

Essential Skills Profile: Parts Sales Consultants

NOC 6421

Prepared for: CARS

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PARTS SALES CONSULTANTS

Introduction

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Retail salespersons and sales clerks sell, rent, or lease a range of technical and non-technical goods and services directly to consumers. They are employed by stores and other retail businesses, wholesale businesses that sell on a retail basis to the public.

CARS Focus

Parts sales consultants are responsible for customer services and store inventory. They order parts for customers, automotive sales material, and provide recommendations in relation to the different parts' manufacturers. They may supply a number of stores and garages in their region.

The most important Essential Skills for the parts sales consultant are:

- Oral Communication
- Document Use
- Thinking Skills (Finding Information)

A. Reading Text

Reading Text refers to reading material that is in the form of sentences or paragraphs. *Reading Text* generally involves reading notes, letters, memos, manuals, specifications, regulations, books, reports, or journals. *Reading Text* includes:

- forms and labels if they contain at least one sentence;
- print and non-print media such as computer screen and microfiche text; and
- paragraph-length text within charts, tables and graphs.

The Reading Text Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 5 (most complex). The typical text reading tasks of the Parts Sales Consultant are at Complexity Levels 1 to 3. Their most complex text reading tasks are at Complexity Level 3.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- read product information and instructions for placing orders on suppliers' web sites. (1)
- read memos from co-workers to be informed of customers' requests. (1)
- read recall notices on defective parts. (1)

- skim manufacturer promotional flyers and brochures. (2)
- scan technical manuals to learn of new technologies in the automotive industry and new parts they may need to stock. (2)
- read technical reports describing various types of parts from a variety of suppliers to compare the information and determine if the parts described correspond to customers' needs. (3)

Reading Profile

Type of Text	Purpose for Reading			
	To <u>scan</u> for specific information/To <u>locate</u> information.	To <u>skim</u> for overall meaning, to get the 'gist'.	To <u>read</u> the full text to understand or to learn.	To <u>read</u> the full text to critique or to evaluate.
Forms	✓	✓		
Labels	✓		✓	
Notes, Letters, Memos	✓	✓		
Manuals, Specifications, Regulations	✓	✓	✓	
Reports, Books, Journals	✓	✓	✓	

Other Information

Parts sales consultants read documents in both English and French. They may need to read both languages to appropriately understand the information from automotive manufacturers' reports and bulletins that are often available in English only. They may be required to read internal written communications in French such as notes from co-workers.

B. Document Use

Document Use refers to tasks that involve a variety of information displays in which words, numbers, icons and other visual characteristics (e.g., line, colour, shape) are given meaning by their spatial arrangement. Workplace examples of documents include graphs, lists, tables, blueprints, schematics, drawings, signs and labels.

If a document includes a paragraph of text, as may be the case on a label or a completed form, it is also included in **Reading Text**. Documents requiring the entry of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs are also included in **Writing**.

The Document Use Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 5 (most complex). The typical document use tasks of Parts Sales Consultants are at Complexity Levels 1 and 2. Their most complex document reading tasks are at Complexity Level 3.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- read labels on products, such as fuel injector cleaner, to understand how to use the product. (1)
- complete shipping and courier forms when sending materials to customers or returning defective parts to suppliers. (1)
- scan delivery schedules to determine the time they should receive the parts they have ordered. (1)
- scan tables in parts' catalogues to locate specific part numbers according to type of vehicle. (2)
- enter part numbers, purchase dates and brief descriptions of problems on warranty forms when making claims for defective parts. (2)
- search part catalogues to obtain information on prices, specifications and characteristics of specific parts. (2)
- consult suppliers' online catalogues to determine prices, availability and purchase options. For example, jobber versus brand name parts. (2)
- read Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) information when dealing with items such as batteries. (2)
- may study exhaust or air conditioning system schematics to understand the component parts and how they function. (3)

Document Use Profile

Parts Sales Consultants:

- read signs, labels or lists.
- complete forms by marking check boxes, recording numerical information or entering words, phrases, sentences or texts of a paragraph or more.
- read completed forms containing check boxes, numerical entries, phrases, addresses, sentences or texts of a paragraph or more.
- read tables, schedules or other table-like text.
- read schematic drawings (e.g., electrical schematics).

