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A Study to Determine what Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Chesapeake Marketing Education Students Should Possess in order to Fulfill the Needs of Retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia

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**A STUDY TO DETERMINE WHAT
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES
CHESAPEAKE MARKETING EDUCATION STUDENTS
SHOULD POSSESS IN ORDER TO FULFILL
THE NEEDS OF RETAILERS IN CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA.**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT
PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION**

**BY
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AUGUST, 1993**

This research paper was prepared by Stephanie L. Freeman under the direction of Dr. John M Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Education. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Education degree.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Retailers play a major role in the success and development of our nation's economy. The United States is involved in a very complex and competitive world economy. Retailers realize that in order to maintain their edge, they must recruit and hire individuals who possess the skills that are necessary to be productive.

The Marketing Education program that exists in the five high schools in the Chesapeake Public School system in Chesapeake, Virginia, serves as a source of employees for retailers in the area. The program utilizes a Cooperative Education program in which students complete coursework while working in a related job. The Marketing Teacher/Coordinator is responsible for classroom instruction involving marketing and marketing related topics, while serving as an implementer of the students' job evaluation. The retailers of Chesapeake served as an excellent source in determining exactly what knowledge, skills and abilities the school system's Marketing Education cooperative education students should achieve in order to fulfill the retailers' needs and be successful on the job.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine what knowledge, skills, and abilities Chesapeake Marketing

Education students should possess in order to fulfill the needs of retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia.

RESEARCH GOALS

To find a solution to the problem, the following questions had to be answered:

1. What background knowledge should Marketing Education students display before applying for a retail job?
2. What specific skills should Marketing Education students possess?
3. What abilities should Marketing Education students be able to perform without extemporization?
4. What additional needs do retailers have of Marketing Education students?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Businesses are always clamoring for employees that possess quality skills and attitudes that ensure the success of the individual and the company. Retailers in the past have complained that prospective employees, from the ranks of high school graduates, lack the positive attributes to thrive in today's competitive economy (Capella and Robin, 1986, p. 28).

Businesses stress the need for critical thinking skills in their employees. Problem solving skills and the ability to make creative analysis are necessary for even entry level success in business. Leaders in business have longed for the curriculum in high school to include these higher level

thinking skills (Capella and Robin, 1986, p. 28).

Innovations in the area of computer technology have created a need for student/trainee literacy. Businesses have expressed that educators should concentrate more on developing computer skills and anticipate the technologies that will be present in the workplace rather than reacting to changes that occur. Some schools in California have guaranteed companies that hire their students that each will have the basic skills needed to enter the workplace. If the employers are unsatisfied, the school will provide remedial training (Armstrong, 1991, p. 34).

This study was developed to provide retailers in Chesapeake with the opportunity to give their input in establishing what knowledge, skills and abilities they need for Marketing Cooperative Education students to possess in order to be successful on the job. The results of the study will be made available to the faculty in the Occupational and Technical Studies Department at Old Dominion University as well as the Marketing Education programs at the high schools in Chesapeake, Virginia. This study should prove to be very valuable in improving the business environment, students' success and the local Marketing Education program.

LIMITATIONS

This research was limited to retail stores in Chesapeake, Virginia. The study was confined to retail stores utilized by the Marketing Education program at Deep Creek High School in

Chesapeake, Virginia. This was because of the large capacity of retailers who employ Marketing Education students from this school. The types of retailers in the research included clothing, food and general merchandise.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made in the study:

1. Retailers would be willing to participate in the study.
2. Retailers would be knowledgeable enough to interpret exactly what knowledge, skills and attitudes Marketing Education students should possess in order to satisfy their employment needs.
3. Retailers were dissatisfied with the quality of Marketing Education students that teachers/coordinators were sending them.
4. The results of the study would be used to improve the Marketing Education program in Chesapeake, Virginia, and the productivity of the retail organization.

