COMMERCE 4ME3 - SALES MANAGEMENT
Fall 2024 Course Outline
Marketing
DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the essential functions of a `Sales Professional' in today's business environment. With the emerging nature of global and fiercely competitive markets, the onus is on the sales team, within most business organizations, to provide that vital edge. Good personal selling skills allow sellers to secure business by helping customers problem solve, meet new challenges and leverage current or emerging opportunities. This course introduces students to key theoretical frameworks for a sound foundation in the `science of selling' in face-to-face interactions. It offers opportunity to experience the practical application of learnt concepts in a controlled setting and will prepare students to become effective, ethical and strategic business-to-business sellers.

INSTRUCTOR AND TA CONTACT INFORMATION

Mandeep Malik
Associate Professor
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TA: Aravind Sithamparapillai
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COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Team skills:	Yes	IT skills:	No	Global:	No
Avenue:	Yes	Verbal skills:	Yes	Numeracy:	Yes	Political:	No
Participation:	Yes	Written skills:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Social:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	No	Guest speaker(s):	Yes

COURSE SUCCESS SKILLS

Growth mindset; Curiosity; Analytical ability; Good interpersonal skills; Information mining skills; Interest in persuading and influencing people; Good Planning and Time Management; Effective Collaboration and Teamwork skills.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The primary purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the essential concepts and practices in B2B buying and selling. Selling is about dealing with customers and their needs, and it has less to do with the product or service than is commonly believed. The course therefore has a focus on customer decision process and an influence approach for each stage of buying. It will be taught using a mix of classroom workshops, guest lectures and in class simulations. Role-plays will be used to give practice in analyzing customer types, solving typical sales problems, and developing a consultative selling approach.

COURSE CHALLENGES

1. Sharpen your ability to work thoughtfully in face-to-face interpersonal transactions.
2. Test your persuasion skills and presentation skills in role-play situations and refine your argumentation skills and `public speaking' confidence.
3. Learn through self-critique and meaningful critique of peer ideas in class debates.
4. Learn using the process of information search, information analysis and opinion development - also including disagreement / debate during all class discussions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course will help you to:
1. Understand the basics of professional selling practices, as they need to be applied today.
2. Develop a strong foundation in the customer decision process for business buying and the related B2B sales process.
3. Gain the knowledge and skills for a typical entry level sales position in the B2B environment.

EVALUATION

Components and Weights

Participation in Class Discussions... .... 20% (*Individual*)
Video Recorded Role Plays ………………………………………………….. 25% (Three assignments)
Sales Role Play – Interim……………. 20%
Sales Role Play - Final... 35%

TOTAL 100%

IMPORTANT: STUDENT EVALUATION METHODS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

COURSE DELIVERY

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	DELIVERY	DESCRIPTION	TOOL(S)
Live Lectures / Discussions	Synchronous	Live discussion led by the professor and will include student led topic presentations.	**On campus**
Readings and Reviews	Asynchronous	Students will read and prepare for in-class discussions. Watch the LinkedIn Learning videos recommended for preparation or as additional learning resource to build on class discussion.	**Recommended book**
Group Work	Asynchronous	Work in groups to complete a practitioner interviews report and role play practice assignments.	**At each group's discretion**

REQUIRED BOOK

'SELL THE WAY YOU BUY' by David Priemer

Available at Campus Bookstore or on Amazon

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Area Administrative Assistants. Instructors are required to provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #9 in the term. Instructors may solicit feedback via an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

A. CLASS CONTRIBUTION 20%

This course will rely heavily on `EMPOWERED LEARNING' – involving students in case discussions and in-class exercises on the topic of the day. As such it is imperative that you prepare for each class – this will determine the take home value of this course to you and impact your learning as well as that of your peers.

