**Course Description:**

Merchandising and Buying explores how businesses determine what to buy, when to buy, how much to buy and from whom to buy products for resale. Learners will develop knowledge and skills to develop a product mix, apply display and visual merchandising techniques and implement sales support activities. This course also includes learning outcomes in corporate social responsibility, relationship management and supply chain management.

**Strand 1. Business Operations/21st Century Skills**

Learners apply principles of economics, business management, marketing and employability in an entrepreneur, manager and employee role to the leadership, planning, developing and analyzing of business enterprises related to the career field.

**Outcome 1.1 Employability Skills**

Develop career awareness and employability skills (e.g., face‐to‐face, online) needed for gaining and maintaining employment in diverse business settings.

**Competencies**

1.1.2 Identify the scope of career opportunities and the requirements for education, training, certification, licensure, and experience.

**Outcome 1.2 Leadership and Communications**

Process, maintain, evaluate and disseminate information in a business. Develop leadership and team building to promote collaboration.

**Competencies**

1.2.3 Identify and use verbal, nonverbal, and active listening skills to communicate effectively.

1.2.4 Use negotiation and conflict-resolution skills to reach solutions.

1.2.5 Communicate information (e.g., directions, ideas, vision, workplace expectations for an intended audience and purpose.

1.2.7 Use problem-solving and consensus-building techniques to draw conclusions and determine next steps.

1.2.10 Use interpersonal skills to provide group leadership, promote collaboration, and work in a team.

1.2.12 Use technical writing skills to complete forms and create reports.

1.2.13 Identify stakeholders and solicit their opinions.

1.2.14 Use motivational strategies to accomplish goals.

**Outcome 1.4 Knowledge Management and Information Technology**

Demonstrate current and emerging strategies and technologies used to collect, analyze, record and share information in business operations.

**Competencies**

1.4.2 Select and use software applications to locate, record, analyze and present information (e.g., word processing, electronic mail, spreadsheet, databases, presentation, Internet search engines).

**Strand 2. Business Foundations**

Learners acquire foundational knowledge of business activities supported by economic principles, business processes and global business considerations.

**Outcome 2.3 Global Business**

Relate global business functions to internal business operations, activities and strategies.

**Competencies**

2.3.1 Describe the global environment in which businesses operate and identify leading economies.

2.3.2 Explain the impact of a country's geography, cultural history and social-political environments on global trade.

2.3.6 Describe product standards’ issues associated with global trade.

2.3.7 Describe costs associated with global business, methods used to analyze those costs and the role of outsourcing and offshoring in cost management.

**Strand 3. Business Communications**

Learners communicate with internal and external stakeholders by applying relationship management techniques and business communication processes and strategies.

**Outcome 3.1 Customer Relations**

Develop, maintain and grow positive internal and external customer relationships.

**Competencies**

3.1.2 Describe how the use of technology can impact customer relationships.

3.1.4 Explain how customer relationships impact acceptance of business policies, recommendations and requirements of service.

3.1.6 Describe how a business's image and culture reflect the brand promise.

3.1.7 Communicate how the brand promise is reflected in the business's image and culture.

3.1.8 Explain the role and function of customer relationship management and its impact on business processes.

**Outcome 3.2 Relationship Management**

Manage internal and external business relationships.

**Competencies**

3.2.4 Manage crises in relationships.

3.2.6 Describe how sharing best practices impacts business relationships.

**Outcome 3.3 Business Communications Management**

Plan, create and evaluate internal and external business communications.

**Competencies**

3.3.3 Implement strategies to solicit and provide feedback.

3.3.6 Develop, implement, monitor, adjust and repurpose content for an intended audience and purpose.

3.3.11 Identify strategies to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in business communication.

**Outcome 3.4 Marketing Communications**

Communicate information about products, services, images or ideas.

**Competencies**

3.4.6 Explain the role and function of product placement as a communication tool to increase brand awareness.

3.4.10 Describe design principles used in visual marketing communication.

3.4.13 Identify types of sales promotion (e.g., signage, slogans and taglines, brand identifiers, frequency or loyalty programs, specialty promotions, special events, trade shows or expositions, web games).

3.4.15 Document marketing processes.

**Strand 4. Business Governance**

Learners acquire foundational legal knowledge and apply business governance principles to minimize risk, maintain organizational compliance and establish and maintain organizational structure.

**Outcome 4.6 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Identify and evaluate corporate social responsibility policies and strategies.

**Competencies**

4.6.1 Compare and contrast ethical challenges across industry sectors, global markets, nonprofit and for-profit organizations and business activities.

4.6.2 Describe the purpose of corporate social responsibility policies and practices, and their impact on business activities.

4.6.3 Identify factors that impact the social responsibility policies implemented by businesses (e.g., national, state and local regulations, market or customer requirements, profit considerations).

**Strand 5. Marketing**

Learners create, communicate and evaluate business offerings by applying marketing functions.

**Outcome 5.1 Marketing Fundamentals**

Identify principles of marketing and marketing functions.

**Competencies**

5.1.2 Identify the components of the marketing mix (e.g., product, price, promotion, place).

5.1.6 Explain the role and function of pricing and factors affecting pricing decisions (e.g., customer value perception, brand, negotiating power, corporate policies, competitive strategy, stage of customer life cycle).

5.1.7 Describe the role and function of product and service management.

**Outcome 5.3 Marketing Information Management**

Collect, analyze and distribute marketing information.

**Competencies**

5.3.1 Distinguish between market-driven and customer-driven information and explain the need for marketing information.

5.3.2 Determine the relevancy of information for marketing purposes.

5.3.3 Describe data and reports that are monitored for marketing decision-making.

5.3.5 Analyze business information to monitor brands and changes that could impact marketing (e.g., customer databases, partners’ and competitors’ activities, sales and operational data, business environment including other industries).

