BUYING AND MERCHANDISING

Buying and Merchandising is a one-credit course which focuses on the development of decision-making skills necessary to determine what to buy, when to buy, how much to buy, and from whom to buy products for resale. Students will develop a product mix and apply display and visual merchandising techniques. Students will also implement sales support activities, process sales, track products, and plan merchandise flow. Students will establish and grow positive customer relationships. Technology, employability skills, leadership and communications will be incorporated in classroom activities. Buying and Merchandising can be taught in Grades 9-12. It is recommended that students enroll in an introductory marketing course prior to taking Buying and Merchandising.

Career and technical student organizations are an integral co-curricular component of each career and technical education course. These organizations serve as a means to enhance classroom instruction while helping students develop leadership abilities, expand workplace readiness skills, and broaden opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Students will:

**Career Readiness Skills**

1. Develop career awareness and employability skills (e.g., face-to-face, online) needed for gaining and maintaining employment in diverse business settings.
   a. Identify the scope of career opportunities and the requirements for education, training, certification, licensure, and experience.

**Leadership and Communications**

2. Process, maintain, evaluate and disseminate information in a business. Develop leadership and team building to promote collaboration.
   a. Deliver formal and informal presentations.
   b. Identify and use verbal, nonverbal, and active listening skills to communicate effectively.
   c. Use negotiation and conflict-resolution skills to reach solutions.
   d. Communicate information for an intended audience and purpose.
      Examples: directions, ideas, vision, workplace expectations
   e. Use problem-solving and consensus-building techniques to draw conclusions and determine next steps.
   f. Use interpersonal skills to provide group leadership, promote collaboration, and work in a team.
   g. Use technical writing skills to complete forms and create reports.
   h. Identify stakeholders and solicit their opinions.
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Knowledge Management and Information Technology

3. Demonstrate current and emerging strategies and technologies used to collect, analyze, record and share information in business operations.
   a. Select and use software applications to locate, record, analyze and present information.
      Examples: word processing, e-mail, spreadsheet, databases, presentation, Internet search engines

International Business

4. Relate factors impacting international business to internal business operations, practices and strategies.
   a. Describe product standards’ issues associated with global business.

Customer Relations

5. Apply techniques, strategies and tools to develop, maintain and grow positive internal and external customer, or client, relationships.
   a. Explain the nature of positive customer or client relations and their role in keeping customers, and describe the importance of meeting and exceeding customer expectations.
   b. Compare the cost to acquire customers with the cost to maintain customers, and explain how these costs impact business strategy and influence which customers to maintain.
   c. Apply a customer-service mindset in a culturally appropriate manner.
      Examples: respond to customer inquiries; reinforce service through effective, ongoing communication
   d. Build rapport with customers and use this rapport to inform customers about company policies, consequences of noncompliance with recommendations or requirements and service or account terminations.
   e. Maintain confidentiality or privacy of internal and external customers.
   f. Reinforce company’s image and culture to exhibit the business’s brand promise.
   g. Build, maintain and improve relationships with customers or clients; and promote brand and solicit new ideas and solutions using social media.
   h. Identify opportunities to use crowdsourcing to engage customers or clients, improve customer or client relationships, promote brand, and solicit new ideas and solutions.

Relationship Management

6. Apply techniques and strategies to develop, maintain and grow positive relationships with employees, peers, and stakeholders.
   a. Manage crises in relationships.
   b. Manage internal and external business relationships to foster positive interactions, and strategically plan and leverage business relationships for growth.
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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

7. Interpret, apply and communicate an organization’s ethics and social responsibility policies and code of conduct in routine and ambiguous situations.
   a. Compare and contrast ethical standards and challenges in domestic and international markets and across countries or areas (e.g., Brazil, China, Latin America, Pacific Rim).
   b. Compare and contrast ethical challenges across industry sectors (e.g., healthcare, financial services, consumer products, manufacturing, retail) and functional areas (e.g., marketing, human resources, financial reporting).
   c. Describe social responsibility policies and practices, and explain their impact on business operations and performance (e.g. community development, charitable foundations, green practices).
   d. Identify factors that impact the social responsibility policies implemented by businesses (e.g., national and state regulations, market or customer requirements, profit considerations).