- Participation will be assessed through engagement in class discussion, attendance and active participation in asynchronous meetings if so offered.
- This is a shared learning environment with your peers and the professor, so please come prepared to engage in thoughtful dialogue about assigned readings, class content, work and personal experiences, as debate and active reflection are important to learning. Preparation for class will ensure deeper learning for you and allow for sharing of insights with your classmates, inviting and respecting your peer's perspectives – all in all to create a rich learning environment.
- Participation also includes contributing to other students learning by creating a respectful space where people can openly explore, test, and challenge ideas. Thus, you are expected to contribute to the creation of a constructive learning environment. This includes active participation in large and small group discussions, asking questions, sharing experiences, reflecting on links to practice and challenging your preconceptions and stereotypes. Important to remember that constructive contributing does not mean dominating the discussion.
- We will engage in problem solving conversations related to best practices in selling, current buyer behaviour and the emerging identity of a sales professional for today / tomorrow. We will work towards enabling productive conversation and classroom community building.

Interim contribution marks will be available through the TA EVERY TWO WEEKS throughout the term. Come to see me then if your mark is low, or well before if you are concerned that it might be low. The key to high participation grades is making a quality contribution to every class. Marks will be awarded on both quality and consistency.

Absence from class is a serious matter since you obviously cannot participate if you're not there. If there are legitimate reasons for you to miss class, you need to provide documentation to the Academic Programs Office.

GROUP WORK

- Groups will consist of two students. Please note that 80% of your mark in this course is based on teamwork so choose your partner wisely. On or before September 23rd, 2024, you are required to advise the TA of your team details.
- Your team of two will operate as buyer and seller for Interim Role Play Exam and as a sales team of two for the Final Role Play Exam (this may change based on student needs or instructor choice given the nature of exam).

OBJECTIVES OF THE GROUP

The purpose of asking you to work in teams is to allow you to experience the process of addressing sales problems and tasks with a partner – this is a reality you may be faced with in the field. Given the complexities encountered in selling, most technology and industrial product companies encourage teams to work on key/major accounts. Sometimes these teams are a combination of sales specialist and technical specialist, other times they may be a business development rep and an account executive. Today, I believe the sales professional and his or her buyer work as a team too. In the real-world team formations have many different objectives. This classroom partnership will allow you to learn how to manage this process more easily, when you are faced with it in the working world. It will help you in areas like relationship building, communication, building trust, division of tasks, respect, handling conflict and motivating others to meet mutually agreed upon `win-win' goals.

Using Role Play Simulations

This is most unique to and a strength of the sales course. It is used as an examination tool too. It is the reason students self-select themselves out of the course and it is also the reason many students are motivated to take this class. Role-plays are fun, competitive, LIVE problem-solving challenges that you can embrace. Depending on the stage of the course each aspect of the business-to-business sales process is role-played independently and cumulatively. I try to minimize risk by assigning you into teams of buyer-seller-observer. You can get instantaneous feedback using tools validated by practitioners. In preparation we review, understand, and analyze case studies of buyer seller interactions, and discuss the power of words, tone, body language and more. These cases help us solve the small mysteries of human interaction. The ongoing Q&A keeps you thinking on your feet, arguing, debating, referencing intuition but then exploring the science.

B. TEAM VIDEO ASSIGNMENTS 25%

You will complete THREE recordings as a team of two. First, decide on a simple product or service (B2B) you wish to demonstrate as being bought and sold. Focus on products / services that are somewhat transactional in nature and do not require involved decision making or more than one/two people involved in the buying journey. **All your recordings will depict the buying / selling journey for the same product and same custome**r. These recordings are a depiction of a SEQUENTIAL conversation, and you can tie it together by picking up where you left off or referencing past meetings.

1. **5% Up to a Five-minute recording of: DUE October 11th, 2024**
    a. Your opening statement and early interaction
    b. Rapport building with the buyer.
    c. Transition from rapport to discovery questions.
2. **10% Up to a Ten-minute recording of: DUE Nov 1st, 2024**
    a. Needs analysis,
        i. Focus on discovery to understand current situation.
    b. Problem exploration
        i. Identify gaps / unmet needs.
        ii. Uncover one or more underlying problems.
    c. Implication questions.
        i. Pose 1 or 2 implication questions.
        ii. Use quantitative data / metrics.
3. **10% Up to a Seven-minute recording including: DUE Nov 22nd, 2024.**
    a. Summarizing past meeting and related agreement to NEED questions.
    b. Presenting a value proposition / solution.
    c. Includes overcoming customer resistance to advance the commitment to buying / making a purchase decision.

Notes:

- You will lose grades if you are reading off a script.
- If you have any questions about the role play, a Q&A session should be scheduled well in advance to the due date.
- The principles learned in this course and from the course text should be directly incorporated into the role plays.

C. ROLE PLAY EXAMS 55%

Interim Role Play Exam (in the week of November 11th)

Within your groups you will be required to form a buyer-seller team and develop a scenario for a selling situation depicting steps like introduction/opening, needs analysis, basic discussion around a solution and close of meeting. This scenario MUST be different from your video submissions.

DETAILED GUIDELINES

This selling situation role-play will give you an opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the buying and selling process and apply the key skills required for sales success. Please design your role-play using the following suggestions:

1. Develop a scenario of a business-to-business selling situation lasting no more than 20 minutes. Use simple products or services, for example – selling televisions to a university; selling cellular phone plans to a small business for their team; selling computers to a small business owner; selling a commercial cleaning service to a doctor's office; selling the services of a chartered accounting firm to a small business.

2. You should assume that you are meeting this buyer for the first time, for a pre-arranged meeting. Cold calls are also acceptable. It is fair to assume elements like you are meeting this buyer based on an inquiry made by him/her or their firm, and that the person you are calling on is a decision-maker. **All assumptions must be mentioned in a briefing sheet - a one page summary of the situation you are going to demonstrate** to the TA/instructor. See attached prep document.

3. The role-play should demonstrate the essential early steps in the sales process including, *opening, questioning to identify needs and a very basic product proposition*. If you see time as a constraint, it is possible to close the call with agreement on the next proposed action; however, such sales calls must thoroughly demonstrate effective opening and needs analysis early in the buying process / sales process.

4. Please use appropriate product exhibits in the role-play. For example, use an online demo about the product or brand accessible on their website. You are also allowed to develop your own professional presentations or other supporting documents / resources. NOTHING SHOULD BE LEFT TO OUR IMAGINATION.

5. You should not be reading from or referring to a script. The role of the buyer should be well defined, and the process should demonstrate a two-way interaction in which the buyer is participating actively. Otherwise, both members of the group will lose marks.

6. Please dress for business and know that the role-play is assessed as a professional business meeting. Any `un-business like' behaviour will have a negative impact on your marks. Ideas that do not appear logical or realistic will not be accepted.

7. You will be judged on your ability to apply sales skills learnt in class, this includes - demonstration of a good understanding and adeptness at the buying and selling steps, communication/presentation skills, usage of sales tools, effort put in developing such tools and realism of the business situation.

Final Role Play Exam (in the week of Dec 16th) unless otherwise arranged given exam schedule)

The situation, product / service and guidelines will be provided at least two weeks prior to the scheduling of the final exam. It is typical in this test that you undertake a team selling effort to the buyer (played by the instructor or an external representative). Your skills will be tested on each stage of the buying and selling process and you must demonstrate a good ability to apply / execute all selling steps including your ability to do research on the industry as well as any pre-meeting research on the buyer as you might do in a real-world sales scenario. As a team you will have up to 45 minutes (subject to change) face-to-face with the buyer. In most instances the buyer will be quite cooperative, easy to deal with and interested in what you represent.

CAUTION - You will be evaluated as a team and as individuals; so, it is quite possible that if equal distribution of sales effort is not evident then you will not earn the same mark. Please keep in mind the grading will change if it is observed that parts of your pitch are not realistic or not professionally executed. For example, a poor opening / introduction or an unexpected illogical argument during the process could earn you a FAIL even though other elements are properly executed. Besides the overall grading, your mark will also be adjusted using a scale of 0-10 with zero representing `highly unlikely to buy' and ten as being `motivated to purchase'.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the *Academic Integrity Policy*, located at: www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

All In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to: www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Students may request relief from a regularly scheduled midterm, test, assignment or another course component. Please refer to the policy and procedure on the DeGroote website at the link http://ug.degroote.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/missed-course-work-policy/

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The instructor and university reserve the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Reasonable notice will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn, and/or McMaster e-mail. It is the responsibility of the student to check these channels regularly during the term and to note any changes.

ONLINE COURSE COMPONENTS

In this course we will be using Zoom, email for communication, Avenue to Learn and LinkedIn. Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for their McMaster University e-mail accounts, personal email account ID and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS, OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous, or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request, including the dates/times needing to be accommodated and the courses which will be impacted, to their Faculty Office normally within 10 days of the beginning of term or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations.

Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, discussions, presentations, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary and analytical work, **including** lectures and discussions by university instructors.

The recording of lectures, discussions, presentations, or other methods of instruction WILL occur during this course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by the TA. It can be shared when relevant for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXPECTATIONS ON STUDENT CONDUCT

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions with all our living, learning, and working communities. These expectations are described in the ***Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities*** (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, ***whether in person or online.***

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g., use of Avenue to Learn, Zoom, MS Teams etc.) will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your enrolment in Commerce 4ME3 will be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above and as follows, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.** Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings	Methodology
Week 1	Participant Introductions and course success skills. Discuss course outline and projects.		
Week 2	The Personal Buying Process and Selling Process to facilitate effective buying.	Chapter 1 and 2	Lecture and discussion
Week 3	Organizational Buying. Buying Centres in Organizations	Chapter 3	In-class case study
Week 4	Relationship Management in Selling.	Chapter 4	Lecture and discussion
Week 5	Prospecting and Pre-Sale Preparation. The Sales Approach – Opening and Developing a Sale		Lecture and discussion In-class practice role plays on Opening a Sales Meeting (First Buyer Seller interaction) NOTE: These role plays are not graded
Week 6	Methods for Needs Analysis The Questioning Approach - SPIN Selling	Chapter 6	Case study
Week 7	SPIN Method for Needs Analysis		In-class practise role plays. NOT GRADED.

Week 8	The Sales Presentations, Product Demonstration and Persuasion through Effective Feature Benefit Analysis	Chapter 5	Group exercise
Week 9	Meeting and overcoming customer objections.	Chapter 7	Group role-play exercise
Week 10	Sales Negotiation Process		Group role-play exercise
Week 11	In class practice role plays (peer feedback – NO GRADES)		
Week 12	Decision making with objectivity.		*IN CLASS EXERCISE*

NOTE: THE COURSE SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FLEXIBILITY WILL BE APPLIED TO BRING IN INDUSTRY SPEAKERS AND DEFINE TOPICS BASED ON PARTICIPANT LEVELS AND INTEREST.

Proposal for Interim Role Play

Names of Your Team Members (Two members per team – One Buyer and One Seller)

I. Type of firm / the company you will be representing and nature of its industry:

II. Product or service you will be selling (include a brief description so I can understand what you are selling—don't just list a brand name):

III. Type of firm / the company you will be selling to and nature of its industry.

IV. Details on the buying situation – type of buyer, nature of purchase, buyer familiarity with this product / service etc.:

V. What do you hope to accomplish in this **20-minute** interaction?

V. What key assumptions should we be aware of?

NOTE: You may choose almost any B2B product or service to sell. After you submit your proposal, I will then either approve or disapprove your product/service. Please note that my approval does not mean that you have chosen a particularly great product or that you will have no trouble presenting it. Approval simply indicates that you are allowed to proceed.

UNDERSTANDING MY GOALS, MY APPROACH TO LEARNING AND THIS COURSE

Why am I here? What is my motivation and goal in taking this course?

Do I believe that learning to sell will add to my portfolio of qualifications to succeed in life? How so?

What responsibility am I willing to take to have a meaningful learning experience?

What part must I play to ensure that my peers have a positive learning experience and contribute effectively to our classroom environment?

How do I propose to act on being an active, engaged, self-directed and collaborative learner?