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A Ranking of Competency Areas of Instruction by Suffolk City Merchants to Determine Felt Importance as a Basis for Distributive Education Curriculum Sequencing

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A RANKING OF COMPETENCY AREAS OF INSTRUCTION BY SUFFOLK CITY
MERCHANTS TO DETERMINE FELT IMPORTANCE AS A BASIS FOR
DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION CURRICULUM SEQUENCING

A Paper
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Education

by
Henry O. Billups
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
 Chapter	
1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	2
ASSUMPTIONS IN THE STUDY	2
IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY	3
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	3
DEFINITION OF TERMS	4
2. A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH	5
3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	9
SELECTION OF TOPIC	9
POPULATION OF THE STUDY	11
INSTRUMENT SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT	12
COLLECTION OF THE DATA	13
4. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	15
POPULATION DETERMINATION	15
SURVEY RESPONSE	18
CALCULATION OF COMPETENCY RATING	18
CALCULATION OF TEACHER TIME ALLOCATION	23
5. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	25
SUMMARY OF THE STUDY	25
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	28

Chapter	Page
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY	28
REFERENCES CITED	30
APPENDIXES	
A. MAJOR COMPETENCY AREAS TYPED ON SEPARATE INDEX CARDS WITH THEIR SUB-TOPICS FOR RANKING BY MERCHANTS IN THE INTERVIEW	33
B. INTERVIEW TABULATION SHEET	35

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Competency Areas as Identified by the Crawford Study	2
2. Seven Major Businesses as Identified by the Crawford Study	5
3. Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Dues Classification Analysis	16
4. Determination of the Number of Businesses to be Surveyed in this Study	17
5. Interview Response by Merchants in the Population	18
6. The Ranking of Competency Areas by all Merchants Interviewed in the Study (N-54)	19
7. Ranking by Employment Level of Persons Completing the Study	21
8. Ranking by Persons Employed in Either Retail or Service Types of Businesses	22
9. Time Allocation for Teaching Based on 160 Days of the School Year	24

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Evolution of Competency-Based Instruction	7

Chapter 1

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

Within the field of Distributive Education a major movement has occurred to direct curriculum toward a competency base. This movement was begun by the Standards of Quality for Public Schools in Virginia, enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia in 1976. It is stated in Section 2 of Article VIII of the Act that:

There be Vocational Education providing marketable skills for students who are not planning to continue their education beyond high school. Those students not completing their public school education should possess the skills and attitudes, commensurate with their capabilities, to obtain employment upon leaving school.

To meet the requirements of this Act, the Distributive Education Service encouraged the individual coordinators and school systems throughout the state to base its curriculum on the competencies (i.e., attitudes, skills, and knowledges) needed for entry and advancement in employment. Thus, students would be taught actual job tasks and skills needed for entry level and advancement positions within distributive occupations.

The principal concern of this study was the ranking of the nine major competency areas as identified by the Crawford Study (Crawford, 1967). These nine major competency areas form the base for job related curriculum in the Distributive Education programs within Virginia's high schools. A review of the research of the Crawford Study identified 983 competencies of job performance for seventy-six occupations investigated within the field of distribution.

All of the competencies were classified under the nine major competency areas. A listing of the competency areas is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Competency Areas as Identified by
the Crawford Study

Competency Area
1. Advertising
2. Display
3. Merchandising
4. Human Relations
5. Operations and Management
6. Math
7. Communications
8. Selling
9. Product and Service Technology

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine the amount of classroom emphasis a Distributive Education coordinator should place on each major competency area.

ASSUMPTIONS IN THE STUDY

There were three assumptions upon which this study was based:

1. The managers and assistant managers who would actually hire the students as employees were qualified to rank the competency

areas for importance of instruction.

2. Persons who were actually employed in related distributive fields would also be qualified to rank the competency areas.

3. The ranking of competency areas, even though performed in a small town would have validity in larger cities.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

With the enactment of the Standards of Quality for Public Schools, the General Assembly has made its intent clear that students were to be prepared for entry into the world of work with marketable job skills.

Teachers with only 180 in class hours with these students would need to provide a good foundation of job competencies. With the identification of 983 separate competencies grouped into nine major areas, a system of allocation of time priorities was needed (Crawford, 1967).

