using principles from competency-based education (Lynch et al., 1977b). In the general merchandise category, which includes the department store area, job and task analysis listings, business and industry training materials, and curriculum guides were used to develop a list of selling objectives.

Lynch et al. (1977a) presented the selling objectives to 17 individuals in general merchandise retailing for verification. The verification group identified 49 selling objectives as being critical or important for the entry level sales associate position. The list of 49 selling objectives appears in Appendix C.

Russell (1971) conducted a study to develop an instrument for measuring selling competencies among different categories of department store sales personnel. Russell developed the Retail Selling Competency Battery (see Appendix D) from selling competencies identified by Crawford (1967). The Retail Selling Competency Battery consists of 100 multiple-choice questions representative of the following nine areas: selling, human relations, merchandising, product/service technology, retail mathematics, operations and management, advertising, communications, and display. The instrument was developed and used to measure competence of department store salespeople in five branch stores of the Macy's department store chain. The study population consisted of 100 salespeople with formal education in marketing and distributive education, 100 salespeople without formal education in marketing and distributive education, and 100 people classified as nonsalespeople. Russell concluded on the basis of his findings that the test battery mean scores differentiated the salespeople groups from the nonsalespeople groups. Also, Russell concluded the test battery measured retail selling competencies of department store employees.

Initially, one list of selling competency statements was developed through synthesizing the 90 tasks verified in the Williams, Berns and Sipos (1979) study, 49 selling objectives identified in the Lynch et al. (1977a) study, and the 100 items identified in the Russell study.

The synthesized list was developed by the researcher. The researcher examined each competency list for similarity. Those items appearing to represent the same competency were combined into one item.

The synthesizing procedure was reviewed and verified by a marketing and distributive education teacher educator. The result of the synthesis was a list of 16 items that were representative of the three studies cited.

A panel of experts was assembled to review the list of 16 selling competency statements. The panel members were chosen because of their experience with department store selling and/or marketing and distributive education curriculum development. Three retail department store managers from the Leggett Department Stores, a marketing and distributive education teacher educator, a regional adult marketing and distributive education instructor, and two supervisors from the Leggett Department Stores represented the panel of experts. The panel received a cover letter accompanying the list of selling competency statements which explained the study and the basis for item selection. The panel members are identified in Appendix E.

Each panel member was given the list of selling competency statements and asked to rate each item as it related to department store selling competence. The panel was asked to rate each item as important or unimportant to selling competence. Those items rated important by a majority of the panel members were included in the instrument. Those items rated unimportant by a majority of the panel members were not included in the instrument. The panel was also asked to comment on the clarity of each item and to add any other items that related to department store selling competence.

The conclusions from the validity panel remarks were:

1. All statements were considered important by a majority of the panel.

2. The competency "uses appropriate methods to prevent shoplifting" was added.

The final list contained 17 items that reflected department store selling competence. In order to test the reliability of the assessment instrument, Cronbach's alpha procedure was used. Cronbach's alpha measured the internal consistency of the assessment instrument. Thirty-one subjects participated in the reliability test. The population consisted of 21 associates and 10 supervisors selected from Leggett stores not participating in the assessment phase of the study. A reliability coefficient of .887 was obtained using Cronbach's alpha reliability formula.

In developing the final assessment instrument, all appropriate recommendations from the validity panel and the reliability test were incorporated into the final assessment instrument.

Section one of the assessment instrument was concerned with determining the product line sold by the sales associate. Section two of the instrument contained statements designed to assess the sales associate's selling competence. The respondent was asked to assess each item according to a five-point scale from low competence to high competence. Respondents were also asked in this section to assess the importance of each competency, using a five-point scale from low importance to high importance. The assessment instrument used in the study appears in Appendix F.

<u>Step Three: Survey populations</u>. Two populations were surveyed in

Step Three: the sales associate population and the supervisory population. Kaufman (1979) indicated that a needs assessment begins with the student and should focus on the skills, knowledge and attitudes that the student should acquire. The use of the self-assessment approach has become more common in various types of organizations (Burack, 1979). Knowles (1970) indicated the importance of the self-assessment approach stating:

> The use of self-assessment materials by an organization member is in reality part of a broader process of self-directed change. (p. 110)

A supervisory assessment of the same selling competencies provided another perspective for assessing training need. Newstrom and Lillyquist (1979) indicated the importance of supervisory involvement in training assessment stating:

> ... direct supervisors often have valid information about the employee's performance deficiencies and training needs as a product of their unique observational perspective. Finally, supervisors create a climate which the employee must return after being trained. If supervisors have been involved in the process of data collection, they are more likely to provide enthusiastic support for new skills that employees will practice upon their return to the job. On the contrary, if supervisors have been isolated from the needs analysis process, they are less likely to support the training program by encouraging attendance and providing an opportunity to apply the new knowledge. (p. 55)

Although there is no one "best method" for analyzing training needs, Newstrom and Lillyquist (1979) described their view of the "ideal" needs assessment model stating:

> Ideally, an assessment method would involve both the employees and their superiors, would require only a modest investment in time and money, and would provide relevant, objective data useful for making decisions to train or not to train. (p. 56)

Self-assessments and supervisory assessments were conducted at the same time in Step Three. The data for the sales associate and immediate supervisor populations were collected in the same manner. Initially, ten Leggett Department Stores in Virginia were selected by the researcher and Leggett corporate management. The ten stores were selected to be representative of all stores within the company. During the selection process, consideration was given to the following characteristics:

1. store location - downtown center, suburban shopping center, or suburban mall

2. store size - as indicated by square footage, sales volume, and number of full-time employees.

The sales associate and supervisor populations were identified by the researcher and the personnel department of the Leggett Department Stores. The personnel department of Leggett Department Stores assigned staff members to assist with data collection. All Leggett staff assisting with the data collection attended a training session that explained research procedures and precautions to assure accuracy in the data collection. The researcher and the personnel director for the Leggett corporation conducted the training session.

Self-assessments by sales associates were conducted at each of the ten sites. The sales associates at each site were convened as a group. A staff member read prepared instructions to the group prior to distributing the assessment instrument.

The following procedure was used to insure anonymity. Each retail site was assigned a letter such as A, B, or C. Supervisors and sales associates at each site were assigned numbers. The researcher instructed the Leggett staff member to assign each instrument a number such as B1, 16 which would indicate sales associate number 16 supervised by supervisor number 1. Self-assessments by sales personnel were not shown to supervisor personnel.

Instruments were collected by the staff member as respondents completed them. All completed assessment instruments were placed in an envelope, sealed, and delivered to the researcher.

Supervisor assessments were conducted at each of ten sites. Supervisors were convened as a group and instructed to complete an assessment instrument for each sales associate they supervised. Supervisors were assured that their assessments would be kept confidential. The Leggett staff member distributed the appropriate number of assessment instruments. Upon completion, all assessment instruments were sealed in an envelope and delivered to the researcher.

Step Four: Analyze assessment data. A five-point scale was used to assess selling competencies. This scale yielded numerical scores which were treated as interval data. Respondents could rate item importance and competence from low to high. A "low" rating was assigned a value of one. A "high" rating was assigned a value of five. Mid-range ratings were assigned a value of two, three, or four.

Upon completion of the data collection, the data were prepared for processing. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences and the Statistical Analysis System were used to facilitate analysis of the data.

Descriptive statistics (mean score for each item on the assessment instrument) were computed for sales associate and supervisor populations according to competence and importance ratings. Items were then ranked from highest competence (5.0) to lowest competence (1.0) for sales associate and supervisor populations. Items were also ranked from highest importance (5.0) to lowest importance (1.0) for sales associate and supervisor populations. Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients were computed for research questions two and three. The ANOVA procedure was used to determine if supervisor and/or sales associate competency ratings varied by sales associate product line sold.

Principal factor analysis was used to determine if groups or clusters of competencies would emerge as training need areas. Four factor analyses were used:

1. self-assessment with importance
2. self-assessment with competence
3. supervisor assessment with importance
4. supervisor assessment with competence.

Step Five: Development of training outline. Based on the needs assessment conducted, a training course outline with the following features was developed by the researcher:

1. selling competency statements adopted from the assessment instrument
2. specific examples of skills, knowledge and attitudes relating to the personal selling activity
3. a recommendation regarding the amount of time an instructor should devote to teaching the personal selling activity.

The training course outline appears in Appendix G.

Step Six: Evaluate training outline. The training course outline was evaluated by two groups to determine its appropriateness to sales training. A group of marketing and distributive education educators reviewed the training course outline. Members were selected because of their involvement in adult marketing and distributive education. Each person had a minimum of three years of teaching experience in marketing and distributive education. Names of participants in this group appear in Appendix H. A group of store management personnel from the Leggett corporation also reviewed the training course outline.

The groups reviewing the training outline were asked to respond to individually designed surveys. Surveys administered to the MDE professionals and store manager groups assessed the appropriateness of the sales training course outline as a basis for development of a sales training course.

Chapter Summary

Chapter III of the study was concerned with the design and methodology of the study. The needs assessment model developed was detailed in six steps.

The study consisted of two populations: (1) sales associates and (2) sales supervisors. Each population completed a 17-item questionnaire which included statements describing the personal selling activities of department store sales personnel. Each population rated the importance and competence of each instrument item using a scale from one (low) to five (high).

To answer the research questions of the study, the following descriptive statistics were used:

1. Mean scores
2. Variance score
3. Pearson Correlations
4. Spearman Correlations.

The ANOVA procedure was also used in the data analysis.

Principal component factor analysis was used to determine clusters of competencies to be used in developing a training course outline.

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The central purpose of the study was to develop and evaluate a discrepancy needs assessment model that can be used to plan supplementary adult marketing and distributive education programs. Two hundred sixty full-time sales associates from ten outlets of the Leggett Department Stores in Virginia comprised one population in the study. Thirty supervisors of the 260 sales associates comprised a second population. Both populations completed a 17-item assessment instrument. The assessment instrument was developed by the researcher using a synthesis of research related to selling competence, validity panel verification, and reliability testing. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data and principal factor analysis was used for the development of a sales training course outline.

The analysis of data is presented in this chapter in seven sections: (1) effectiveness of the needs assessment model; (2) relationship of competence ratings; (3) relationship of importance ratings; (4) relationship of product line with supervisor competence ratings; (5) relationship of product line with sales associate competence ratings; (6) development of the sales training course outline; and (7) competence rankings by population. The first sections analyze data relative to specific research questions addressed in the study. The final section describes development of the sales training course outline.

