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### A STUDY OF THE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESSFUL SALESWORK AS INTERPRETED BY THE EMPLOYER, EMPLOYEE, CONSUMER, AND INSTRUCTOR IN SALESMANSHIP CLASSES

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A STUDY OF THE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESSFUL  
SALESWORK AS INTERPRETED BY THE EMPLOYER, EMPLOYEE,  
CONSUMER, AND INSTRUCTOR IN SALESMANSHIP CLASSES

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Division in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Science

By  
Ernest Frank Horn, Jr.

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KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Pittsburg, Kansas

August, 1949

WITHDRAWN

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the qualifications required for successful saleswork as interpreted by employers who hire salespeople, the salespeople themselves, the consumers who buy from salespeople, and the instructors who teach salesmanship in the two-year colleges of Kansas.

Data was collected by means of a check list filled out by sixteen retail employers, fourteen retail salespeople, ten traveling salespeople, eight door-to-door salespeople, thirteen salespeople who sell a service, twelve consumers, and thirteen salesmanship instructors. The check list was supplemented by a personal interview with everyone except the salesmanship instructors. The check list contained the topics covered in a salesmanship course as offered in the Chanute Junior College. The person filling out the check list was asked to indicate whether, in his opinion, the topic is of great importance, some importance, or little importance to a salesperson in order to be successful.

In summarizing the study the data was divided into three areas. The first area was the personal qualifications, both physical and mental, that the salesperson should possess. It was found that the following items ranked highest in this order: courtesy, tact, truthfulness, cleanliness and grooming, and loyalty. The second area covered skills in English and Arithmetic. It was found that the following items ranked highest in this

order: accuracy, calculating what the customer is to pay, enunciation, knowledge of how to emphasize important parts of the sales talk, and pronunciation. The third area was devoted to items the salesperson should have a knowledge of. The following items ranked highest in this order: manner of approach and greeting, thorough knowledge of product, ethical treatment of customer, know yourself, methods of applying for a position, customer objections and how to meet them, everyone is a salesman, knowledge of how to contact employers, knowledge of consumers needs and wants, and knowledge of how to increase sales.

It was recommended that teachers in the two-year colleges of Kansas revise their salesmanship course in order to devote sufficient time to the more important topics. It was further recommended that teachers place more emphasis on personal qualifications and good English. Finally, it was recommended that more students be encouraged to take salesmanship and that stress be placed on retailing.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the problem is to determine the qualifications required for successful saleswork as interpreted by the employers who hire salespeople, the salespeople themselves, the consumers who buy from the salespeople, and the instructors who teach salesmanship in the two-year colleges of Kansas.

#### Need for the Study

There is a definite trend from the seller's market to the buyer's market in our selling today. It is important at this particular time for the salespeople to know this and be able to meet the needs of the consumer. In order to meet these requirements it is important for the teacher of salesmanship, as well as the salesman, to know what qualities, skills, and knowledges the salesperson should possess.

There is an endless number of topics that can be covered in a general course in salesmanship. Since most college salesmanship classes meet only two or three days a week for eighteen weeks there is not sufficient time to cover all of the topics adequately. The average teacher follows the particular text he is using and probably doesn't know which topics are most important and should have the most time

allotted to them. As a result perhaps many less important topics are receiving too much attention while some more important topics receive very little. It is the author's opinion that more time should be allotted to the more important topics and less time to the others.

Salespeople already in the field will benefit from this study too. Fred H. Westberg writes:

"Salesman are born, not made," was once a favorite expression among merchants and sales managers. The statement was valid at a time when the ethics of merchandising were summoned up in the words, "let the buyer beware." During that era, the qualifications of a successful salesman were a glib tongue, a mixture of Yankee shrewdness, and a ready fountain pen. Times have changed. Now it is the duty of the salesperson to aid people to buy intelligently. Today's salesman is a buying counsellor who realizes that continued customer confidence is more important than making a particular sale.<sup>1</sup>

It is hoped that this study will help salespeople realize the importance of Mr. Westberg's statement.

It is the purpose of this study to determine which topics should be covered in a general course in college salesmanship. The importance of each topic will be determined, too, so that a proportionate amount of time can be allotted to each.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study was made primarily in Chanute, Kansas during the school year 1948-1949, except for the check list mailed to the teachers of salesmanship in the two-year colleges of

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<sup>1</sup>"Merchandising and Sales Training," United Business Education Association Forum, (November, 1947), pp. 10-12.



Kansas. A few salespeople and consumers in Iola, Kansas are included.

Furthermore, the study is limited to a select group of employers, employees, as shown in Table I, and consumers.

Finally, the study is limited to the check list as prepared by the researcher, and found in the appendix of the study.

#### Definition of Terms

Retail Employer. The owner or manager who does the hiring of salespeople for that particular retail store.

Retail Employee. The employee hired to sell merchandise in a particular retail store.

Wholesale Salesman. Term applied to traveling salespeople who travel for a wholesale or manufacturing concern. They usually call on retail stores.

Door-to-Door Salesman. Term applied to those salespeople who attempt to sell at the customer's home.

Service Salesman. Term applied to those salespeople who sell a service rather than a tangible commodity. An illustration might be a bank employee, insurance salesman, barber, beauty operator, etc.

Consumer. Any person who buys a commodity or a service from a salesperson.

Teacher. One who teaches salesmanship in one of the two-year colleges of Kansas.

Related Studies

A study was made by Stephan G. Fitchjian at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.<sup>2</sup> Twenty retail stores of various types in Syracuse were selected to be used in the survey to determine the qualifications needed by beginning employees. The employees represented any type of work that beginners were hired to do. In order to gather the necessary data two questionnaires were used. One questionnaire asked for general information about the store. The second one requested specific information for each distributive occupation for which beginners were hired. The questionnaires were presented to the employer in each store and supplemented by a personal interview. The results of the survey showed:

1. School subjects in which applicants must be well trained include arithmetic, penmanship, English, retailing, salesmanship, bookkeeping, and office practice.
2. The most frequently checked duties applicants should be able to perform include properly caring for and handling equipment and merchandise, keeping records, applying production information, and applying principles of salesmanship.
3. The most frequently checked equipment applicants should be able to use include the cash register, hand tools, the hand truck, and the sales book.
4. The applicant should possess good

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<sup>2</sup>"A Survey of the Opinions of Employers Regarding the Qualifications of Beginning Retail Employees in Syracuse, New York," (unpublished master's thesis, Syracuse University, 1947), 114 pp.



personal and physical qualities. 5. The most frequently checked weaknesses included inability to apply the fundamental processes involved in simple arithmetic, weak vocabularies, and poor use of English. It was recommended that further studies be made to obtain more details. It was further recommended that schools give primary emphasis on developing and refining necessary personality traits and teaching essential subject matter. Finally, it was recommended that such training place secondary emphasis on teaching students use of equipment and performance of duties.

