

A photograph of several wooden baskets filled with fresh vegetables. The foreground shows a basket of green bell peppers and a basket of yellow bell peppers. In the background, there are baskets of red bell peppers and cucumbers. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures and colors of the produce.

# **Sales Promotion is Your Responsibility**

**Self-Directed  
Study Guide**



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# How To Use This Workbook

The purpose of this workbook series is to provide you with knowledge, skill and ability on a wide range of subjects related to your produce department. To ensure success, you will want to identify who your manager will be for this program.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have more than one manager or trainer, please list them all below. Any one of these individuals is capable of signing-off on your work. Refer to the individual directly responsible for your training for more information.

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## Accompanying CD

Some exercises presented here may require additional practice for trainees to perfect. Whenever you see the CD icon pictured below, you can print out that activity from the CD and practice it as often as needed to obtain mastery.



You will need to complete all of the exercises and work activities and have your manager sign and date the designated areas of the workbook. This way, you and your manager will know that you have successfully completed all of the learning exercises and have achieved the desired level of understanding, skill and ability to execute tasks needed to do your job well.



# What You Will Learn



This course is geared toward providing you with the essential skills to enhance your relationship with your customers, increase sales and reduce shrink in your produce department. After completing the readings and exercises in this workbook, you will be able to do the following:

## **Select and promote products that reflect local customers needs.**

To effectively sell your produce, you need to provide information to customers that will assist them with their selections.



## **Use sales techniques to effectively and confidently sell produce to customers.**

You will learn three sales techniques – sampling, up-selling and suggestive selling – that will help you meet customers' needs completely.

## **Adjust promotional activities to compensate for mispicks and overages.**

At times you may find that you or someone else in your department has either over-ordered or mistakenly ordered the wrong item. You will learn techniques to compensate for the overages.

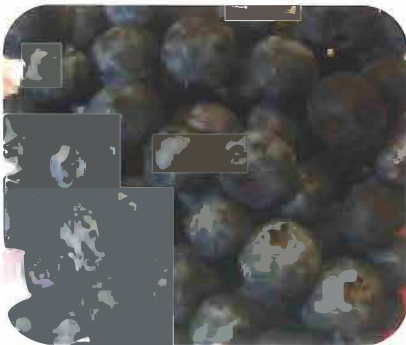


## What You Will Learn



### **Identify when and how to use handling and storage best practices to help minimize product loss or shrink.**

The better you understand the importance of minimizing shrink, the better chance you have of reducing inventory the right way – through increasing sales.



### **Recognize strategies for promoting specialty and seasonal items.**

Understanding the basics of promoting, preparing and pricing seasonal items will result in increased profits and more satisfied customers in your department.

# Introduction



## Your Role

If you haven't already figured it out, you will soon see that your job in the produce department is multi-faceted and exciting. One of your primary responsibilities is to effectively sell our produce.

You will learn proven strategies you can use to help improve your relationship with customers, drive sales and reduce shrink in your produce department.

We will focus on the skills required to:

- Understand and meet your unique customer demands.
- Interact with them directly and indirectly.
- Differentiate your store from all of your competitors.



### A note for managers

This guide is written with a focus on the produce clerk perspective, but the content is also relevant to managers. The last section of this study guide focuses on you, the manager, and presents specific tips that will help you increase your personal success.

# Introduction

Your primary responsibility is to effectively sell your produce to your customers. The best way to do this is by providing information that will assist them with their selections.



So it is important for you to understand:

- Who your customers are.
- How to identify what they want.
- How to give them the buying experience they seek.
- Why knowing and practicing these skills will lead to increased sales and more loyal customers.

## Know your customers

Learn about your customers demographic and ethnic profiles. Know who your customers are, what they look for, when they look for it and what they ultimately buy. Knowing what they want and when they want it will enable you to stock the correct product mix to meet their unique needs. And meeting their needs will help you achieve your goal of increasing sales and reducing shrink.

If you are unsure of what customers want or need, ask your produce manager. Your store probably collects a lot of information about your customers, and your manager can share the most important aspects with you.

