



Customer Service and Sales

November 18, 2016

Certifying Organization	National Retail Federation (NRF) Foundation: https://nrf.com/career-center/certifications-and-training
Description of Credential	The Customer Service and Sales Certification measures a candidate's ability to learn about products or services, assess and meet customer needs, educate customers, and provide ongoing support. The certification is appropriate for anyone interested in obtaining a job or pursuing a career in retail and other industries that value customer service and sales skills.
Part of which Graduation Pathways ¹	<u>Integrated:</u> Hospitality, Tourism, Culinary and Retail Integrated Pathway <u>Regional:</u> Business Management Regional Pathway, Public Service Regional Pathway This credential also serves as a complementary credential on a variety of graduation pathways.
Associated with Which Careers?	<u>4 Star:</u> Food Service Manager; Lodging Manager, First-Line Supervisor of Retail Workers, Store Manager, Assistant Store Manager <u>3 Star:</u> Customer Service Representative; First-Line Supervisor of Food Prep and Serving Workers, Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers, Personal Service Workers, <u>2 Star:</u> Hotel Desk Clerk; Tour Guide and Escort; Travel Agent
Entry-Level Annual Salaries	\$16,000 - \$48,000
Industry-Based Certification Requirements: Students	
Standard / Curriculum	<p>Customer Service and Sales Skills Standards:</p> <p>Learns About Products and/or Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks out and participates in training opportunities to support products, services and to further develop customer service skills. • Remains current regarding products, services, and industry standards. • Tests or samples products and/or services to build recommendations for customers. • Researches and reviews relevant data on competitors' products and/or services. • Arranges service recovery and handles service failures. <p>Assess and meet customer needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greets and engages the customer in a personal and professional manner. • Assesses the customer's needs while determining the customer's knowledge of products or services to promote customer loyalty. • Listens attentively and responds effectively to customers' comments and questions. • Identifies the customer's budget through active listening. • Uses customer feedback to improve customer satisfaction. <p>Educates Customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explains levels of product or service value to customers in a way that is relevant to their needs. • Recommends comprehensive solutions, products, services, and related items based on customer needs. • Educates customer about service policies and related resources (e.g., returns, warranties, guarantees, service plans, support plans, instruction). • Knows when to ask for help, support, and advice <p>Advanced Customer Service and Sales Skills Standards:</p> <p>Prepares for Selling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains knowledgeable of sales goals, their implications, and how they are based on current and past performance. • Supports development and execution of strategy for selling products and/or services. • Serves as an expert regarding relevant company and industry pricing strategies, company policy, regulatory compliance, product knowledge, and company services.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies needs and characteristics of customers within the target market and customizes sales approach. <p>Gains Customer Commitment and Closes Sale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listens and/or observes customer for verbal or non-verbal cues indicating purchase intent. Identifies and suggests additional products and services to the customer that complement the sale. Discusses specifics of the sale (e.g., delivery and/or installation date, financing, warranties, and product protection plan). Confirms sale information with the customer. Completes sales transaction with the customer. <p>Develops and Implements a Sales Follow-Up Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows up with customers regarding suggestions for future purchases. Suggests alternative products/services in lieu of return. Evaluates the effectiveness of sales and marketing strategies and takes appropriate action. Evaluates the effectiveness of merchandising plans and takes appropriate action. <p>Curriculum</p> <p>Additional information: Customer Service and Sales Fundamentals textbook: Certification and Training Frequently Asked Questions: (Scroll to bottom of page)</p> <p>Chapters 1, 2, and 4 cover the content on the basic Customer Service and Sales Certification exam. While chapters 1-4 should be studied/reviewed for the Advanced Customer Service and Sales Certification exam.</p>						
Testing Methodology	Paper?	No	Online?	Yes	Performance Exams / Tests?	No
Re-Testing (if available)	Re-Testing Procedures	Student is able to re-test after a 30-day wait period.			Max Attempts	Unlimited
Testing Details (including any age requirements / accommodations)	<p>To be eligible to take the certification exam, a student must be at least 16 years old, or in the 11th grade. The exam is 90-minutes and consists of 75 questions.</p> <p>An approved minimum age limit change to 15 years old is pending official implementation in 2017.</p> <p>ACCOMMODATIONS: The NRF Foundation wishes to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not deprived of the opportunity to participate in the assessment solely because of a disability. For the testing accommodations form for students, click here.</p> <p>For more information on testing tips, retesting and accommodations, see "Certification Handbook."</p>					
<p>Industry-Based Certification Requirements: Teachers</p> <p><i>Bulletin 746, Chapter 5: All Louisiana teachers providing instruction in a course that leads to an IBC must hold the certification that they're teaching students to attain.</i></p>						
Instructor Certification Requirements (by certifying agency)	<p>The NRF Foundation does not require instructors to obtain the certification themselves—though it is highly recommended. If an instructor wishes to obtain the certification, he/she must do so prior to proctoring the exam.</p> <p>See Test Administrators details here in the FAQs.</p>					
Proctoring / Test Security (if any)	<p>The test must be administered in a proctored environment, and all proctors must complete an online training (approximately 45 minutes) through Castle Worldwide, the 3rd party test administrator.</p>					