A second study was made by Alma Lee Puckett at the University of Iowa.<sup>3</sup> The study was made to determine what sales duties are most frequently performed by all types of retail salespeople in Pekin, Illinois; and to secure opinions of experienced retail salespeople as to the most helpful type of instruction which high schools can give students. A check list of seventy duties commonly performed by all types of retail salespeople was set up. Thirteen girls from advanced commercial classes were selected to help interview 105 salespeople in 41 retail stores. An effort was made to interview people who would be representative according to age, sex, schooling, and experience. It was found that the following duties are most frequently performed: learn what the customer wants; select the right merchandise to show the

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<sup>3</sup>"A Study of the Duties of Retail Salespeople of Pekin, Illinois, for the Purpose of Building a Curriculum in Distributive Education for Pekin Community High School," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Iowa, 1940), 75 pp.

customer; help the customer make up her mind on which article to buy; suggest additional merchandise; make out sales slips, use cash register, make change, and wrap merchandise; spend much time dusting and arranging stock. It was found that the following duties might be profitably taught in school: how to make change; use cash register and adding machine; wrap merchandise; paint showcards; advertising; window trimming; secure knowledge of merchandise. It was found that the following duties might be learned best on the job: selecting proper merchandise for customer; demonstrating merchandise; working in all departments; giving information about location of merchandise; exchanging merchandise. It was recommended that evening extension classes be continued, and that the business department of the school strive to eventually have a complete merchandising curriculum.

A third study was made by Thomas Vassar Morton at New York University.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of the study was to discover what traits and duties are required of retail salespersons in department stores, and also to determine what educational facilities are available for retail sales training in the area under investigation. Twenty department stores in the New York metropolitan area were chosen and classified into three groups according to type of clientele served. Duties and traits of salespeople were obtained from various manuals,

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<sup>4</sup>"Traits and Duties Required of Retail Salespersons in Department Stores," (unpublished master's thesis, New York University, 1933), 66 pp.



job analyses, rating sheets, etc. collected from stores. A check list of duties of retail salespeople was prepared by one store and used as a check sheet with other stores. Only eighteen stores responded. To determine the amount of attention given to retailing in schools, the curricula of high schools in the area was analyzed. It was found that there is a definite demand from department stores for salespeople possessing certain traits. Of the thirty traits listed, health, personal appearance, industry, responsibility, and intelligence received the highest rating. It was also found that certain duties are common to all selling jobs in department stores. There were a large number of these listed under contacts with customer, relationship with store, store system, care of stock, and merchandise knowledge. It was found that the school is the place to begin the development of traits; whereas training on the job, rather than in school should be given for the majority of the duties. Traits and duties can both be developed further if school and job training are combined. It was found that there were only four high schools in the metropolitan area offering retailing courses. All four schools give training in most of the major traits and duties. The main recommendation offered was that there should be more intensive studies made over a larger area.



### Method of Procedure

Under the Normative-Survey Method of Research the check list, supplemented by personal interviews, was used. The check list was mailed to salesmanship teachers in the two-year colleges of Kansas. The check list was supplemented by a personal interview with employers of salespeople, salespeople themselves, and consumers of goods and services. According to Good, Barr, and Scates it is possible to secure more data with a personal interview as people want to see who is getting the information and how it will be used. Furthermore, they need the stimulation of personal contacts in order to be "drawn out." Likewise, the interview permits the interviewer to gain an impression of the person who is giving the facts, to form some judgment of the truth in the facts, and to "read between the lines," things that are not said.<sup>5</sup>

A check list with rating scale (see appendix) was composed containing the topics covered in a general course in salesmanship as offered in the Chanute Junior College. The check list was needed as a basis for correlation and continuity in handling interviews. The check list was submitted to the researcher's committee for their approval before being used in the survey. In rating each topic,

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<sup>5</sup>Carter V. Good, A. S. Barr, and Douglas E. Scates, The Methodology of Educational Research (New York, 1941), p. 378.

the person filling out the check list was to indicate whether the topic is of great importance, some importance, or little importance in his particular connection to selling.

Interviews were held with sixteen employers of salespeople in various types of retail stores in Chanute and Iola; fourteen employees working as salespeople in various types of retail stores in Chanute and Iola; ten traveling salespeople, living in Chanute and Iola, who sell for wholesale and manufacturing concerns; eight door-to-door salespeople in Chanute who make their contacts in the home; thirteen salespeople in Chanute who sell some type of service rather than a tangible commodity; twelve consumers in Chanute and Iola who buy from the salespeople.

A copy of the check list was sent to instructors in salesmanship in junior colleges and other two-year colleges of Kansas as listed in the Kansas Educational Directory.<sup>6</sup> Completed returns were received from thirteen of them. Four colleges indicated they did not offer a course in salesmanship. Three colleges did not bother to answer.

The study is based on a total of seventy-three interviews and check lists, covering six different groups of people connected with selling, and thirteen check lists mailed to teachers of salesmanship in the two-year colleges

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<sup>6</sup>Kansas Educational Directory (1948-1949), pp. 75-77.

of Kansas (see Table I). Major emphasis was given to retail selling because according to Paul E. Smith, the majority of people who enter the selling field do so in some type of retail store.<sup>7</sup>

The data collected with the check lists and interviews has been compiled into tables, and analyzed in order to determine the importance of each of the topics covered in the salesmanship course.

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<sup>7</sup>"Salesmanship--Objectives and Course Content," United Business Education Association Forum, (April, 1948), p. 37.

TABLE I

## TYPES AND NUMBER OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Type	Number
<b>Retail Employers:</b>	16
Grocery Store	2
Lumber Yard	1
Department Store	3
Hardware Store	2
Men's Clothing Store	2
Drug Store	2
Furniture Store	2
Ladies' Clothing Store	1
Chevrolet Motor Company	1
<b>Retail Employees:</b>	14
Furniture Store	1
Ford Motor Company	1
Men's Clothing Store	2
Grocery Store	3
Department Store	3
Lumber Yard	1
Drug Store	1
Service Station	1
Restaurant	1
<b>Wholesale Salesmen:</b>	10
Grocery	2
Wallpaper	1
Cement	1
Refinery	1
Feed	1
Hardware	1
Crackers and Cookies	1
Seeds	1
Meat	1
<b>Door-to-Door Salesmen:</b>	8
Fuller Brushes	1
Jewel Tea	1
Books and Bibles	1
Grand Union	2
Cosmetics	1
Hose	1
Dresses	1



TABLE I (Continued)

## TYPES AND NUMBER OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Type	Number
Service Salesmen:	13
Doctor	1
Barber	1
Dentist	1
Nurse	1
Bank Teller	1
Bank Cashier	1
Beauty Operator	1
Insurance	4
Stenographer	1
Lawyer	1
Consumers	12
Teachers (check list only)	13
	—
Total	86



## CHAPTER II

### PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL SALESWORK

In order for a salesperson to be successful it is necessary for him to develop a well-rounded personality. To achieve this personality it is necessary for the salesperson to possess certain physical and mental qualities.

#### Physical Qualities

Table II is a summary of the physical qualities the salesperson should possess as indicated by the seven groups of people filling out check lists. It is interesting and important to note that not a single item was checked as being of little importance by any one of the eighty-six people contacted. Cleanliness and grooming received the highest rating of any of the physical qualities listed. The importance of being clean and well-groomed is recognized in the instructions given by the L. E. Waterman Company to its salesmen: "Cleanliness is the most important feature of appearance. Well-brushed hair and clean hands make a greater impression than bright neckties and fancy waistcoats."<sup>1</sup>

One salesperson indicated that most selling contacts are short, and that the customer's first impression of a

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<sup>1</sup>R. G. Walters and John W. Wingate, Fundamentals of Selling (Cincinnati, 1948), p. 142.

