

# Agricultural Sales

Nebraska Career Development Event  
Handbook and Rules for 2018-2021

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## **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Nebraska FFA Agricultural Sales Career Development Event is to develop communication and problem-solving skills essential for agricultural sales. Students will develop an understanding of the professional sales process. Teams will be given a scenario and asked to identify and demonstrate pre-call sales planning. Individually, students will sell identified product(s) to a judge posing as a customer.

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## 2. OBJECTIVES

### A. Team Activity Objectives

- a. Overall Objective of Team Activity: As a team, analyze the information given and develop a pre-call sales planning presentation.
- b. Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork, group dynamics, problem solving, data analysis, decision making and oral communication.
- c. Using provided information, the team will develop the pre-call plan, for the product(s) provided prior to the event, necessary to sell the product(s) in a face-to-face sales call. This pre-call plan should include:
  - i. Potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.
  - ii. Identify customer needs and wants through use of questioning techniques.
  - iii. Identify and demonstrate active listening skills or techniques for determining needs and wants.
  - iv. Identify and match potential needs and wants of the customer to the product's features and benefits.
  - v. Identify potential objections of the customer and demonstrate techniques to address them.
  - vi. Identify concerns of customer.
  - vii. Students are expected to explain their decisions for the pre-call plan based on selling principles.
  - viii. Team identifies common interests that they have with the customer.
- d. Teamwork and involvement of team members will be judged during this event.
- e. Sell complementary products if identified on the Product Information Sheet.
- f. As a team, answer questions regarding the methods and strategies presented in the pre-call sales presentation.

### B. Individual Objectives

- a. Students will demonstrate verbal, written, and interactive communication skills through an individual sales call and creation of sales material.
- b. Students will understand and demonstrate a professional sales process by completing the following tasks:
  - i. Identifying and targeting customers based on given information
  - ii. Understanding customer buying motives
  - iii. Discussing features and benefits of a product with a customer and demonstrating proper product use

- iv. Addressing potential customer objections that arise during the sales call
- v. Developing a sales call that addresses customer needs and concerns
- vi. Attempting to close the sale by asking for the customer's buying decision
- vii. Reassuring customer of decision to buy and build confidence
- viii. Building rapport with the customer
- c. Students will demonstrate professional conduct by:
  - i. Being properly groomed
  - ii. Professionally dressed
  - iii. Exhibiting a positive attitude
  - iv. Using appropriate language

### **C. Test Objectives**

- a. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the professional sales process through a written exam.
    - i. The written exam will consist of 25 multiple choice, true/false, and fill in the blank questions.
    - ii. Refer to suggested resource(s) to prepare for the written exam.
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## **3. ELIGIBILITY**

- a. The top 3 from each district will qualify for the state event.
  - b. Four students per team are required for this event.
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## **4. REQUIRED ATTIRE**

Official FFA Dress is required for this event. Students not in official dress may be deducted up to five points during the sales practicum.

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## **5. REQUIRED SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT**

- A. The ONLY allowable items include:
  - a. 1" prepared binder containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant that may include:
    - i. Pricing sheet
    - ii. Product specifications / features
    - iii. The binder may be used during both the individual and team sales activities

- b. A calculator (separate from a cellphone)
  - c. Writing utensils
- B. NOTE: Prohibited items will result in a deduction of up to five points during the individual sales practicum.**
- a. Business cards are NOT allowed (starting in 2018).
  - b. The physical product is NOT allowed at the sales event.
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## 6. EVENT SCHEDULE

- Once State Convention registration and CDE registration have closed, the contest superintendent will create a spreadsheet with both individual and team sales activity times on it. This will be posted on the Ag Sales CDE webpage prior to State Convention and will be used as the schedule for the contest.
  - Prior to the spreadsheet schedule being created, a school may request a specific time if they have conflicts with additional contests. The superintendent will do his or her best to accommodate these requests.
  - After the spreadsheet schedule is released, if schools notice they have a conflict with their scheduled time, they should contact other schools and switch time slots with them. If schools switch, they must notify the contest superintendent of the change.
  - While actual participation time is about an hour, it may take longer depending on movement of participants through the three parts of the event. If you have special time considerations, please contact the event superintendent as soon as possible.
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## 7. ANNUAL THEME

Themes from which the product will be selected will rotate on a 4 year basis:

- 2018 Theme: Plant Systems
- 2019 Theme: Natural Resources Systems
- 2020 Theme: Animal Systems
- 2021 Theme: Power Structure and Technical Systems

Specific Product Information Sheets will be made available on the CDE website by September 1 of the current year.

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## 8. EVENT FORMAT

- a. The event will be composed of three parts - individual sales activity, team sales activity, and written exam.
- b. Real world scenarios will be utilized, and students will not be allowed to invent product information to include pricing, packaging, specials, etc. As a salesperson, those decisions typically involve or are at the discretion of management.
- c. To improve consistency of evaluation of the sales presentations, two teams will be selected at random to complete their team activity in front of all judges at the beginning of the event. The judges will provide a collective score for each of the two teams.
- d. The team will be provided with paper and pencils. No presentation equipment such as laptops, flipcharts or dry erase boards will be allowed.
- e. The following information will be provided to the team at the event as if they were a group of salespeople working together to develop the pre-call planning prior to conducting a sales call.
  - i. Product information (before the event)
  - ii. Profile of two customers
- f. **TEAM ACTIVITY:** The team will be given 15 minutes to analyze the information and prepare to answer questions about the pre-call plan. During this 15 minutes, the team will be judged using the team activity scorecard. At the conclusion of the 15 minutes, team members will have an additional 15 minutes to individually answer questions from the judges and they will answer without assistance from their team members.
- g. **INDIVIDUAL SALES ACTIVITY:** Participants will directly sell the product(s) to the judge. The judge will fit one of the customer profiles identified in the team pre-call planning activity. Students will be given one of the two preliminary customer profiles and will have 5 minutes to review that preliminary customer profile prior to meeting with the judges. The judge will act as the customer which may include not buying the product. Participants will have to establish rapport, ask probing questions to ensure they meet the customer's needs, and clarify customer information as a part of the sales call. Participants will have 10 minutes to interact with the judge.
- h. Participants are not allowed to offer discounts or other promotional items which are not included in the original product information sheets.

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## 9. SCORING

Refer to the rubrics in the appendix below. The following represents how team and individual scores are calculated:

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<b>Individual Score Calculation</b>	<b>Score</b>
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<b>Total Individual Score Calculation</b>	
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• Written Exam	50
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• Sales Activity	150
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<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>200</b>
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<b>Team Score Calculation</b>	<b>Score</b>
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<b>Total Team Score Calculation</b>	
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• Individual Scores (4 x 200)	800
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• Sales Activity	150
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<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>950</b>
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## 10. TIEBREAKER

### A. Individual

- a. In the event of a tie in the individual scores, the highest individual sales activity score will break the tie. If the tie cannot be broken using the individual sales activity score, the highest written exam score will be used. If a tie still exists, the highest team activity score will be used to break the tie.

### B. Team

- a. In the event of a tie in the team scores, the highest team activity score will break the tie. If the tie cannot be broken using the team activity score, then the total individual sales activity scores will be used. If a tie still exists, the total written exam scores will be used to break the tie.
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## 11. RESOURCE MATERIALS

*ProSelling: A Professional Approach to Selling in Agriculture and Other Industries*, W. Scott Downey, ISBN-13: 978-0978895211 (excluding chapter 2)

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## 12. PAST EXAMS

- A. 2015 Exam - <https://go.unl.edu/2015exam>
  - B. 2016 Exam - <https://go.unl.edu/2016exam>
  - C. 2017 Exam - <https://go.unl.edu/2017exam>
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## 13. POST-CDE DEBRIEFING OPPORTUNITY

A debriefing session is not available for this event; however, individualized feedback will be made available to students on the rubrics and provided to teachers in their convention results packets.

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# **APPENDIX**

# Appendix 1. Team Rubric

## Nebraska FFA Ag Sales Team Activity Rubric

150 total points

### Preparation

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Points Possible	Points Eared
Effective listening	7–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Clearly evident that all team members are listening.	Listening occurs but distraction is evident.	Not listening to each other and/or talking over each other		
Oral communication	5–7 points	3–4 points	0–2 points	7	
	Clearly evident that all team members are discussing the topic.	Communication occurs but side conversations are occurring or two to three members dominating.	One member dominating conversation.		
Demonstrated cooperation	7–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Clearly all team members completing tasks, sharing written and oral solutions.	Tasks primarily completed by two to three members, other members assist occasionally.	Tasks primarily completed by no member.		
Respect	8–12 points	5–11 points	0–4 points	12	
	Clearly all team members respected the input of other team members.	Most team members respected the input of other team members.	The team members did not respect the input of other team members.		
Participated in the team preparation	6–8 points	3–5 points	0–2 points	8	
	Clearly all team members are engaged, attentive, and making notes for the full term of event.	Members are engaged and attentive with two to three making notes, participation fades over time.	No members form the primary team, no other members participate.		
Product knowledge	5–7 points	3–4 points	0–2 points	7	
	Clearly all team members demonstrated knowledge of the product.	Most team members demonstrate knowledge of product.	None of the team members demonstrate knowledge of product.		

## Completion of Team Goal

<b>INDICATOR</b>	Very strong evidence of skill is present 3 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 0–1 point	Points Possible	Points Eared
<b>Building Rapport</b>	Team identified at least four potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.	Team identified at least two potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.	Team identified no potential question to build rapport for the scenario.	3	
<b>Establish Common Interests</b>	Team identified at least four common interests that they have with the customer.	Team identified at least two common interests that they have with the customer.	Team identified no common interests that they have with the customer.	3	
<b>Discover Through Questioning</b>	Team identified at least four questions to identify the wants and needs of customer.	Team identified at least two questions to identify the wants and needs of customer.	Team identified no questions to identify the wants and needs of customer	3	
<b>Active Listening</b>	Team identified four active listening skills or techniques to determine wants and needs.	Team identified two active listening skills or techniques to determine needs and wants.	Team identified no active listening skills or technique to determine wants and needs.	3	
<b>Identifying Needs and Wants</b>	Team identified at least four potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants	Team identified at least two active potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	Team identified no potential needs and wants of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	3	
<b>Objectives</b>	Team identified at least two potential objections of customer	Team identified at least one potential objection of customer	Team identified no potential objections of customer	3	
<b>Concerns</b>	Team identified two concerns of customer.	Team identified at least one concern of customer.	Team identified no concerns of customer.	3	

## Questions

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

<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>Very strong evidence of skill is present</b>	<b>Moderate evidence of skill is present</b>	<b>Strong evidence of skill is not present</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Earned</b>
<b>Determine wants and needs</b>	4-5 points	2-3 points	0-1 point	5	
	All team members questioned contributed potential needs and wants for the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	Half of team members questioned contributed a potential need and want of the customer and how the product meets those needs and wants.	No team members provided potential needs or wants of the customer or how the product meets those needs and wants.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0-3 points	10	
	All potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.		
<b>Objections and concerns</b>	4-5 points	2-3 points	0-1 points	5	
	All team members questioned contributed potential objections and potential concerns for the customer.	Half of team members questioned contributed potential objections and potential concerns for the customer.	No team member contributed potential objections or potential concerns for the customer.		
	7-10 points	4-6 points	0-3 points	10	
	All potential objections and concerns identified are appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Most potential objections and concerns identified are appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	Potential objections and concerns identified are not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.		
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>					

# Appendix 2. Individual Rubric

## Nebraska FFA Ag Sales

Name

## Individual Sales Call Rubric

Chapter

150 points

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Points Possible	Points Earned
First impression	4–5 points	2–3 points	0–1 points	5	
	Individual identifies themselves with a good first impression.	Individual mostly identifies themselves with a good first impression.	Individual poorly identifies themselves with a good first impression.		
Personal rapport	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	Individual mostly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	Individual poorly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.		
Clarifying questions	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	Individual asks mostly questions to learn about the customer's business.	Individual poorly asks questions to learn about the customer's business.		
	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	Individual mostly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	Individual poorly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.		
Needs and wants	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	Individual mostly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	Individual poorly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.		
Features and benefits	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants to their product features.	Individual mostly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants to their product features.	Individual poorly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants to their product features.		

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Points Possible	Points Earned
Matching needs and wants	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.	Individual mostly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.	Individual poorly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/needs to the product features.		
Trial close	8–10 points	4–6 points	0–3 points	10	
	Individual uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	Individual mostly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	Individual poorly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.		
Objections	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Student listens and clarifies customers objections.	Student mostly listens and clarifies customers objections.	Student poorly listens and clarifies customers objections.		
Addressing objections	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	Individual mostly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	Individual poorly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.		
Close or advance sale	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Student closes or attempts to close the sale.	Student mostly closes or attempts to close the sale.	Student poorly closes or attempts to close the sale.		
Active listening	11–15 points	6–10 points	0–5 points	15	
	Individual actively listens to comments and answers from the customer.	Individual mostly listens to comments and answers from the customer.	Individual poorly listens to comments and answers from the customer.		
				<b>POINTS</b>	<input type="text"/>

Up to 5 points deducted for:  
 Not wearing official dress \_\_\_\_\_  
 Offering promotions or discounts \_\_\_\_\_  
 Using the product or electronic devices \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL POINTS**

## Appendix 3. Written Exam

2017 State FFA Ag Sales CDE Written Exam  
Please do not write on this test.

**Fill in the NAME section, including the bubbles, of your answer sheet in this format: Last, First.**

**Failure to do so could mean your score is not counted correctly.**

1. Determining which customers to call on is called\_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) Qualifying
  - b) Prospecting**
  - c) Marketing
  - d) Promotion
  
2. When should a sales person attempt to close the sale?
  - a) After the second sales call
  - b) When the customer asks to buy the product
  - c) During a phone call following the sales call
  - d) At any point during the sales call**
  
3. \_\_\_\_ explain how the feature will fit the customer relative to alternatives.
  - a) Advantages**
  - b) Impressions
  - c) Benefit
  - d) Features
  
4. Which of the following is an example of a buying signal?
  - a) Sharing concerns about cost
  - b) Asking about delivery**
  - c) Asking about the company's history
  - d) None of the above
  
5. Which of the following is the best way to begin a sales call?
  - a) Using pre-written script
  - b) The opening that works with the salesperson's personality
  - c) It depends on the previous relationship with the customer**
  - d) Discussing the recent election
  
6. When a customer has an objection you should first:
  - a) Explain why your product is a better value than the competitor
  - b) Offer a discount
  - c) Contact your manager
  - d) Listen for the concern**

7. You are a sales representative for Nebraska Welding and a prospective customer complains to you about your competitor. She tells you they never have the products she needs and never follows up on her requests. Which of the following is the most appropriate response?
- a) Share other complaints you have heard about your competitor
  - b) Agree with the prospective customer
  - c) Ignore the complaints
  - d) Ask about her expectations and interest in a welding company
8. \_\_\_\_\_ are the characteristics of a product that can be measured or observed.
- a) Advantages
  - b) Impressions
  - c) Benefit
  - d) Features
9. The primary responsibility of salespeople is to\_\_\_\_\_.
- a) Provide solutions for their customers
  - b) Increase their salary
  - c) Maximize their company's short-term profit
  - d) Determine discounts and incentives
10. Making sure prospects have the authority and means to buy is called\_\_\_\_\_.
- a) Qualifying
  - b) Prospecting
  - c) Marketing
  - d) Promotion
11. A customer tells you that your company's quote is higher than two others he has received. What is the best way to handle this objection?
- a) Offer to price match
  - b) Demonstrate how the benefits of your product outweigh the disadvantages.
  - c) Explain that your competitors' products are of lower quality.
  - d) Close the sale
12. When visiting a prospective customer, you notice he has a diploma from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Agricultural Economics hanging on his wall. You mention that you spent time on East Campus during the FFA convention and note that it is beautiful during the spring. This is an example of\_\_\_\_\_.
- a) Building rapport
  - b) Creating a positive impression
  - c) Personal beliefs
  - d) A direct approach

13. The most common mistake by sales people is:
- a) Using a negative close
  - b) Failing to close**
  - c) Ignoring the customer
  - d) Pushing to close
14. Customer objections should be treated as:
- a) A buying signal
  - b) Customer uncertainty that needs clarification**
  - c) A clear indication that a sale is not possible
  - d) Warning signs for the salesperson
15. \_\_\_\_\_ answer the customer's question "So what will this do for me?"
- a) Features
  - b) Pitch
  - c) Benefits**
  - d) Marketing mix
16. A good salesperson:
- a) Never hears objections from their customers
  - b) Addresses one objection before ending the sales call
  - c) Restates the objection in his or her own words**
  - d) Handles each objection by disagreeing
17. \_\_\_\_\_ is asking a customer questions in order to uncover the needs that can be served by a company's products services, and information.
- a) Prospecting
  - b) Qualifying
  - c) Nurturing
  - d) Probing**
18. Which of the following questions is an example of a trial close?
- a) What are you looking for in a feed supplier?
  - b) How will you measure whether this grain bin has been a good investment?
  - c) Would this type of nozzle be a good solution for you?**
  - d) None of the above
19. Purchases are made because the buyer has \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ for the product.
- a) Hope, requirement
  - b) Discount, deal
  - c) Needs, wants**
  - d) None of the above
20. A successful sales presentation:
- a) Includes a discussion of all the benefits of the product
  - b) Lasts no more than 30 minutes
  - c) Includes a discussion of competitors
  - d) Includes a discussion of the benefits that address customer needs**

21. In order to made a good first impression, a salesperson must
- a) Understand the customer's expectations of a salesperson
  - b) Always wear a tie
  - c) Ask probing questions
  - d) Hand out gifts and trinkets
22. "Then if I understand you correctly, you make decisions independently from the regional office?" This is an example of a \_\_\_\_?
- a) Implication question
  - b) Closed-ended question
  - c) Confirming question
  - d) Clarifying question
23. A salesperson attempted to close the sale but his customer said she was not sure she was ready to purchase. What should the sales person do next?
- a) Build rapport with her
  - b) Probe to find out why
  - c) End the sales call
  - d) Offer free delivery
24. Who generally has the discretion to set pricing or incentives?
- a) Salesperson
  - b) Customer
  - c) Trade association
  - d) Management
25. Which of the following is an example of a feature?
- a) This pickup will use less fuel than your current model.
  - b) This pickup's engine has 385 horsepower.
  - c) With this pickup, you will be able to easily tow your horses up the mountain.
  - d) Buying this pickup means you will spend less time on repairs.