- obtain information from sketches, pictures or icons.

C. Writing

Writing includes:

- text writing and writing in documents such as filling in forms; and
- non-paper-based writing such as typing on a computer.

The Writing Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 5 (most complex). The typical writing tasks of Parts Sales Consultants are at Complexity Levels 1 and 2. Their most complex writing tasks are at Complexity Level 2.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- write short memos to co-workers to inform them of customers' requests. (1)
- write brief notes to remember customers' requests or details needed when preparing orders and scheduling deliveries. (1)
- write brief descriptions on warranty forms explaining reasons parts are being returned to manufacturers. (2)

Writing Profile

Length	Purpose for Writing						
	To organize/ to remember	To keep a record/to document	To inform/ to request information	To persuade / to justify a request	To present an analysis or comparison	To present an evaluation or critique	To entertain
Texts requiring less than one paragraph of new text	✓	✓	✓				
Texts rarely requiring more than one paragraph			✓				
Longer texts							

D. Numeracy

Numeracy refers to the use of numbers by workers and their requirement to think in quantitative terms in order to complete tasks. Two aspects of **Numeracy** have complexity ratings: *Numerical Calculation*; and, *Numerical Estimation*.

Numerical Calculation is rated within four different application settings as specific knowledge of concepts or procedures are exclusive to each setting:

- **Money Math** - financial transactions, such as handling cash, preparing bills or making payments;
- **Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting Math** - managing time and money as resources, planning and monitoring their use, assessing best value, reducing waste;
- **Measurement and Calculation Math** - measuring and describing the physical world; and,
- **Data Analysis Math** - analysis of numerical data such as extrapolation of information and determination of trends or statistically significant effects.

Numerical Estimation refers to tasks involving any estimation (i.e., an approximation based on judgement) that results in a number.

Numerical Calculation

The Numerical Calculation Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 5 (most complex). The numerical calculation tasks of Parts Sales Consultants involve:

- Money Math at Complexity Levels 1 and 2.
- Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting Math at Complexity Level 1 and 2.
- Measurement and Calculation Math at Complexity Levels 1 and 2.
- Data Analysis Math at Complexity Levels 1 and 2.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- receive cash, debit or credit card payments from customers. (Money Math) (1)
- verify invoices from suppliers. (Money Math) (1)
- prepare invoices for customers detailing part names and part numbers, prices and quantities. They calculate the appropriate taxes and total the invoice. (Money Math) (2)
- adjust delivery schedules to accommodate urgent requests from customers. (Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting Math) (1)
- plan when lunches and breaks will be taken so that customer service is not compromised. (Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting) (1)
- compare parts' prices among suppliers to determine the best. (Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting) (2)
- prorate warranties when an item is on a declining balance warranty. (Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting) (2)
- use a belt measuring gauge to identify proper sizes and models. (Measurement and Calculation) (1)
- use a digital load tester to verify if a battery is still functional. (Measurement and Calculation) (1)
- count the number of parts received to ensure they match the packing slip and invoice. (Measurement and Calculation) (1)
- measure the depth of tire tread. (Measurement and Calculation) (1)
- prepare orders for suppliers based on customers' requests and current store inventory. (Measurement and Calculation) (2)

- measure battery dimensions to identify the type of batteries needed for vehicles. They use conversion tables to identify the battery number according to its dimension. (Measurement and Calculation) (2)
- may convert product price from United States to Canadian dollars and then add the profit margin. (Measurement and Calculation) (2)
- reconcile inventory reports with actual quantities in stock. (Data Analysis) (1)
- determine inventory requirements based on sales history. (Data Analysis) (2)
- may examine bin capacity, such as how many oil filters move at any time, and compare this to sales data to determine seasonal trends. (Data Analysis) (2)