TABLE II

## THE SELLER'S PERSONALITY - PHYSICAL QUALITIES

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Health & Physique	14	2	0	11	3	0	5	5	0	6	2	0
Good Posture	11	5	0	10	4	0	5	5	0	5	3	0
Cleanliness & Grooming	14	2	0	13	1	0	9	1	0	8	0	0
Clothes	12	4	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	6	2	0
Voice	11	5	0	11	3	0	6	4	0	7	1	0
Mannerisms	11	5	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	5	3	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

TABLE II (Continued)

## THE SELLER'S PERSONALITY - PHYSICAL QUALITIES

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Health & Physique	12	1	0	8	4	0	11	2	0	67	19	0
Good Posture	10	3	0	6	6	0	12	1	0	59	27	0
Cleanliness & Grooming	13	0	0	12	0	0	12	1	0	81	5	0
Clothes	12	1	0	11	1	0	11	2	0	72	14	0
Voice	10	3	0	8	4	0	11	2	0	64	22	0
Mannerisms	10	3	0	8	4	0	11	2	0	65	21	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

salesman is often his only impression. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that a salesman be clean, well-groomed, that his clothes be clean and neat, and that he has a pleasing and sincere voice. Good health is of great importance because a person cannot do his best work while feeling "under the weather." One wholesale salesman said that good health was of particular importance to him since he has to be out in all kinds of weather and lives in varied environments. Good posture ranked lowest, but was still considered to be important to the seller's personality.

Stephan G. Fitchjian found in his study of retail salespeople that out of twenty employers interviewed nineteen checked grooming as being of great importance, eighteen checked health, sixteen checked speech, and twelve checked posture.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Vassar Morton found in his study of department store salespeople that out of eighteen employers interviewed eighteen checked health and personal appearance as being of great importance.<sup>3</sup>

These findings seem to correlate very well with this study.

#### Mental Qualities

According to M. A. Jencks, selling is definitely a

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<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 7.



mental process, putting it in the class of a highly scientific subject.<sup>4</sup> Table III, which is a summary of the mental qualities a salesperson should possess, verifies this statement. Though the mental qualities in the check list, as a whole, do not rate quite as high as the physical qualities, it is important to note that there were very few items rated as being of little importance by anyone in any of the groups. Courtesy not only ranked greatest in importance of the mental qualities, but also ranked higher than any other item on the entire check list. Tact and truthfulness also ranked very high in all types of selling. Imagination received the lowest rating. This item was considered not quite so important in wholesale and door-to-door selling. Several salespeople believed that if the salesperson could gain the confidence of the customer, making the sale would be easy. One retail employer mentioned that being alert and never antagonizing the customer were of great importance. One retail employee added honesty and respect to the check list and rated them as being of great importance.

Stephen G. Fitchjian found in his study of retail employees that out of twenty employers interviewed nineteen checked courtesy, seventeen checked initiative, thirteen checked dependability, eleven checked cooperation, ten

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<sup>4</sup>"General Salesmanship is Needed," Balance Sheet, (September, 1948), pp. 14-15.



TABLE III

## THE SELLER'S PERSONALITY - MENTAL QUALITIES

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Truthfulness	14	2	0	13	1	0	10	0	0	8	0	0
Loyalty	16	0	0	13	1	0	8	2	0	7	1	0
Resourcefulness	14	2	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	6	2	0
Imagination	10	4	2	6	8	0	4	6	0	3	5	0
Courage	10	5	1	10	4	0	10	0	0	8	0	0
Self-confidence	13	3	0	11	3	0	6	4	0	6	2	0
Ambition	12	4	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	8	0	0
Industry	14	2	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	8	0	0
Initiative	13	3	0	10	4	0	4	6	0	6	2	0
Adaptability	13	3	0	10	4	0	6	4	0	4	4	0
Observation	15	1	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	6	2	0
Enthusiasm	12	4	0	12	2	0	8	2	0	7	1	0
Courtesy	16	0	0	14	0	0	9	1	0	8	0	0
Tact	16	0	0	13	1	0	10	0	0	7	1	0
Interest in Customer	14	2	0	13	1	0	6	4	0	6	2	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

TABLE III (Continued)

## THE SELLER'S PERSONALITY - MENTAL QUALITIES

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Truthfulness	12	1	0	12	0	0	12	1	0	81	5	0
Loyalty	13	0	0	8	3	1	12	1	0	77	8	1
Resourcefulness	12	1	0	6	5	1	12	1	0	70	15	1
Imagination	8	3	2	6	4	2	8	5	0	46	35	6
Courage	11	2	0	6	4	2	9	4	0	64	19	3
Self-confidence	12	1	0	3	9	0	12	1	0	63	23	0
Ambition	10	3	0	8	2	2	11	2	0	69	15	2
Industry	11	1	1	10	2	0	11	2	0	74	11	1
Initiative	9	4	0	4	7	1	11	2	0	57	28	1
Adaptability	10	3	0	3	7	2	10	3	0	56	28	2
Observation	12	1	0	7	5	0	10	3	0	70	16	0
Enthusiasm	12	1	0	8	4	0	12	1	0	71	15	0
Courtesy	13	0	0	12	0	0	13	0	0	85	1	0
Tact	13	0	0	11	1	0	12	1	0	82	4	0
Interest in Customer	12	1	0	9	2	1	12	1	0	72	13	1

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

checked alertness, and eight checked ambition, loyalty, tact, and responsibility. The main weaknesses of retail salespeople as found by Mr. Fitchjian were lack of initiative and self-confidence.<sup>5</sup>

Thomas Vassar Morton found in his study of department store salespeople that out of eighteen employers interviewed sixteen checked industry as being of great importance, fourteen checked responsibility, thirteen checked loyalty, twelve checked interest and adaptability, eleven checked self-confidence, initiative, imagination, and enthusiasm, nine checked tact, and six checked ambition.<sup>6</sup>

Most of these qualities correlate with this study of salesmanship in general.

#### Summary

According to Ruben J. Dunler, "Success in almost any field depends about 75 per cent upon personality and 25 per cent upon knowledge and skill. Success in selling is dependent upon personality to a large degree."<sup>7</sup> Tables II and III indicate the great importance of the seller's personality if he is to be a successful salesman. Every quality on the check list should be included in the instruction. Furthermore,

<sup>5</sup>Op. cit., pp. 85 and 87.

<sup>6</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>"Salesmanship for Everybody," Balance Sheet, (September, 1947), p. 26.



honesty, respect, never antagonize the customer, and alertness were added to the check list by one salesman and should be added to the instruction too. Appearance, good health, pleasing and sincere voice, courtesy, tact, and truthfulness, because of their high rating on the check lists, should be given special emphasis in the instruction. However, do not neglect any of the other qualities.

## CHAPTER III

### SKILLS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL SALESWORK

In order to become a successful salesperson certain skills should be mastered. Two important skills to be considered in this study are English and Arithmetic.

#### English

Table IV summarizes the seller's skill in English. Though the total analysis of English indicated that it is important in saleswork, it did not receive as high a rating as the researcher anticipated. Several salespeople indicated that the type of grammar to use depends on the particular customer. They seemed to feel that the majority of customers do not use very good grammar so it was better for the salesman not to be too particular and concise unless the customer spoke that way. The teachers of salesmanship naturally felt that English is of great importance; and most of the consumers preferred to have the salesperson use good English.