PROCEDURES

A sample of Chesapeake retailers were individually surveyed by the researcher. The survey included open form questions concerning suggestions for improving the employability of Marketing Education students, who in turn could better satisfy their employment needs. The data was collected, tabulated and presented in tables along with an

explanation of the results.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

A basic understanding of the following terms is essential for individuals working with cooperative programs and are defined because of their importance to the research study:

1. Marketing Education: a vocational instructional program that is designed to inform and instruct students who are entering occupational fields such as retailing, sales and entrepreneurship (Crawford and Meyer, 1972, p. 2).
2. Retailer: a merchant whose primary business is selling goods or services directly to the ultimate consumer (Bohlinger, 1977, p. 8).
3. Cooperative Education: an instructional plan which combines learning experiences gained through regularly scheduled employment in the community and vocationally oriented in-school instruction (Harms, Stehr and Harris, 1972, p. 416).
4. Teacher/Coordinator: a member of the local school staff who teaches technical and related subject matter to students preparing for employment, and who coordinates classroom instruction and project learning activities of career oriented students (Harms, Stehr and Harris, 1972, p. 416).
5. Needs: the required knowledge, skills and attitudes that contribute to the overall success of the retail

organization.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

Chapter I of this study introduced Marketing Education and the need for retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia, to provide their input concerning the knowledge, skills and abilities that Marketing Education students of Chesapeake should possess to meet the needs of those retailers and therefore, contribute to the overall success of the retail organization. The chapter also established the research goals, the background and significance of the study, identified the study's limitations and assumptions, defined procedures to be used and defined the important terms related to the study. Chapter II will address the review of previous literature on what has been done by other researchers concerning the involvement of retailers in the interpretation of the knowledge, skills and abilities that Marketing Education students should possess. Chapter III will address the methods and procedures used to conduct this study, while Chapter IV will report the findings of the research. Finally, Chapter V will summarize the research and make recommendations regarding the effectiveness of Chesapeake Marketing Education Teachers/Coordinators in relation to the findings from the sample of retailers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter II of this study dealt with the review of literature. The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature related to the stated problem. This chapter examined the need for Marketing Education to include basic competencies and foundations that are essential in preparing students for the workplace, according to the Secretary's Commission on Necessary Skills. The chapter will also discuss the need for more instruction to students in the affective domain. This chapter will focus upon what should be improved in the curriculum that will enable education and business to produce effective students/workers.

THE SECRETARY'S COMMISSION on ACHIEVING NECESSARY SKILLS (SCANS) REPORT

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was asked to examine the demands of the workplace and whether our working students are capable of meeting those demands. Specifically, the Commission was directed to advise the U.S. Secretary of Labor on the level of skills required to enter employment. In carrying out this charge, the Commission was asked to:

- Define the skills needed for employment
- Propose acceptable levels of proficiency
- Suggest effective ways to assess proficiency and

- Develop a dissemination strategy for the nation's schools, businesses and homes.

Information for the report resulted in input from various businesses sources (SCANS, 1991, p. 1).

The SCANS report outlined five competencies, as exhibited in FIGURE A, and three foundations, exhibited in FIGURE B, that must be developed to ensure students' success (SCANS, 1991, p. 12-16). The five competencies include: resources, interpersonal skills, information, systems and technology. The three foundations include: basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities.

The implementation of the competencies and foundations outlined in the SCANS report is vital to the nation in maintaining its world economic leadership. Schools must develop a curriculum that will address these needs to ensure the success of students and businesses.

THE AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

Critical feedback from the business community regarding the competency development of young workers invariably dwells on the area of the affective domain; yet research studies indicate that the instructional program consists almost entirely of teaching marketing functions--"the steps of a sale", the "how to's" of performing tasks with little, if any, time spent in the area of career development in preparation for the broad field of marketing--the affective domain area (Meyer, 1988, p. 2). Recent studies suggest that the

★

FIGURE A

FIVE COMPETENCIES²

Resources: Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources

- A. *Time*—Selects goal-relevant activities, ranks them, allocates time, and prepares and follows schedules
- B. *Money*—Uses or prepares budgets, makes forecasts, keeps records, and makes adjustments to meet objectives
- C. *Material and Facilities*—Acquires, stores, allocates, and uses materials or space efficiently
- D. *Human Resources*—Assesses skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance and provides feedback

Interpersonal: Works with others

- A. *Participates as Member of a Team*—contributes to group effort
- B. *Teaches Others New Skills*
- C. *Serves Clients/Customers*—works to satisfy customers' expectations
- D. *Exercises Leadership*—communicates ideas to justify position, persuades and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies
- E. *Negotiates*—works toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolves divergent interests
- F. *Works with Diversity*—works well with men and women from diverse backgrounds