Effectiveness of the Needs Assessment Model

The results presented in this section relate to research question number one addressed in the study: Is the content discrepancy needs assessment model effective according to the evaluation criteria identified by Newstrom and Lillyquist?

In response to research question number one, three groups were surveyed to determine the effectiveness of the model. The three survey groups were: (1) seven store management personnel from the Leggett corporation; (2) seven marketing and distributive education professionals involved in adult marketing and distributive education; and (3) ten Leggett staff members assisting with the needs assessment.

The Leggett staff member group completed a survey reflecting the evaluation criteria developed by Newstrom and Lillyquist:

a. incumbent involvement
b. management involvement
c. time required for assessment
d. cost of assessment
e. relevant quantifiable data.

The store managers and MDE professionals group completed surveys reflecting the appropriateness of the sales training course outline to the development and implementation of a sales training course.

The actual surveys used for each group appear in Appendices I (store managers), J (MDE professionals), and K (Leggett staff members). The results of each survey are presented in table form. Selected comments from respondents are also included.

Leggett Management Personnel Evaluation. The information in Table 3 represents store managers' responses to items one through five of the respective survey. All store managers responded that the course

Table 3

Store Managers Survey Responses

Item	Number of Responses: Yes	Number of Responses: No
1. Are the content areas presented appropriate for persons working in department store sales positions?	7	0
2. Is appropriate time allocated to each content area?	6	1
3. Would a sales training course based on this outline benefit full-time department store sales personnel?	7	0
4. Would a sales training course based on this outline benefit part-time department store sales personnel?	7	0
5. Is $200.00 a satisfactory price for an eight-hour sales training course developed from this outline?	7	0

outline areas were appropriate for persons working in the department store area. Six of the seven store managers indicated that an appropriate amount of time was allocated to each content area. All store managers responded that the sales training course outline would benefit both full- and part-time sales personnel. A cost of $200.00 for an eight-hour sales training course developed from the course outline was considered satisfactory by all store managers.

Store managers were asked in item six to offer suggestions for improving the course outline. One manager suggested that the recommended time for each content area serve only as a guide to the instructor.

MDE Professionals Evaluation. The information in Table 4 represents the MDE professionals' responses to items one through three of the respective survey. All MDE professionals indicated that the content areas presented in the course outline were appropriate for persons working in department store sales positions. Five of the seven MDE professionals felt an appropriate amount of time was allocated to each content area. Two of the respondents felt that less time should be allocated to the content area "uses appropriate sales approach." Two respondents recommended more time be allocated to "uses methods to prevent shoplifting." Six of the seven respondents indicated they could conduct a sales training course using the course outline. One respondent felt the recommended amounts of time would prohibit the use of role-playing methodology: "I have problems with the recommended times, particularly if there is to be role-playing, or other student participation."

Table 4

MDE Professionals Survey Responses

Item	Number of Responses Yes	No
1. Are the content areas presented appropriate for persons working in department store sales positions?	7	0
2. Is appropriate time allocated to each subject area?	5	2
3. Could you conduct a sales training course for department store sales personnel using this outline?	6	1

Question four of the survey completed by MDE professionals requested suggestions for improving the course outline. Although most respondents offered no suggestions for improvement, one respondent suggested that some content areas could be combined because of content overlap: "Some areas could be combined as they possibly overlap. Overall, though, a very thorough outline."

Leggett Staff Members Evaluation. Table 5 provides information regarding the reactions of Leggett staff members to the administration of the assessment instrument.

As indicated by the responses to item one in Table 5, the majority (80%) of the respondents felt the amount of time needed to administer the assessment was not excessive. Also, 90 percent of the respondents indicated that the cost of administering the assessment was not excessive. All respondents agreed that involvement of the sales associate and the sales supervisor in the assessment is important to the design of a sales training program. All respondents agreed that the sales associates provided relevant information needed for the design of a sales training program. One respondent did not support the premise that the sales supervisor provides relevant information for designing a sales training program. The remaining responses to item six indicated agreement that the sales supervisor provides relevant information for designing a sales training program.

The Leggett staff members were asked in item seven to indicate the amount of time that was required to administer the assessment instrument. Seven of the ten staff members responded to this item. Responses to this item ranged from 10 to 90 minutes with 30 minutes reported most

Table 5

Leggett Staff Members Survey Responses

Item	Number of Responses: Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1. The amount of time needed to administer the assessment instrument was not excessive.	6	2	1	1
2. The cost of administering this assessment instrument (time invested by you, sales associates, and sales supervisors) was not excessive.	7	2	1	0
3. Involving the sales associate (permitting he/she to complete the assessment instrument) is an important step in designing a sales training program.	8	2	0	0
4. Involving the sales supervisor (permitting he/she to complete the assessment instrument for subordinate) is an important step in designing a sales training program.	7	3	0	0
5. Completion of the assessment instrument by sales associates provides relevant information needed to design a sales training program.	3	7	0	0
6. Completion of the assessment instrument by the sales supervisor provides relevant information needed to design a sales training program.	4	5	1	0

often.

The Leggett staff members were asked in item eight to specify any problems encountered while administering the assessment instrument. The most common problem reported by the respondents concerned the logistics of administering the assessment instrument. Two respondents indicated problems with lost forms while four people had trouble securing completed forms. One respondent indicated he "had to remind one supervisor she was rating her sales associate, not herself."

Item nine of the Leggett staff members survey requested suggestions for improving the assessment instrument. Two respondents suggested that more thorough instructions would improve the administration of the assessment instrument. Another person felt the Leggett staff assessors should be permitted to give directions to sales associates so they could "... understand why it is necessary to assess both importance and competence." An additional suggestion was made to provide "... a blank on the assessment for employees and their supervisors to suggest an area that was not rated and they felt was important."

Relationship of Competence Ratings

The findings presented in this section relate to research question number two addressed in the study: Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self assessment and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor?

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to determine the extent of a relationship between the competence ratings of supervisors and sales associates. A correlation coefficient of .114 was computed.

Kerlinger (1973) stated that correlations tell a researcher of the magnitude and the direction of a relationship. Correlations vary in value from -1.00 through 0 to +1.00. The relationships -1.00 and 1.00 indicate a perfect negative and positive association while 0 indicates no discernible relation. Therefore, a correlation coefficient of .114 indicates that there is very little relationship between the salesperson's self assessment and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor. The researcher also computed a Spearman correlation coefficient. The Spearman correlation coefficient of .179 was similar to the Pearson coefficient.

Relationship of Importance Ratings

The findings presented in this section relate to research question number three: Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self assessment and the importance rating of his/her immediate supervisor?

To determine if a relationship existed between the importance ratings of supervisors and sales associates, a Pearson correlation coefficient was computed. A correlation coefficient of .131 was computed. Therefore, only a minor relationship exists in this study between the salesperson's self assessment and the importance rating of his/her immediate supervisor.

The researcher also computed a Spearman correlation coefficient that resulted in a value of .123.

Relationship of Product Line with Supervisor Competence Ratings

The findings presented in this section relate to research question number four: Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor?

The ANOVA procedure was used to determine if a relationship existed between the competence ratings of supervisors and the product line sold by the sales associates. The product lines sold by sales associates in the study are indicated in Table 6. The results of the ANOVA procedure for supervisors are presented in Table 7. An F value of 2.94 was found to be significant at the .001 level. The researcher followed the ANOVA procedure with a post hoc test to determine which product line means differed significantly. The Duncan's multiple range post hoc test was used since the frequencies of product lines were unequal. The results of the Duncan's test indicated that competence ratings in two product lines, cosmetics and lingerie, were significantly higher than four other product lines, women's wear, drapery/linens, men's wear, and piece goods. The R-square test indicated that 12.2 percent of the variance in competence ratings was attributable to the product line of the sales associates. Table 8 presents the means of product lines found to be significant.

Relationship of Product Line with Sales Associate Competence Ratings

The findings presented in this section relate to research question number five: Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the salesperson's self-assessment competency rating?

Table 6

Product Lines of Sales Associates and Frequencies of Occurrence

Product Line	Frequency
1. Accessories	17
2. Candy	1
3. Children's wear	15
4. Cosmetics	22
5. Drapery/Linens	31
6. Gifts	9
7. Jewelry	7
8. Lingerie	16
9. Men's wear	34
10. Piece goods	9
11. Shoes	30
12. Women's wear	54
Incomplete data	15
TOTAL	260

Table 7

Results of ANOVA for Supervisors

Source	DF	Sum of squares	Mean square	F value	PR > F
Product line	11	4174.24896827	379.47717893	2.94	.0012
Error	232	29964.51742517	129.15740269		
Total	243	34138.76639344			

Table 8

Results of Duncan's Multiple Range Test

Product Line	Mean
1. Accessories	66.824
2. Candy	67.000
3. Children's wear	66.067
4. Cosmetics	72.682
5. Drapery/Linens*	61.290
6. Gifts	67.778
7. Jewelry	69.000
8. Lingerie	71.813
9. Men's wear*	60.235
10. Piece goods*	58.222
11. Shoes	66.033
12. Women's wear*	62.887

*Indicates statistically significant difference from Cosmetics and Lingerie product lines.

The simple ANOVA procedure was used to determine if a relationship existed between the competency ratings of sales associates and the product line sold by the sales associates. The results of this procedure presented in Table 9 indicate that an F value of 0.59 was not significant.

Development of the Sales Training Course Outline

To facilitate evaluation of the needs assessment model, the researcher developed a training course outline. Items featured in the instrument served as a basis for the development of the training course outline. Also, importance rankings by sales associates and supervisor populations influenced development of the outline. The importance rankings by population are presented in Table 10.

The principal factor analysis procedure was also used to determine if clusters of selling activities would emerge. The results of this procedure revealed no discernible underlying constructs or themes.

Competence Rankings by Population

The mean competence ratings of each selling activity by population are listed in Table 11. Data from Table 11 indicate that supervisor competence ratings were generally lower than sales associate ratings. The selling activities "operation of cash register" and "conduct sales transactions" received the highest competence ratings by both populations. The selling activity "prospecting for new customers" received the lowest competence ratings by both groups.