The findings of this study should provide the Distributive Education Coordinator with information to use in the allocation of time to the many competencies that need to be taught.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There were several limiting factors which users of this study need be aware:

1. No attempt was made to single out individual competencies but, rather, the general competency areas were considered.

2. The study was performed within the geographic boundaries of the City of Suffolk, Virginia.

3. Not all distributive businesses were asked to rank the competency areas but, rather, a percentage of all distributive businesses were surveyed.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Distributive Education--a vocational instructional program designed to meet the needs of persons who have entered or are preparing to enter a distributive occupation requiring competency in one or more of the marketing functions (Crawford and Meyer, 1972).

Coordinator--the coordinator is the classroom instructor of the Distributive Education program. He or she provides theory based instruction in the job competencies relating to the student's occupational goals (Crawford, 1967).

Ranking--the relative position or status in a group. To classify; to take precedence over (Davies, 1976).

Competency--the knowledges, skills and attitudes required to satisfactorily perform a job task (Crawford, 1967).

Competency Based Instruction--instruction focused on the development of competencies required for students to enter and advance in their chosen careers (Crawford, 1967).

Chapter 2

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

The problem of this study was to determine the amount of class emphasis a Distributive Education coordinator should place on each major competency area.

Between the years of 1965 and 1967, under a grant from the United States Office of Education, Professor Lucy C. Crawford of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, interviewed four hundred workers and managers to determine the critical tasks performed in their jobs. The result of this effort identified 983 competencies of job performance required of seventy-six occupations investigated in seven major marketing areas.

Table 2 presents a list of the marketing areas researched.

Table 2

Seven Major Businesses as Identified
by the Crawford Study

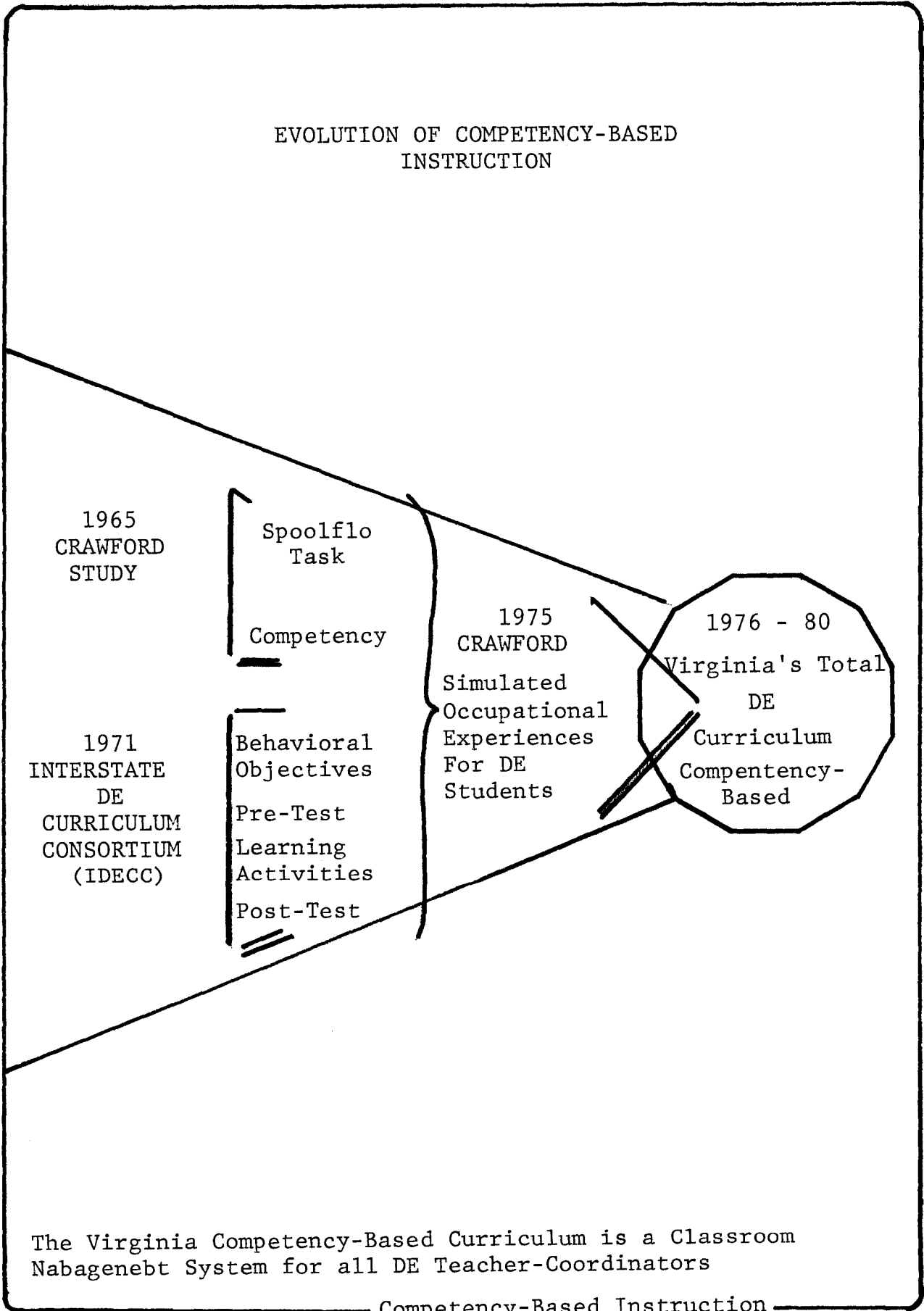
Businesses
1. Department Stores
2. Food Stores
3. Hotel/Motels
4. Restaurants
5. Service Stations
6. Variety Stores
7. Wholesalers

