MANAGEMENT OF SALES FORCE IN OIL INDUSTRY
A CASE STUDY OF ELF OIL NIGERIA LTD

BY

OLADUNJOYE FEMI

BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE POST-GRADUATE SCHOOL OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (M.B.A.)

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATION
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA.

OCTOBER, 1999.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information used in this project were obtained from personal research and interview readings and all references are duly referred to.

All mistakes in thought or sequence or omissions are entirely mine.

OLADUNJOYE FEMI		21/12/99
NAME OF STUDENT	**SIGNATURE**	**DATE**

CERTIFICATION

This project titled "MANAGEMENT OF SALES FORCE IN OIL INDUSTRY. A CASE STUDY OF ELF OIL NIGERIA LTD, meets the regulations governing the award of degree of Master of Business Administration(M.B.A.) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

E Ubom 21/12/99

NAME AND SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR **DATE**

Essiensak J Ubom

Dr. A. M. Bashir 27/7/2000

NAME AND SIGNATURE OF EXTERNAL SUPERVISOR **DATE**

..... 23/8/00

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT **DATE**
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

..... 05/03/02

DEAN, POST GRADUATE SCHOOL **DATE**
A.B.U., ZARIA.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my parents, the entire members of my family, my wife Mrs. F.M. Oladunjoye and my son Master 'Tosin Oladunjoye.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my profound gratitude to God Almighty for given me the grace to undergo the M.B.A. Programme. I cherished the unrelentless efforts of Mr. Ubom, E.J whose supervision leads to the success of this project. I also commend the effort of the M.B.A. co-ordinator Mal. Sani Abdullahi throughout the programme.

My special thanks goes to Mr. M.O. Oladunjoye of N.L Finance Ltd. Lagos and Mr. Mudah B. Kehinde of Lion Bank Plc Lagos who are my source of inspiration.

I am indebted to Mr. Jackson Tunde, Mr. Biodun Osundiji, Mr. Funsho Garba and Mr. D.O. Osokoya of Livestock Feeds Plc Kaduna, all whom together we sailed through.

I also appreciate the assistance rendered by the management of Elf Oil Ltd, Kano district, staff of Davab Computer Service, ABU Zaria and staff of Oyes Ventures Zaria. I am indeed grateful to Mr. D.A. Bode for his moral and financial support towards the success of this project, and Mr. Abdul Ganiyu B.S. who assisted in typing the manuscript.

Thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Omosebi of Police Affairs Abuja, Mr & Mrs. S.O. Oladunjoye of O.S.S.C.E Ila-Orangun, Mr & Mrs. P.O. Ajayi, Mr & Mrs. K. Adegoke, Miss. Kikelomo Oladunjoye of N.M.D.C Jos, Mr. Gbolahan Oguntoyinbo, Mr. Abdulkadir Adeleke, Mr. Modiu Kehinde, friends, brothers and Sisters who have contributed in one way or the other towards this research work.

Finally, my love and gratitude goes to my wife, Mrs. F.M. Oladunjoye who stood solidly by me during the programme.

ABSTRACT

This project titled the management of sales forces in oil industry. A case study of Elf oil Nigeria Ltd., attempts to examine the role of the sales force and the important of the sales person in marketing. The role of the sales person in marketing oriented sector of the oil industry, with particular focus on Elf oil Nigeria Ltd.

The study attempts to look at the sales force management in areas of selection, training and motivation of sales force. The role of salesman is very important in marketing practice. Production will not be in existence unless it is believed that the products to be produced can be sold at a profit.

The researcher conducted two types of interview to be able to find out how well the sales force in Elf oil is managed. Questionnaires and oral interview were conducted.

The major findings from the two types of interview revealed that elf oil has a well experienced and organised sales force. The company also has a well established training centre elf Academy for the sales force. Inspite of the training school, the company still has provision for external training programmes.

The researcher revealed that despite the well organised sales force, they are comparatively better motivated amongst competing oil companies.