### HELPFUL HINT

One of the most effective ways to learn is to ask your customers directly. Listening to your customers is a great way to learn while you build a relationship with them.

# Introduction



## Customer happiness tip

Every customer needs you to provide them with a shopping experience that is better than they expected. Unfortunately, the reality is that most customers view grocery shopping as a chore. They probably come into your department to buy one or two things in particular.

So it is extremely important that you avoid running out of stock. If customers have trouble finding what they want, they will feel frustrated and disappointed. Customers will only tolerate *out of stock* for a very short time before they decide to go to your competitors. Once a customer makes a decision to look elsewhere, you may never see them again.



## Let's review

- Get to know your customers! Know who they are, what they want, and when they want it so that you are able to stock the correct product mix to meet their needs.
- Make your customers shopping experience as easy as possible by ensuring there are plenty of the items they're looking for.



# Sales Techniques

There are three key sale techniques you can use to enhance your customers experience:

- Sampling
- Up-selling
- Suggestive selling



## Sampling

Sampling can help you build a relationship with your customers because it allows you to describe the item in detail and give your customers reasons to want to buy the products that they are interested in.

Sampling is good from two standpoints:

- 1: It generates sales.
- 2: It heightens the customer's experience.

### Did you know

According to a recent study conducted by the Produce Marketing Association, over half the consumers surveyed reported that they were more likely to buy a produce item after they have tasted it. This tells you that sampling can take the shopping experience to a new level by giving the customer a chance to taste for themselves how fresh and delicious your produce is.

# Sales Techniques



## Tips for Sampling

- Be careful about what you sample and when; always use items that are in season and at the peak of freshness and flavor.
- Try sampling fruits versus vegetables – for example, apples versus celery – because in most cases, fruit is more likely to spark an impulse sale than most vegetables.
- Use items that are easily sampled, such as pineapples.
- Sample items that are easily cross-promoted. For example, strawberries with shortcake and glaze; apples with caramel sauce.

## Up-selling

Up-selling occurs when you and your customer help each other. You listen to what they are looking for and help them meet that need completely. Up-selling increases sales because when you help your customers this way, they usually buy more expensive or upgraded items they didn't think or know about before talking to you.

You are not tricking the customer when you up-sell. Instead, you are using your knowledge of the store to enhance their shopping, and eventually their eating experience. Of course you have to first be knowledgeable about your products, and even perhaps products from other departments, to share this knowledge with your customers. Up-selling is tailored to each customer's unique likes, wants or needs.



## Example

If you see a customer that is looking to buy broccoli, you can up-sell the customer by asking if they would be interested in trying fresh broccoli that has been specially selected, cleaned and cut, and is ready to put right into salads, soups or a steamer.

# Sales Techniques



## Suggestive selling

Suggestive selling refers to *adding on* items to the final purchase that will result in a more profitable sale. Suggestive selling increases sales by teaching the customer. Just like up-selling, to do this successfully you must be knowledgeable about your products so that you can make good recommendations.

Your manager can help you learn how to suggest great combinations of produce items. For example, you could say something like:

*I noticed you were looking at the tomatoes. They are at their peak right now and the flavor is wonderful! Pairing them with some fresh basil can enhance their flavor even further.*

And who knows? By talking to your customers, you may learn a few suggestive selling tips from them!

## Let's review

- Enhance your customers shopping experience by offering samples and giving your customers a chance to taste for themselves how fresh and delicious your produce is.
- When done correctly, up-selling and suggestive selling are not pushy. Instead, they serve to make the customers aware of items or additional options they might not normally be aware of. The goal is to help each customer have the best shopping experience possible.

# Sales Techniques



## Interview Your Manager

In order to learn more about using specific sales techniques at your store, interview your manager by asking the following questions.

Q: What type of sampling have we done in our department?  
How successful was this approach in increasing sales?

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Q: What are the best types of produce to sample during this time of year? How do we go about setting up the display or sampling area?