In 1969, the State Superintendent of Wisconsin Schools appointed a committee to develop a curriculum for the more common competencies. In 1971, a consortium of eleven states, known as the Interstate Distributive Education Curriculum Consortium (IDECC), was formed. From this consortium the Distributive Education Department of Suffolk City Schools purchased the five hundred Learning Activity Packages of 983 competencies for use in its curriculum. According to the IDECC system, a Learning Activity Package is a self-contained package of learning activities, in addition to outside references, for a large group, small group, or independent learning (Harrison, 1976).

Thus, from a list of critical job tasks identified by the Crawford Study to a series of Learning Activity Packages of related and sequenced competencies categorized into the major competency areas has evolved a curriculum for Distributive Education. An illustration of the evolution of this Competency-Based Instruction is shown in Figure 1.

Instruction consists of what you the teacher teaches in your class, and the LAPs gives you the option of several learning activities. As recommended use for curriculum, it is suggested that each student be identified as to his or her career goal and that students with like goals be clustered allowing them the opportunity to participate in group activity. The student then, with the aid of the coordinator, identifies the competencies needed for entry or advancement within his or her occupational goal. Also, suggested in the Learning Manager's Guide of the IDECC system, is the use of employers and community business people as a resource in deciding what competencies should be taught (Harrison, 1976). Applying this reasoning, this study has

Figure 1



obtained from the merchants of the City of Suffolk, Virginia, a ranking of the major competency areas.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A discussion of the design and procedures used for the collection and treatment of the data in this study is contained in this chapter under the following headings: (1) selection of topic; (2) population of the study; (3) instrument selection and development; and (4) collection of the data.

SELECTION OF TOPIC

In 1976, the General Assembly of Virginia enacted the Standards of Quality for the Public Schools. Section 2 of Article VIII of the Act states that:

There be Vocational Education providing marketable skills for students who are not planning to continue their education beyond high school. Those students not completing their public school education should possess the skills and attitudes, commensurate with their capabilities, to obtain employment upon leaving school.

To answer the challenge of this act the Distributive Education Service of Virginia began to alter its curriculum toward a competency (i.e., attitudes, skills, and knowledges) based instructional program. The competency based instructional concept of education was not entirely new to Distributive Education in Virginia. A study performed under a grant from the United States Office of Education, by Professor Lucy C. Crawford of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, identified 983 competencies of jobs performance required of seventy-six occupations from seven major marketing areas. The identified 983

competencies were grouped by Crawford into nine major competency areas--Advertising, Display, Merchandising, Human Relations, Math, Communications, Selling, Product and Service Technology, and Operations and Management (Crawford, 1967).

