

Retail knowledge

**Level 1: Understanding the retail selling process
(T/502/5805)**

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This material is provided as an additional and optional resource for tutors and teachers to use and adapt when delivering a programme of units for their learners. For learners to achieve units within a Skilled for Life programme, it is important that every assessment criterion is assessed, fully met and noted. The resource sheets provided for each unit will enable learners to produce evidence for certain criteria. It is not envisaged that solely by completing the resource sheets, learners will fully meet all the criteria. It is the responsibility of tutors and assessors to ensure that all criteria are properly assessed and the evidence recorded appropriately.

Introduction

Our Skilled for Life resources are designed to provide you with ideas for delivering the unit content and engaging tasks and activities that will help learners work towards assessment.

The materials consist of stand-alone sheets that can be used in a range of ways to suit most situations. Whether you are working in a classroom or a less formal learning environment, with individual learners or with groups, it is hoped that you will find these sheets and the accompanying tutor guidance notes useful.

The sheets are in pdf format; they are downloadable and may be photocopied for use only within your institution. Alternatively, learners can access them on-screen – the write-in sections are interactive so that answers to activities can be recorded electronically.

Each sheet addresses one or more of the assessment criteria in the unit (A.C.s are clearly marked at the top of each page). Page 1 of each sheet provides a starter stimulus or introductory idea based around the suggested unit content in the specification; it can be used to explain key concepts, or as the basis for a discussion. You could use the stimulus to draw together key learning points and encourage learners to engage with the topic or concept from the outset. There is plenty of scope for you to introduce your own content or ideas as well.

Page 2 of each sheet includes tasks that will consolidate learners' knowledge and understanding and, in some cases, may provide evidence for assessment.

This tutor guidance document provides detailed suggestions for how to use each of the resource sheets in the unit, and includes tips and advice together with suggested extension activities, alternative ideas, useful reference sources and answers to activities where applicable.

Unit overview

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with knowledge and understanding of selling within a retail environment. It introduces learners to the selling process, meeting customer requirements, the purpose and importance of product information, and the benefits of product demonstrations when closing a sale.

Learning and teaching activities in this unit

Resource sheet 1: Selling a car

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to the key steps in the selling process. The three images used on the resource sheet help to demonstrate this process; from the product selection, through the sale to an eventual purchase. Key words surround the images.

Distribute the resource sheet and use the visual stimuli to initiate a discussion about recent purchases that the learners have made. What did they buy? Where did they buy it? What factors influenced their decision to purchase?

Explore each key word on the resource sheet in turn. Focus the discussion on the retailer; learners must recognise what retail staff can do to help close a sale. Make sure to explain the importance of product positioning when discussing presentation – examine the way that cars are placed on the forecourt in the image and ask learners to consider why this approach was taken. Review the role of retail staff in the selling process, focusing on the need to be polite, speak clearly and listen carefully, as well as the importance of both open and closed questions.

Learners should be made aware that a sale can be closed in different ways; for example, by paying for the product at the till point or, as in the example shown, when drawing up contracts and arranging payments.

Activity 1: Think like a customer

In this activity, learners are presented with a series of events representing the key steps of the selling process. They relate to the character Darren, who is buying a car from PC Motors. Learners must rearrange the steps into the correct order. They can cut out the tiles and arrange them physically or they can number the steps on the activity sheet to indicate the order.



Extension activity

To extend the activity, learners can focus on asking questions. They can explore the difference between open and closed questions, the reasons why each type might be used and the different types of information they elicit. Learners should be asked for their own examples of the different types of questions. Some examples are given below.

Examples of open questions	Examples of closed questions
How can I help you?	Do you need help?
What exactly were you thinking of?	Is this the size/colour you were thinking of?
What were you thinking of using it for?	Did you want to try this one?
When would you want to use it?	Would you like to have it delivered?
	Do you like this particular one?

Resource sheet 2: What are his rights?

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to the key legislation governing the selling process and to encourage them to recognise the legal rights of both customers and retailers when buying, selling or returning goods.