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Q: What are some examples of how you have used the up-selling technique in our department? What opportunities might I have to up-sell to customers by recommending specific items that we currently have on display?

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Q: What advice do you have for pairing produce items (suggestive selling) that I can share with customers?

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# Sales Techniques



## On-the-Job Learning Exercise: Sampling

Your goal is to conduct a sampling. Work with your manager to decide which produce item you will sample and how you will set up for the event. After sampling, record your results by answering the following questions:

What product did you choose to sample? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the sampling help you to strike up conversations with customers?

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How well did the sampling help you to influence customers buying decisions? Explain.

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Describe a situation in which a customer sampled your product and then decided to buy the item. Record the details of your conversation?

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How did this sales technique help you build relationships with customers?

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# Sales Techniques



## On-the-Job Learning Exercise: Up-selling and Suggestive Selling

Use the form on the next two pages to complete this activity. During your shift, look for opportunities to up-sell and suggestive sell. Practice using these skills during conversations with customers. Record two examples of when you used each skill during a customer interaction.

It might take several days for you to complete this exercise and have the opportunity to try out your new skills. Record your attempts, even if the customer does not take your advice.



### NOTE

If you have already completed the Customer Interaction course, you do not have to repeat this On-the-Job exercise. You may skip this activity and have your manager sign-off on this sheet.

Manager/Training Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sales Techniques



## Using the Skills Form

**Instructions:** Use this form to record information about your sales interactions with customers.

### Up-Selling

#### Opportunity 1

Describe the situation. What did the customer say or do that indicated to you that you could be of some assistance and make a suggestion?

What did you offer or suggest to the customer? How did the customer respond?

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#### Opportunity 2

Describe the situation. What did the customer say or do that indicated to you that you could be of some assistance and make a suggestion?

What did you offer or suggest to the customer? How did the customer respond?

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# Sales Techniques



## Using the Skills Form (continued)

### Suggestive Selling

#### Opportunity 1

Describe the situation. What did the customer say or do that indicated to you that you could be of some assistance and make a suggestion?

What did you offer or suggest to the customer? How did the customer respond?

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#### Opportunity 2

Describe the situation. What did the customer say or do that indicated to you that you could be of some assistance and make a suggestion?

What did you offer or suggest to the customer? How did the customer respond?

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# Compensating for Overages

## Overages and Mispicks

At times, you may find that either you or someone else in your department has either over-ordered a particular item, or mistakenly ordered the wrong item. This can make your goals of maximizing profits while minimizing shrink difficult to achieve.

In these circumstances, you need to adjust promotional activities to compensate for mispicks and/or overages. If you find that you have either a mispick or an overage, you can do the following:

- Give excess produce more space
- Use signage to increase awareness of the product
- Cross merchandise



### Give excess produce more space

Keep in mind that every hour the produce sits in your department is one less hour that your customers can enjoy it at home. So do everything you can to get more customers to see your produce. If possible, build a display in a high traffic area outside of the produce department for the excess inventory. Use the physical display, its location, and aroma of the produce to draw customers to it.

Work with your manager to determine the best location and size for any additional displays. This will give even more customers, even those customers who weren't planning on going into the produce department, the opportunity to see and buy.

# Compensating for Overages



## Signage

To increase customer knowledge and awareness about the product, use informational signage and recipes in your displays. Great signage helps to sell produce when you are not there and it is an integral part of your merchandising display. You will probably get most of the display signage from corporate headquarters, but your manager may also provide signage and recipes for your department.

Here are some tips for display signage:

- Educate customers on the benefits of the produce on display by including information on pricing, nutrition, preparation and culinary uses. This will help the customer see the value in the items.
- If you have recipes available, make sure the signage points them out so that customers know the recipes are theirs for the taking.
- Use visually descriptive words to communicate the taste or flavors of produce.
- Use attractive colors and make sure all text is legible. The same quality and design principles that apply to other aspects of the display also apply to the signage.
- Verify the accuracy, positioning, and visual appeal of the signage before putting it on the display. Does the wording make sense? Are all words spelled correctly? Is the pricing correct?