In 1969, a committee was formed in Wisconsin to develop a curriculum for the more common competencies. In 1971, a consortium of eleven states, known as the Interstate Distributive Education Curriculum Consortium (IDECC), was formed (Harrison, 1976). Developed here were five hundred Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) containing the 983 Crawford identified competencies to be used as a curriculum in Distributive Education.

Under the current school system structure, a teacher has only 180 classroom hours per year to instruct students in the competencies needed for job entrance and advancement. When one considers assemblies, fire drills, illness, and other variables, a school year of 160 classroom hours is more realistic. This limitation of classroom hours available make the need for instructors' time priorities most important to the planning process. It is the purpose of this study to provide a ranking of the major competency areas based on merchant impressions as to which competency area was the most to the least in demand by employees of distributive businesses. The teacher can then establish an instructional sequence emphasizing competency areas felt to be most important to distributive businesses.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study was all distributive businesses in the City of Suffolk, Virginia. The sample consisted of fifty-six persons employed in distributive occupations within the City of Suffolk, Virginia. Each business employing these persons was selected by the following criteria: (1) they must be engaged in business classified to be within the field of distribution; and (2) they should represent businesses which employ students at the entry level. In the Crawford Study, four hundred workers and managers were interviewed to determine the critical tasks performed in their job. From this study came the 983 competencies of job performance categorized into the nine major competency areas. It was felt, therefore, that since merchants were the source of the curriculum they should also be able to perform a ranking as to importance for time allocation by the instructor of a competency based curriculum.

To avoid the over-sampling of a business area and to assure a proportionate survey of all business types, aid was secured from the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce. A 1977 dues classification analysis was acquired. This document presents a breakdown by business area of the membership in the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce.

By applying criteria number one, that the only businesses to be included in the study would be those engaged within the distributive field--agriculture, manufacturing, professional--public utilities and the diversified types of business operations were screened out of the study. Next, to obtain a survey population that would rank the competency areas for Distributive Education curriculum, criteria two

was applied. Criteria two states that the survey be completed by those businesses which employ students at the entry level. This criteria affected the areas of Financial and Insurance/Real Estate. It was thought that the number of these types of businesses having membership in the Chamber of Commerce exceeded the opportunity of employment of entry level students; however, entry level positions do exist so the areas of Financial and Insurance/Real Estate were not completely omitted from the study. The number of samples taken from those areas was reduced.

The number of businesses in each category to be sampled was determined by the percentage of membership of that type when compared to the total number of businesses engaged in the field of distribution having membership in the Chamber of Commerce of Suffolk, Virginia.

INSTRUMENT SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Crawford, in her study of 1967, interviewed four hundred employees and managers to determine the critical tasks performed on their jobs. From these critical tasks, 983 competencies were developed which were categorized by Crawford into nine major competency areas-- Advertising, Display, Merchandising, Math, Human Relations, Product and Service Technology, Communications, and Operations and Management. Using these competency areas as headings, a two-part survey tool was developed to determine the ranking by the merchants. The first part of the survey instrument was a set of nine index cards. Each card carried a major competency category and a list of subtopics covered by that category (Harrison, 1976), (Appendix Z). The second part of the survey tool was a tally sheet for the numerical ranking. Also included on

this sheet were questions to indicate the type of distributive business and the current employment status of the person being interviewed (Appendix B).

COLLECTION OF THE DATA

The sample of this study consisted of fifty-six persons employed in distributive occupations within the City of Suffolk, Virginia. In 1967, Crawford held interviews with four hundred workers and managers identifying critical job tasks performed. It was felt that the ranking of the competency categories identified by Crawford might also be performed by persons engaged in the field of distribution. The determination of the number of persons and the types of businesses to be surveyed was derived based on the percent of membership in the Chamber of Commerce of Suffolk, Virginia.

Once the total number of surveys to be completed was determined, the geographic layout of Suffolk was considered. To assure a broad cross-sample, all areas of the business community were reached. The survey instruments were carried into the selected business and verbal instructions as to the nature of the study were given. The interviewee was then presented with a set of index cards bearing the competency categories and the listing of sub-topics. He or she was then instructed to sort the cards ranking them from most important to least important. Upon completion of this ranking each interviewee was given the tabulation sheet and asked to record the data and complete the questions, indicating the type of business and the interviewee's current employment status.

A checklist was maintained to record the type of business and its location. This was done to assure the proportional percentage of business participation and to obtain a good geographic cross-section of the city businesses.