The learner is introduced again to Darren, who wishes to return the car he bought because he no longer likes the colour. Distribute the resource sheet and initiate a discussion about Darren’s rights. Can he legally return the car? Explain to learners that Darren is only entitled to a refund if his car is faulty and ‘not fit for purpose’. PC Motors could give Darren a refund as a goodwill gesture, but they aren’t legally obliged to do so.

Introduce the key legislation governing the selling process: the Sale and Supply of Goods to Consumers Regulations 2002, which includes the Sale of Goods Act 1979 and the Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994. Explain the main features of these laws. You may wish to arrange for a visiting speaker from Trading Standards who can explain the law to the learners and may be able to bring examples with them.

Activity 2: Everybody has rights

In this activity, the learners are introduced to three more customers to help underpin the central message about legal entitlements when returning goods. For each scenario, the learner must consider the

rights of the customer, the store and the laws that set out the legal entitlements.

Learners may wish to discuss each case in pairs or small groups before recording their response on the activity sheet. To conduct the activity as a whole-class exercise, divide them into three smaller groups and present each group with a scenario from the activity sheet. Once the groups have agreed on the rights of their customer, the retailer and the relevant legislation, they should report their findings back to the group as a whole.

Resource sheet 3: How can I help you?

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to considerations when liaising with customers; such as the key skills and qualities required of sales staff, acknowledging, greeting and approaching customers, and finding out what customers need.

The resource sheet shows an image of Hitomi, an employee of Best Autos. Distribute the sheet and initiate a discussion about the factors that will contribute to Hitomi's success at work. Encourage the learners to consider her appearance, her body language, the way she conducts herself and how she interacts with her customers.

Learners should recognise that good, clear communication, a professional appearance and a polite, well-informed manner will contribute to sales.

Activity 3: Working with customers

In this activity, learners will take part in a role-play. Each learner must play the part of the employee selling a product to a customer. They could be asked to imagine that they are colleagues of Hitomi at Best Autos; however, if they prefer to sell another type of product, they can do so. More able learners can be divided into pairs, with each learner taking it in turns to play the role of the customer and the employee. Other learners may need additional support and it may be necessary for you to take on the role of the customer.

The activity sheet provides a self-assessment checklist against which learners can evaluate their performance. It could also act as a checklist when carrying out the role-play to ensure they do not forget key steps. An observation report template is available in the Answer section on page 12–13.



Extension activity

To extend the activity, learners can focus on closing the sale. What different techniques are available for them to use? Encourage them to explore different options or questions that could be asked, such as

'How would you like to pay?'. Ask learners to evaluate each option. How effective is it for closing the sale? If time allows, learners can undertake the role-play for a second time using the closing techniques they have identified and discussed.

Resource sheet 4: What might you ask when buying a car?

The purpose of this sheet is to encourage learners to consider the selling process from the customer's point of view and to think about customers' common concerns when buying goods. The resource sheet continues with the previous theme and focuses on buying a car; however, learners could consider other possible purchases in order to raise the same considerations.

Distribute the resource sheet and initiate a discussion about the things they would want to know before buying a car. Draw key themes from the discussion and encourage learners to consider the general issues that customers might have; for example, price, product benefits or how well the product meets their needs.

It may be helpful to consider the role of Internet shopping: many customers now carry out online research into price, benefits and stockists before purchasing a product. E-retailing has made it easier to comparison shop, so many customers will have a great deal of the information they need before entering a store.

Activity 4: Your last shopping trip

In this activity, learners must consider their last shopping trip in order to answer the questions on the sheet. By examining their own buying decisions, the learner can uncover the important factors that customers consider when making a purchase in order to answer question 6.

Resource sheet 5: Make a choice

The purpose of this sheet is to explore the importance of product information and to understand how relevant information can make goods more attractive to customers. The resource sheet shows two pots of yoghurt. The packaging for the first pot displays only the most basic information; the other is attractively packaged and includes detailed information about the product, such as ingredients and nutritional information.

Distribute the resource sheet and ask learners to consider the two pots of yoghurt. Which would they buy? Are they drawn more to one than the

other? What are the reasons for this? Encourage learners to recognise the benefits to the customer of the product information supplied.

