

Subject Line: RSS Ready Set Sell Assignment 1: Product/Service and Buyer Choice

Dear AGB 202 Students,

I hope your quarter is off to a good start. I'm e-mailing you today to discuss your first Ready Set Sell assignment. As a reminder, the RSS project involves you making a sales presentation to a buyer who is portrayed by a classmate. This assignment is due on PolyLearn Friday, October 6 at 5 pm. **Only Pdf documents will be accepted.** This assignment is worth 20 points and must be in e-mail format.

By the end of this course you are expected to demonstrate competency in conducting a sales call. The first step is to state the **product or service you have chosen to sell**. All products must be food or Agribusiness related and must already exist. I would recommend making a simple product or service choice.

You must also provide a **description of the product or service** and the **name of the company you will be representing**. Agricultural sales can involve several levels of the supply chain and you need to be able to differentiate how sales occurs at each of these steps. As such you must also state the **company type:** manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, service, etc. You will get the most out of this assignment if you are interested in the process and outcome. Try to pick a product you can get excited about researching and selling. I would like you to tell me **your previous experience with the product or service** and **why you have chosen it** for this project.

You then need to think about what type of buyer you will be selling to. *A word of warning: describing a buyer "with lots of money that likes to buy anything and everything" is not acceptable.* Make your selling scenario realistic, which generally means that there are some difficult issues to overcome.

Begin by informing me of **the name of the company you are selling to** and its **industry type**. Recall that in sales it is also important to build the personal side of your relationship. Thus I would also like to know the **name of the person you are selling to**, their **position within the company**, and where the **sales call will take place** (store, home, office, etc.).

Part of the prospecting process involves prioritizing potential customers and concentrating on those that will be most likely to benefit from your product. I would like to understand why you have chosen your prospective buyer. Start by stating **their current supplier(s)** so that I understand what their baseline situation is. Then think about the information you can use to prepare for the call. Specifically, I would like to know your **prospect's problems with their current supplier(s)** as well as the **factors that are likely to be important to this prospect**.

As a salesperson you also need to be well-versed in not just your own product but also those of your competitors. Thus you also need to state **the names of three competing products** and **their producers**.

My goal is that by this end of this course you will have improved your oral and written communication skills so please additionally bring a hard copy of your draft to class on Thursday September 28. If you have any questions about this assignment, feel free to contact me by email at crconnol@calpoly.edu or see me during office hours. I am looking forward to hearing about your product/service choice!

Thank you for your time,
Professor Connolly

Subject Line: RSS 2 Assignment: Opening, Probing and Communicating Value

Dear AGB 202 Students,

Hope you are having a good week! In this RSS you finally get to start preparing for the sales call. This step is an important part of the call strategy. This assignment is due Tuesday, October 31 at 8 pm. Recall that **only PDF documents will be accepted**.

Several of this course's learning objectives involve understanding and completing the steps of a sales call. The purpose of the RSS presentation is to give you experience in conducting a sales call and in this e-mail you will start to give me information on how you are strategizing for the call to go.

It is important to ensure that anyone reading your e-mail is on the same page as you so begin by reminding me of **your product or service name** as well as the **customer** you will be selling to. Then describe the opening of the call. Explain how you **plan to make a positive initial impression**; this step should never be overlooked as it is your first opportunity to put the customer at ease.

One of your most important responsibilities as a salesperson is to build a relationship with your customer. Think about **two subjects that you can use to build rapport**. Then explain whether you will use **standard or direct approach** and why, including **how you will bring the conversation around to his/her business**. Also discuss the **implications of your behavioral style** when it comes to interacting with your customer. Make sure to explain why you made each of these choices for your call strategy.

The crux of the sales call is probing as it is when you learn about your customer's beliefs, goals and needs. The information you acquire during this process will be used throughout the rest of your interaction. Begin by thinking about **a need or problem your prospect may have** so that you have some idea of what direction your probing should take. You should then prepare to ask at least **four open-ended questions** and **two closed-ended questions**. For each query I would also like you to **explain your reason for asking that particular question**.