Enunciation and knowledge of how to emphasize important parts of the sales talk ranked a little higher than the other items on the check list. Slang rated lower than any other item in importance. Slang seems to be very generally used today in selling and most of the employers, salespeople, consumers, and teachers felt that it is all right to use a

TABLE IV

## THE SELLER'S SKILLS - ENGLISH

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Effects of Incorrect Grammar	4	7	5	7	6	1	6	1	3	4	4	0
Unity in the Sales Talk	7	7	2	7	4	3	6	1	3	5	3	0
Coherence in the Sales Talk	8	6	2	7	5	2	4	3	3	6	2	0
Knowledge of How to Emphasize Important Parts of Sales Talk	9	5	2	9	4	1	7	1	2	4	4	0
Building a Vocabulary	5	9	2	8	5	1	1	6	3	5	3	0
Choosing Words to Use	6	5	3	7	6	1	3	4	3	6	2	0
Slang	5	7	4	3	8	3	3	3	4	2	6	0
Pronunciation	9	5	2	9	5	0	5	2	3	4	4	0
Enunciation	8	6	2	10	4	0	3	5	2	4	4	0
Legible Penmanship	7	7	2	7	7	0	4	4	2	4	4	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance



TABLE IV (Continued)

## THE SELLER'S SKILLS - ENGLISH

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Effects of Incorrect Grammar	7	4	2	8	3	1	5	8	0	41	33	12
Unity in the Sales Talk	6	4	3	9	2	1	9	4	0	49	25	12
Coherence in the Sales Talk	7	3	3	7	2	3	9	4	0	48	25	13
Knowledge of How to Emphasize Important Parts of Sales Talk	7	3	3	6	3	3	11	2	0	53	22	11
Building a Vocabulary	7	6	0	5	5	2	6	7	0	37	41	8
Choosing Words to Use	6	5	2	6	4	2	8	5	0	44	31	11
Slang	2	6	5	4	6	2	5	8	0	24	44	18
Pronunciation	8	3	2	8	3	1	6	7	0	49	29	8
Enunciation	10	2	1	9	3	0	8	5	0	52	29	5
Legible Penmanship	8	3	2	5	6	1	4	8	0	39	39	8

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

certain amount of it. The amount and kind of slang used would probably depend somewhat on the prospective customer.

Quite a varied response was received in regard to penmanship, though the majority did think it was of some or great importance. As far as actual selling is concerned penmanship is of little importance, but most salespeople have to make out sales slips or order blanks which often have to be read by someone else. One grocery store owner said that penmanship was of great importance in her store since one person takes the order by telephone, another person puts the order up, and a third person has to deliver the order. Two employers suggested the need for better spelling among salespeople.

Building a vocabulary and choosing words to use did not rate as high as the researcher anticipated. According to one large insurance company a varied vocabulary is important:

The language of a lawyer is different from that of a priest or an engineer. Each possesses a large vocabulary of words, terms, and phrases of which the others are ignorant.

You doubtless have had the experience of being the only layman present in a group of doctors or lawyers or engineers or the members of some other profession. If so, you have probably felt just a little out of place. You have been unable to join in the conversation because of your ignorance of the things that were being talked about. And if one of the party stopped talking "shop" and spoke to you in "everyday" English, you probably felt that he was just being polite. If you stayed very long in such a gathering,



you were either ignored or bored, and if the latter, you also felt that you were boring others.

Now while such situations are not frequent, for birds of a feather are seldom joined by a bird of another feather, it illustrates the point that each individual, when alone, thinks in terms of his vocational and social environment. As a salesman you will approach Brown, the lawyer, one day, Smith, the doctor, the next day, Davis, the Engineer, on some other day; and insofar as you present your proposition in their respective vocational or avocational languages, the quicker will you engage their interest, make your own ideas clear to them, and induce them to buy your service.<sup>1</sup>

Stephen G. Fitchjian found in his study of retail employees that out of seventeen employers interviewed sixteen checked English as being of great importance, and ten checked penmanship. English was considered as being one of the greatest weaknesses of retail salespeople.<sup>2</sup>

### Arithmetic

According to Table V skill in the general principles of arithmetic are very important. Everyone agreed that the salesman must be able to do fundamental arithmetic in order to calculate what the customer is to pay. All were agreed that it was more important to go a little slower and be accurate than to hurry and make mistakes. A knowledge of sales tax is important to the salesman in the retail store

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<sup>1</sup>Paul W. Ivey, Successful Salesmanship, (New York, 1947), pp. 21-22.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., pp. 46 and 84.



TABLE V

## THE SELLER'S SKILLS - ARITHMETIC

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Calculating What Customer is to Pay	13	3	0	13	1	0	5	5	0	7	1	0
Sales Tax	13	1	2	10	3	1	4	1	5	4	1	3
Accuracy	13	3	0	12	2	0	7	3	0	6	2	0
Discounts	2	2	12	7	4	3	7	1	2	0	2	6
Use of Percentage	4	3	9	7	5	2	4	1	5	0	3	5
Comparisons	0	3	13	4	6	4	5	2	3	0	3	5
Pricing Goods and Services	2	3	11	3	9	2	5	2	3	0	3	5
Calculating Profits	0	4	12	5	4	5	5	2	3	1	1	6

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

TABLE V (Continued)

## THE SELLER'S SKILLS - ARITHMETIC

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Calculating What Customer is to Pay	10	3	0	11	1	0	8	5	0	67	19	0
Sales Tax	2	0	11	10	2	0	5	8	0	48	16	22
Accuracy	11	2	0	11	1	0	10	3	0	70	16	0
Discounts	1	5	7	6	6	0	7	5	1	30	25	31
Use of Percentage	6	2	5	2	7	3	6	6	1	29	27	30
Comparisons	5	3	5	1	7	4	3	10	0	18	34	34
Pricing Goods and Services	3	2	8	2	6	4	6	6	1	21	31	34
Calculating Profits	6	4	3	0	5	7	3	9	1	20	29	37

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

and some door-to-door salesmen, but the majority of wholesale and service salesmen interviewed do not have to figure sales tax. The viewpoints on discounts and percentage was about equal. The majority of retail employers said they marked the goods as discounted and the salesman needed no knowledge other than to sell the goods as marked. Little knowledge of discounts and percentage was needed by door-to-door salespeople. Service salespeople needed little knowledge of discounts but were about equally divided on percentage. The consumers cared little as to what skills the salesperson had in arithmetic as long as he could figure the consumer's bill accurately.

Most of the employers, salespeople, consumers, and teachers were agreed that the salesperson could benefit from some knowledge of comparisons, pricing of goods and services, and calculating profits but that those items were mainly the concern of the owner or manager of the business. One service employee said that it was important for her to have a knowledge of withholding tax, social security tax, and rate tables. One lumber yard employer said that his salespeople must be able to help customers estimate the cost of various building materials.

Stephan G. Fitchjian found in his study of retail employees that out of seventeen employers interviewed all seventeen checked arithmetic as being of great importance. Arithmetic was considered as being one of the greatest weaknesses of retail salespeople.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



Summary

The salesman should be able to speak clearly and distinctly, and know how to emphasize important parts of the sales talk. The salesman who meets many different types of people must have a sufficient vocabulary to talk the customer's language. The use of slang is becoming more common and a certain amount is acceptable. Penmanship is not too important from the selling standpoint. However, any salesman who has to take orders over the telephone, fill out sales slips, or make out order blanks should be able to write legibly and spell correctly. All salespeople should be able to calculate what the customer is to pay. Accuracy is much more important than speed. It would be well for the salesman to have some knowledge of discounts and percentage. Most salespeople do not need a knowledge of comparisons, pricing of goods and services, or calculating profits since that is primarily the work of the owner or manager.