To extend the session, source packaging from real-life products for comparison, such as food and drink or mobile phone packaging, and bring it in. If this is not possible, learners can compare the packaging of different products using online retailers; the websites for large supermarket chains such as Waitrose, Tesco or Sainsbury's would be good options here.

Learners should be encouraged to recognise that clear, relevant product information can help customers to learn more about the product, its benefits and how it might compare to other similar products. All of this information will help to influence the decision about whether to buy.

Activity 5: Why give information about products?

In the activity, learners must list the reasons why retailers should give customers information about their products. Learners can discuss this in pairs or small groups before capturing their ideas on the sheet. A spider diagram has been provided for learners to record their answers.

Resource sheet 6: Where can you find product information?

The purpose of this sheet is to encourage learners to identify where they can find the product information they require. They will also be introduced to the concept of features and benefits when providing product information. The sheet gives examples of three very different types of products: an item of clothing, a mobile phone and a ready meal.

Distribute the resource sheet and focus on each of the items shown in turn. Ask learners for suggestions about where they can find the information they need about the product, in order to emphasise its features and benefits to potential customers.

Possible sources to consider include:

- Manufacturer's catalogues
- Retail catalogues, such as those available from retailers like NEXT, La Redoute, Boden, Goodness Direct and Littlewoods
- Product manuals, for items with detailed product specifications like white goods, vehicles, gardening or DIY equipment, mobile phones, etc.
- Garment labels
- The Internet

Ensure that learners understand that any information they give should be accurate and must not mislead or deceive the customer in any way. More able learners will be able to assess the validity of different sources, particularly when using the Internet, to search for information. You may wish to bring in examples of the above sources to enhance the session. Capture all suggestions made about possible sources on a flipchart or whiteboard.

Give support as necessary to define key terms, particularly the distinction between features and benefits.

Activity 6: Find out more (1), (2) and (3)

In this activity, learners will build on the previous discussion about sources of product information by conducting their own research into the features and benefits of each of the three products: the mobile phone, the t-shirt and the ready meal. They must complete three separate activity sheets; one for each of the products.

Although an example of the product is shown, the sheets allow for some flexibility. You may be able to supply sample products for learners to research. Other suggestions are made below.

In part 1, learners can use their own mobile phone, a mobile phone found online or an alternative electronic device such as an iPod, tablet or laptop.

In part 2, learners can use an item of clothing they have brought in or are currently wearing. Alternatively, they may wish to choose a specialist item of clothing from a website, such as an outdoor jacket.

In part 3, learners can bring in a food product from home or select an item from a supermarket website.

Ensure that the list of possible sources of information compiled earlier is displayed. You will also need to ensure that learners have access to at least some of these sources. Learners must use the different sources of information to answer the questions on the activity sheets. These questions cover advice on how to use the product and an exploration of its features and benefits.

Resource sheet 7: Would you demonstrate it to a customer?

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to the idea of demonstrating products to customers to help drive up sales. The same products are shown: t-shirt, mobile phone, ready meal. All of these products could be demonstrated to the customer in different ways.

Distribute the resource sheets and initiate a discussion about the advantages of demonstrating products to customers. How would the learners demonstrate each of the products shown? Why is it a good idea to demonstrate products? It may be helpful to direct learners to sales channels such as QVC or Ideal World in order to see demonstration techniques in action.

It is important to make learners aware of the basic rules for product demonstration, such as health and safety considerations. It may also be necessary to reinforce the importance of giving customers clear, accurate information when demonstrating and to avoid misleading or deceiving them.

Activity 7: Know your product

In this activity, learners will demonstrate a product of their choosing to the group. Learners can select any product for the demonstration and should choose something in which they have a particular interest. Suggestions include: electronic devices such as an iPad, beauty tools such as hair straighteners, kitchen equipment such as a juicer or blender, toys or games, and outdoor equipment such as a rucksack or sleeping bag.

Before the demonstration, learners should conduct research to make sure they have all the product information they need. The activity sheet provides a framework for this research, including guiding questions and a space for notes.

Learners should be prepared to demonstrate how to use the product, including information about its features and benefits, and discuss how it compares to similar products. They should be aware of their target customer and the current retail price of the product. It is also important that learners consider health and safety. Learners should be prepared to answer questions from the group.