Using this procedure, a total of fifty-four personal interviews were held and the data recorded. Two merchants did not complete the survey forms. The participation in this study is a 96.42 percent return of requested data. The survey was begun June 1, 1977, and completed August 15, 1977.

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The problem of this study was to determine from merchants engaged in the field of distribution an importance ranking of the nine major competency areas of Distributive Education curriculum. This chapter contains the presentation and the analysis of data relative to the following topics: (1) population determination; (2) survey response; (3) calculation of competency ranking; and (4) calculation of teacher time allocation for each major competency area.

POPULATION DETERMINATION

The population of this study was determined by a stratified random selection of merchants based on the following criteria: (1) they must be engaged in a business classified to be within the field of distribution; and (2) they should represent businesses that employs students at the entry level. It was also felt that the population should be proportionately representative of the number of businesses in the City of Suffolk, Virginia. To accomplish this, use was made of the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Dues Classification Analysis

Applying criteria number one, that only businesses engaged in distribution would be sampled--agriculture, manufacturing, professional--public utilities and diversified types were screened out. Using the total number of distributive businesses (N-327), a percentage for each

Table 3
Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Dues
Classification Analysis

Classification	Number of Accounts
Amusement	2
Agriculture	40
Automotive	11
Construction	21
Financial	37
Hotels/Motels	2
Insurance/Real Estate	42
Manufacturing	103
Professional	64
Public Utilities	13
Publishers/Printers	11
Radio/Television	5
Restaurants	11
Retailers	88
Services	86
Transportation	10
Wholesalers/Distributors	22
Diversified	29
TOTAL	595

remaining type was determined. Criteria number two, that the study be completed by those businesses which employ students at the entry level, was applied. From this stratification process, the sample of fifty-six merchants from the City of Suffolk, Virginia, was determined.

Table 4

Determination of the Number of Businesses
to be Surveyed in this Study

Classification	No. of Accounts	Percentage of Businesses in Suffolk, Va.	Number to be Surveyed
Amusement	2	.61	2
*Agriculture	0	0	0
Automotive	11	3.36	2
*Construction	0	0	0
Financial	37	11.32	4
Hotel/Motels	2	.61	2
Insurance/Real Estate	42	12.85	4
*Manufacturing	0	0	0
*Professional	0	0	0
*Public Utilities	0	0	0
Publishers/Printers	11	3.36	2
Radio/Television	5	1.52	2
Restaurants	11	3.36	6
Retailers	88	26.92	12
Services	86	26.30	12
Transportation	10	3.05	2
Wholesalers/ Distributors	22	6.74	6
*Diversified	0	0	0
TOTAL	327	100.00	56

*Denotes non-distributive business areas.

SURVEY RESPONSE

The sample of this study consisted of fifty-six Suffolk City merchants from distributive businesses. These merchants were employed on either management or employee levels. They also represented a proportionate number of business types of the City of Suffolk, Virginia. Each merchant was interviewed and asked to rank the nine major competency areas identified in the Crawford Study and developed in the IDECC system. A summary of the responses is presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Interview Response by Merchants in
the Population

	Number	Percent
Complete and Useable	54	96.42
Not Returned	2	7.58
TOTAL	56	100.00

Fifty-four of the fifty-six merchants interviewed completed the ranking of the nine major competency areas for an effective return rate of 96.42 percent. An attempt to secure the missing rankings was made; however, the results were negative.

CALCULATION OF COMPETENCY RANKING

Fifty-four merchants engaged in twelve categories of distributive businesses within the City of Suffolk, Virginia, were interviewed to rank the nine major competency categories from the most important to the least important, based upon how they felt classroom emphasis

should be placed in order to prepare a student for an entry level position of employment. Calculation of these rankings were made in the following manner: All responses of merchants recorded as "felt importance." In order to establish an effective method for the calculation of rankings and percentages, a value was given each (most important, 9 to least important, 1). The number of responses were then multiplied by the value given to give the ranking and when divided by the total a percentage ranking was determined. Presented in Table 6 is the "felt importance" ranking by all merchants interviewed in the study.