## CHAPTER IV

### KNOWLEDGES CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL SALESWORK

In order to become successful, the salesperson should possess certain knowledges about the fundamentals of selling, the firm he works for, and the product or service he is selling. Some of the knowledges, to be considered here, are: basic knowledge needed in selling, the sales transaction, special mediums for selling, selling policies, merchandise information, store system, and selling oneself.

#### Basic Knowledge Needed in Selling

Table VI is a summary of the basic knowledge needed by the salesperson in selling his product or service. Blackler said, "A fundamental of successful selling is knowledge of the merchandise. The well-informed salesperson who has the information to answer the questions of customers inspires confidence and builds repeat sales and good will for the store."<sup>1</sup> According to Table VI, a thorough knowledge of the product the salesperson sells ranked highest by all employers, salespeople, consumers, and teachers contacted. Since service salespeople sell a service rather than a product, they indicated a knowledge of the service was of great importance. One employer said that it was just as

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<sup>1</sup>William R. Blackler, "Intelligent Salesmanship," United Business Education Association Forum, (February, 1949), p. 16.

TABLE VI

## BASIC KNOWLEDGE NEEDED IN SELLING

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of Consumers Needs and Wants	9	6	1	12	2	0	9	1	0	6	2	0
Buying Motives of Consumers	6	7	3	5	7	2	8	1	1	3	5	0
How to Analyze Consumer Demand	4	5	7	8	6	0	8	1	1	5	3	0
Thorough Knowledge of Product	15	1	0	10	4	0	9	1	0	8	0	0
Thorough Knowledge of Firm	10	4	2	10	4	0	7	2	1	5	3	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance



TABLE VI (Continued)

## BASIC KNOWLEDGE NEEDED IN SELLING

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of Consumers Needs and Wants	11	1	1	8	3	1	10	3	1	65	18	3
Buying Motives of Consumers	9	1	3	4	3	5	8	5	0	43	29	14
How to Analyze Consumer Demand	10	2	1	6	3	3	9	4	0	50	24	12
Thorough Knowledge of Product	12	0	1	7	5	0	13	0	0	74	11	1
Thorough Knowledge of Firm	9	3	1	4	6	2	10	3	0	55	25	6

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

important for the salesman to know his competitor's merchandise as it was to know his own. A knowledge of the consumers needs and wants ranked second. Blackler further stated, "Salesmanship in its simplest terms is the ability to satisfy the needs of consumers. In many cases the customer knows definitely what he wants and asks for particular items of merchandise. In other instances, the presence of a need must be brought to his attention."<sup>2</sup> The other items in Table VI, though not as important as the two mentioned above, were considered to be of great importance.

Fitchijian found in his study of retail salespeople that out of seventeen employers interviewed seventeen thought product information was of great importance.<sup>3</sup>

### The Sales Transaction

Table VII summarizes the importance of the sales transaction. According to Walters and Wingate, "It is desirable for a salesman to know something about each qualified prospect before he visits the prospect or writes him a letter. This is true, regardless of the type of selling involved. Even a retail salesperson may occasionally obtain some advance information about a customer before the customer enters the store. At least, the retail clerk should endeavor to gain information, during the time he is demonstrating an article, which he can use if the customer comes into the store again."<sup>4</sup> Most of the people

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Stephan G. Fitchijian, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>4</sup>R. G. Walters and John W. Wingate, op. cit., p. 235.

TABLE VII

## THE SALES TRANSACTION

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of the Customer	12	4	0	8	5	1	10	0	0	5	3	0
Manner of Approach and Greeting	16	0	0	14	0	0	9	1	0	8	0	0
Determining the Customers Wants	11	4	1	12	2	0	6	2	2	6	2	0
Knowledge of How to Display	13	3	0	8	6	0	6	4	0	6	1	1
Knowledge of How to Demonstrate	12	3	1	11	2	1	7	1	2	6	1	1
Knowledge of Customer Objec- tions & How to Meet Them	15	0	1	13	1	0	9	1	0	7	0	1
Knowledge of When to Close the Sale	13	1	2	8	5	1	8	2	0	7	1	0
Knowledge of Terms of Sale	11	3	2	10	2	2	7	3	0	8	0	0
Manner of Farewell	14	2	0	10	3	1	7	2	1	5	3	0
Analyze Your Failures	14	1	1	9	5	0	5	3	2	5	3	0
Knowledge of How to Increase Sales	14	2	0	12	2	0	10	0	0	8	0	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance



TABLE VII (Continued)

## THE SALES TRANSACTION

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of the Customer	9	1	3	7	3	2	10	3	0	61	19	6
Manner of Approach and Greeting	8	5	0	10	2	0	13	0	0	78	8	0
Determining the Customers Wants	9	3	1	9	2	1	11	2	0	64	17	5
Knowledge of How to Display	4	5	4	8	2	2	11	2	0	56	23	7
Knowledge of How to Demonstrate	4	2	7	10	1	1	12	1	0	62	11	13
Knowledge of Customer Objec- tions & How to Meet Them	11	2	0	5	3	4	12	1	0	72	8	6
Knowledge of When to Close The Sale	6	2	5	7	2	3	11	2	0	60	15	11
Knowledge of Terms of Sale	7	3	3	9	0	3	9	4	0	61	15	10
Manner of Farewell	8	4	1	9	2	1	5	8	0	58	24	4
Analyze Your Failures	9	3	1	4	2	6	8	5	0	54	22	10
Knowledge of How to Increase Sales	9	3	1	4	3	5	10	3	0	67	13	6

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

contacted indicated that it is important for the salesman to know the customer's name and to greet him by name. Manner of approach and greeting the customer received the highest rating in Table VII. All of the other items rated better than average importance. Knowledge of when to close the sale ranked above average. It was said that most salespeople do not attempt to close the sale soon enough, and often talk themselves out of a sale. Many salespeople never give much thought as to why they failed to make a sale. For that reason analyzing your failures is important. Knowledge of customer objections and how to meet them was second in importance. One insurance salesman said that insurance is intangible and more difficult to sell than merchandise, especially when the prospect has never suffered a loss.

Alma Lee Puckett found in her study of the duties of retail salespeople that the following duties were considered of great importance: learn what the customer wants, select the right merchandise to show the customer, help the customer decide what article to buy, suggest additional merchandise, and demonstrate the merchandise properly.<sup>5</sup>

#### Special Mediums for Selling

Table VIII is a summary of the special mediums for selling. Knowledge of proper telephone technique was considered to be of greatest importance. Practically all salespeople make some contacts with customers by telephone. One employer said that

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<sup>5</sup>Op. cit., p. 23.