Table 9

Results of ANOVA for Sales Associates

Source	DF	Sum of squares	Mean square	F value	PR > F
Product line	11	821.03450052	74.6395005	0.59	0.8343
Error	232	29187.96140112	125.81017845		
Total	243	30008.99590164			

Table 10

Importance Rankings by Populations

Item	Supervisor Ranking Number	Supervisor Ranking Mean	Sales Associate Ranking Number	Sales Associate Ranking Mean
1. Prospects for new customers with telephone, direct mail, or some other method.	17	3.965	17	3.933
2. Is able to present products to customers effectively.	3	4.849	4	4.769
3. Uses appropriate approach to begin sales transaction.	10	4.665	14	4.599
4. Makes a favorable impression on the customer during all phases of the selling process.	5	4.798	6	4.748
5. Suggests substitute merchandise to customer when appropriate.	6	4.779	10	4.674
6. Uses appropriate questioning techniques to determine customer needs and wants.	8	4.671	12	4.650
7. Is able to provide appropriate product information to customer.	9	4.671	9	4.695
8. Is able to handle customer objections tactfully and effectively.	13	4.621	8	4.702
9. Uses appropriate methods to close sale.	12	4.640	7	4.713

Table 10, continued

Item	Supervisor Ranking Number	Supervisor Ranking Mean	Sales Associate Ranking Number	Sales Associate Ranking Mean
10. Effectively suggests related merchandise to customer.	7	4.691	13	4.626
11. Informs customer how to maintain and use products.	14	4.459	16	4.445
12. Informs customer of services (i.e., credit, gift wrapping) provided by the firm.	16	4.146	15	4.465
13. Is able to conduct sales transactions (e.g., complete credit sale, handle checks, make change) accurately and efficiently.	2	4.852	1	4.904
14. Can operate cash register accurately and efficiently.	1	4.879	2	4.876
15. Handles returned merchandise tactfully and efficiently.	4	4.817	3	4.827
16. Is able to perform non-selling duties (i.e., stocking, pricing, stock rotation) effectively.	11	4.047	5	4.761
17. Uses appropriate methods to prevent shoplifting.	15	4.410	11	4.674

Table 11

Competence Rankings by Population

Item	Supervisor Ranking		Sales Associate Ranking	
	Number	Mean	Number	Mean
1. Prospects for new customers with telephone, direct mail, or some other method.	17	3.01	17	3.31
2. Is able to present products to customers effectively.	7	3.94	7	4.33
3. Uses appropriate approach to begin sales transaction.	13	3.79	14	4.11
4. Makes a favorable impression on the customer during all phases of the selling process.	5	4.00	8	4.32
5. Suggests substitute merchandise to customer when appropriate.	9	3.84	6	4.36
6. Uses appropriate questioning techniques to determine customer needs and wants.	12	3.81	10	4.22
7. Is able to provide appropriate product information to customer.	8	3.85	11	4.18
8. Is able to handle customer objections tactfully and effectively.	10	3.83	9	4.23
9. Uses appropriate methods to close sale.	6	3.95	5	4.41

Table 11, continued

Item	Supervisor Ranking Number	Supervisor Ranking Mean	Sales Associate Ranking Number	Sales Associate Ranking Mean
10. Effectively suggests related merchandise to customer.	11	3.83	6	4.07
11. Informs customer how to maintain and use products.	14	3.53	15	4.07
12. Informs customer of services (i.e., credit, gift wrapping) provided by the firm.	15	3.47	12	4.18
13. Is able to conduct sales transactions (e.g., complete credit sale, handle checks, make change) accurately and efficiently.	2	4.24	2	4.77
14. Can operate cash register accurately and efficiently.	1	4.40	1	4.79
15. Handles returned merchandise tactfully and efficiently.	4	4.03	3	4.65
16. Is able to perform non-selling duties (i.e., stocking, pricing, stock rotation) effectively.	3	4.06	4	4.60
17. Uses appropriate methods to prevent shoplifting.	16	3.39	13	4.17

Chapter Summary

The analysis of the data was presented in Chapter IV. Each research question addressed in the study was presented with appropriate results. Also, the procedures used to evaluate the sales training course outline were presented.

The content discrepancy model was evaluated by three groups: marketing and distributive education professionals; store managers from the Leggett Department Stores; and Leggett staff members assisting with the assessment. Each group responded to an individually designed survey.

Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients were computed to determine if relationships existed between competence ratings of supervisors and sales associates. In addition, the same coefficients were computed to determine if relationships existed between importance ratings of supervisors and sales associates.

The ANOVA procedure was used to determine if a relationship existed between the competence ratings of supervisors and the product line sold by the sales associates. In addition, the same procedure was used to determine if a relationship existed between the competence ratings of sales associates and the product line sold by the sales associates. Post hoc testing was used to determine significant differences in product line means.

Importance rankings for each population and factor analysis were used in the development of a sales training course outline. The outline was used in the evaluation of the needs assessment model.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is presented in five sections: (1) summary of the study; (2) findings of the study; (3) conclusions of the study; (4) discussion of the needs assessment model; and (5) recommendations of the study.

Summary of the Study

Needs assessment in education has been receiving increased attention in recent years. The demand for greater accountability, and the need for more systematic determination of learner needs, has led to increased use of needs assessment as part of the educational planning process. Unfortunately, needs assessment has been neither extensively researched nor practiced in adult marketing and distributive education.

The needs assessment model developed in this study utilized existing occupational research in the department store area for sales personnel. This research served as the foundation for development of the needs assessment instrument and training course outline.

Statement of the Problem. The purpose of the study was to develop and evaluate a discrepancy needs assessment model that can be used to plan supplementary adult marketing and distributive education programs. Additionally, research questions addressed in the study were: Is the content discrepancy needs assessment model effective according to the evaluation criteria identified by Newstrom and Lillyquist; (2) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self assessment and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor; (3) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self assessment and the importance rating of his/her immediate supervisor; (4) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor; and (5) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the salesperson's self-assessment competence rating?

Research Procedure. The research procedure for this study is discussed in four sections: (1) research method; (2) populations used in the study; (3) instrumentation; and (4) analysis of the data.

1. Research Method. The survey form of applied research was used to develop and evaluate the needs assessment model. Use of the survey method allowed populations of larger size to evaluate the effectiveness of the needs assessment model. Two separate populations assessed the importance and competence of selected activities performed by full-time department store salespersons.

2. Populations Used in the Study. Two populations were used in the study. One population consisted of 260 full-time sales associates employed by Leggett department stores in the State of Virginia. The sales associate population was selected from ten Leggett outlets. The second population consisted of the 30 supervisors of the 260 sales associates.

3. Instrumentation. A 17-item needs assessment instrument developed by the researcher was used as the primary data collection method in the study. The instrument was developed from the current

research reflecting the activities performed by department store sales personnel. A validity panel verified statements synthesized from research, and a reliability test was conducted.

Analysis of the Data. Three surveys were conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the needs assessment model. Frequency counts of responses to closed-ended questions were used as the method of presenting the data. Selected responses to open-ended questions were included in narrative form.

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to determine the strength of relationships between how supervisors and sales associates rated importance and competence of selling competency statements. Analysis of variance was used to determine if supervisors and sales associates rated importance and competence differently according to product line sold by the sales associate. Post hoc testing was used to determine significant differences among product lines.

Data collected from sales associate and supervisor populations were analyzed using factor analysis.

Findings

The findings of the study are presented in six sections: (1) effectiveness of the needs assessment model; (2) relationship of competence ratings; (3) relationship of importance ratings; (4) relationship of product line with sales associate competence ratings; (5) relationship of product line with supervisor competence ratings; and (6) development of the sales training course outline.

Effectiveness of the Needs Assessment Model. Three groups were surveyed to determine the effectiveness of the needs assessment model: (1) Leggett store managers; (2) MDE professionals; and (3) Leggett staff members. Findings of each group are reported individually.

1. Leggett store managers. Findings reported in this section consist of responses generated by questions from a survey developed for this group (see Appendix I).

a. Appropriate content areas. Course outline content areas were considered appropriate by all store managers responding to question one. No comments were offered regarding the appropriateness of the content areas for persons working in department store sales positions.

b. Content area time allocation. The length of time allocated to each content area on the sales training course outline was considered appropriate by six of seven Leggett store managers responding to the survey.

c. Beneficial for full-time sales personnel. All Leggett store managers agreed that a sales training course based on the sales training course outline developed by the researcher would be beneficial for full-time sales personnel working in department stores.

d. Beneficial for part-time sales personnel. All Leggett store managers agreed that a sales training course based on the sales training course outline developed by the researcher would be beneficial for persons employed in department stores as part-time salespersons.

e. Price of sales training course. Two hundred dollars was considered a satisfactory price for an eight-hour sales training course by all managers responding to the survey. No additional comments were offered concerning the price of a sales training course.

2. MDE Professionals. Findings reported in this section consist of responses generated by questions from a survey developed for MDE professionals with experience in conducting adult MDE programs.

a. Appropriate content areas. The content areas on the sales training course outline were considered appropriate by all MDE professionals responding. No comments were offered concerning the content areas listed on the sales training course outline.

b. Content area time allocation. The length of time allocated to each content area was considered appropriate by five of the seven (71%) respondents. Two of the seven respondents (28%) suggested less time be allocated to the "sales approach" content area. Two MDE professionals recommended more time be allocated to the "shoplifting prevention" content area.

c. Conducting a sales training course. One MDE professional indicated that he could not offer this sales training course because insufficient time was allocated to each content area while six people responded that they could conduct the sales training course.

3. Leggett Staff Members. Findings reported in this section consist of responses generated by the ten Leggett staff members that assisted with the needs assessment.

a. Time needed to administer instrument. Sixty percent or six of the participants strongly agreed that the length of time needed to administer the assessment instrument was not excessive. Two of the ten respondents selected the "agree" response. Twenty percent or two of the respondents indicated the time needed to administer the assessment instrument was excessive.

b. Cost of administering instrument. Most of the respondents (70%) strongly agreed that the cost of administering the instrument was not excessive. Two of the ten Leggett staff members selected the "agree" response. Only one respondent indicated the cost of administering the assessment instrument was excessive.

c. Sales associate involvement. A large majority (80%) of the participants strongly agreed that involvement of the sales associate was an important step in designing a sales training program. Twenty percent or two respondents agreed it was important to involve the sales associate when designing a sales training program.

d. Supervisory involvement. Seven of the ten respondents indicated they strongly agreed that the supervisor was important to designing the sales training program. Thirty percent or three staff members selected the "agree" response.

e. Relevant information from sales associate. Seventy percent or seven of those responding agreed that the sales associate completion of the assessment instrument provided relevant information. Thirty percent or three of the participants strongly agreed that relevant information needed to design sales training programs was provided by the sales associates that completed the assessment instrument.

f. Relevant information from supervisor. Fifty percent or five respondents agreed that the supervisor provided relevant information needed to design sales training programs. Forty percent or four staff members selected the "strongly agree" response. One respondent indicated the supervisor did not provide relevant information needed to design a sales training program.