Table 6

The Ranking of Competency Areas by all Merchants
Interviewed in the Study (N-54)

Major Competency Categories	Rank	Responses Multiplied by Value	Percentage N - 2436
Human Relations	1	412	16.91
Selling	2	364	14.94
Math	3	318	13.05
Communications	4	310	12.73
Merchandising	5	260	10.67
Product and Service Technology	6	238	9.77
Operations and Management	7	200	8.21
Display	8	176	7.23
Advertising	9	158	6.49
TOTAL VALUES		2436	100.00

For analysis and comparison, segments of the complete ranking were made. Table 7 and Table 8 presents a comparison by employment level and by the largest number of business areas represented in the study (Retailing and Service).

Competency areas are listed in order ranked from the complete survey with all segment comparisons noted in the tables. It should also be noted that in each analysis there are slight variations as to how the nine competency areas should rank in felt importance. However, in all cases Human Relations received the number one position of felt importance. The ten employees who were interviewed indicated agreement in Human Relations (number one) and Selling (number two), but in Math (number three) they felt the importance should be reduced to the number eight position. They indicated that Product and Service Technology should occupy the number three position. The balance seemed to vary only slightly from the overall ranking with the exception of Operations and Management which dropped from the seventh position to number nine position by the employees. As a special observation, it should be noted that employees, even after permission was received to participate in the study from their store managers, were reluctant to express an opinion or complete the survey. Many tried to match the ranking of their managers even though no names were required on the survey instrument (Appendix B).

The forty-five managers completing the study indicated complete agreement with the overall ranking of the study. A comparison ranking by employment levels is shown in Table 7.

Table 7
 Ranking by Employment Level of Persons
 Completing the Study

Major Competency Categories as Ranked Overall	Ranking by Employees N - 10	Ranking by Managers N - 44
Human Relations	1	1
Selling	2	2
Math	8	3
*Communications	4-5	4
*Merchandising	4-5	5
Product and Service Technology	3	6
Operations and Management	9	7
*Display	6-7	8
*Advertising	6-7	9

*In calculating the ranking, these areas were equal and, therefore, jointly occupy that position.

Forty-eight percent of the businesses surveyed in this study came under the category of either Retail or Service types, so it was felt that a ranking for comparison should be performed.

Here both Retail and Service businesses combined affirm the rank of Human Relations in the number one position. The most significant rank change for Retail is in the area of Communications which was felt should be ranked number nine rather than in the fourth position overall. In considering the types of businesses associated with service, one can see the ranking changes dropping Selling from the number three position to the number five slot. All others agree with

the overall ranking. When analyzing Retail and Service together, the most significant change from the complete overall ranking is in Communications which moves from the number four position to the rank of number six. A summary of these differences and comparisons of all rankings for Retail and Service types of businesses is presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Ranking by Persons Employed in Either Retail
or Service Types of Businesses

Major Competency Categories as Ranked Overall	Ranking by Retail Businesses N - 12	Ranking by Service Businesses N - 12	Ranking by Retail and Service N - 24
Human Relations	1	1	1
Selling	2	5	3
Math	4	2	2
Communications	9	3	6
Merchandising	5	4	4
Product and Service Technology	3	7	5
Operations and Management	7	6	7
Display	6	8	8
Advertising	8	9	9

CALCULATION OF TEACHER TIME ALLOCATION

With the enactment of the Standards of Quality for the Public Schools in Virginia, the General Assembly has made its intent clear that students were to be prepared for entry into the world of work with marketable job skills. Under most school systems, a teacher has only 180 class hours to instruct students in the competencies needed for job entrance and advancement. With the identification of 983 competencies for Distributive Education grouped into nine major areas, a system of time allocation was needed (Crawford, 1967). Also, when one considers assemblies, fire drills, illness, administrative duties, and other variables a school year of 160 in-class hours is more realistic.

Using the ranking of major competency areas provided in this study submitted by the fifty-four merchants from twelve distributive business types in Suffolk, Virginia, an allocation of instructors' time priorities was made. This allows the teacher the opportunity of establishing an instructional sequence based on merchant impressions as to what competency area was most to least in demand for entry level employees of distributive businesses.