TABLE VIII

## SPECIAL MEDIUMS FOR SELLING

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	A	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of Advertising	3	7	6	4	6	4	3	3	4	0	4	4
Knowledge of What Constitutes A Good Sales Letter	2	6	8	3	4	7	5	2	3	1	0	7
Knowledge of Effective Merchandise Display	11	4	1	8	2	4	5	2	3	4	2	2
Knowledge of Proper Telephone Technique	10	4	2	10	3	1	3	4	3	3	3	2

- A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance



TABLE VIII (Continued)

## SPECIAL MEDIUMS FOR SELLING

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			A	B	C
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C			
Knowledge of Advertising	3	3	7	0	9	3	8	5	0	21	37	28
Knowledge of What Constitutes A good Sales Letter	6	4	3	2	6	4	5	8	0	24	30	32
Knowledge of Effective Merchandise Display	2	1	10	6	2	4	10	3	0	46	16	24
Knowledge of Proper Telephone Technique	10	2	1	8	3	1	7	6	0	51	25	10

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

his salespeople phone their special customers whenever new merchandise arrives. Most of the salespeople said they had to do very little writing of sales letters. Knowledge of effective merchandise display was of little importance to most of the service salespeople. One wholesale salesman said that his product is an impulse item, bought mostly from seeing it displayed. Therefore, he had to have a knowledge of how best to display his product. The only knowledge of advertising needed by most of the salespeople was a knowledge of what is being advertised in the paper by their firm. The manager or owner makes up the advertisements. One wholesale salesman said that he makes up newspaper advertisements for his customers.

Morton found in his study that retail salespeople need to have a knowledge of the following: what merchandise is advertised each day by his firm, what merchandise is on display in the window, and how to arrange displays each morning.<sup>6</sup>

Puckett found in her study that retail salespeople should have a knowledge of the following: take orders by telephone, plan and arrange counter and window displays.<sup>7</sup> Fitchjian found in his study that retail salespeople needed a knowledge of the following: how to properly display merchandise, and a general knowledge of advertising.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Thomas Vassar Morton, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

<sup>7</sup>Alma Lee Puckett, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup>Stephan G. Fitchjian, loc. cit.

Selling Policies

Table IX is a summary of the selling policies the salesperson should have a knowledge of. The importance of ethical treatment of customers is very well illustrated in the following poem by Edgar A. Guest:

If I possessed a shop or store  
 I'd drive the grouches off the floor,  
 I'd never let some gloomy guy  
 Offend the folks who come to buy.  
 I'd never keep a boy or clerk  
 With a mental toothache at his work,  
 Nor let a man who draws my pay  
 Drive customers of mine away.

I'd treat the man who takes my time,  
 And spends a nickle or a dime,  
 With Courtesy, and make him feel  
 That I was pleased to close the deal.  
 Because tomorrow, who can tell?  
 He may want things I have to sell.  
 And in that case, then glad he'll be  
 To spend his dollars all with me.

The reason people pass one door,  
 To patronize another store  
 Is not because the busier place  
 Has better silks, or gloves, or lace  
 Or lower prices, but it lies  
 In pleasant words and smiling eyes;  
 The only difference, I believe,  
 Is in the treatment folks receive.

The high ranking the item received in Table IX verifies Mr. Guest's poem. One wholesale salesman said it was just as important to create goodwill with everyone else in the customer's place of business, as it was with the customer himself. Ethical treatment of competitors received almost as high a rating as that of the customer. The other items received only average



TABLE IX  
SELLING POLICIES

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Price Policies	6	3	7	7	5	2	4	5	1	2	3	3
Credit Policies	5	4	7	10	3	1	7	1	2	3	3	2
Service Policies	9	3	4	8	4	2	5	4	1	4	2	2
Ethical Treatment of Customers	15	1	0	14	0	0	10	0	0	7	1	0
Ethical Treatment of Competitors	12	2	2	11	2	1	7	2	1	7	1	0
Salesman's Relations With His Firm	7	6	3	9	5	0	6	3	1	3	5	0

A - Great Importance  
B - Some Importance  
C - Little Importance

TABLE IX (Continued)

## SELLING POLICIES

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Price Policies	1	3	9	6	5	1	7	6	0	33	30	23
Credit Policies	4	2	7	5	6	1	6	7	0	40	26	20
Service Policies	4	2	7	5	6	1	4	9	0	39	30	17
Ethical Treatment of Customers	12	0	1	7	3	2	11	2	0	76	7	3
Ethical Treatment of Competitors	9	3	1	7	3	2	7	6	0	60	19	7
Salesman's Relations With His Firm	6	6	1	2	5	5	9	4	0	42	34	10

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

rating. One retail employer said that selling policies vary from store to store and could best be learned on the job. One retail employee, while speaking of price policies, said that he never mentioned price until the end of the sale unless the customer asked the price. The same salesman always shows medium priced merchandise first, then he can go up or down to suit the particular customer.

#### Merchandise Information

Table X is a summary of merchandise information needed by the successful salesperson. All salespeople would not need to possess all of this knowledge, but only those items related to the product or service he is selling. The importance of the items rated about equal since a variety of salespeople were interviewed. A good many of the people contacted did not have much faith in seals of approval such as Good Housekeeping magazine, Parent's magazine, etc.

Morton, in his study of department store salespeople, found that a knowledge of the following items was considered to be of great importance: fashions, styles, qualities, values, materials, sizes, colors, and makes.<sup>10</sup> Puckett found in her study of retail salespeople that a knowledge of these items was important: colors, materials, correct wear, show and compare brands.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Thomas Vassar Morton, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>11</sup>Alma Lee Puckett, loc. cit.



TABLE X

## MERCHANDISE INFORMATION

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of Sizes	10	4	2	8	3	3	7	1	2	3	3	2
Knowledge of Labels	9	4	3	10	3	1	6	3	1	2	4	2
Knowledge of Seals of Approval	4	5	7	8	5	1	1	4	5	2	4	2
Knowledge of Brands	12	3	1	12	2	0	4	3	3	4	4	0
Knowledge of Styles	7	5	4	7	2	5	2	1	7	3	1	4
Knowledge of Color and Design	9	2	5	8	2	4	2	1	7	4	0	4
Knowledge of Textiles	6	3	7	6	2	6	0	2	8	2	3	3
Knowledge of Grades	6	6	4	9	4	1	3	2	5	4	3	1

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

TABLE X (Continued)

## MERCHANDISE INFORMATION

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of Sizes	3	1	9	9	3	0	10	3	0	50	18	18
Knowledge of Labels	2	2	9	9	3	0	10	3	0	48	22	16
Knowledge of Seals of Approval	3	1	9	6	6	1	6	7	0	30	31	25
Knowledge of Brands	3	1	9	10	1	1	10	3	0	55	17	14
Knowledge of Styles	2	2	9	10	1	1	12	1	0	43	13	30
Knowledge of Color and Design	2	1	10	9	3	0	11	2	0	45	11	30
Knowledge of Textiles	1	1	11	9	3	0	12	1	0	36	15	35
Knowledge of Grades	1	2	10	7	5	0	11	2	0	41	24	21

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

Store System

Table XI is a summary of duties connected with a store system. How to make change and knowledge of how to make out a sales slip or order blank rated at the top in this section. Wholesale salespeople indicated that making change was not so important to them. One employer said that all of these items were important in his store but that they could be learned on the job rather than in school. One employer mentioned that in making change the salesman should not place a bill in the cash register until the change has been counted back to the customer. This does away with any argument as to the denomination of the bill. One grocery employer requested that we teach students to sack groceries properly as well as wrap merchandise. One wholesale salesman mentioned that he had to be careful how he handled his order book because some customers became frightened when he flashed the order book on them suddenly. The order blank is equivalent to the application blank for insurance salesman. Most service, wholesale, and door-to-door salespeople do not have to wrap merchandise. Most wholesale and door-to-door salespeople do not have to operate a cash register or adding machine. One salesmanship teacher said that salespeople should know how to operate a comptometer.