Numerical Estimation

The Numerical Estimation Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4. The numerical estimation tasks of the Parts Sales Consultant are at Complexity Levels 1 and 2.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- estimate the number of parts needed for store inventory to meet customers' requests. (1)
- estimate parts' delivery times for customers by considering their schedule and total number to be delivered. (2)
- prepare cost proposals for customers detailing various options such as brand name or jobber parts and the associated costs and taxes for each. (2)

Math Skills Profile

a. Mathematical Foundations Used

Number Concepts

Whole Numbers

Read and write, count, round off, add or subtract, multiply or divide whole numbers. For example, recording Vehicle Information Numbers (VIN), counting the number of parts received from suppliers; verifying parts' numbers; sorting parts by number; add and subtract parts from the inventory system according to sales and returns.

Rational Numbers – Fractions

Read and write, add or subtract fractions, multiply or divide by a fraction, multiply or divide fractions. For example, measuring strap size to identify the serial number; add fractions when replacing small straps by

larger ones when required (e.g. strap of 3 ½ inches identified as missing ½ inch, therefore the customer needs a 4 inch strap)

Rational Numbers – Decimals

Read and write, round off, add or subtract decimals, multiply or divide by a decimal, multiply or divide decimals. Use decimals mainly to refer to dollars and cents. For example, reading invoice amounts from suppliers; adding parts' prices on customers' invoices; reading numeric data on battery tester.

Rational Numbers – Percents

Read and write percents, calculate the percent one number is of another, calculate a percent of a number. For example, calculating the percentage of gross margin on parts sold by comparing the supplier to retail costs; calculating taxes on invoices.

Equivalent Rational Numbers

Convert between fractions and decimals or percentages, convert between decimals and percentages. For example, converting tax percentage to dollars and cents.

See *Document Use* for information on:

- using scale drawings.

Shape and Spatial Sense

Measurement Conversions

Perform measurement conversions. For example, converting imperial to metric and back when measuring the dimensions of a part.

See *Document Use* for information on:

- recognizing common angles;
- drawing, sketching and forming common forms and figures.

See *Document Use* for information on:

- using tables, schedules or other table-like text;
- using graphical presentations.

b. How Calculations Are Performed

Parts sales consultants perform calculations:

- in their head.
- using a pen and paper.
- using a calculator.
- using a computer.

c. Measurement Instruments Used

Parts sales consultants measure:

- time. For example, using a watch or a clock.
- distance or dimension. For example, using a tape measure.
- volts. For example, using a battery load tester or a multimeter.

They use the:

- System International measurement.
- Imperial measurement system.

E. Oral Communication

Oral Communication pertains primarily to the use of speech to give and exchange thoughts and information.

The Oral Communication Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). The typical oral communication tasks of The Parts Sales Consultant are at Complexity Levels 1 to 3. Their most complex oral communication tasks are at Complexity Levels 3.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- interact with delivery people to provide information on the specific parts to be delivered and customers' addresses. (1)
- communicate with suppliers to place orders, request information on parts' numbers, availability, prices and delivery schedules. (2)
- provide customers with information on different brands of parts and explain their characteristics, specifications, prices and warranties, if applicable, for each. (2)

- answer customers' questions regarding parts purchases. They quickly identify the customers' specific needs and the availability of required parts. (2)
- interact with the co-workers and supervisors to coordinate workload, break times and inform them of customers' requests and orders to suppliers to ensure productivity and minimize duplication of work. (3)
- may explain air conditioning or exhaust system functioning to customers using schematics. (3)

Modes of Communication Used

Parts Sales Consultants communicate:

- in person.
- using the telephone.