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Certification Tracking						
Credentialing Documentation	Each student must register for the exam with his or her unique email address. Upon successfully passing the exam, a digital badge is sent directly to student's designated email. The student can easily share the badge on social media, in an electronic job application, on his/her resume, or by sending a link. Learn more about digital badges at https://nrf.com/career-center/certifications-and-training/digital-badges .					
Certification Tracking System	Online Tracking System?	Yes		Details	Each student may access his/her account for any changes to their contact information and for renewal information.	
Other Details	Expiration Timeframe?	Certification is valid for 3 years; certification renewal costs \$25, and the <u>renewal form</u> and fee are submitted to Castle Worldwide. For more information on the certification process and maintenance see "Certification Handbook".				
Certification Costs / Funding Sources						
Cost Details	<p>Testing vouchers and curriculum can be purchased directly from the NRF Foundation. Customer Service and Sales testing vouchers cost \$55 per voucher if purchased by the school/teacher; \$90 per voucher if purchased by the student. While, Advanced Customer Service and Sales costs \$45 if purchased by the school/teacher and \$85 if purchased by the individual student. All voucher purchases are non-refundable and expire one year from the month issued. The <i>Customer Service and Sales Fundamentals</i> textbook comes in a student and a teacher's edition, and also come available in a classroom set. Pricing is as follows:</p> <p>Customer Service and Sales Fundamentals (Student) — \$65 each Customer Service and Sales Fundamentals (Teacher) — \$265 each Customer Service and Sales Fundamentals (Classroom Set - contains 15 Student books and 1 FREE Teacher's book) — \$975</p>					
Re-test / Refund Policies	Candidates may retake the exam after a 30-day waiting period, using a new voucher. The retest cost per voucher is \$35. To request a retest voucher, the proctor or teacher should email the candidate name and testing location to certinfo@nrf.com .					
Funding Sources ²	CDF?	No	Perkins?	Yes	Alternative Source (other than General Funds)	
For More Information						
Certifying Agency Contact Info	Certifying Agency Contact: NRF Foundation 1101 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC, 20005 1-844-NRF-EXAM FAX (202) 737-2849 Testing Contact: Castle Worldwide 1-844-NRF-EXAM or nrffoundation@castleworldwide.com					
LDE Contact	JumpStart@La.Gov					
Jump Start Regional Team Experts	TBD					

1 – This table may not include all the graduation pathways this credential appears in. Please check the [graduation pathway](#) you are working with if you have a question as to whether or not this credential is part of that pathway.

2 – CDF = [Career Development Fund](#)