## Attention Getters

Great signs help to establish an upbeat atmosphere and bring attention to the products you are looking to sell.

# Compensating for Overages

## Cross merchandising

One way to drive sales for any product is through the use of cross merchandising. You are cross merchandising whenever you create interest in an item by pointing out an additional item that complements the item on display.

For example, if you find that you have received more apples than you anticipated, create a feature display and cross merchandise the apples with items needed to bake an apple pie. Whenever you are visualizing a new display, consider some of the different recipes in which your displayed item is included.

If your display will use different varieties of berries, ask yourself, *What else do customers typically buy with these berries this time of year?* Then include those items in your display to generate more interest and appeal.

## Let's review

- If you have excess product on hand, give this product more space in your displays.
- To increase customer knowledge and awareness, use culinary signage and recipes in your displays.
- Cross merchandise the excess product or mispick to create more interest and appeal.

# Compensating for Overages



## Interview Your Manager

In order to gain more insight into how you can compensate for overages in your department, interview your manager by asking the following questions:

Q: What are some examples of times when we had an overage?  
What caused the overage? What steps did you take to compensate for the overage?

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Q: Can you show me the different display signage we receive from corporate headquarters? Do we have any other signage or recipes available? If so, can you show them to me?

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Q: What are some ways in which our department cross merchandises?  
How well has cross merchandising helped you to drive sales?

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# Compensating for Overages



## On-the-Job Learning Exercise: Cross Merchandising

Your goal is to cross merchandise a produce item. Work with your manager to choose the appropriate produce item. Come up with ideas or recipes to cross-merchandise this item and then set up the display. Then answer the questions below.

Produce Item Chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you choose this item? (Was there an overage, was it a seasonal item, etc.)

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How did you cross merchandise this item? Describe any recipe ideas you used.

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How did your cross-merchandising efforts help to drive sales? Did customers purchase more of the produce item? Your manager can help you track this.

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How did you generate interest in your display?

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# Minimizing Shrink



## Your Goal

One of the goals of Sales Promotion is to reduce inventory while minimizing shrink. Just following some basic best practices for receiving, handling, storing and merchandising produce can go a long way to helping you reach your goal of minimizing shrink. The better you understand the importance of minimizing shrink, the better chance you have of reducing inventory the right way – through increasing sales.

## Receiving and Handling

Taking time to properly receive and handle all produce is a very important part of minimizing shrink. If the produce is handled correctly from the time you receive it, it has a much better chance of maintaining the high quality, great taste and freshness that your customers are expecting.

Here are some basic tips for receiving and handling produce items:

- Upon arrival be sure to maintain the recommended temperatures and inspect the items for signs of breakdown. Discard any produce that shows signs of breakdown, decay or mold because it can cause deterioration in the items next to it.
- Handle all produce carefully and do not drop shipping containers on the floor because this can cause bruising.



# Minimizing Shrink

## Storage

The way you store your produce will make all the difference in how much you sell versus how much you have to throw away due to deterioration and decay.



Here are some basic tips for storing produce:

- Store each produce item at its recommended temperature and humidity level at all times. Storing produce at higher or lower temperatures and/or humidity than recommended may promote rapid decay and deterioration.
- Pay attention to each produce item's susceptibility to the effects of ethylene gas and store accordingly. For example, do not store ethylene-sensitive items near ethylene-producing items (apples, avocados, bananas, pears and tomatoes) or ripening rooms.
- Be aware of the typical shelf-life of each item in your department and merchandise or discard it accordingly.



## Merchandising and Rotating

Creating eye-appealing displays will help increase sales and profits in your department because eye appeal is *buy appeal*.

Here are some general tips for merchandising and rotating produce:

- When putting items on display, look for items that are firm with a fresh, smooth appearance and are free from major blemishes.
- Keep handling to a minimum and be careful when stacking to avoid bruising.