Relationship of Competence Ratings. The relationship of competence ratings of sales associates and supervisors was determined by computing a correlation. A Pearson correlation coefficient of .114 and a Spearman correlation coefficient of .179 were computed.

Relationship of Importance Ratings. The relationship of importance ratings of sales associates and supervisors was determined by computing a correlation. A Pearson correlation coefficient of .131 and a Spearman correlation coefficient of .123 were computed.

Relationship of Product Line with Supervisor Competence Ratings. The ANOVA procedure was used to determine if a relationship existed between the product line sold by a sales associate and the compétency rating of the supervisor. It was found that supervisor competency ratings of sales associates in the cosmetics and lingerie product lines were significantly higher than the product lines of men's wear, piece goods, drapery/linens, and women's wear. No other product lines differed significantly in relation to the supervisor competence ratings.

Relationship of Product Line with Sales Associate Competence Ratings. The ANOVA procedure was used to determine if a relationship existed between the sales associate product line sold and the self-assessment competence rating. No significant differences among competence ratings were found in the twelve product lines sold by the sales associates.

Development of Sales Training Course Outline. The researcher developed a training course outline based on the needs assessment instrument. Supervisor and sales associate importance rankings of selling activities were used in the development of the outline. Selling activities rated as the most important by both populations were allocated more time by the researcher. Selling activities rated as most important were:

1. operate cash register efficiently
2. conduct sales transactions accurately
3. handle return merchandise tactfully.

The factor analysis procedure was also used in the development of a sales training course outline. This procedure was implemented to determine the existence of clusters or groups of related items, possibly indicative of needs in particular areas of sales training. The factor loadings on each instrument item were analyzed to determine if any items might be grouped by their common relationship to some identifiable factor such as human relations or communications. No specific common factors, and therefore no groups or clusters of related items useful in the development of the sales training course outline, emerged as the result of this analysis and interpretation of the data.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based upon an analysis of the responses of 260 sales associate self-assessments and the assessments of selling competence by their supervisors to a 17-item instrument assessing selling competence.

1. Three groups were surveyed to determine the effectiveness of the needs assessment model: a group of MDE professionals involved with administration of supplementary adult programs; a group of store

managers from Leggett department stores; and a group of Leggett staff members that assisted with the data collection. A separate survey was designed for each group.

Leggett staff members provided an evaluation of the needs assessment procedures. They completed a survey which reflected the evaluation criteria identified by Newstrom and Lillyquist:

a. incumbent involvement
b. management involvement
c. cost of assessment
d. time needed to administer
e. collection of relevant quantifiable data.

The MDE professionals and store manager groups evaluated a training course outline that was based on the results of the needs assessment. These evaluations related to the applicability of a training course developed from the needs assessment procedure.

Conclusions concerning the effectiveness of the model are discussed relative to each of the five evaluation criteria.

Incumbent Involvement. The results of the survey completed by Leggett staff members indicated the importance of the sales associate's input in the needs assessment process. These results are consistent with the needs assessment literature that supports the involvement of training recipients in designing training programs. Therefore, the researcher concludes that sales associates' input should be included in the needs assessment.

Management Involvement. Supervisors of the 260 sales associates represented management in this study. The majority of Leggett staff members surveyed agreed that supervisors should be involved in training program development. Also, the majority of the respondents indicated that the supervisor provided relevant information to training program development. These results support the conclusion that a supervisor, or a management representative familiar with the training needs of persons who will be enrolled in the training program, be involved in the needs assessment process.

Cost of Assessment. The cost of administering the assessment for Leggett Department Stores was mainly associated with the time spent by supervisors, sales associates and staff members in data collection. Only one Leggett staff member felt the cost of administering the assessment was excessive. Since ninety percent of the respondents felt the cost of administering the assessment instrument was not excessive, it is concluded that administrative costs do not represent a barrier to use of the needs assessment model.

Time Needed to Administer. Twenty percent of the Leggett staff members responded that the time needed to administer the needs assessment was excessive. The remaining eighty percent indicated the time they spent administering the needs assessment was not excessive. Thirty minutes was mentioned most often as the amount of time needed to administer the instrument. Since a majority of the respondents indicated the time needed to administer the assessment was not excessive, it is concluded that time is not a barrier to use of the needs assessment model.

Collection of Relevant Quantifiable Data. The literature supports the concept that needs assessment should produce relvant data. Also, a needs assessment procedure should obtain objective data. The data gathered by this needs assessment procedure was considered relevant by the majority of Leggett staff members. Involvement of sales associates and supervisors in the assessment increases the likelihood of gathering objective data. Also, the data are gathered in a quantifiable method by having respondents assign numerical values to selling activities. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the needs assessment procedure used in this study gathered quantifiable data that was relevant for designing a sales training program.

2. Since a relationship of .114 existed between self and supervisor ratings of competence, it is concluded that there is very little relationship between sales associate and supervisor ratings of the selling competence of the sales associates.

3. Since a relationship of .131 existed between self and supervisor ratings of importance, it is concluded that there is very little relationship between sales associate and supervisor ratings of the importance of selling activities at the ten Leggett stores.

4. Since a relationship existed between supervisor ratings of their sales associates' competence and the product line sold by the sales associates, it is concluded that supervisors in cosmetics and lingerie product lines will rate selling competence higher than supervisors in drapery/linens, men's wear, piece goods, and women's wear.

5. Since no relationship existed between self-assessment competence ratings and product line, it is concluded that product line does not relate to sales associate self-ratings on selling activities at the ten Leggett stores.

Discussion of the Needs Assessment Model

Based upon the experience gained during the course of this study, the following information relating to each step of the needs assessment model is provided to aid those who may adopt this method of needs assessment.

1. Obtain commitment to conduct assessment. Users of this needs assessment procedure should remember the importance of obtaining the support and commitment of the cooperating business. Also, future users should be certain that the cooperating business fully understands the extent to which they will be involved in the needs assessment. Finally, users should emphasize to the cooperating business the benefits they will receive from participating in the needs assessment.

2. Develop the assessment instrument. Future researchers should closely follow all steps employed in the development of this assessment instrument. Users of the instrument developed in this study may want to consider adding or deleting selling activities based on the specific needs of the cooperating business.

3. Survey populations. The assessment of selling activities was conducted by the researcher and staff members from the cooperating business. Although a training session was conducted with staff members, future users should take steps to ensure that specific instructions be given to staff who assist with data collection. If possible, the researcher should be present during the data collection.

The number of sales associates actually participating in the study was approximately 60% of the original group. Problems beyond the control of the researcher resulted in a smaller study population than anticipated. It is very important that future researchers select a convenient time to conduct the assessment in order to maximize participant involvement.

4. Analyze assessment data. Analyzing the data gathered from the assessment is critical to the needs assessment process. Future researchers and users should establish a competence standard by which assessed performance can be measured. This standard may be set by management of the cooperating business. It is difficult to determine exactly when a need exists if the results of the assessment cannot be viewed in relationship to a pre-determined performance standard.

5. Development of a training outline. A training course outline provides an accurate forecast of the content a training course will include. Future users and researchers are encouraged to develop such an outline. However, future users and researchers should include competence and importance ratings in the development of the outline. This may result in an outline that more fully reflects training need.

6. Evaluation of training outline. Future users and researchers should place emphasis on obtaining a detailed response from those who evaluate the training outline.

7. Limitations of the needs assessment model. Future users of the needs assessment model developed in this study should consider the following comments in order to strengthen needs assessments using this model:

a. The data analysis section of the model did not aid the assessor in discriminating the competence level among the selling activities. Also, the model did not indicate which selling activities are most crucial to successful department store selling.

b. Supervisor ratings of importance and competence as they related to product line may be misleading. The results of the supervisory ratings may be due to individual supervisor rating bias rather than to the product line supervised.

c. The amount of instructional time educational planners should allocate to each selling activity was not a direct outcome of the needs assessment model. Also, the relationship between importance and competence of each selling activity could be utilized to develop the sales training course outline.

d. Supervisors did not rate the same number of sales associates in each product line. Unequal group sizes resulted in supervisor importance ratings being given different weights based on the number of sales associates supervised.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, conclusions, and discussion, the following recommendations are presented.

1. The needs assessment model developed in this study can be utilized in various ways by marketing and distributive education professionals. Specifically, the following recommendations are offered:

a. Marketing and distributive education teacher-educators should add the model to instructional units focusing on planning of supplementary adult edult education programs. The model can be discussed as one method to assess needs prior to planning and delivery of adult training courses.

b. Educators involved in planning supplementary adult marketing and distributive education programs should use the needs assessment model to plan adult programs in department store sales training.

c. Educators involved in developing in-service programs for marketing and distributive education should instruct MDE professionals in the application of the needs assessment model.

2. The needs assessment instrument developed in this study should be used as a basis for further research. Specifically:

a. Further research should be conducted with similar populations to further test the validity and reliability of the instrument.

b. A similar study using the needs assessment instrument should be conducted with part-time sales personnel employed in department stores.

3. Further research is needed to apply the needs assessment model to other occupational areas within the marketing and distributive education taxonomy.

4. Further research is recommended to apply the needs assessment model to instructional areas outside of marketing and distributive education.

5. Future researchers should use a mean importance figure for supervisor ratings of selling activities. Supervisor ratings of selling activity importance should be given equal weight regardless of the number of sales associates supervised by a specific supervisor.

6. Future researchers may wish to change the assessment instrument so that importance and competence rating scales do not appear on

the same page.

7. It is recommended that the Leggett Department Stores utilize the needs assessment model (including training outline) as a basis for implementing a sales training course.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE

1. June letter to Leggett's Department Stores
2. November letter to Leggett's Department Stores
3. September letter to
4. Letter to Validity Panel Members

NEW RIVER
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
Drawer 1127, Dublin, Virginia 24084, Telephone

June 4, 1981

Dear ,

I was very happy to learn that you will be able to assist me in conducting my dissertation research. I feel the research can have numerous mutual benefits.

I would like to summarize some points to insure my understanding of our progress to date. The points are:

1. You require that the assessment be conducted by you and your staff.

2. I will develop the assessment instrument and deliver it to your office.

3. The assessment will be conducted in October 1981 unless an August or September data becomes available.

4. I will work with you regarding assessment procedures and controls. In turn, you will be working closely with your staff to insure procedural accuracy.

5. Detailed instructions will be given to each staff member that assists in the assessment. I will prepare the instructions and deliver them to your office.

6. The assessment will be conducted at ten retail outlets in Virginia. Estimated sample size will be 300-400 sales staff and 30-50 supervisory personnel.

7. Any personnel background data you provide will remain anonymous.

8. Leggett Department Stores will receive a copy of the research findings.

I will be presenting this proposal to my doctoral committee. It may be necessary that additional requirements be added after review by the doctoral committee. In any event, I sincerely hope that any necessary requirements or restrictions either of us must impose can be met. I am very excited about the opportunity to work with you and your firm. Thank you for your interest and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

cc: Dr. Barry Reece (Graduate Advisor)

NEW RIVER
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
Drawer 1127, Dublin, Virginia 24084, Telephone

November 24, 1981

Dear :

Thank you for participating in the data collection phase of my research. I recently received that data which looks very informative. I will be examining the data in the next few weeks. After the data examination, I'll give you some initial feedback on the results.

Assessment evaluations are enclosed for completion by the project assessors. Please have each assessor complete the evaluation form and return it to me in the envelope provided. This information will assist me in assessing the overall effectiveness of the data collection procedure.

I appreciate the cooperation and support you and your firm have given me throughout my research. Your cooperation has been invaluable.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor
Program Head, Marketing

PJO:bsm

Enclosures

Patrick J. O'Connor

September 29, 1981

Marketing and Distributive
Education
Lane Hall
VPI & SU
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Dear :

Enclosed is the cross-referenced list of sales competence statements. This list represents my synthesis of current research on the department store salesperson's selling skills competence. In parentheses after each statement are letters and numbers that refer to statements in the enclosed appendices. Please review my synthesized list and comment on its accuracy and appropriateness.

I appreciate your assistance in this phase of my study. I will forward a copy of the results for your information.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

Patrick J. O'Connor

October 6, 1981

Dear Panel Member:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my dissertation research. As you know, the research will focus on the development and testing of a model for assessing the training needs of department store sales personnel. In an effort to establish a standard that reflects the competent salesperson, I have cross-referenced current research on department store sales competence. The list of sales competencies is enclosed for your review. I would like your assistance in validating the enclosed cross-referenced list of competency statements. Please circle "I" (important for department store salesperson) or "U" (unimportant for department store salesperson) after you have reviewed each item. If you feel the competency statement is unclear please add suggestions for clarification.

Finally, if there are any competencies you feel should be added, please list these in the space provided. The validated list of competency statements will form the basis for the questionnaire to be used in my study. Your assistance in validating the competency list will result in a more accurate "competency standard" for the department store salesperson. Please return your list to me as soon as possible.

I appreciate your assistance. If you would like a copy of the results of the research, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

APPENDIX B

TASK STATEMENTS FROM WILLIAMS, BERNS AND SIPOS STUDY

1. Advise customer on current fashions.
2. Analyze customer objections as valid or as excuses.
3. Appriase customer's purchasing needs and desires.
4. Apply methods for meeting customer objections.
5. Approach the customer when opening a sale.
6. Approve credit transaction.
7. Approve customer's check for purchase.
8. Approve merchandise return or exchange.
9. Arrange for home installation of merchandise.
10. Arrange merchandise in the stockroom.
11. Arrange merchandise on the selling floor.
12. Balance cash drawer against cash register reading.
13. Calculate employee discount on merchandise purchased.
14. Calculate sales tax.
15. Calculate the amount of a customer's purchase.
16. Calculate the unit price for multiple-priced merchandise.
17. Call customer concerning merchandise ordered.
18. Call fitter, or make appointment for fitting, if alterations are needed.
19. Change price marking on merchandise.
20. Check store for depleted stock.
21. Clean merchandise.
22. Compute selling costs of purchased items.
23. Correct cash register error.
24. Cover merchandise.
25. Demonstrate merchandise as it may be used by customers.

Appendix B (con't.)

26. Detect "buying signals" or readiness to buy on the customer's part.
27. Determine a customer's buying motive.
28. Determine approach for opening a sale.
29. Determine method for closing a sale.
30. Determine personality type of customer.
31. Determine sales tax from a tax table.
32. Determine type, quality, and price of merchandise carried by competitors.
33. Determine when either underselling or overselling is becoming detrimental to a sale.
34. Develop a sales presentation around identified buying motives.
35. Develop a sales presentation based upon anticipated customer objections.
36. Employ methods of suggestion selling to increase the sale.
37. Establish sales quota for department.
38. Establish sales quota for salesperson.
39. Establish sales quota for store.
40. Exchange returned merchandise.
41. Explain delivery schedules to customer.
42. Fill in floor fixture or bin.
43. Identify product benefits.
44. Identify product features.
45. Inform buyer or supervisor of stocks that are low.
46. Inform customer of newly-arrived merchandise.

Appendix B (con't.)

47. Inform customer of specially-priced merchandise.

48. Inform supervisor of customer complaint.

49. Inform the buyer of customer requests.

50. Inspect merchandise on selling floor for damage.

51. Inspect merchandise returned by customer for damage.

52. Inventory the physical stock.

53. Make change during a cash transaction.

54. Mark prices on merchandise.

55. Order replacement merchandise based upon merchandise counts.

56. Place merchandise into the customer's hands during a sale.

57. Place size marker on rack.

58. Read and clear cash register.

59. Record merchandise price changes in price book.

60. Record sale on a cash register.

61. Refund money for returned merchandise.

62. Repair damaged merchandise.

63. Replenish floor stock from reserve stock.

64. Remove spoiled or damaged merchandise from selling floor.

65. Request cash for register.

66. Request merchandise from other stores.

67. Rotate merchandise.

68. Select merchandise to transfer to other stores.

69. Select the credit plan or installment terms which will serve the customer best.

Appendix B (con't.)

70. Select wrapping materials for the customer's purchase.
71. Sell gift certificate.
72. Set up a customer card file.
73. Set up merchandise demonstration.
74. Ship merchandise to fill a mail order.
75. Ship merchandise to fill a telephone order.
76. Suggest merchandise from department.
77. Suggest merchandise from other departments.
78. Suggest qualities of higher priced merchandise (trade up) during a sale.
79. Take garment to alterations department.
80. Take merchandise count.
81. Transfer merchandise to Will-Call or Lay-Away area of store.
82. Wrap, bag, or box sold merchandise.
83. Write additional customer (identification) information on customer check.
84. Write cash refund slip.
85. Write charge credit.
86. Write exchange slip.
87. Write sales check for cash transaction.
88. Write sales check for C.O.D. transaction.
89. Write sales check for credit transaction.
90. Write sales check for lay-away.

APPENDIX C

SELLING OBJECTIVES FROM LYNCH ET AL. STUDY (1977a)

1. Determine amount of sales tax and which items are taxable.
2. Make change for customer.
3. Bag or wrap merchandise for customer.
4. Process checks received in accordance with firm's policies.
5. Make refunds for items such as coupon redemption and returned merchandise.
6. Handle lay-away sales.
7. Secure necessary customer credit information such as obtaining credit references, status of customer's account, credit limits, etc.
8. Interpret credit policies to customers.
9. Process credit purchases such as firm accounts, Bank Americard, Master Charge, etc.
10. Prepare sales slips.
11. Balance cash drawer against register reading and complete appropriate forms for register close-out.
12. Handle back-orders in accordance with company policy.
13. Take orders in person or on the phone including catalog sales.
14. Analyze reasons for return of merchandise and take corrective action.
15. Follow legislation regarding sales of certain products.
16. Represent the firm favorably to customers by showing courtesy, responding to inquiries in a friendly manner, etc.
17. Greet all customers in accordance with firm policy.
18. Open sale in appropriate manner.
19. Identify prospective new customers.

Appendix C (con't.)

20. Open new accounts.
21. Maintain a customer list for mailings.
22. Help customers define and understand their needs, wants, and problems.
23. Determine merchandise which is of interest to customer.
24. Ask pertinent questions to define more clearly the nature of customer interest.
25. Recognize when customers prefer to examine merchandise with or without assistance.
26. Inform customers of the uses of products.
27. Inform customers of the various sizes available.
28. Explain to customers protective measures such as standards and grades.
29. Inform customers of the various styles.
30. Compare prices and price lines for customers.
31. Inform customers of various colors available.
32. Inform customers of brand names.
33. Inform customers of expected useful life.
34. Inform customers of product materials.
35. Instruct customers in how to care, handle, maintain, and repair merchandise.
36. Suggest substitute items to customers.
37. Suggest related items to customers.
38. Inform customers of product trends and innovations.

Appendix C (con't.)

39. Provide sources of product information.

40. Explain guarantees and warrantees to customers.

41. Present new items to customers.

42. Demonstrate products for customers.

43. Respond to customer questions and complaints in an effective manner and in accordance with company policy.

44. Inform customers of locations of merchandise.

45. Work with more than one customer simultaneously in a courteous manner.

46. Greet all customers in accordance with company policy.

47. Operate cash register in accordance with company policy.

48. Determine price for items not pre-priced.

49. Inform customers of services provided by the firm.

APPENDIX D

RETAIL SELLING COMPETENCY BATTERY FROM RUSSELL STUDY

RETAIL SELLING COMPETENCY BATTERY

prepared by
Robert L. Russell
Department of Vocational Education
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Directions: On the Answer Sheet, write the letter that represents the word, or group of words, that best completes the question or statement.

HUMAN RELATIONS

1. The employee who does not destructively criticize the firm is a form of
   A) rating
   B) loyalty
   C) venturesome spirit
   D) industriousness

2. To succeed in retailing one must succeed in
   A) product knowledge
   B) being aggressive
   C) remaining quiet
   D) human relations

3. By respecting the opinion and ideas of one's fellow worker, praising their efforts and making them feel important in their work will
   A) cause others to be industrious
   B) help others to acquire tact
   C) result in a profit for the store
   D) motivate others to their best performance

4. Steady, earnest, diligent effort is
   A) industriousness
   B) enthusiasm
   C) "passing the buck"
   D) eagerness

5. A person who has the ability to see a job to be done and the courage to go ahead and do it is said to possess
   A) enthusiasm
   B) tact
   C) initiative
   D) loyalty

6. What helps the salesperson to handle customer complaints satisfactorily?
   A) Definite store policies and follow recommended procedures.
   B) Refer the customer to the supervisor.
   C) Making exchanges.
   D) Suggest that you will try to get them an adjustment when you have the time.

OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

7. The most common credit plan is the
   A) bank credit plan
   B) open or regular account
   C) deferred or revolving account
   D) installment plan

8. What increases sales volume and reduces selling costs and results in increased profits;
   A) Efficient stockkeeping
   B) Controlled economy
   C) Service advertising
   D) Variable expense

9. If it is not a personalized check, most stores require
   A) that he cash the check at his bank
   B) that the customer write his address and telephone number on the back
   C) a bank authorization
   D) that the customer write his social security number on the back

10. The type of goods located to the back or on upper floors are generally
    A) customer services
    B) staple or shopping goods
    C) impulse goods
    D) convenience goods

11. The method of wrapping which speeds up selling service, reduces damages and handling costs and eliminates packing is
    A) packing
    B) wrapping
    C) prepacking
    D) bagging

12. A summary of all sales checks written during the day, totaled and given to the department manager with sales checks and money is
    A) a customer's ledger
    B) a deposit book
    C) a tally
    D) cycle billing

13. What is the procedure for checking to see if the quantity and style are the same as ordered, that the price is correct, that proper cash discount has been given and that the shipping instructions were followed?
    A) The invoice is checked against the original purchase order.
    B) The packages are opened by the receiving clerk.
    C) The invoice is checked against the bill of lading.
    D) The bill of lading is checked against the purchase order.

14. Name the document used to order goods from a salesman in person or by phone.
   A) Sales-Check
   B) Purchase order
   C) Invoice
   D) Bill of lading

MERCHANDISING

15. Charging all customers the same price for a particular article is known as a
   A) floor price
   B) cash-retail price
   C) staple price
   D) one-price policy

16. A lower-than-average markup is generally justified when
   A) customers expect a greater amount of personal service
   B) the goods are exclusive
   C) the expenses of handling are to be greater than normal
   D) customers expect little personal service.

17. All merchandising, including advertising, displaying, buying and market researching appeals to
   A) marketing policies
   B) customer buying motives
   C) rational motives
   D) product motives

18. Buying in many of the large department stores is based upon
   A) the private brands
   B) a study of customer demand
   C) the availability of national brands
   D) staple goods

19. Perpetual inventory data processed by a computer from a paper tape and returned in a final report back to the retailer is recorded by a
   A) basic stock list
   B) cash-register control
   C) sales-check control
   D) reserve requisition

20. Valuable information for sales planning and sound purchasing can be achieved better
   A) on memorandums
   B) by reducing slow-moving merchandise
   C) by an inventory system
   D) by a quantity discount

21. What information provides salespeople with convincing evidence that builds their confidence in the products they sell?
   A) technical information
   B) showing and demonstrating
   C) using visual sales aids
   D) talking with the customer

22. Merchandise should be arranged with these three goals in mind: (1) it aids in the sale of goods; (2) it allows the new salesperson to learn the location of the stock; and (3) it
   A) should increase selling space
   B) should speed delivery
   C) aids in the handling of complaints
   D) facilitates the control of stock

23. An inventory system in which value of goods on hand can be determined without bothering to count the goods is
   A) a physical inventory
   B) a perpetual inventory
   C) an opening inventory
   D) a closing book inventory

24. If the store counts its stock at inventory time at cost rather than retail price, the cost price is nearly always indicated on the price ticket
   A) by digits
   B) as the original retail price
   C) for easier retail pricing
   D) in code

25. Advance-marking from the purchase order is called
   A) cost price
   B) preretailing
   C) marking
   D) initial markup

SELLING

26. When a customer is interested in an item for a specific reason, it is wise to use a remark that
   A) appeals to the average customer
   B) appeals to the latest fashion
   C) appeals to that interest
   D) will result in an argument

27. The basic steps of a retail sale listed in correct order are
   A) the approach and determining the need, the presentation, overcoming objections, closing the sale, and suggestion selling
   B) suggestion selling, the presentation, overcoming objections, the approach and determining the need, and closing the sale
   C) the presentation, the approach and determining the need, overcoming objections, suggestion selling, and closing the sale
   D) the approach and determining the need, the presentation, suggestion selling, overcoming objections, and closing the sale

28. When a customer participates in the sales presentation, his interest changes into
   A) studying the merchandise
   B) desiring to own the merchandise
   C) a need for more product information
   D) indifference to owning the merchandise

29. Which of the following approaches is most desirable when the salesperson sees a customer examining an item?
   A) Greeting approach
   B) Service approach
   C) Merchandise approach
   D) Stall approach

30. Customer identification for a charge transaction is usually done in one of the three ways: (1) recognizing him, (2) by credit card, or
   A) calling the local credit bureau
   B) references of three former employers
   C) by requesting authorization from the credit department
   D) customer's social security number

31. When the credit card is inserted into the charge-posting cash register the sale is
   A) printed on the customer's ledger account card
   B) registered on a credit memorandum
   C) printed on the customer's monthly statement
   D) printed on the bank credit card

32. A document numbered in order, each accounted for, with the original copy kept by the store, the duplicate is the customer's copy and the triplicate copy remains in the sales book is called a
A) purchase order
B) cash-record
C) sales register
D) sales check

33. Helping the customer to reach a decision to buy is called
A) overcoming objections
B) closing the sale
C) suggestion selling
D) hard sell

34. Regular customers, less price-consciousness, buying more freely, building confidence, attracting a preferred trade, smoothing out business peaks, and building retail profits are advantages of
A) department stores
B) cash-take sales
C) credit plan
D) chain stores

35. When the salesperson helps the customer to understand what it will mean to do without merchandise, then this is answering
A) specific-feature objections
B) need objections
C) price objections
D) "decision" excuses

36. Legislation which requires that cost of credit on each transaction be revealed before purchase in terms of an annual interest rate is the
A) Fair-trade laws
B) Truth-in-Lending Bill
C) Unfair-practices laws
D) Robinson-Patman Act

37. Misrepresenting merchandise, high pressure selling, incorrect delivery information and errors in billing or crediting accounts are reasons for complaints and returns caused by
A) the sales promotion division
B) the merchandising division
C) the finance and control division
D) store personnel

38. Related merchandise, a larger quantity, new products, and specials are kinds of
A) the merchandise approach
B) customer needs
C) buying decisions
D) suggestion selling

39. Which service ranks second to credit and that which the sales personnel should be well informed about?
A) delivery service
B) personal shopping service
C) gift-wrapping service
D) return goods service

40. An essential part of mail and phone orders is
A) delivery service
B) charge accounts
C) discount sales
D) exchanges

41. With women's shoes, color becomes
A) a fad
B) an important factor
C) a major merchandise classification
D) a minor merchandise classification

42. When reserve stock is kept in drawers or on shelves on the sales floor, it is called
A) reserve stock
B) under-the-counter stock
C) warehouse reserve
D) perimeter stock

43. Communication with gestures, isolating the goods, handling merchandise meaningfully, and visualizing the product in use are
A) the basic steps of retail selling
B) means to display goods effectively
C) selling according to need and desires
D) variations in buying procedure

MATHEMATICS

44. Find the total amount of the sale.
4 panels, French-fold draperies @ $30.00
2 twin straight sheets @ $4.80
2 twin fitted sheets @ $5.80
4 pillowcases @ $1.20
2 twin bedspreads @ $14.95
2 traverse rods @ $15.00
A) $300.50
B) $405.90
C) $625.75
D) $452.50

45. A salesman sold a suit to a fellow employee for $80. A 5% state tax and a 1% city tax must be charged. The employee is allowed a 15% discount by the store. How much should the employee pay for the suit?
A) $64.00
B) $72.00
C) $72.08
D) $68.25

46. During a recent week the women's ready-to-wear sold 95 children's dresses at $9.95 each; 150 teen dresses at $15.95 each; and 108 women's casual dresses at $12.95 each. What were the total dress sales of the department?
A) $4736.35
B) $8200.50
C) $5265.70
D) $3775.00

47. A salesman in the houseware department sold an electric blender to a customer. The price of the blender was $49.50, and the customer decided to pay $9 a month for 6 months, plus a $6 down payment. How much would the customer have saved if he had paid cash?
A) $10.50
B) $49.50
C) $9.00
D) $4.50

48. A wool fabric is priced at $7.40 per yard. A customer buys 2 yards and 9 inches of the material and must also pay a 5% state sales tax. Figure the amount of the sale.
A) $20.35
B) $17.48
C) $21.18
D) $18.35

49. If the amount of sales in a department last week was $44,698.50 and if the sales represented 1050 sales transactions, what was the amount of the average sale for the week?
A) $42.57
B) $72.50
C) $82.07
D) $40.57

50. If department sales amount to $80,000, the average stock amounts to $10,000, what is the rate of turn?
A) 8
B) 7
C) 4
D) 10

51. If 42 is 3/5 of a number, what is 1/10 of the number?
A) 2.52
B) 4.2
C) 7.0
D) 25.2

52. A commission of 16-2/3% is paid on all sales over $200,000. Sales last month were $254,000. Find the amount of commission paid.
A) $33,333.00
B) $6,750.00
C) $82,333.00
D) $9,000.00

53. During one month the $5,000 advertising expenditure of a department store was distributed among two of the departments as follows: men's clothing, $1250 and furniture, $500. The remainder was allocated to other departments. Compute the percentage of the total that each department mentioned spent for advertising.
A) 25% and 50%
B) 25% and 10%
C) 25% and 5%
D) 12.5% and 10%

54. Retail, $26; markup, 30%. Find (a) cost price and (b) markup in dollars. (Based on the retail).
A) (a) $20.00 (b) $6.00
B) (a) $27.80 (b) $7.80
C) (a) $17.33 (b) $8.67
D) (a) $18.20 (b) $7.80

55. Which equation is used to find the cost price of an item when the retail price and the markup are known?
A) Markup % = $\frac{\text{Markup in \$}}{\text{Retail Price}}$
B) M = R − C
C) C + M = R
D) C = R − M

56. Retail, $30; markup, $10. Find (a) cost and (b) markup percent based on the cost.
A) (a) $20.00 (b) 50%
B) (a) $40.00 (b) 25%
C) (a) $40.00 (b) 50%
D) (a) $20.00 (b) 33-1/3%

57. As a general rule, what is the best procedure to follow after a salesperson over-rings the sale?
A) (1) Ring a "No Sale"
(2) Re-ring the sale correctly
(3) Void the incorrect cash-register receipts and
(4) Give it to the supervisor immediately
B) (1) Check the cash-register window for the correct amount
(2) Ring a "No Sale"
(3) Void the incorrect cash-register receipt and
(4) Turn in the cash-register receipt and the cash at the end of the day
C) (1) Note the amount of over-ring on the cash-record form
(2) Have it approved by the supervisor and
(3) Turn in the change fund and the money received during the day to the cashier's office
D) (1) Re-ring the sale correctly
(2) Void the incorrect cash-register receipt
(3) Have it approved by a supervisor, if required, and
(4) Turn it in with the cash at the end of the day

PRODUCT AND/OR SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

58. Product information should be organized according to the
A) policies of the store
B) customer's buying decisions
C) five basic steps of selling
D) principles of marketing

59. A merchandising tool which gives the essential facts about the product is a
A) customer survey
B) testimonial
C) label
D) special course

60. Why is it necessary for a salesperson to be responsible for maintaining a wide selection of fresh, clean forward stock and for knowing where it is and how to get it easily?
A) caveat emptor
B) increased customer satisfaction and profits
C) to prevent injury to other personnel
D) for checking stock with the receiving book

61. The salesperson interprets the features of a product in terms of benefits to customers
A) by comparison shopping
B) through the wholesaler
C) by comparing and studying several grades of merchandise
D) through community services

62. Trade papers or journals
A) are published just for home furnishings
B) report on new products and items that are enjoying popular demand
C) are infrequently read by salespeople
D) are given free to retailers by the local Chamber of Commerce

63. Information on how to use and care for products and information on their construction can often be obtained from
A) mail order catalogues
B) the warranty
C) descriptive labels
D) informative labels

64. If the customer enters a department hurriedly and seems anxious to buy what type of approach should the salesperson use?
A) approach in an unhurried manner but with an intense interest
B) approach briskly showing a real desire to satisfy him quickly
C) ask many questions to discover the customer's needs
D) omit the greeting, concentrate on technical information alone

65. Information attached to merchandise to aid the customer in making a wise buying decision is found on
A) the warranty
B) the trade mark
C) the brand mark
D) merchandise labels

66. What kind of information gives the customer the assurance that the article will provide the values he deserves?
A) interior displays
B) consumer research
C) characteristics of a product
D) information from other retail stores

67. What legislation requires that the label specify weight and condition of wool and the weight of nonwool material?
A) Truth-in-Packaging Bill
B) Fur Label
C) Wool Products Labeling Act
D) Textile Fiber Products

68. Name the agency which issues guidelines to prevent deceptive and dishonest retail pricing practices
A) Fair Trade Code
B) Better Business Bureau
C) Consumers League
D) Federal Trade Commission

69. "Vogue ®" on a garment label means the trademark is
A) registered with the Federal Trade Commission
B) the name of the manufacturing company
C) identifying the quality of the garment
D) the brand name of the garment

70. The act which protects producers and consumers against misbranding and false advertising of fiber content of textile fiber products is the
A) Federal Trade Commission Act, 1941
B) Textile Fiber Identification Act, 1958
C) National Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act, 1938
D) Robinson-Patman Act, 1936

71. The Flammable Fabrics Act was passed in order to
A) protect the public from adulterated goods
B) assure the consumer protection against hazards of using products containing toxic substances
C) prohibit the sale in interstate commerce of clothing materials that are a fire hazard
D) protect the customer from products not properly packaged or labeled

72. The seal of approval for both the seller and the consumer that electrical appliances are free from fire and shock hazards is furnished by the
A) Federal Trade Commission Act
B) Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.
C) Fair Packaging and Labeling Bill
D) Fair-trade laws

COMMUNICATIONS

73. If an employee has a new idea, he should
A) report it in the written monthly report
B) discuss it with the store manager
C) try it out with a fellow employee
D) discuss it with his supervisor

74. What are the three main parts of a sales check?
A) (1) the address label
(2) the body and
(3) the voucher
B) (1) selection factors
(2) quantities and
(3) service and location demands
C) (1) address label
(2) cost of goods and
(3) discount
D) (1) date
(2) type of transaction and
(3) cash balance

75. Products must be described realistically in
A) direct selling
B) telephone selling
C) internal selling
D) a cooperative store

76. The successful salesperson matches his product information with the
A) price that the customer can afford
B) buyer's wants and needs
C) customer's knowledge
D) customer's objections

77. Which choice of answers best describes the foundation of sales professionalism?
A) personal integrity
B) constant aspiring toward perfection
C) hard work
D) decision making

78. The three types of information that may be attached to goods are
A) (1) the color
(2) style and
(3) packaging regulations
B) (1) the trade discount
(2) bank credit plan and
(3) the delivery terms
C) (1) a code price
(2) a list price and
(3) the sales price
D) (1) a descriptive label
(2) an informative label and
(3) a grade label

79. Which meaning of a word causes the salesperson the most difficulty?
A) literal meaning
B) emotional meaning
C) perceptual meaning
D) acceptation

ADVERTISING

80. Stores use institutional advertising to
A) create a desire for their merchandise
B) introduce a new model and style of a specific product
C) generate customer traffic for the sale
D) build goodwill

81. Periodicals (newspapers, magazines, trade journals), mass media (radio, T.V., billboards) and direct advertising (catalogs, circulars, letters) are types of
A) public services
B) local resources for research
C) agencies which furnish lists of customers
D) media that are available for advertising

82. Which of the choices help to answer the question "where should it be purchased?"
A) the history of the store's management
B) adequacy of the assortment from which to choose
C) where advertising costs are low
D) from a chain store

83. (1) Is it arresting? (2) Is it distinctive? (3) Is it clear? and (4) Does it quickly communicate the idea of interest to the reader? These questions along with others should be answered when checking
A) a media plan for a layout
B) display space
C) advertising layouts
D) fundamentals of design

84. The newspaper, direct-mail, enclosures, outdoor and public transportation, radio and television, window and store displays are used
A) to inform customers of special events
B) for internal selling
C) to control the amount of advertising
D) for planning future sales

85. Why do some stores have to spend more on advertising than competitors?
A) high incomes of salespeople
B) low quality stock
C) location
D) lack of continual advertising

86. The type of customer a retailer wishes to attract, what goods he is advertising and how much money he wishes to spend determines
A) the advertising standards
B) how much will be advertised
C) the value of advertising
D) the selection of advertising media

DISPLAY

87. Keep the display fixtures and the merchandise clean, where possible, show the merchandise as it would be used and change the displays often are necessary for the proper upkeep of
A) under-the-counter stock
B) reserve stock
C) window and interior displays
D) the physical inventory

88. To be effective, point-of-sale devices should
A) not contain space for the price
B) be functional
C) be out of the customers' reach
D) be concentrated on staple items only

89. The elements of the design spread out like rays from a central point are called
A) zig-zag
B) stair-step
C) pyramid
D) radiation

90. The stimulating colors—yellow, orange, and red are called
A) receding colors
B) advancing colors
C) secondary colors
D) primary colors

91. The soothing colors—blue, green, and violet suggest dignity and relaxation and are called
A) receding colors
B) advancing colors
C) secondary colors
D) primary colors

92. The lines and characteristics of an article that make it different from other articles of the same kind are known as
A) style
B) high fashion
C) fad
D) fashion

93. Which relationship between merchandise and background makes a display more interesting?
A) contrast in texture
B) same in texture
C) use of numerous colors
D) two colors of the same value

94. Most displays are best if the color selection is
A) achromatic
B) complex
C) nonharmonious
D) simple

95. A design that uses items of the same general nature and aligns them in exactly the same height, spacing or angle is called
A) repetition
B) stair-step
C) zig-zag
D) interference

96. Thumbnail sketches, generous margins, balance and emphasis of the important copy are
A) general rules for preparing a sales letter
B) simple rules for creating show cards
C) principles of design
D) rules for planning interior displays

97. Composition, dominance, balance and proportion are four principles of
A) advertising
B) retail promotion
C) design
D) buying

98. Why is the open display effective?
A) because the customer cannot handle the goods
B) only one specific kind of goods are used
C) it is the area just inside the front door
D) the customer can handle the merchandise.

99. Planning the display and checking the display for its effect in selling merchandise are the two most important steps for
A) creating a layout
B) direct-mail advertising
C) direct selling
D) creating a display

100. Care in folding, draping, concealing pins and tags, skillful use of color and design principles are important
A) steps for omnibus advertising
B) when dressing mannequins for displays
C) points in institutional advertising
D) duties handled by the sales director

APPENDIX E

VALIDITY PANEL MEMBERS

Adult Regional Coordinator
Marketing and Distributive Education
Roanoke, Virginia 24019

Marketing and Distributive Education
Teacher Educator
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia

Manager
Leggett's Department Store
Radford, Virginia 24141

Division Supervisor
Leggett's Department Store
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060

Manager
Leggett's Department Store
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073

Department Manager
Leggett's Department Store
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073

Department Manager
Leggett's Department Store
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060

APPENDIX F

Assessment Instrument Used in Study

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SALES ASSOCIATE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine your responses to statements concerning certain activities performed by persons engaged in personal selling. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. By circling the appropriate number (on a scale of 1-5) to the left of each statement, please indicate how important each statement is to your job. By circling the appropriate number (on a scale of 1-5) to the right of each statement, please indicate your ability to perform each selling activity. Please respond to all statements. Thank you for your participation.

Please indicate the product(s) or product line you sell most often_________________.

IMPORTANCE LOW HIGH		COMPETENCE LOW HIGH
1 2 3 4 5	1. Prospects for new customers with telephone, direct mail, or some other method	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	2. Is able to present products to customers effectively	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	3. Uses appropriate approach to begin sales transaction	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	4. Makes a favorable impression on the customer during all phases of the selling process	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	5. Suggests substitute merchandise to customer when appropriate	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	6. Uses appropriate questioning techniques to determine customer needs and wants	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	7. Is able to provide appropriate product information to customer	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	8. Is able to handle customer objections tactfully and effectively	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	9. Uses appropriate methods to close sale	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	10. Effectively suggests related merchandise to customer	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	11. Informs customer how to maintain and use products	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	12. Informs customer of services (i.e., credit, gift wrapping) provided by the firm	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	13. Is able to conduct sales transactions (e.g., complete credit sale, handle checks, make change) accurately and efficiently	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	14. Can operate cash register accurately and efficiently	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	15. Handles returned merchandise tactfully and efficiently	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	16. Is able to perform non-selling duties (i.e., stocking, pricing, stock rotation) effectively	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	17. Uses appropriate methods to prevent shoplifting	1 2 3 4 5

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUPERVISORS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine your responses to statements concerning certain activities performed by persons engaged in personal selling. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. By circling the appropriate number (on a scale of 1-5) to the left of each statement, please indicate how important each statement is to the sales associate's job. By circling the appropriate number (on a scale of 1-5) to the right of each statement, please indicate the sales associate's ability to perform each selling activity. Please respond to all statements. Thank you for your participation.