Information: Acquires and uses information

- A. *Acquires and Evaluates Information*
- B. *Organizes and Maintains Information*
- C. *Interprets and Communicates Information*
- D. *Uses Computers to Process Information*

Systems: Understands complex inter-relationships

- A. *Understands Systems*—knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively with them
- B. *Monitors and Corrects Performance*—distinguishes trends, predicts impacts on system operations, diagnoses deviations in systems' performance and corrects malfunctions
- C. *Improves or Designs Systems*—suggests modifications to existing systems and develops new or alternative systems to improve performance

Technology: Works with a variety of technologies

- A. *Selects Technology*—chooses procedures, tools or equipment including computers and related technologies
- B. *Applies Technology to Task*—Understands overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment
- C. *Maintains and Troubleshoots Equipment*—Prevents, identifies, or solves problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies

FIGURE B

A THREE-PART FOUNDATION³

Basic Skills: Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens, and speaks

- A. *Reading*—locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules
- B. *Writing*—communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing; and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts
- C. *Arithmetic/Mathematics*—performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- D. *Listening*—receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues
- E. *Speaking*—organizes ideas and communicates orally

Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn and reasons

- A. *Creative Thinking*—generates new ideas
- B. *Decision Making*—specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternative
- C. *Problem Solving*—recognizes problems and devises and implements plan of action
- D. *Seeing Things in the Mind's Eye*—organizes, and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects and other information
- E. *Knowing How to Learn*—uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills
- F. *Reasoning*—discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it in solving a problem

Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity and honesty

- A. *Responsibility*—exerts a high level of effort and perseveres towards goal attainment
- B. *Self-Esteem*—believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self
- C. *Sociability*—demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in group settings
- D. *Self-Management*—assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress, and exhibits self-control
- E. *Integrity/Honesty*—chooses ethical courses of action

affective domain is just as important to job success and survival as the psychomotor and cognitive domains (Petty, 1981, p. 55).

Affective learning deals with the emotional aspects of one's behavior; the influences on our choice of goals, and the means we choose for attaining them. The cognitive domain also includes all forms of "intellectual" activity--attending, perceiving, remembering, associating, discriminating, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating--all the behaviors that can loosely be called thinking (Ringness, 1975, pp. 1-2).

While there are many specific affective concerns in marketing, they can be grouped into three broad types of performance categories:

(1) Self-concept, self esteem or self-image is directly manifested in the work setting in terms of confidence and is generally the foundation for success in other affective areas. Techniques for self-concept development include opportunities to overcome feared situations, goal setting techniques, positive affirmations and positive social reinforcement.

(2) Human relations skills call for consideration, attentiveness and fairness in dealing with supervisors, employees, co-workers or customers. Procedures for developing human relations skills are role playing, behavior modeling and coaching.

(3) Work attitude includes concern, willingness, loyalty, dependability, reliability, cooperation, productivity,

honesty, responsibility, values, initiative, independent work habits and enthusiasm regarding the job or company. Procedures for developing work attitudes include self-evaluation, discrimination activities, controlled practice and experiential opportunities (Meyer, 1988, p. 3).

In order to progress in any affective area, the most ideal situation for application and practice is the real world setting. Marketing education programs have available one component which closely approximates and one which meets this criteria for work attitudes. In addition to providing experiential opportunities for growth in attitudes, both the school lab and the cooperative method traditionally utilize a built in feedback system: the employer progress report, as exhibited in FIGURE C. These documents typically have a heavy focus on work attitudes as well as other affective concerns (Meyer, 1988, pp. 9-10).

Employers and others concerned with the preparation of students for careers in marketing have been calling for an emphasis on the affective domain. Effective results in the affective domain require methods which enable students to develop useful affective behaviors as well as know about them (Meyer, 1988, p. 14).

SUMMARY

This chapter examined what has previously been written concerning the needs of business employers and the Marketing

FIGURE C

PROGRESS REPORT

AG HEALTH
 BCE H. EC.
 DE T & I
 OTHER

Name: _____

Evaluation Period: 1 2 3 4 5 6 From _____ to _____

By prior agreement this student was assigned to the tasks listed below. If he has been asked to work on other major tasks, please add them to the list. Please give your honest opinion about the progress and achievement of this student so that the student can be assisted in making improvement.