# Minimizing Shrink



## Merchandising and Rotating (continued)

- Do not stack bulk produce or packages too high because the weights can cause bruising and restrict air flow.
- Whenever possible, include consumer educational pamphlets in your displays that highlight your produce selection, health benefits, storage tips and recipes or preparation tips. This will help to encourage your customers to try new produce items and increase repeat purchases.
- Proper rotation of produce is extremely important, so rotate as you restock throughout the day using the First-In, First-Out (FIFO) rule. For both bulk and prepackaged items, continually move the older product forward and place the newer product behind – and remember to be careful because produce can bruise easily.
- To keep displays looking fresh and vibrant throughout the day, cull any produce that is soft, shriveled or shows signs of decay or deterioration.



### HELPFUL HINT

Remember to re-stock just before and after the “rush” hours in your produce department so your display always looks fresh and plentiful.



# Minimizing Shrink



## Customer happiness tip

Manage all of your displays carefully, but pay special attention to your non-refrigerated ones. The amount of time your produce is out of refrigeration will determine how quickly it breaks down. So don't put too much produce out during your department's slower periods. You also don't want your customers to buy your produce today and have it show signs of deterioration shortly after they get it home. This will cause them to associate your produce department with poor-quality produce, and they may stop buying any produce from your store.

## Let's review

- Taking time to properly receive and handle all produce is a very important part of minimizing shrink because if the produce is handled correctly from the time you receive it, it has a much better chance of maintaining the high quality, great taste and freshness that your customers are expecting.
- The way you store your produce will make all the difference in how much you sell versus how much you have to throw away due to deterioration and decay.
- Creating eye-appealing displays will help increase sales and profits in your department because eye appeal is buy appeal.
- Manage all non-refrigerated displays so that you never have too much product out of refrigeration at one time.

# Minimizing Shrink



## Interview Your Manager

In order to learn more about what you can do to minimize shrink in your department, interview your manager by asking the following questions.

Q: Can you show me any documents that provide the recommended temperatures and humidity levels of the produce items we carry?

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Q: Which of our produce items are susceptible to ethylene gas?

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Q: What is the typical shelf life of each item in our produce department?  
Do we have any documentation on this?

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Q: When are the typical rush hours for our store?

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# Minimizing Shrink



## On-the-Job Learning Exercise: Reducing Shrink

Use this form to record ways in which you help to prevent shrink in your department throughout your shift, or several shifts. Check each item or action below and write a brief description of how you performed this action.

### Shrink Management Checklist

- ☐ Upon arrival, maintain the recommended temperatures and inspect the items for signs of breakdown.

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- ☐ In storage, maintain recommended temperature and humidity levels.

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- ☐ Make sure ethylene-sensitive items are kept away from ethylene-producing items.

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- ☐ Use the *First-In, First-Out* rule to rotate produce effectively.

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- ☐ Restock just before and after the rush hours.

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# Seasonal Items



## Guidelines

Seasonal items are items that we do not carry all the time. However, we offer these products to provide our customers with the variety that they deserve and desire.

### Know what's in season

Knowing what's in season means knowing what product is at its peak and domestically available at each time of the year. Most of your customers will look for produce that's in season, so it's important to promote the items at the right time of year to maximize sales.

Here are some examples:

- Promote apples in the fall and early winter, just after harvest when they are at their peak and your customers are more likely to be thinking of them.
- Promote nectarines, watermelon and cherries during the summer months when they are in season.



### Know the trends

You should also know what trends already are, or may likely become, popular with your customers. The best way to learn this information is by getting to know your customers. By talking to them, you will learn what trends they currently follow and what's important to them. For example, knowing that your customers are interested in ethnic cuisines, or locally grown produce, you can easily draw their attention to those items that are used in various ethnic cuisines or are supplied by a local grower.

## Seasonal Items

### Be aware of special occasions

It's also important to be aware of the calendar. Be sure you know of any upcoming special occasions, such as football games, holidays, graduations, etc. These types of events and activities provide great opportunities to maximize sales through promotions.



For example, during the football season, your produce department may create a Super Bowl theme and you could build a display with seasonal and/or regional items.