With the learner's permission, demonstrations can be videotaped as evidence. Alternatively, you can complete an observation report.

Useful resources

Resources to prepare include the following:

- A variety of catalogues and product manuals from which learners can cut out materials
- Packaging for products such as a mobile phone, shoes, food labels, tins, etc.
- Point of Sale material from retailers
- Instruction manuals such as those that accompany mobile phones, vehicles, brown, minor and white goods

Other useful resources include:

- Books such as:
 - Cox R, Brittain P: *Retailing – An Introduction*; FT Prentice Hall 2004, ISBN 0273678191
 - Segel R: *Retail Business Kit for Dummies*; John Wiley & Sons 2001, ISBN 978-0764553813
 - Dion J: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Starting and Running a Retail Store*; Alpha Books 2008, ISBN 978-1592577262
- Trade journals and magazines such as:
 - *Convenience Store* (published by William Reed Business Media)
 - *Independent Retailer* (published by Emap)
 - *The Grocer* (published by William Reed Business Media)
 - *Retail Week* (published by Emap)
 - *Which?* magazine

Websites

- <http://www.britishcatalogues.co.uk/> – a complete list of UK catalogues available
- <http://www.offt.gov.uk/business-advice/treating-customers-fairly/saleofgoodsact/> – information about the Sale of Goods Act from the Office of Fair Trading
- <http://www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights/making-a-complaint/making-a-complaint> – advice from Which on how to make a complaint to a retail organisation
- <http://www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights/sale-of-goods/sale-of-goods> – information from Which about consumer laws
- www.skillsmartretail.com – website for the Sector Skills Council for Retail, containing some information on consumer protection

Answers to activities

Activity 1: Think like a customer

Correct order:

1	Position – How are the cars laid out? Do they look good?
2	Talk to the customer – Be polite, speak clearly and listen carefully.
3	Price – What does the car cost?
4	Give information – Tell Darren about the car. What can it do? Why is it good?
5	Close the sale.

Note: tiles 3 and 4 are interchangeable and could also be presented the other way around.

Activity 2: Everybody has rights

Scenario	Exemplar answer
Amrit bought a pair of shoes as a gift. He wants to return them. They are too small.	Amrit has few rights as the goods are not faulty. If he has a receipt, the store might be able to exchange the shoes. He might also be able to get a refund, at the discretion of the store, if he has a receipt and is within the period of time allowed.
Karla bought a pair of trousers. She took them home. Then she saw that the hem was unstitched.	The trousers are faulty. As this was not noticed when they were purchased, Karla has the right to ask for a refund or replacement to the same value.
Kyi bought a pot of yoghurt. She tried to eat it but it had gone off. It wasn't past the use-by date.	Kyi has the right to ask for a refund or replacement yoghurt as the yoghurt was not 'fit for purpose'.

Activity 3: Working with customers

Learner's own answer. You may wish to create an observation report during the learner's role-play. An example is given below.

OBSERVATION RECORD

Learner Name:
Programme:
Unit Number and title:

Activity 4: Your last shopping trip

- 1** Learner's own answer. Learners should be encouraged to consider a range of items such as clothing, food and drink or electronic goods.
- 2** Learner's own answer. Responses should be focussed on needs, such as replacement, hunger, thirst, addiction; and wants, such as trends or peer and/or parental pressure.
- 3** Learner's own answer. A range of outlets are possible here including online retailers.
- 4** Learner's own answer. Learners should consider both the store and the method used (for example, store shopping versus online shopping).
- 5** Learner's own answer. A variety of payment methods may be used, including pay-pal.
- 6** Learner's own answer. Answers might include: price; benefits of product; benefits compared to other similar products; consideration of whether product meets needs.

Activity 5: Why give information about products?

Learner's own answer. Suggestions can include: to help customers become knowledgeable about the product, to allow comparison with similar products, to emphasise the benefits of the product, to help customers decide whether to buy the product.

Activity 6: Find out more (1), (2) and (3)

Learner's own answer.

Activity 7: Know your product

Learner's own answer.

An example of a simple observation report form is provided on page 12–13.