When applying the percentage ranking of the major competency areas from the fifty-four Suffolk, Virginia, merchants to the 160 realistic teaching hours of a school year, a time allocation for sequencing instruction can be made. A summary of this time allocation is presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Time Allocation for Teaching Based on
160 Days of the School Year

Major Competency Areas	Suggested Teaching Days
Human Relations	27
Selling	24
Math	21
Communications	20
Merchandising	17
Product and Service Technology	16
Operations and Management	13
Display	12
Advertising	10
TOTAL	160

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter begins with a summary of the study including the background of the problem, statement of the problem, population of the study, procedures utilized in the collection and treatment of the data. Findings of the study are reported, as well as conclusions drawn from those findings.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Background of the Problem

In 1976, the General Assembly of Virginia enacted the Standards of Quality for the Public Schools. Students are to be prepared by Vocational Education with marketable skills that would enable them to obtain employment upon leaving school. The Distributive Education Service of Virginia began to alter its curriculum toward a competency (i.e., attitudes, skills, and knowledges) based instructional program. In a study performed by Professor Lucy C. Crawford of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 983 competencies of job performance required of seventy-six occupations from seven major marketing areas were identified. The competencies were grouped by Crawford into nine major competency areas--Advertising, Display, Merchandising, Human Relations, Math, Communications, Selling, Product and Service Technology, and Operations and Management (Crawford, 1967). In 1971, a consortium of eleven states known as the Interstate Distributive Education Curriculum Consortium (IDECC) was formed

(Harrison, 1976). It developed five hundred Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) to be used in the competency based Distributive Education curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

Under most school systems in Virginia, a teacher has only 180 in-class hours to instruct students in the competencies needed for job entrance and advancement. When one considered assemblies, fire drills, illness, and other variables, a school year of 160 in-class hours is more realistic. It is the purpose of this study to provide an importance ranking of the nine major competency areas, thus, allowing the teacher the opportunity of establishing an instructional sequence for time priorities based on merchant impressions as to which competency areas were the most to the least in demand by entry level employees of distributive businesses.

Stratified Sample of the Study

The stratified sample of this study consisted of fifty-six managers and employees of twelve categories of distributive businesses proportionate to the number of businesses within the City of Suffolk, Virginia. Of this population, fifty-four merchants completed the ranking process for an effective rate of return of 96.42 percent.

Procedures Utilized in Collection and Treatment of the Data

Two instruments were used for the collection of data in this study. First, the interviewee was presented a set of nine index cards bearing the major competency categories and a listing of subtopics. Upon completion of sorting the cards from the most to the

least important, a tabulation sheet was presented. The ranking was recorded, and the additional questions indicating the type of business and current employment status.

The rankings were recorded and values were given (nine for most important, to one for least important). The number of responses multiplied by the value gave a numerical ranking to the major competency areas. When this numerical ranking (responses multiplied by value) was divided by its total, a percentage ranking was obtained. This percentage ranking was used in determining teaching time allocation for instructional sequencing.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study are reported as they relate to the ranking of the major competency areas and the determination of teaching time allocation for sequencing of instruction for Distributive Education.

Ranking of Major Competency Areas by the Population

Upon recording and adjusting the responses for the ranking, it was determined that the participating merchants of Suffolk, Virginia, felt the major competency areas should be ranked from most emphasis to least emphasis in the following manner: (1) Human Relations; (2) Selling; (3) Math; (4) Communications; (5) Merchandising; (6) Product and Service Technology; (7) Operations and Management; (8) Display; and (9) Advertising.

Based on this "felt ranking", time allocations were made representing proportioned representation of all distributive businesses and employment levels.

Comparative analysis were made for employment levels of retail and service types of businesses. In each case human relations received the number one ranking position for felt emphasis. In each comparison only slight ranking deviations occurred except in the case of math in the employee level ranking which was placed in the number eight position and communications which in the retail business type ranking was placed in the last, a number nine position.

Using the percentile ranking for the total population and the realistic 160 in-class day school year for Virginia schools, it was recommended that the time allocation for instruction should be as follows: (1) Human Relations--27 days; (2) Selling--24 days; (3) Math--21 days; (4) Communications--20 days; (5) Merchandising--17 days; (6) Product and Service Technology--16 days; (7) Operations and Management--13 days; (8) Display--12 days; and (9) Advertising--10 days.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Recommendations, based on the findings of this study, are presented as they relate to the teacher coordinator of a Distributive Education program using the Crawford competencies as developed by the Interstate Distributive Education Curriculum Consortium (IDECC) as a base for their curriculum as they related to content and planning.