### Building Excitement

Creating a theme and building a special occasion display will draw attention to your department and create excitement for the seasonal and regional items that are featured.



# Seasonal Items



## Offer seasonal preparation ideas

You should also be able to offer information and recommendations to your customers about how the items can be prepared and served. Your customers will also be pleased by your suggestions for what the seasonal items can be paired with, similar to the way a server in a restaurant will make recommendations to their customers about dishes on their menus.



## Understanding price

In some cases, your customers will ask you why certain in season items are selling at a higher price than normal for that time of year, so you will need to know the correct answer. For example, if the weather conditions are impacting the U.S. supply of an item, it could mean that the item had to be imported, which will result in higher prices.

### HELPFUL HINT

If a customer asks you a question to which you don't know the answer, don't make something up or make your best guess. Instead, politely ask the customer if he or she would mind waiting while you ask your manager for the correct answer.

## Let's review

- Know what's in season so that you can meet your customers seasonal preferences.
- Be prepared to offer preparation ideas for the seasonal items your department is promoting.
- Stay up-to-date on pricing information so that you can answer any customer questions about pricing variations. Never make up an answer.

# Seasonal Items

## Interview Your Manager

In order to learn more about promoting seasonal items in your department, interview your manager by asking the following questions.

Q: What items are currently in season? How can these items be prepared and served? What suggestions can I make for pairing these seasonal items with other items?

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Q: What are some trends that are popular with our customers (such as ethnic cuisines)? Which produce items can I draw their attention to?

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Q: What pricing issues, or variations, do I need to be aware of regarding our seasonal items? What pricing issues have come up in the past? How did you explain these situations to customers?

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# Seasonal Items



## On-the-Job Learning Exercise: Seasonal Items

Your goal is to plan a special occasion display that will draw attention to your department. Meet with your manager and discuss any upcoming events or holidays. Then create your seasonal display plan using the form on the next page.



# Seasonal Items



## Seasonal Display Plan

### Theme of Display

### Overall Concept

Seasonal Produce Items to Use

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Special Items

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

### Supply List *(inventory and estimated counts, display materials, sign materials, tools, etc.)*

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☐
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### Set-up Details *(balloons in an arch, locations of signs, etc.)*



Manager/Training Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Manager Responsibilities



## For Managers only

If you are a manager, you will complete this section. If you are a produce clerk, you can skip this section and go directly to page 38. Read the bottom of page 38, entitled *Congratulations*, and then complete the rest of the guide.

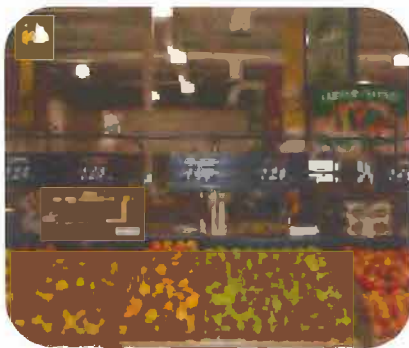
## A Manager's Role

As a manager, you're responsible for guiding your clerks as they work to fulfill their sales promotion responsibilities. You also have certain sales promotion responsibilities of your own. The following pages provide tips that can help you realize more success.



# Manager Responsibilities

**Instructions:** Read the tips under each category. Place a check mark next to the actions you are already taking. Then use the space provided to record notes on the ideas that you would like to implement to enhance your sales promotion efforts. Capture your thoughts and also describe the specific actions you will take on the job.



## Information is Power

- ☐ Make sure you are keeping good records and know what produce will be coming into season during different times of the year.
- ☐ Use established sales forecasting methods to order correct quantities for holidays, special events, and sales promotions.
- ☐ Visit your competitors' produce departments so that you know what your competition is stocking. Pay attention to what they are selling and what their customers are buying. Some of these customers would probably shop in your store, provided you have what they are looking for. Also look at the visual appeal of their produce department. How is their produce merchandised – does it create visual excitement?
- ☐ Make sure to discuss your findings with your produce buyers and use the information to fine-tune your department.