Marketing Information Management

8. Apply the concepts, systems and tools needed to gather, synthesize, evaluate and disseminate marketing information for use in making business decisions that achieve organizational goals and objectives.
   a. Track business information to stay abreast of trends and changes that could impact marketing (e.g., customer databases, partners’ and competitors’ activities, sales and operational data, and environmental changes).

Product and Service Management

9. Apply the concepts and processes needed to obtain, develop, maintain and improve a product or service mix in response to market opportunities.
   a. Determine width and depth of assortment strategies with consideration to seasonal assortment strategies.
   b. Develop merchandise plans (budgets) to guide selection of retail products (calculating open-to-buy, planning stock, planning reductions, planning purchases, planning gross and net margins).
   c. Perform buying activities to obtain products for resale (determining quality to offer, what to buy or reorder, stock turnover, quantities to buy or reorder and when to buy or reorder; and setting reorder points).

Marketing Communications

10. Plan and control marketing communications activities consistent with brand guidelines, organizational and departmental strategies and marketing plans and budgets.
   a. Apply display techniques to attract customers and increase sales potential (e.g., types of arrangements; display maintenance; display creation; set-up and dismantling; signage; selection of fixtures and forms; lighting; point-of-sale displays).
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Marketing Communications Management

11. Plan and control marketing communications activities consistent with brand guidelines, organizational and departmental strategies and marketing plans and budgets.
   a. Develop and execute visual merchandising strategies to increase interest in product offerings (merchandise placement, on-floor assortments, cross-merchandising, planograms).

Selling

12. Determine client needs, wants and fears; and respond through planned, personalized communication that influences purchase decisions and enhances future business opportunities.
   a. Process the sale to complete the exchange, and collect payment from customer to complete sales transactions.
   b. Implement retail sales support activities that facilitate the sales process (delivery, packing and wrapping, special orders, gift certificates, returns or exchanges, retail sales documentation).

Sourcing and Procurement

13. Implement sourcing and procurement activities to obtain resources that enable achievement of organizational goals and objectives and to enhance the organization’s financial well-being.
   a. Differentiate among purchasing, procurement and sourcing.
   b. Identify potential sources of materials or services locally, nationally, and globally, and make purchases.
   c. Evaluate the impact of using global sources.
   d. Manage the bid or contracting process (e.g., bid specification, vendor or supplier search, bid review, selection of vendor) to achieve business goals.
   e. Negotiate vendor contracts with suppliers (e.g., service and maintenance, supplies, system development).
   f. Monitor and evaluate vendor performance and relationships (e.g., supplier visits, scorecards).
   g. Determine organizational strategies (e.g., quality, availability, productivity, sustainability, supply chain management, corporate social responsibility, ethical business practices) impacting expense control options, and incorporate them into expense control plans.
   h. Implement expense control strategies (e.g., reduce use of supplies or services, develop budgets, review overhead or operating costs, renegotiate contracts).
   i. Identify opportunities to incorporate operational objectives into the procurement process (e.g., supplier diversity initiatives, supply chain management goals, regulatory compliance).
   j. Evaluate whether to make or buy products.
   k. Assess the impact of accepting gifts on procurement decisions, business performance, and brand image.
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**Inventory Management**

14. Plan, acquire, maintain, and monitor inventory to support the achievement of organizational goals.
   a. Calculate the cost of carrying inventory.
   b. Describe the factors considered in establishing inventory thresholds (e.g., tolerance for stock-outs, supply chain process goals).
   c. Allocate and track merchandise stock by classification, department, class, vendor, and location.
   d. Implement category management processes.
   e. Plan merchandise flow for timely delivery (turnover, lead time, peak seasons, delivery dates).
   f. Determine shelf space allocation.

**Quality Management**

15. Design, implement, and manage quality-control processes to minimize errors, expedite workflow, and achieve performance objectives at a reasonable cost, using continuous improvement techniques (e.g., lean, Six Sigma or DMAIC [Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control]).
   a. Evaluate the impact of quality on internal and external brand experience, reputation, financial performance (e.g., healthcare reimbursement), procurement and sourcing options, and process design.