Fitchjian found in his study of retail salespeople that out of seventeen employers interviewed eleven thought that a knowledge of these duties was important: cash register,



TABLE XI  
STORE SYSTEM

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of How To Make Out A Sales Check & Order Blank	10	4	2	13	1	0	6	3	1	6	1	1
How To Make Change	11	4	1	13	1	0	3	2	5	7	1	0
How To Wrap Packages	6	8	2	9	3	2	1	3	6	1	4	3
How To Operate an Adding Machine and A Cash Register	4	5	7	9	3	2	0	2	8	0	0	8

A - Great Importance  
B - Some Importance  
C - Little Importance

TABLE XI (Continued)

## STORE SYSTEM

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Knowledge of How To Make Out A Sales Check & Order Blank	9	1	3	9	2	1	11	2	0	64	14	8
How To Make Change	10	0	3	11	1	0	11	2	0	66	11	9
How to Wrap Packages	1	2	10	8	4	0	6	7	0	32	31	23
How To Operate an Adding Machine and A Cash Register	4	3	6	5	4	3	6	6	1	28	23	35

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

sales slips, wrapping of merchandise, and making change.<sup>12</sup> Puckett found in her study that retail salespeople should have a knowledge of the following: cash register, adding machine, making change, wrapping merchandise, and making out sales slips.<sup>13</sup>

### Selling Oneself

Table XII is a summary of the importance of selling oneself. According to Weisbecker, "Census figures show that two out of every five high school graduates become retail store employees sooner or later. This does not take into account those who engage in wholesale and specialty selling as traveling salesmen, also insurance, real estate, and automobile salesmen, residential selling, canvassers, and solicitors. The student will use the principles of salesmanship every day of his life as long as he lives."<sup>14</sup> The above statement indicates that everyone is a salesman, or uses the principles of salesmanship at some time during his life. All of the items in Table XII were rated as being of great importance.

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<sup>12</sup>Stephan G. Fitchjian, op. cit., pp. 46 and 47.

<sup>13</sup>Alma Lee Puckett, op. cit., pp. 23 and 24.

<sup>14</sup>A. A. Weisbecker, "Why Study Salesmanship?" Balance Sheet, (February, 1947), p. 248.



TABLE XII

## SELLING ONESELF

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Retail Employer			Retail Employee			Wholesale			Door to Door		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Everyone Is A Salesman	14	1	1	12	2	0	10	0	0	6	2	0
Know Yourself	14	1	1	11	3	0	10	0	0	8	0	0
Knowledge of How To Contact Employers	13	1	2	11	3	0	10	0	0	6	1	1
Methods of Applying For A Position	14	1	1	12	1	1	10	0	0	6	2	0

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

TABLE XII (Continued)

## SELLING ONESELF

Topics Covered in Salesmanship Course	Service			Consumer			Teacher			Total		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Everyone Is A Salesman	13	0	0	5	3	4	10	3	0	70	11	5
Know Yourself	13	0	0	5	3	4	13	0	0	74	7	5
Knowledge of How To Contact Employers	13	0	0	7	1	4	12	1	0	72	7	7
Methods of Applying For A Position	13	0	0	5	3	4	12	1	0	72	8	6

A - Great Importance  
 B - Some Importance  
 C - Little Importance

Summary

A summary of this chapter reveals that practically all of the items included are of some or great importance to one or more types of salespeople. Salespeople sell a large variety of products and services. Therefore, knowledge that might benefit one salesman might not be of any importance to another. However, there are some things that are of great importance to all salespeople regardless of what they sell. Some of these more important things are: 1. A thorough knowledge of the product or service being sold. 2. Manner of approach and greeting the customer. 3. Knowledge of customer objections and how to meet them. 4. Knowledge of proper telephone technique. 5. Ethical treatment of customers and competitors. 6. How to make change. 7. The fact that everyone is a salesman to some degree.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusions

Tables XIII, XIV, and XV show a summary of the relative importance of the personal qualifications, skills, and knowledges salespeople need to possess in order to be successful. The reader should keep in mind that this is a summary of all types of selling. Therefore, an item that might be of importance in one type of selling may not be important to another type. Furthermore, the viewpoints of the teacher of salesmanship, the consumer, and the employer are included, as well as the salespeople themselves. Finally, we have a picture of what topics should be offered in a general course in salesmanship, and their relative importance.

In order to obtain the relative importance of one topic to another, each topic was weighted. A weight of three was arbitrarily given to those topics on the check list marked "great" importance; a weight of two was given to those topics marked "some;" and a weight of one was given to those topics marked "little." All of the weights for each topic were compiled in order to arrive at the total weighted score as shown in Tables XIII, XIV, and XV.

Table XIII is a summary of the relative importance of personal qualifications to successful selling. The following

TABLE XIII

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS  
NEEDED BY SALESPeOPLE

Personal Qualification	Rank	Weighted Scores
Courtesy	1	257
Tact	2	254
Truthfulness	3	253
Cleanliness and Grooming	3	253
Loyalty	5	248
Industry	6	245
Clothes	7	244
Enthusiasm	8	243
Interest in Customer	8	243
Observation	10	242
Resourcefulness	11	241
Ambition	12	239
Health and Physique	12	239
Mannerisms	14	237
Voice	15	236
Self-confidence	16	235
Courage	17	233
Good Posture	18	231
Initiative	19	228
Adaptability	20	226
Imagination	21	214

items ranked highest in this order: courtesy, tact, truthfulness, cleanliness and grooming, and loyalty.

Table XIV is a summary of the relative importance of skills to successful selling. The following items ranked highest in this order: accuracy, calculating what the customer is to pay, enunciation, knowledge of how to emphasize important parts of the sales talk, and pronunciation.

Table XV is a summary of the relative importance of knowledges to successful selling. The following items ranked highest in this order: manner of approach and greeting, thorough knowledge of product, ethical treatment of customer, know yourself, methods of applying for a position, customer objections and how to meet them, everyone is a salesman, knowledge of how to contact employers, knowledge of consumers needs and wants, and knowledge of how to increase sales.



TABLE XIV

## RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF SKILLS NEEDED BY SALESPeOPLE

Description of Skill	Rank	Weighted Scores
Accuracy	1	242
Calculating what customer is to pay	2	239
Enunciation	3	219
Knowledge of how to emphasize important parts of sales talk	4	214
Pronunciation	5	213
Unity in the sales talk	6	209
Coherence in the sales talk	7	207
Choosing words to use	8	205
Legible penmanship	9	203
Building a vocabulary	10	201
Effects of incorrect grammar	10	201
Sales tax	12	198
Slang	13	178
Discounts	14	171
Use of percentage	14	171
Pricing goods and services	16	159
Calculating profits	17	155

TABLE XV

## RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGES NEEDED BY SALESPeOPLE

Description of Knowledge	Rank	Weighted Scores
Manner of approach and greeting	1	250
Thorough knowledge of product	2	245
Ethical treatment of customer	2	245
Know yourself	4	241
Methods of applying for a position	5	238
Customer objections and how to meet them	5	238
Everyone is a salesman	7	237
Knowledge of how to contact employers	7	237
Knowledge of consumers needs and wants	9	234
Knowledge of how to increase sales	10	233
Determining the customers wants	11	231
How to make change	12	229
How to make out a sales slip or order blank	13	228
Knowledge of the customer	14	227
Manner of farewell	15	226
Ethical treatment of competitors	16	225
Knowledge of terms of sale	17	223
Thorough knowledge of firm	18	221
Knowledge of how to display	18	221
Knowledge of how to demonstrate	18	221
Knowledge of when to close the sale	18	221
Analyze your failures	22	216
Knowledge of proper telephone technique	23	213
Knowledge of brands	23	213
How to analyze consumer demand	25	210
Salesman's relations with his firm	26	204
Knowledge of sizes	26	204
Knowledge of labels	26	204
Buying motives of consumers	29	201
Knowledge of effective merchandise display	30	194
Service policies	30	194
Credit policies	32	192
Knowledge of grades	32	192
Knowledge of color and design	34	187
Knowledge of styles	35	185
Price policies	36	182
How to wrap packages	37	181
Knowledge of seals of approval	38	177
Knowledge of textiles	39	173
Knowledge of advertising	40	165
How to operate an adding machine and a cash register	40	165
Knowledge of what constitutes a good sales letter	42	164