IMPORTANCE LOW HIGH		COMPETENCE LOW HIGH
1 2 3 4 5	1. Prospects for new customers with telephone, direct mail, or some other method	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	2. Is able to present products to customers effectively	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	3. Uses appropriate approach to begin sales transaction	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	4. Makes a favorable impression on the customer during all phases of the selling process	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	5. Suggests substitute merchandise to customer when appropriate	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	6. Uses appropriate questioning techniques to determine customer needs and wants	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	7. Is able to provide appropriate product information to customer	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	8. Is able to handle customer objections tactfully and effectively	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	9. Uses appropriate methods to close sale	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	10. Effectively suggests related merchandise to customer	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	11. Informs customer how to maintain and use products	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	12. Informs customer of services (i.e., credit, gift wrapping) provided by the firm	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	13. Is able to conduct sales transactions (e.g., complete credit sale, handle checks, make change) accurately and efficiently	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	14. Can operate cash register accurately and efficiently	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	15. Handles returned merchandise tactfully and efficiently	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	16. Is able to perform non-selling duties (i.e., stocking, pricing, stock rotation) effectively	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	17. Uses appropriate methods to prevent shoplifting	1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX G

SALES TRAINING COURSE OUTLINE

The following are suggested content areas and may be changed in actual training situations.

CONTENT AREA	RECOMMENDED TIME
1. Prospect for New Customers a. To develop an understanding of the importance of prospecting to personal selling b. To become familiar with the main prospecting techniques	1 hour
2. Present Products to Customers a. To understand the role of product presentation b. To use presentation techniques and procedures	1 hour
3. Use Appropriate Sales Approach a. To understand the importance of correctly approaching customers b. To become familiar with three common sales approaches	1 hour
4. Make Favorable Impression on Customer a. To understand importance of first impression to sales success b. To become familiar with the parts of a good first impression	1 hour
5. Suggests Substitute Merchandise a. To understand the reason for substituting merchandise b. To utilize techniques to encourage customer to accept a substitute	1 hour
6. Use Appropriate Questioning Techniques a. To understand the importance of questioning in a sales conversation b. To become familiar with the main types and methods of questioning	1 hour
7. Provide Appropriate Product Information a. To understand the importance of providing the customer with product information b. To become familiar with the main sources of product information	1 hour
8. Handles Customer Objections a. To understand what the objection contributes to the sales conversation b. To become familiar with three common techniques to handle customer objections	1 hour

Appendix G (con't.)

CONTENT AREA	RECOMMENDED TIME
9. Use Methods to Close Sale a. To realize importance of closing to selling b. To become familiar with three common closing methods	1 hour
10. Suggest Related Merchandise a. To understand the role of suggestion selling as a service to customer b. To become familiar with suggestion selling techniques	1 hour
11. Inform Customer of Product Use and Maintenance a. To understand importance of showing customer how to use and maintain product b. To become familiar with methods to learn product use and maintenance	1 hour
12. Inform Customer of Store Services a. To understand the importance of related store services to selling b. To integrate three store services into a sales conversation	1 hour
13. Conducts Sales Transaction a. To realize the importance of accuracy in conducting transaction b. To be able to conduct transaction using appropriate procedures	2 hours
14. Operate Cash Register a. To understand importance of proper, accurate cashiering b. To be able to accurately and efficiently use cash register	2 hours
15. Handles Return Merchandise a. To understand relationship of return merchandise to selling b. To use techniques to insure customer satisfaction when handling returned merchandise	1 hour
16. Perform Non-Selling Duties a. To understand importance and relationship of non-selling duties to selling b. To be able to perform non-selling duties such as merchandising products	1 hour

Appendix G (con't.)

CONTENT AREA	RECOMMENDED TIME
17. Use Methods to Prevent Shoplifting a. To understand the salesperson's role in preventing shoplifting b. To be able to use tactful methods to deter shoplifters	1 hour

APPENDIX H

MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION PERSONNEL REVIEWING COURSE OUTLINE

T. C. Williams High School
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

James Wood High School
Winchester, Virginia 22601

Martinsville Senior High School
Martinsville, Virginia 24112

William Fleming High School
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

Princess Anne High School
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462

Brookville High School
Lynchburg, Virginia 24502

Bethel High School
Hampton, Virginia 23666

Stonewall Jackson High School
Manassas, Virginia 22110

Stafford Senior High School
Fredericksburg, Maryland 22405

Abingdon High School
Abingdon, Virginia 24210

APPENDIX I

SURVEY COMPLETED BY LEGGETT STORE MANAGEMENT

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ATTACHED SALES TRAINING COURSE OUTLINE. YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

THANK YOU.

1. Are the content areas presented appropriate for persons working in department store sales positions?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

2. Is appropriate time allocated to each content area?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

3. Would a sales training course based on this outline benefit full-time department store sales personnel?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

4. Would a sales training course based on this outline benefit part-time department store sales personnel?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

5. Is $200.00 a satisfactory price for an eight-hour sales training course developed from this outline?

    __________Yes __________No

    Comments____

    ____

    ____

6. Please indicate any suggestions for improving the course outline in the space below.

    ____

    ____

    ____

    ____

    ____

APPENDIX J

SURVEY COMPLETED BY MDE PROFESSIONALS

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ATTACHED SALES TRAINING COURSE OUTLINE DESIGNED FOR SALES PERSONNEL IN DEPARTMENT STORES. YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. THANK YOU.

1. Are the content areas presented appropriate for persons working in department store sales positions?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

2. Is appropriate time allocated to each subject area?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

3. Could you conduct a sales training course for department store sales personnel using this outline?

   __________Yes __________No

   Comments____

   ____

   ____

4. Please indicate any suggestions for improving the course outline in the space below.

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

APPENDIX K

SURVEY COMPLETED BY LEGGETT STAFF MEMBERS ASSISTING WITH ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this survey is to obtain your reaction to the assessment instrument you recently administered to sales associates and their supervisors. Please respond to statements one through six using the following scale:

AS - Agree strongly
A - Agree
D - Disagree
DS - Disagree strongly

Please provide written responses to items seven through nine in the space provided. All answers will be confidential and used for research purposes only.

	CIRCLE ONE
1. The amount of time needed to administer the assessment instrument was not excessive.	AS A D DS
2. The cost of administering this assessment instrument (time invested by you, sales associates and sales supervisors) was not excessive.	AS A D DS
3. Involving the <u>sales associate</u> (permitting he/she to complete the assessment instrument) is an important step in designing a sales training program.	AS A D DS
4. Involving the <u>sales supervisor</u> (permitting he/she to complete the assessment instrument for subordinate) is an important step in designing a sales training program.	AS A D DS
5. Completion of the assessment instrument by <u>sales associates</u> provides relevant information needed to design a sales training program.	AS A D DS
6. Completion of the assessment instrument by the <u>sales supervisor</u> provides relevant information needed to design a sales training program.	AS A D DS

7. Approximately how much time was required to administer the assessment instrument to sales associates and supervisors in your store?
_________________ minutes.

8. Please specify any problem you encountered while administering the assessment instrument. (Use back of page if additional space is needed.)

9. Do you have any suggestions for improving the assessment instrument? (Use back of page if additional space is needed.)

APPENDIX L

INSTRUCTIONS TO ASSESSORS

1. Be certain to keep supervisory and sales associate questionnaires separate. THIS IS CRITICAL.

2. Please do not impose any time limit on persons completing questionnaires.

3. The questionnaire instructions are self-explanatory. It is not necessary to give sales associates or supervisors additional instructions.

4. Be certain that you distribute questionnaires so that supervisor and sales associate questionnaires have the SAME code number. This is essential so that we can match the sales associate's questionnaire with the appropriate supervisory questionnaire. Please use the following procedure to code the questionnaires:

   a. Remove supervisor packet first.

   b. Select enough supervisor forms for each supervisor and his/her appropriate number of sales associates.

   c. Assign supervisors numerically (1, 2, 3, etc.) on the appropriate number of forms. For example: You may have six supervisors, each supervising a different number of sales associates. First, assign a number for each supervisor. Then assign a second number to indicate each sales associate. The result is that each form will have a number such as 1,1/ 1,2/ 1,3/ 1,4/ 1,5/ 2,1/ 2,2/ 2,3/ 2,4/ 2,5/ 2,6/ 2,7/ etc. It is important that you assign numbers from each sales associate name.

   d. Next, open the packet of sales associate forms.

   e. Select the appropriate number of forms for each supervisor. Then assign the same supervisor number from the supervisor packet to each sales associate form. Next assign each form with the same sales associate number you assigned on the supervisor evaluation form. It is CRITICAL that the same number appear on both forms completed by the sales associate and the same supervisor. This is necessary so forms can be matched for analysis purposes.

5. Please place completed sales associate and supervisor questionnaires in the appropriately marked envelopes after all questionnaires are completed and placed in the appropriate envelopes. Please seal the envelope.

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A DISCREPANCY NEEDS ASSESSMENT MODEL WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING SUPPLEMENTARY ADULT MARKETING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by

Patrick J. O'Connor

(ABSTRACT)

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to develop and evaluate a discrepancy needs assessment model that could be used to plan supplementary adult marketing and distributive education programs. Research questions addressed in the study were: (1) Is the discrepancy needs assessment model effective according to the evaluation criteria identified by Newstrom and Lillyquist; (2) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self assessment and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor; (3) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's self assessment and the importance rating of his/her immediate supervisor; (4) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the competence rating of his/her immediate supervisor; and (5) Does a relationship exist between the salesperson's product line and the salesperson's self assessment competence rating?

Research Procedures

Two populations were used in the study: (1) 260 full-time sales associates employed by Leggett department stores in the state of Virginia; and (2) the 30 supervisors of the 260 sales associates.

A 17-item needs assessment instrument was developed, validated and reliability tested by the researcher. Statistical analysis included Spearman and Pearson correlations, ANOVA, post hoc testing, factor analysis and mean rankings.

Conclusions

It is concluded that there is very little relationship between sales associate and supervisor ratings of selling competence. Also, it is concluded that there is very little relationship between sales associate and supervisor ratings of importance of the selling activities. It is concluded that a relationship existed between supervisor ratings of sales associate competence and the product line sold by the sales associates. Finally, it is concluded that product line is not related to sales associate self assessment ratings of selling competence.

A training course outline was developed and reviewed by: MDE professionals involved with supplementary adult programs; store managers from Leggett department stores; and Leggett staff members that assisted with the data collection. Each group completed a survey form that reflected the evaluation criteria identified by Newstrom and Lillyquist. The course outline was given a positive review by each group.