



A survey of 250 salesperson course participants:

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Redesigned salesperson course gets high marks!

A survey of salespeople who participated in 10 separate Salesperson Certification Courses offered by the VSA this past summer delivered an approval rating of 82 percent.

In courses from Burnaby to Cranbrook, everyone was asked to evaluate the experience on a 7-point scale, with LOW at the bottom and HIGH at the top. Over 82 percent rated the course experience as above average, with 40 percent giving it a 5 or HIGH rating. Course facilitators were similarly evaluated, earning an above-average approval level of 95 percent, with 76 percent offering a 5 or HIGH rating.

A refresher course for pre-2004 sales veterans!

An advanced salesperson course designed as a refresher for industry veterans will be introduced this winter. About 4,000 salespeople and business office staff of dealerships completed the voluntary certification course offered by the former Motor Dealer Standards Association (MDSA), before this new Authority commenced on June 1, 2004. Roughly 2,400 of these early graduates are still working in the industry.

A great deal has changed since 2004 - professional standards, legislation, regulations, advertising guidelines and countless other issues. In addition, experience has demonstrated that the curriculum, teaching methods and results improve through the interaction of the facilitators, VSA staff and the day-to-day industry experience of the participants. In order to integrate the industry changes in an effective way, the new course will begin with pilot sessions to solidify the curriculum and the course design. Just as the basic certification course is much better now than it was in 2004, the "refresher" course designed for veterans will be more advanced and focused and will include a re-certification exam.

If you are interested in participating in a pilot session, please contact: Doug Longhurst at 604-293-3536.

"This is really very encouraging for us in the VSA's new Learning Division," said Doug Longhurst, Manager, Projects and Research. "Our emphasis is on a two-way dialogue between the facilitators and the participants, each of us learning as we go forward. In this way, the course constantly evolves."

Courses are required for salespeople, the business office staff of dealerships, general sales managers and even dealer principals; anyone with direct customer contact related to a sales transaction. The survey also asked participants to comment upon various aspects of the experience. The most common comments praised the overall experience and the facilitators, as well as identifying the content as highly relevant to salespeople. Elements of the curriculum reported to be the most valuable were the case studies, the legislation review and the discussions of contract law and business practices.

Suggestions for improvement touched upon a variety of issues, many of which were implemented during the two-month long introduction of the redesigned course. The suggestions for improvement reflected the diversity among the 250 summer attendees. Those who have been employed in the industry for fewer than 60 days are the principal audience for the course.

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About the new course

At least 80 percent of the redesigned course is spent reviewing, through a variety of methods, the legislation that affects the sale of motor vehicles in B.C. The methods include a direct examination of key legislation, distilled into plain language to be more easily understood, to case studies that use simplified examples to tie the legislation to actual business situations. Topics that were included as individual sections in the previous course design (such as Dealer Operations, Professionalism, and Consumer Perception) are still covered, but always through the lens of the legislation and the legal responsibilities of the dealership and the salesperson.

Given the current success rate on the licensing exam, the redesigned format and curriculum is clearly meeting the most important course objective: *“To review British Columbia’s motor vehicle sales legislation and its application to licensed motor vehicle dealers and salespersons.”*

Salesperson Certification Courses are currently scheduled in Terrace, Burnaby, Kelowna, Abbotsford, Nanaimo, Kamloops and Prince George. For additional sessions and up-to-date availability, please visit the “Learning” section of the VSA web site.