Please judge the student in the same way you would any other beginning worker.

| ASSIGNED TASKS | UNDERSTANDS | | | PRODUCTION | | | QUALITY OF WORK | | | SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS |
|----------------|-------------|---|----|------------|------|-------|-----------------|------|-------|------------------------|
| | YES | ? | NO | FAIR | GOOD | EXCEL | FAIR | GOOD | EXCEL | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

| OVERALL PERFORMANCE | NEEDS HELP | WEAK | AVERAGE | GOOD |
|---|------------|------|---------|------|
| Punctual: gets to work on time No. of Times Absent ____ No. of Times Tardy ____ | | | | |
| Appearance: neat, well groomed, appropriately dressed | | | | |
| Dependability: prompt, trustworthy, follows directions, meets obligations | | | | |
| Adaptability: catches on fast, follows detailed instruction well, can switch jobs easily | | | | |
| Ability to get along: cooperative, well mannered, has social and emotional stability | | | | |
| Job attitude: enthusiastic, a good team worker, willing to work and cooperate, desires to improve | | | | |
| Initiative: Ability to work without supervision, sees things to do | | | | |
| Accepts suggestions: eager to improve, seeks assistance, follows through | | | | |

Do you think this student is performing as well as any other beginning worker in the same job?
 yes no not sure (Why) _____

Do you plan to ask the student to assume new duties in the next two months? yes no
 If yes, what duties _____

If there have been any problems with this student in the last two months, describe the circumstances and the outcome on the back of this sheet.

Date _____ Signature _____
 Company _____

UTHE/72

Education program. It dealt with the expressed need for businesses to see an improved curriculum in the five competencies and the three foundations outlined in the SCANS report, as well as the three areas of the affective domain. Chapter III will discuss the methods and procedures that will be used to determine exactly what knowledge, skills and abilities retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia, feel that Marketing Education students should possess in order to fulfill their retailing needs.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the methods and procedures that were used to determine what knowledge, skills, and abilities retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia, felt were necessary competencies. In order to gain relevant information, it was essential to conduct survey the retailers. This chapter includes the population, instrument design, methods of data collection, statistical analysis and summary.

POPULATION

The population of this study consisted of retail owners and managers located in Chesapeake, Virginia. The participants in this study were retailers who employ Marketing Education students at Deep Creek High School. A stratified sample of 37 businesses was used. The strata consisted of the following retail categories and the number of respondents from each: 15 food, 6 grocers, 2 drug stores, 2 shoes, 1 automotive, 1 beauty supply, 1 carpet store, 1 clothing, 1 florist, 1 general merchandise, 1 hair salon, 1 hotel/motel, 1 key shop, 1 office supply, 1 labeling company, and 1 lumber company.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN

A survey was developed which consisted of closed ended and open ended questions. Closed ended questions were used to allow participants to respond to questions that require

specific short answers, such as types of job skills and attitudes that should be present in trainees entering the workforce. Open ended questions were used to allow the respondents to expound upon what they would want to see taught in the classroom, how the program could be improved, and an explanation of specific units of instruction that should be included. A copy of the survey is included in Appendix A.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

A cover letter and survey was distributed to a total of 37 local businesses. The participants were given ten days to respond before the researcher followed up by telephone to gain the needed responses. A copy of the survey cover letter is found in Appendix B.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Upon receiving all of the data, a statistical analysis took place in order to provide meaning to the acquired data. The researcher compiled the responses to determine the frequencies of response and examine the needs of the participants. The data was tabulated, converted to frequencies of responses and was presented through tables and discussion in the subsequent chapters.

SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the methods and procedures that were used for the study. The components of Chapter III included the population, instrument design, methods of data

collection and statistical analysis. The findings of the survey will be presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V will summarize, draw conclusions and make recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The problem of this study was to determine what knowledge, skills and abilities Chesapeake Marketing Education students should possess in order to fulfill the needs of the retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia. In this chapter data was presented with accompanying tables indicating survey statistics, job skills, basic knowledge, student abilities, any additional needs required by retailers, and a list of general courses that should be implemented in the marketing education curriculum.

REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

Table I indicates the number of surveys that were received versus the number of surveys presented. A total of 37 surveys were presented resulting in 26 responses and 11 non-responses. The percentage rate of response was 70.3%.