Content and Planning of Curriculum for Distributive Education

As with the advent of any new system, it requires time and experimentation to develop a method by which it may be implemented to its greatest advantage. Such is the case with the transformation to a competency based curriculum using the 983 competencies identified

in the Crawford Study to develop the five hundred Learning Activity Packages written by the Interstate Distributive Education Curriculum Consortium (Crawford, 1967). It was observed that the IDECC system provided such a vast abundance of materials that one could not teach all the job competencies covered. To this end many methods of dealing with this wealth of material was utilized from basing curriculum individually on the career interest of the student or teaching the section which had the most competencies first, and gradually working down the list of major competency categories.

By using the data presented in this study, a teacher coordinator may base the development and time allocation of curriculum on an importance ranking of competency areas by the merchants of distributive businesses for whom the students are being prepared for employment. Content of curriculum may be adjusted so as to cover areas of greater importance more thoroughly utilizing the educational screen of--Must know, should know, and nice to know. Time allocation has many variables as the case with the 180-day school year, such as individual student needs, special instructional needs of a community, careers of students, background education of students, and opinion of the instructor. All must be considered, and a proper mix devised to insure program coverage of content.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

MAJOR COMPETENCY AREAS TYPED ON SEPARATE INDEX CARDS WITH THEIR SUB-TOPICS FOR RANKING BY MERCHANTS IN THE INTERVIEW

Merchandising

Pricing policies
Inventory forms and procedures
Record keeping systems
Customer analysis
Buying procedures

Vendor relationships
Developing advertising plans
Economic analysis
Merchandise analysis

Advertising

Media
Budgets
Designing ads/writing copy
Evaluating ads
Promotional devices

Packaging
Selecting merchandise for ads
The role of the salesperson
and advertising
Publicity

Display

Writing copy
Developing display themes
Art principles of display
Construction problems in display

Locations
Manufacturer's aids
Selecting merchandise
Uses of displays

Human Relations

Dealing with people
Employee morale
Grooming
Organizing yourself

Supervisory techniques
Problem solving
Employee training
Store goodwill and customer
loyalty

Communications

Business letter writing
Writing Reports
Working with fellow employees
Talking with customers
Supervisory communications

Telephone skills
Selling vocabulary and speak-
ing skills
Legible writing--sales slips,
etc.
Importance of good grammar

Mathematics

Mark-up and mark-downs	Profit
Business expenses	Basic math computations
Sales Analysis	Taxes
Inventory	Computing store sales math
Cash register records and change	

Product/Service Technology

Sources of merchandise information	Current trends
Customer benefits	Laws on standards
Delivery to customers	Brand names
Handling merchandise	Merchandise returns
Uses of merchandise	

Selling

Attracting customers	Customer analysis
Demonstrating merchandise	Customer benefits
Answering objections	Telephone sales
Closing the sale	Arranging merchandise
Suggestion selling	Customer relations
Caring for merchandise	Know your merchandise
Selling services	Restaurant service
Exchanges and returns	

Operations/Management

Scheduling employees	Customer services--delivery, facilities, packaging, etc.
Recruiting employees	Receiving merchandise procedures
Evaluating employees	Stockkeeping and pricing
Budgets and cost control	Credit
Store location and layout	Store equipment
Department management	Vendor problems
Analyzing competition	Safety
Employee orientation and training	
Transportation	
Public relations	

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW TABULATION SHEET

This study is being performed to obtain curriculum input information from you, the merchants of Suffolk. Please respond by completing the rating scale of the areas of study in Distributive Education.

1. The business category I represent is: (check one)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amusement | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance/Real Estate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Automotive | <input type="checkbox"/> Publishers/Printers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/T.V. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hotel/Motel | <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retailer | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesaler/Distributor |

2. Your current status within your place of employment is:

- Manager/Owner
 Assistant Manager
 Personnel Manager
 Other: _____

3. Rank the following subject competency areas from 1-10 with 1 being the most important based on your feelings as to the class emphasis that should be devoted to that subject area.

- Advertising
 Display
 Math
 Human Relations
 Communications
 Operations/Management
 Product and Service Technology
 Merchandising
 Selling