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# Manager Responsibilities



## Minimize Shrink

- ☐ Get to know your customers. Select and promote the produce items they are interested in. Let's say your customers prefer vine-ripened tomatoes. If you order and display more cluster tomatoes than vine-ripened, there's a good chance that your customers will go somewhere else for the tomatoes they really want, and you'll be throwing away the ones they didn't want.
- ☐ Make the best of a mispick or overage by taking an immediate retail reduction to stimulate movement: lower the price of the item and sell it while it's fresh. By doing this, you are giving your customers high value at a lower-than-normal cost. You are also minimizing waste, thereby reducing your shrink.

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## Offer Regionally Correct Items

- ☐ Understand the importance of offering regionally correct items to your customers. For example, even though several states are known for growing great blueberry crops, you're better off ordering blueberries from New Jersey if your store is in New Jersey, because the large majority of your customers will want blueberries from their region.



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# Manager Responsibilities



## Track the Success of Your Specialty Items

- ☐ One way you will know if you have successfully ordered exclusive items and brands as a point of differentiation from your competitors is by strategic tracking and sales comparisons.
  - If your store is an independent, track your department's sales figures and compare the rate of increase to the overall store sales figures.
  - If your store is part of a chain, track your department's sales figures and compare the rate of increase to the other produce departments within your region.
- ☐ If your sales are higher than the other departments in your store or region, that's a signal that you're doing something right.

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# Manager Responsibilities



## Communicate with Your Buyer

- ☐ Think of yourself and your produce clerks as the eyes and ears of the produce department. Depending on your store's policy, make sure that either you or your clerks are regularly communicating the latest information about your customers' purchasing habits with your store's produce buyer and produce merchandiser.
- ☐ Talk with them about what items your customers are buying, what the customers are asking for, and what the customers are telling you and the produce clerks. Open communication with buyers and merchandisers helps them develop the best product mix for your customers. It also helps them understand whether particular brands are important to your customers and, if so, what those brands are.

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### Did you know?

In an average produce department, less than 10% of SKUs make up over 50% of sales. This means that it's critical to learn the key sales drivers in your department, and to let those sales guide your ordering and merchandising strategies.

Many managers feel pressured to have a lot of different items in their produce department, but each item takes up a valuable piece of real estate in your department. Offering variety is important, but the key is to make sure you are carving out enough real estate for your key sales drivers so that you are maximizing your profit.

# Manager Responsibilities



## Let's review

- Get in the habit of keeping good records and visiting your competition to gather information that will help you drive sales.
- Get to know your customers so that you know their buying preferences. This will help you minimize shrink.
- Understand the importance of offering regionally correct items to your customers.
- Know your sales drivers and make sure these items guide your ordering and merchandising strategies. Provide regular updates about your customers purchasing habits to your store's produce buyer and produce merchandiser so they can develop the best product mix for your customers.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finished this self-directed learning program.

It is time to take a short knowledge test. Afterwards, make sure your manager signed all your activities.



# Knowledge Test



Circle or check the best answer for each of the following questions.  
When you are done, ask your training coach or manager to grade your answers.

- 1:** What is the most effective way of promoting and selling produce to your customers?
  - A. Providing information, such as proper handling and storage tips, that will assist them with their produce selections.
  - B. Abundant, eye-catching displays that will entice them to select items they might not otherwise have chosen.
  - C. Catering to your customers and being attentive to their needs.
  - D. All of the above.
  
- 2:** What are two of the most successful selling techniques you should use to enhance your customers' experiences while increasing sales?
  - A. Sampling and stocking specialty items in large quantities.
  - B. Sampling prepared product such as potato salad or steamed broccoli with cheese sauce.
  - C. Suggestive selling and up-selling based on what your customers tell you they are looking for.
  - D. Distributing recipe cards at check-out and moving nutritional information to a location outside of the produce department.
  
- 3:** Effective up-selling and suggestive selling should NOT include:
  - A. Knowledge of product, even outside the produce department.
  - B. Tricking the customer by pushing them into trying products they might not have chosen otherwise.
  - C. Knowledge of produce items that go well together so that you can assist customers with great pairings.
  - D. Listening to the customers so you know what they are looking for.

## Knowledge Test

- 4:** What is the best way to compensate for overages?
- A. Send the excess back to the producer.
  - B. Discard the excess after pulling the best product.
  - C. Donate the excess to employees.
  - D. Adjust promotional activities such as secondary displays.
- 5:** Which of the following is the best way to educate customers on the benefits of the product on display by including information on pricing, nutrition, preparation, and culinary uses?
- A. Cross merchandising.
  - B. Providing more display space.
  - C. Using culinary signage and recipes.
- 6:** Which of the following is the best way to point out an additional item that complements the item on display?
- A. Cross merchandising.
  - B. Providing more display space.
  - C. Using secondary displays.
- 7:** The way you store produce will make a big difference in how much you sell versus how much you have to throw away due to deterioration and decay.
- ☐ TRUE                      ☐ FALSE
- 8:** Which of the following will NOT help you maintain the high-quality, great taste, and freshness that your customers are expecting?
- A. Proper receiving and handling.
  - B. Proper storage.
  - C. Using culinary signage and recipes.
  - D. Merchandising and rotating.

# Knowledge Test



- 9:** You are stocking apples when a customer approaches you with a question. You are not certain of the correct answer to the question and you can tell by the customer's body language that he is in a hurry. What should you do?
- A. Make your best guess. Given the situation, speed is more important than being 100% correct.
  - B. Ask the customer if he would mind waiting while you find your manager and get the answer.
  - C. Politely tell the customer that you don't know the answer.
  - D. Tell the customer that you don't know the answer but point him in the direction of your manager.
- 10:** Which of the following best describes seasonal items?
- A. Items your customers are buying because they can't get them anywhere else.
  - B. Items that are not carried all the time, but are during certain seasons.
- 11:** What does the term in season mean?
- A. A produce item that is at least 70% organically grown.
  - B. That a produce item can only be purchased at your store's location.
  - C. Product that is at its peak and domestically available at a specific time of year.
  - D. Fresh herbs or spices used to spice up food during cooking.
- 12:** You should be prepared to offer preparation ideas for the seasonal items your department is promoting.
- ☐ TRUE      ☐ FALSE
- 13:** What is the **best** way to minimize shrink?
- A. Talk to and get to know your customers
  - B. Proper storage and handling of volatile produce items.
  - C. Large, colorful, expansive displays.
  - D. Proper promotions including recipe cards and nutritional information displays.

# Activity Completion and Sign-off

The purpose of the module was to provide you with some hands-on experience with sales promotion. Specifically, you should feel confident in your ability to select and promote products that reflect local customers needs, use effective sales techniques with customers, compensate for overages, use best practices to minimize shrink, and use strategies for promoting seasonal items.

## Activities to Complete

| On-the-Job Learning Exercises               | Trainer Initials | Trainee Initials |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Sampling (page 11)                          |                  |                  |
| Up-selling and Suggestive Selling (page 12) |                  |                  |
| Cross Merchandising (page 19)               |                  |                  |
| Reducing Shrink (page 25)                   |                  |                  |
| Seasonal Items (page 30)                    |                  |                  |
| Manager Interviews                          | Trainer Initials | Trainee Initials |
| Sales Techniques (page 10)                  |                  |                  |
| Compensating for Overages (page 18)         |                  |                  |
| Minimizing Shrink (page 24)                 |                  |                  |
| Seasonal Items (page 29)                    |                  |                  |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trainee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Manager Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Future Learning and Development Plan



Naturally, there are bound to be some tasks related to Sales Promotion that you are more confident in than others, as learning is a continual process based on experience and practice. Your manager will provide you with specific development goals based on your performance throughout this program. You and your manager will take these ideas and create a development plan together (see next page).

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Trainee Signature

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Manager Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Development Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| Development Goal | Actions to Take | Team Member Mentor | Follow-up Date | Completed (Mgr Initial) |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
|                  |                 |                    |                |                         |
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