TABLE ISURVEY STATISTICS

| | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Surveys Presented | 37 |
| Responses | 26 |
| Non-responses | 11 |
| Response Rate | 70.3% |

Table II indicates the job skills that retailers felt

were most important to entry-level workers at their stores. The data revealed the skills that should be present according to the following percentage of responses: communication skills 34.6%, basic math skills 19.2%, cash register operational skills 15.4%, selling skills, 11.5%, merchandising skills 7.7%, basic computer skills 7.7% and credit card handling 3.8%.

TABLE II

JOB SKILLS

| | <u>PERCENTAGE</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Communication | 34.6% |
| Basic Math | 19.2% |
| Cash Register | 15.4% |
| Selling | 11.5% |
| Merchandising | 7.7% |
| Basic Computer | 7.7% |
| Credit card handling | 3.8% |

Table III indicates the background knowledge that applicants should display before applying for a position. The data revealed the background knowledge that should be present as indicated by the following percentage of responses: operation of the cash register 34.6%, accepting checks 23.1%, completing charge slips 15.4%, working with the public 11.5%, merchandising 7.7%, and common sense 7.7%.

TABLE III
BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

| | <u>PERCENTAGE</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Operating cash register | 34.6% |
| Accepting checks | 23.1% |
| Completing charge slips | 15.4% |
| Working with public | 11.5% |
| Merchandising | 7.7% |
| Common sense | 7.7% |

Table IV indicates the abilities that retailers felt were most important to entry-level workers at their stores. The data revealed the skills that should be present according to the following percentage of responses: work with others 34.6%, making change 30.8%, and accept checks/credit cards 23.1%. The findings produced other responses such as possessing a knowledge of money, being organized, and the ability to work with disabled customers totaling 11.5%.

TABLE IV
APPLICANT ABILITIES

| | <u>PERCENTAGE</u> |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Work with others | 34.6% |
| Making change | 30.8% |
| Accept checks/credit cards | 23.1% |
| Other | 11.5% |

Table V indicates the additional needs that retailers

felt could be met by marketing education students. The data resulted in the following percentages concerning additional training: opening and closing the cash register 30.8%, using suggestive selling techniques 26.9%, making creative displays 23.1%, take phone orders 7.7%, check in/send merchandise 7.7%, and complete markdowns 3.8%.

TABLE V

ADDITIONAL NEEDS

| | <u>PERCENTAGES</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Opening/closing the register | 30.8% |
| Suggestive selling | 26.9% |
| Making displays | 23.1% |
| Taking phone orders | 7.7% |
| Check in/send merchandise | 7.7% |
| Complete markdowns | 3.8% |

Table VI indicates the make-up of general courses that retailers felt should be offered to high school students who plan to enter the marketing workplace. The following percentages reflect the general make-up of courses needed according to the retailers: basic math 38.5%, keyboarding 30.8%, public speaking 19.2%, and writing 11.5%.

TABLE VI
GENERAL COURSES

| | <u>PERCENTAGES</u> |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Basic math | 38.5% |
| Keyboarding | 30.8% |
| Public speaking | 19.2% |
| Writing | 11.5% |

SUMMARY

The problem of this study was to determine what knowledge skills, and abilities Chesapeake Marketing Education students should possess in order to fulfill the needs of retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia. In this chapter the findings of this research study were presented. Table I indicated the survey statistics, revealing the participation of the respondents to the total number of people solicited. Table II indicated the major job skills that the retailers felt were most important to entry-level students entering the workplace. Table III illustrated the background knowledge that the retailers felt that applicants should display before applying for a position. Table IV revealed the abilities that applicants should be able to perform without extemporization in order to qualify for a position with the retailers. Table V illustrated the additional needs that the retailers felt could be met by Marketing Education students, if they were properly trained, and Table VI indicated the courses that retailers felt should be offered to high school students who plan to enter the

marketing workplace.

Chapter V provides a summary of this study along with conclusions and recommendations on how the information could best be put to use.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The intrinsic nature of marketing constitutes change among people and their knowledge. Therefore, to teach marketing education, change is inevitable for a good teacher to reflect the progression of marketing in the classroom. This research set out to find what knowledge, skills, and abilities marketing students should possess.