**Outcome 5.4 Marketing Research**

Apply qualitative and quantitative research methods to collect, analyze and distribute marketing data.

**Competencies**

5.4.17 Identify and evaluate marketing data needs.

5.4.18 Identify sources of relevant, new marketing data.

**Outcome 5.5 Market Planning**

Identify, select and evaluate marketing strategies to reach targeted audiences.

**Competencies**

5.5.3 Describe the concepts of market and market identification.

5.5.4 Identify market segments and select target market(s).

5.5.5 Profile target customer to determine market needs and customer demand for products and services.

5.5.8 Conduct a competitive analysis.

5.5.9 Forecast sales and establish sales goals.

5.5.10 Set marketing goals and budget to achieve business objective.

**Outcome 5.7 Product and Service Management**

Develop, maintain and promote a product and/or service mix aligned to market research opportunities.

**Competencies**

5.7.2 Describe the role and function of the product life cycle in maintaining a product pipeline.

5.7.5 Identify and apply product mix strategies to meet business objectives.

5.7.6 Evaluate the performance of product mix strategies in meeting business objectives.

5.7.7 Determine the width, depth and consistency of a product mix strategy.

5.7.8 Analyze merchandise plans (budgets) to update or guide selection of retail products (e.g., calculating open-to-buy, planning stock, planning reductions, planning purchases, gross and net margins).

5.7.9 Determine quality, quantity and timing of product buying and reordering.

5.7.10 Implement techniques to increase customer exposure to products.

5.7.11 Execute visual merchandising strategies.

**Outcome 5.8 Branding**

Apply branding methods to increase brand equity.

**Competencies**

5.8.4 Describe how a business's unique selling proposition impacts brand equity.

5.8.5 Position products or services to support the brand.

5.8.11 Assess product packaging to improve its function and brand recognition (e.g., packaging requirements, graphic design, adequacy).

**Strand 7. Operations Management**

Learners identify and apply policies, processes and strategies for business operations.

**Outcome 7.2 Sourcing and Procurement**

Plan, implement and evaluate sourcing and procurement activities.

**Competencies**

7.2.1 Differentiate among purchasing, procurement and sourcing.

7.2.2 Identify potential sources of materials or services locally and make purchasing recommendations.

7.2.3 Evaluate the impact of using global sources.

7.2.4 Describe how the bid or contracting process (e.g., bid specification, vendor or supplier search, bid review, selection of vendor) impacts business objectives.

7.2.5 Describe the importance of negotiating vendor contracts with suppliers (e.g., service and maintenance, supplies, system development).

7.2.6 Describe the purpose of monitoring and evaluating vendor performance and relationships (e.g., supplier visits, scorecards).

7.2.7 Describe how sourcing and procurement factors (e.g., quality, availability, productivity, sustainability, supply chain management, corporate social responsibility, ethical business practices) impact expense control options.

7.2.8 Describe expense control strategies (e.g., reduce use of supplies or services, develop budgets, review overhead or operating costs, renegotiate contracts).

7.2.9 Identify opportunities to incorporate operational objectives into the procurement process (e.g., supply chain management goals, regulatory compliance).

7.2.10 Evaluate whether to make or buy products.

7.2.11 Assess the impact of accepting gifts on procurement decisions, business performance and brand image.

7.2.12 Explain the role and function of supplier diversity initiatives.

**Outcome 7.3 Inventory Management**

Identify, administer and evaluate inventory management policies, processes and strategies.

**Competencies**

7.3.1 Calculate the cost of carrying inventory.

7.3.3 Describe the factors considered in establishing inventory thresholds (e.g., tolerance for stock-outs, supply chain process goals).

7.3.8 Allocate and track merchandise stock by classification, department, class, vendor and location.

7.3.9 Implement category management processes (e.g., ABC method).

7.3.10 Describe tools used to plan merchandise flow for timely delivery (e.g., turnover, lead time, peak seasons, delivery dates).

7.3.11 Determine shelf space allocation.

7.3.14 Explain the importance of planning for inventory disruptions (e.g., stockout, dead, discontinued, obsolete).

7.3.15 Identify factors that impact the availability of inventory.

7.3.17 Describe different methods to conduct a physical inventory (e.g., annual, cycle count, ABC analysis).

**Outcome 7.4 Quality Management**

Identify, administer and evaluate quality control policies, processes and strategies.

**Competencies**

7.4.1 Define quality and identify quality control measures and techniques (e.g., Lean, Six Sigma, ISO 9000, Malcolm Baldridge, DMAIC [Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control]).

7.4.2 Explain the role and function of quality management (benchmarking, continuous improvement, and Six Sigma, Lean) and identify quality controls (checklist, Pareto charts, histograms).

7.4.4 Evaluate the impact of quality control on brand experience, business reputation, financial performance, procurement, sourcing options and process design.

7.4.7 Analyze and report quality of products and services using recognized quality standards and specifications.

7.4.8 Describe validation and qualification methods used in new or revised products, processes and services (e.g., alpha and beta testing, first-article, customer satisfaction surveys).

**Outcome 7.7 Supply Chain Management**

Plan, implement and evaluate supply chain management activities.

**Competencies**

7.7.3 Describe how the supply chain impacts customer satisfaction.

7.7.4 Trace and track the end-to-end supply chain network.

7.7.6 Identify opportunities and threats that impact supply chains (e.g., sustainability, regulatory standards, globalization, e-commerce)

7.7.8 Compare and contrast supply chain management strategies for different business environments (e.g., importers, exporters, small and large businesses, various industries).