In the next process of the e-mail you will be considering how you will communicate value to your buyer. A crucial task during the sales call is to employ the information you learned during probing to highlight the features of your product that will be most relevant to your buyer. Recall that you cannot expect customers to translate features into benefits...that is your job! In order to prepare for this task I would like you to state four of your product/service's features, and a corresponding advantage and benefit for each one (ie. **4 FAB statements**).

Although this part of the call is called the presentation it should still be a conversation; don't forget the importance of the 80/20 rule. As such, you should make sure the customer is engaged throughout this process. A great way to do this is a benefit-tag statement. Additionally, you should be prepared with evidence for any follow-up questions the buyer may have. For one of your FAB statements, explain how you can **support this feature with evidence**. Then compose a **benefit-tag statement** that secures customer agreement by getting them to admit this product feature would help him or her out.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns, and I look forward to reading these!

Sincerely,

Professor Connolly

20 points

Subject Line: RSS Objections and Closing Assignment

Dear AGB 202 Students,

I hope you are all surviving the end of the quarter :). We are now in the home stretch and this e-mail concerns your RSS 3 assignment, which is due Sunday, November 12th at 8pm. As a reminder, **only PDF documents will be accepted.**

For this RSS you will discuss your strategy for overcoming objections, as well as how you intend to close the call. To start, state your **product or service** name as well as your **customer's name**.

No matter how strong your presentation is the customer will almost surely have some objections. The best way to prepare for this is to predict these concerns and develop your responses. Thus I would like you to list **four probable objections**, state **what objection technique you would use** for each one, and explain **why**. It is also important that you be well-versed in your competitor's products in addition to yours. Please list at least **one feature and benefit for each of the three competitor's products** you have listed in previous assignments.

Now we are on to the close. This is what you have been working toward! Recall that a trial close is a great way to understand how your customer feels about the product without the pressure of asking for their business. Give me an example of a **trial close** for your product/service. Then state the **primary actual close** you will use and give me an **example** of how you intend to employ it.

Though you are going into this call as prepared as possible there are times that the flow of conversation require you to change your approach. Flexibility is incredibly important in the sales process and you may find as you reach the end of the call that your primary close is not appropriate. State a **secondary actual close** type as well as an **example**.

Though the sales call may be over, the sales process continues with the Evaluate step. We have previously discussed the significance of forging a relationship when it comes to a successful sales career. An important part of that is maintaining contact with your customer after the sale. Finish up this assignment by **describing follow up activities** and **when they will take place**. Let me know if you have any questions and I look forward to reading these!

Thank you for your time,
Professor Connolly
12 points

Subject Line: RSS Outline Assignment

Dear AGB 202 Students,

Your RSS mock sales calls are coming up and this e-mail will help you develop an outline to prepare for the experience. This assignment must be submitted online by Wednesday November 15 at 8pm in **pdf** format. Additionally, bring a **hard copy to class on Tuesday November 14.**

For this assignment, I want you to develop an outline for your RSS Presentation. Although adaptive selling techniques should be used, outlining a presentation helps a salesperson plan their sales call and stay on track when conducting the sales call. This outline may be longer than one page, and does not have to be in paragraph format.

The outline should cover the following:

- 1) Your sales call Objective
- 2) The Opening and Probing
 - a. What type of opening will you use
 - b. What questions will you ask during probing
- 3) 3 FAB Statements
 - a. Ensure your FAB statements reflect what you learned during probing
- 4) 3 anticipated Objections and corresponding Objection Techniques
- 5) Trial Close and two potential Actual Closes
- 6) Backup Sales Info (separate page)
 - a. Detail competitors' info in a one sheet format that you can use during the call
 - b. Include how your product's features compare to competitors' products

Good luck with the assignment!

Let me know if you have any questions,
Professor Connolly

5 points