This chapter summarized what had been done in the previous four chapters. Conclusions were drawn that answered the research goals outlined in Chapter I. Recommendations were made on how the research findings in Chapter IV should be implemented.

SUMMARY

The problem of this study was to determine what knowledge, skills and abilities Chesapeake Marketing Education students should possess in order to fulfill the needs of retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia. In dealing with this problem, research goals were constructed to determine the areas that need improvement involving marketing education students and the curriculum. These goals focused on improvements in students' knowledge, job skills, and attitudes. The goals also sought input for general courses that should be offered to high school students who plan to enter the marketing workplace.

A review of literature revealed areas that businesses wanted to see improved in students. These areas included competencies outlined in the Secretary of Labor on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report, and improving the affective domain. A stratified sample was developed to solicit responses from retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia, which would answer the research goals. The findings of the surveys were presented in tables along with a narrative explanation of the results.

CONCLUSIONS

The following information consists of the study's research goals and the answers to these questions.

Goal 1: What background knowledge should Marketing Education students display before applying for a retail job?

According to the respondents, Marketing Education students should possess some knowledge concerning cash register operations, the acceptance of checks and charges, working with the public, merchandising, and should possess some common sense.

Goal 2: What specific skills should Marketing Education students possess?

The respondents felt that communication, basic math, cash register operations, selling, merchandising, basic computer skills and credit card handling were skills that marketing students should possess.

Goal 3: What abilities should Marketing Education students be

able to perform without extemporization?

The respondents also expressed their opinion concerning abilities. They felt that marketing students should have the ability to work with others, make proper change, accept checks and credit cards, possess a knowledge of money, be organized, and able to work with disabled customers.

Goal 4: What additional needs do retailers have of Marketing Education students?

The respondents also expressed some additional needs that they felt could be satisfied by marketing students, if properly trained. These include opening and closing out the cash register, practicing suggestive selling techniques, making creative displays, taking phone orders, checking in and sending out merchandise, and completing markdowns.

The findings indicate a strong need for basic skills improvement in entry-level student workers. Areas that need particular focus included communication skills, basic math skills, cash register operational skills, and the ability to work with others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the findings of this study, it is recommended that developers of the marketing education curriculum positively alter the program. This research uncovered areas that require specific attention, including

communication skills, basic math skills, cash register operational skills, and the ability to work with others. Curriculum developers must create competencies, units of instruction, lesson plans and activities which will lead to improvements in these areas. It is imperative that these skills be improved to produce student/workers that will strengthen our economy and standard of living.

It is recommended that this information be presented to Virginia Marketing Education leaders in an effort to improve the state curriculum. The study should also be published in a Marketing Education journal where it can inform and influence professionals in the field.

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APPENDIX A
RESEARCH SURVEY

Marketing Education Survey

Purpose: This research was undertaken to determine what knowledge, skills, and abilities Chesapeake marketing education students should possess in order to fulfill the needs of retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia.

Survey Directions: *Please write out clear and concise responses to the following items.*

Item 1 List major job skills that you feel are most important to entry-level workers at your place of business, i.e. communication skills.

Item 2 What background knowledge should applicants display before applying for a retail position at your place of business, i.e. operation of the cash register, completing charge slips, etc.?

APPENDIX B
COVER LETTER

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

Department of Occupational and Technical Studies
Norfolk, Virginia 23529

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June 22, 1993

Dear Owner or Manager:



I am a graduate student at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Currently, I am employed as a graduate teaching assistant in the Occupational and Technical Studies Department at the university. I plan to complete the requirements for my degree in Secondary Education during the summer of 1993.

In January, I began to work on a research project as a requirement for my degree. The problem of the research was to determine what knowledge, skills, and abilities Chesapeake marketing education students should possess in order to fulfill the needs of retailers in Chesapeake, Virginia. To determine these needs a survey was developed which will allow for input from the business community. This is where your valuable assistance is needed. You as the store owner or manager are involved with these students on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, only you can provide this valuable information. Please complete the enclosed survey and return it using the addressed, stamped envelope within seven working days. The information will be compiled in the Marketing Education Program. The completed research will be presented and will be made available to the Chesapeake Public Schools System.

Your cooperation in this study is very important and appreciated. Thank you for your conscientious effort.

Sincerely,


Stephanie L. Freeman

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