Oral Communication Profile

Type	Purpose for Oral Communication											
	To greet	To take messages	To provide/receive information, explanation, direction	To seek, obtain information	To coordinate work with that of others	To reassure, comfort	To discuss (exchange information, opinions)	To persuade	To facilitate, animate	To instruct, instill understanding, knowledge	To negotiate, resolve conflict	To entertain
Listening (little or no interaction)												
Speaking (little or no interaction)												
Interact with co-workers			✓	✓	✓		✓					
Interact with those you supervise or direct												
Interact with supervisor/manager			✓	✓	✓							
Interact with customers/clients/public	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	
Interact with suppliers, servicers		✓	✓	✓							✓	
Participate in group discussion												
Present												

information to a small group												
Present information to a large group												

F. Thinking Skills

Thinking Skills differentiate among five different types of cognitive functions. However, these functions are interconnected and include:

1. **Problem Solving**
2. **Decision Making**
3. **Critical Thinking**
4. **Job Task Planning and Organizing**
5. **Significant Use of Memory**
6. **Finding Information**

1. Problem Solving

Problem solving involves problems that require solutions. For example, a mechanic solves problems, e.g., the car shakes when driven over 80 km. /hr., by eliminating probable causes until the correct one is identified and remedied. Most problems concern mechanical challenges, people or situations.

The Problem Solving Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). The typical problem solving tasks of Parts Sales Consultants are at Complexity Level 1. Their most complex problem solving tasks are at Complexity Level 1.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- receive complaints from customers about receiving the wrong parts. They identify why and at what stage, such as packaging, the mistake occurred. They reassure the customers and send the correct parts as quickly as possible to both satisfy the customers and decrease the negative impact of the mistake. (1)
- receive “rush orders” for parts. They change the delivery schedule to accommodate regular customers and not lose them. (1)
- find that some parts are out of stock or back ordered. Knowing that the customers need these parts within 24 hours, they try to locate the parts through another manufacturer. They inform the customers of the situation and verify that change in the manufacturer is an acceptable solution. (1)

2. Decision Making

Decision making refers to making a choice among options.

Decision making occurs during problem solving, but not all decision making is part of problem solving. It is, therefore, presented as a separate thinking skill. For example, buyers for retail outlets regularly make decisions about which suppliers to buy from, i.e., they select from the options for particular types of merchandise. This is not problem solving.

The Decision Making Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). The typical decision making tasks of Parts Sales Consultants are at Complexity Levels 1 and 2. Their most complex decision making tasks are at Complexity Level 2.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- decide to give a discount to a customer following a delivery mistake. (1)
- decide to reduce the price of a brand name part to the jobber part price because the part is not available in jobber and they do not want to lose the sale. (2)
- determine when to order stock to ensure they have sufficient inventory to supply customers' needs. (2)

3. Job Task Planning and Organizing

There are two aspects to **Planning and Organizing: Job Task Planning and Organizing** and **Organizational Planning**.

Job Task Planning and Organizing refers to the extent to which the workers plan and organize their own tasks.

Organizational Planning refers to the job incumbent's involvement in the organization's broader planning and organizing tasks (i.e., planning and organizing the work of others, operational planning, strategic planning).

The Job Task Planning and Organizing Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). Parts Sales Consultants plan and organize their job tasks at Complexity Level 2.

Description

Parts sales consultants plan their daily activities according to customers' demands and the level of activity in the store. When there is less activity in the store, they determine priorities among tasks such as reshelving returned parts, completing warranty forms, sorting parts and filling front shelves. They are responsible for organizing their workspace to be efficient and productive.

4. Significant Use of Memory

Significant Use of Memory includes any significant or unusual use of memory for workers in the occupational group. It does not include normal memory use that is a requirement for every occupation.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- memorize telephone numbers of suppliers and customers.
- remember customers' names and voices.
- remember part numbers, characteristics and specifications.
- remember specific parts of certain makes and models of vehicles.
- remember customers' needs when ordering stock.

5. Finding Information

Finding Information involves using any of a variety of sources including text, people, computerized databases or information systems.

