



RETAIL MERCHANDISING SERIES EVENT

RMS-26
ICDC Preliminary 1

CAREER CLUSTER
Marketing

CAREER PATHWAY
Merchandising

INSTRUCTIONAL AREA
Customer Relations

PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS

This event is presented to you through your review of the Career Competencies, Performance Indicators and Event Situation.

You have up to 10 minutes to review this information and prepare your presentation. Using the materials provided, you may make notes to use during your presentation.

You will have up to 10 minutes to present to the judge(s).

You will be evaluated on your solution to the event situation, how you incorporate the performance indicators of this event and how you demonstrate the career competencies.

Turn in all your notes and event materials when you have completed the event.

SOLUTION

- Unique – Demonstrate original thinking, fresh perspectives and an insightful approach.
- Practical – Develop an actionable/viable solution in a real-world context.
- Effective – Develop a solution that achieves relevant outcomes.

CAREER COMPETENCIES

- Critical Thinking – Think critically to understand and solve problems.
- Communication – Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason.
- Decision Making – Consider the impacts of decisions.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Identify components of a retail image.
- Demonstrate a customer service mindset.
- Develop rapport with customers.
- Determine ways of reinforcing the company's image through employee performance.
- Reinforce service orientation through communications.

EVENT SITUATION

You are to assume the role of the district manager at CENTER MARK, a discount retail chain. You will meet with one of the store managers (judge) to provide a plan for better employee-customer engagement.

CENTER MARK is known for its focus on upscale, trend-forward merchandise at lower costs. CENTER MARK stores sell general merchandise in standard big-box formats, but for years has had a more favorable image than its main competitor BUY-MART.

Unfortunately, due to escalating prices and questionable policy decisions by CENTER MARK executives, the chain has seen a significant decline in foot traffic and in sales. This has led to a reduction in staffing and the installation of self-checkouts.

Customers are not happy with the additional self-checkouts at CENTER MARK stores. Feedback suggests the installation reminds customers of BUY-MART, and they miss the interaction with store associates. A national survey of shoppers reported that 64% prefer to engage with store associates.

A store manager in your district (judge) wants you to provide a plan for customer engagement and interaction for CENTER MARK associates. The store manager (judge) wants you to develop easy to follow rules and practices that associates can use throughout the stores for increased engagement and positive interaction.

You will present the plan to the store manager (judge) in a role-play to take place in the store manager's (judge's) office. The store manager (judge) will begin the role-play by greeting you and asking to hear your ideas. After you have presented the plan and have answered the store manager's (judge's) questions, the store manager (judge) will conclude the role-play by thanking you for your work.

JUDGE INSTRUCTIONS

JUDGE CHARACTERIZATION

You are to assume the role of a local store manager of CENTER MARK, a discount retail chain. You have asked the district manager (participant) to provide a plan for better employee-customer engagement.

CENTER MARK is known for its focus on upscale, trend-forward merchandise at lower costs. CENTER MARK stores sell general merchandise in standard big-box formats, but for years has had a more favorable image than its main competitor BUY-MART.

Unfortunately, due to escalating prices and questionable policy decisions by CENTER MARK executives, the chain has seen a significant decline in foot traffic and in sales. This has led to a reduction in staffing and the installation of self-checkouts.

Customers are not happy with the additional self-checkouts at CENTER MARK stores. Feedback suggests the installation reminds customers of BUY-MART and they miss the interaction with store associates. A national survey of shoppers reported that 64% prefer to engage with store associates.

You want the district manager (participant) to provide a plan for customer engagement and interaction for CENTER MARK associates. You want the district manager (participant) to develop easy to follow rules and practices that associates can use throughout the stores for increased engagement and positive interaction.

The participant will present information to you in a role-play to take place in your office. You will begin the role-play by greeting the participant and asking to hear about his/her ideas.

During the course of the role-play, you are to ask the following questions of each participant:

1. What is the best way to train store employees in our district?
2. How can we determine if your ideas are effective?

Once the district manager (participant) has presented information and has answered your questions, you will conclude the role-play by thanking the district manager (participant) for the work.

You are not to make any comments after the event is over except to thank the participant.

EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

- The participants are to be evaluated on their solution and ability to apply the specific performance indicators stated on the cover sheet of this event and restated on the Judge's Evaluation Form. Although the participants may demonstrate other performance indicators, those listed in the Performance Indicators section are the selected ones you are evaluating for this particular event.
- Maintain a consistent expectation when evaluating each participant.
- The maximum score for the evaluation is 100 points. This presentation will be valued at one-third of the total score.

Levels of Evaluation

FOCUS AREA	NOVICE	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
Content Understanding	Demonstrates a limited or inaccurate understanding of key concepts.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of key concepts.	Demonstrates a solid understanding of key concepts and clearly explains and supports ideas using appropriate evidence.	Demonstrates comprehensive understanding of concepts and applies them effectively to solve the scenario, including in more complex or extended contexts.
Application of Performance Indicators and Career Competencies	Lists the performance indicators and career competencies, but understanding is incomplete or inaccurate.	Defines the performance indicators and career competencies, but does not connect them to solve the objective of the case study scenario.	Explains the performance indicators and career competencies and connects them to solve the objective of the case study scenario.	Strategically applies the performance indicators and career competencies and connects them to comprehensively solve the objective of the case study scenario.
Reasoning	Ideas are unclear, inaccurate, or lack logical support. There is no application of the ideas and concept.	Ideas are present and somewhat logical but contain gaps in reasoning, development, or supporting evidence.	Ideas are logical, well-developed, and supported with appropriate evidence, with only minor gaps.	Ideas are logical, well-supported using appropriate business concept and theories and demonstrates reasoning with clear practicality and real-world relevance.
Workplace Readiness	Participants represent an employee who requires significant guidance and support to complete tasks.	Participants represent an employee who demonstrates basic skills and can complete routine tasks with some guidance.	Participants represent an employee with solid skills and who works independently to complete tasks effectively.	Participants represent an employee with advanced skills, works independently, and adapts effectively to new or unpredictable challenges.



RETAIL MERCHANDISING SERIES – 2026

JUDGE'S EVALUATION FORM ICDC PRELIMINARY EVENT 1

Participant: _____

ID Number: _____

INSTRUCTIONAL AREA:

Customer Relations

Rate the participant's ability to:		Novice	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary	Judged Score
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS						
1.	Identify components of a retail image.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10	
2.	Demonstrate a customer service mindset.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10	
3.	Develop rapport with customers.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10	
4.	Determine ways of reinforcing the company's image through employee performance.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10	
5.	Reinforce service orientation through communications.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10	
SOLUTION						
6.	Unique Demonstrate original thinking, fresh perspectives and an insightful approach.	0-1-2	3-4-5	6-7	8	
7.	Practical Develop an actionable/viable solution in a real-world context.	0-1-2	3-4-5	6-7	8	
8.	Effective Develop a solution that achieves relevant outcomes.	0-1-2	3-4-5	6-7	8	
CAREER COMPETENCIES						
9.	Critical Thinking Think critically to understand and solve problems.	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
10.	Communication Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason.	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
11.	Decision Making Consider the impacts of decisions.	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
OVERALL IMPRESSION						
12.	Demonstrate overall career readiness through professionalism, poise and confidence.	0-1-2	3-4-5	6-7	8	
TOTAL SCORE						