### Recommendations

The results of this survey have been carefully studied and analyzed. The following recommendations are made:

1. A majority of the salesmanship teachers filling out check lists indicated that most of the topics listed were of great importance. Since most college salesmanship classes meet only two or three times a week during the semester, there is not sufficient time to cover all of the topics thoroughly. Therefore, it is recommended that the two-year colleges of Kansas revise their salesmanship course to meet the needs of salespeople in the field. Topics of less importance can be covered lightly or left out, depending upon the amount of time available.

2. The study shows a great need for more emphasis on the personal qualities of the salesperson, both physical and mental. The researcher feels that most teachers skim over this phase of salesmanship. Therefore, it is recommended that more time be spent in the salesmanship course in attempting to develop the salesperson's personality.

3. A good many salespeople were of the opinion that good English is not too important in selling today. It is the researcher's opinion that good grammar and speaking ability are of the utmost importance in becoming a successful salesman. It is recommended that good grammar be stressed in the salesmanship course.



4. The study brings out the fact that everyone is a salesman to a certain degree, and can benefit from knowing the principles of selling. Therefore, it is recommended that more students be encouraged to take salesmanship.

5. The study shows that a majority of students going into the selling field enter retailing. It is recommended, if the school does not offer a course in retailing, that emphasis be placed on retail selling.

principles of selling. Therefore, it is recommended that more students be encouraged to take salesmanship.

5. The study shows that a majority of students going into the selling field enter retailing. It is recommended, if the school does not offer a course in retailing, that emphasis be placed on retail selling.

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APPENDIX



**CHECK LIST - SALESMANSHIP**

Name of person interviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_ Years of experience \_\_\_\_\_

Type of selling (wholesale, retail, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of firm \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Type of business (grocery, furniture, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of sales people in organization \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The following topics are ones covered in a general course in salesmanship in the Chanute Junior College. After each topic, please indicate whether you think it is of great importance, some importance, or little importance for a salesman to possess or to know. If there are any other points not mentioned, that you think are important, please list them in the spaces provided below.

**A. The Seller's Personality--Physical Qualities**

1. Health and physique.....  
(eating habits, sleep, exercise, etc.)
2. Good posture.....
3. Cleanliness and grooming.....
4. Clothes (proper, clean, pressed, etc.).....
5. Voice (pleasing, non-irritating, etc.).....
6. Mannerisms (detracting or irritating habits)....
7. Others:

**B. The Seller's Personality--Mental Qualities**

1. Truthfulness.....
2. Loyalty.....  
(to firm, to fellow employees, to customer)
3. Resourcefulness.....
4. Imagination.....
5. Courage.....
6. Self-confidence.....
7. Ambition.....
8. Industry.....
9. Initiative.....
10. Adaptability.....
11. Observation.....
12. Enthusiasm.....
13. Courtesy.....
14. Tact.....
15. Interest in customer.....
16. Others:

GREAT	SOME



GREAT  
SOME

**C. The Seller's Skills--English**

1. Effects of incorrect grammar.....
2. Unity in the sales talk.....
3. Coherence in the sales talk.....
4. Knowledge of how to emphasize important parts of the sales talk.....
5. Building a vocabulary.....
6. Choosing the words to use (depends on customer)
7. Slang (in general, avoid use of).....
8. Pronunciation.....
9. Enunciation.....
10. Legible penmanship.....
11. Others:

**D. The Seller's Skills--Arithmetic**

1. Calculating what the customer is to pay.....
2. Sales tax.....
3. Accuracy (more important than speed).....
4. Discounts (cash, quantity, seasonal, etc.).....
5. Use of percentages.....
6. Comparisons.....  
(% of profit, % of sales, stockturn, etc.)
7. Pricing goods and services.....  
(markups, determining costs, etc.)
8. Calculating profits.....  
(sales, purchases, inventories, expenses, etc)
9. Others:

**E. Basic Knowledge Needed in Selling**

1. Knowledge of the consumers needs and wants.....
2. Buying motives of consumers.....  
(recognition, beauty, knowledge, physical well-being, amusement, money gain, etc.)
3. How to analyze consumer demand.....  
(what do consumers want, how much, when, etc.)
4. Thorough knowledge of his product.....  
(what made of, how made, where made, etc.)
5. Thorough knowledge of his firm.....  
(history of firm, organization and management, policies of firm, rules and systems)
6. Others:

**F. The Sales Transaction**

1. Knowledge of the customer.....  
(name, characteristics, interests, etc.)
2. Manner of approach and greeting.....
3. Determining the customers wants.....
4. Knowledge of how to display goods.....
5. Knowledge of how to demonstrate goods.....
6. Knowledge of customer objections and how to meet them.....



GREAT  
SOME

- 7. Knowledge of when to close the sale.....
- 8. Knowledge of the terms of the sale.....
- 9. Manner of farewell.....
- 10. Analyze your failures.....
- 11. Knowledge of how to increase sales.....  
(suggestion selling, related goods, etc.)
- 12. Others: .....

G. Special Mediums for Selling .....

- 1. Knowledge of advertising (theory).....  
(newspapers, magazines, radio, etc.)
- 2. Knowledge of what constitutes a good sales  
letter.....
- 3. Knowledge of effective merchandise display.....
- 4. Knowledge of proper telephone technique.....
- 5. Others: .....

H. Selling Policies .....

- 1. Price policies.....  
(discounts, delivery charges, etc.)
- 2. Credit policies.....  
(to whom, length of credit, amount of credit)
- 3. Service policies.....  
(credit, delivery, packaging, installation)
- 4. Ethical treatment of customers.....  
(creating goodwill, etc.)
- 5. Ethical treatment of competitors.....  
(price wars, running down their mdse., etc.)
- 6. Salesman's relations with his firm.....  
(conserve time, expense accounts, etc.)
- 7. Others: .....

I. Merchandise Information .....

- 1. Knowledge of sizes.....
- 2. Knowledge of labels.....
- 3. Knowledge of seals of approval.....
- 4. Knowledge of brands.....
- 5. Knowledge of styles.....
- 6. Knowledge of color and design.....
- 7. Knowledge of textiles.....
- 8. Knowledge of grades.....
- 9. Others: .....

J. Store System .....

- 1. Knowledge of how to make out a sales check  
and order blank.....
- 2. How to make change.....
- 3. How to wrap packages.....



GREAT  
SOME

- 4. How to operate a cash register and adding machine.....
- 5. Others:

K. Selling Oneself

- 1. Everyone is a salesman.....
- 2. Know yourself.....
- 3. Knowledge of how to contact employers.....
- 4. Methods of applying for a position.....
- 5. Others: