

SELLING IN SALES COURSES: AN EVOLVING REVENUE PARADIGM FOR MARKETING DEPARTMENTS

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

Developing a sales curriculum that provides the necessary academic rigor and also meets the pragmatic needs of the business community is an ongoing challenge for academe. At Metropolitan State College of Denver, we have begun an introspective process that has transformed our program both in and out of the classroom to include sales experiences that benefit the student, the potential employer, and the school.

SALES EDUCATION

The field of sales education, like many other areas in business, has undergone a shift from lecture based learning to experiential learning (Anderson *et al.*, 2005). This transformation in learning style requires students to become actively involved both inside and outside the classroom to receive optimal educational benefits.

Business executives expect that new employees possess sales skills (Leisen, Tippins, & Lilly, 2004; Walker et al. 2009). Furthermore, sales professionals believe that role playing and sales projects are two key ingredients in sales education, helping students develop communication skills, self-confidence, and critical thinking skills (Parker, Pettijohn, & Luke, 1996; Tomkovick, Erffmeyer, & Hietpas, 1996). The experience gained in role-playing exercises, as part of the sales curriculum, is a first order expectation for organizations that recruit sales candidates. However, there is no substitute for actually having to sell something.

NEED FOR REVENUE

The current economic situation has proved challenging to individuals, colleges, and businesses alike. By adding real world selling situations, professors provide students with an opportunity to test their recently acquired sales knowledge and to generate revenue.

This presentation will outline how several marketing classes have applied experiential learning principles and created revenue for scholarships, endowed scholarships, as well as extra funds for the department.

SPORT AND ENTERTAINMENT TICKETS

Over the past several years, these classes have worked with organizations such as: the Colorado Rapids, The International-PGA Golf Tournament, the Colorado Rockies, the Denver Nuggets, the Colorado Avalanche, the Colorado Crush, Disney on Ice, Los Lobos Concert, Gipsy Kings Concert, and the Colorado Mammoth. These relationships have resulted in raising funds for the academic department, making money for sports and entertainment entities and helping students land internships and jobs.

SUCCESS AND DISCUSSION

When financial resources are scarce in higher education, the ability to create opportunities for students requires that educators creatively develop new pedagogical techniques. Through a combination of experiential learning and training, students are thus better equipped to succeed. Local sports teams benefit by generating additional ticket revenue and by developing potential new hires. Through working with the college, teams have the inside track with students looking for internships or full time positions. The college benefits by generating new revenue sources that allow the development of new courses and educational programs within the Marketing Department.

The presenters will outline how the project is created and implemented.

The session will end with a roundtable discussion of the topic and comments from the audience.

References Available on Request