Finding Information is highlighted in this section as an essential job skill. However, workers' use of various information sources may be referred to in other sections such as *A. Reading Text*, *B. Use of Documents*, *E. Oral Communication* and *H. Computer Use*.

The Finding Information Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). Parts Sales Consultants tasks that involve finding information are at Complexity Levels 1 and 2.

Examples

Parts sales consultants:

- search online catalogues to identify and verify parts' numbers and prices (1)
- contact suppliers to request details on parts specifications, prices and availability. (2)

G. Working with Others

The Essential Skill of **Working with Others** examines the extent to which employees work with others to carry out their tasks. Do they have to work co-operatively with others? Do they have to have the self-discipline to meet work targets while working alone?

The Working with Others Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). Parts Sales Consultants works with others at Complexity Level 2.

Description

Parts sales consultants work independently when answering customers' requests and ordering parts from suppliers. In larger stores, they coordinate their work with colleagues in a team to provide increased coverage and service to customers.

Participation in Supervisory or Leadership Activities

Parts sales consultants:

- have opportunities to make suggestions on improving work processes.

H. Computer Use

Computer Use indicates the variety and complexity of computer use within the occupational group.

The Computer Use Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 5 (most complex). The Computer Use tasks of Parts Sales Consultants are at Complexity Level 2.

Computer Use Profile

Parts sales consultants:

- use a database. For example, use a database to record information on customers and suppliers, track inventory, place orders and prepare invoices. (2)
- use a database. For example, may use manufacturer-specific databases to look for part numbers and place orders. (2)
- use the Internet. For example, locate and search online catalogues from various suppliers to establish parts' availability and order them. Larger or national companies may have intranet accessibility for their brand of product. (2)

I. Continuous Learning

Continuous Learning examines the requirement for workers in an occupational group to participate in an ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge.

Continuous Learning tests the hypothesis that more and more jobs require continuous upgrading, and that all workers must continue learning in order to keep or to grow with their jobs. If this is true then the following will become Essential Skills:

- knowing how to learn;
- understanding one's own learning style; and
- knowing how to gain access to a variety of materials, resources and learning opportunities.

The Continuous Learning Complexity Rating Scale ranges from Level 1 (least complex) to Level 4 (most complex). Parts Sales Consultants performs Continuous Learning tasks at Complexity Level 1.

Description

Parts sales consultants are responsible for determining their own learning needs and setting objectives to continually upgrade their skills and abilities. They may attend manufacturer-sponsored training sessions or participate in distance learning programs. They learn independently by using the Internet and reading technical manuals and technical service bulletins to ensure they are up-to-date with new technology in the automotive industry.

How the Learning Occurs

Learning may be acquired:

- through reading and other forms of self-study:
 - on the workers own time.
 - using materials obtained on worker's own initiative.
 - using materials available through work
 - through interactive distance learning courses (on-line and via satellite)

J. Other Information

Other Information summarizes additional information collected during interviews with job incumbents and focus groups with occupational experts.

In addition to collecting information for this Essential Skills Profile, our interviews with job incumbents also asked about the following topics.

1. Physical Aspects

Body Position

Parts sales consultants work in the standing position 70% of a regular day and the other 30% is spent sitting while answering the phone, locating parts for customers and completing forms.

Limb Co-ordination

Parts sales consultants use upper limb co-ordination to perform their duties.

Strength

Medium strength is required to perform some parts sales consultants jobs; occasionally, they have to lift heavy parts.

2. Attitudes

Parts sales consultants must be comfortable interacting with people. They need to be knowledgeable regarding vehicle parts and willing to work with new technologies.

3. Future Trends Affecting Essential Skills

Computers are increasingly permeating the industry. Parts sales consultants must be able to use computers effectively to be productive as a lot of research is done on the Internet to find suppliers and to access online parts' catalogues. There are also significant technological requirements as the automotive industry introduces hybrid vehicles and use of alternative fuels.