The research also looked at the quality of sales assistance and services rendered in retail outlets in the oil marketing industry. It also revealed that elf oil has high quality staff and services compared to other competitors. In order for elf oil to maintain its high standard the study recommend that the sales force should never relent in sales efforts, and should strive for, still higher performance while management should look for areas of improvement to further motivate the salesteam.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page i

Declaration ii

Certification iii

Dedication iv

Acknowledgement v

Abstract vi

Table of content v

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction 1

1.1.1 Areas of Operation 2

1.1.2 Company's Organization set-up 3

1.2 The roles, functions and responsibilities of the sales representative 5

1.2.1 Roles of sales representatives 5

1.2.3 responsibilities 6

1.2.4 Functions of the Retail Sales representative 6

1.3 Sales Force selection, Recruitment and training 7

1.3.2 Recruitment 7

1.3.3 The training of sales representative 8

1.3.4 Sales budget, planning, and implementation 9

1.3.5 Sales budget planning 9

1.3.6 Implementation 10

1.4 Assumption 10
1.5 Statement of problems 11
1.5.1 Sales Force Objective and Strategies 13
1.6 Purpose of the study 16
1.7 Scope and limitations of the study 16
1.8 Definition of terms 17
1.9 Chapter One References 19
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Introduction 20
2.1.1 Sales Force Defined 23
2.1.2 History of Sale Force 26
2.2 Sales Management in a developing economy 29
2.3.1 Selection 31
2.3.2 Importance of Careful Selection 32
2.3.3 Recruitment 34
2.3.4 Training Sales Representatives: An Overview 35
2.3.5 Evaluation of Sales Representatives 49
2.4 Chapter Two References 56
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
3.1 Data source 59
3.2 Research instruments 59
3.3 Sample size 60

3.4 Objective of the Study 60

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.2 Sales Force Questionnaire 61

4.2.1 Recruitment 62

4.2.2 Trainning 62

4.2.3 Motivation 63

4.2.4 Remuneration 65

4.2.5 Budgeting and Setting and Planning 65

4.3 Oral Interview 66

4.3.1 Remuneration 66

4.3.2 Customer Service 67

4.3.3 Quality of Station Staff 67

4.4 Findings 67

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 summary 70

5.2 Conclusion 73

5.3 Recommendation 74

Bibliography 76

Appendix 79

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Elf Oil Nigeria Limited is one of the eight major petroleum marking companies operating in Nigeria. The other seven are:

National Oil

Agip Oil

Texaco

Mobil

African Petroleum

Total and Unipetrol.

Elf Oil after incorporation, started full operation in February 1983 as a joint venture between Elf Aqyitaine of France (Parent Company) and the Nigerian partners. The first target of the company was to develop her image in Nigeria to the level of respect and reputation it enjoys in France where the group (E4 Aquitaine(is the leader).

Elf Aquitaine has an international reputation for its production and sales of high quality lubricants for marines, automobile and industrial purposes. Elf oil Nigeria Ltd. is committed to new products development to meet the requirements of new standard and applications, test and improve the products already in the market and protects the environment by eliminating pollutants. This explains why elf products are carefully formulated with efficient and modern adictive combinations to meet the latest of international standards. Some of these quality

products are:

- Elf Sports 20W50 for petrol engine;
- Elf Competition 20W50 (Super Multigrade Oil) for petrol engine
- Elf dua a *DS* 63 (Hydraulic Oil HM) etc

The performance of these products are fully certified to quarantee excellent operations under very severe conditions. The other set of Elf oil products are white products (ie PMS, AGO, and DPK these are petrol, diesel and kerosine respectively). These second set of products are produced by Nigerian National Petroleum Company(NNPC) and supplied to oil marketing companies through the product Pipeline Marketing Company (PPMC) a subsidiary of NNPC.

The fundamental aims of Elf oil are to be a leading marketer of petroleum product, at the same time providing excellent customer service through the network (ie petrol filling stations) and to the company's numerous industrial customers.

In 1994, the Managing Director of the company in a visit statement stated thus, " Elf Oil Nigeria Ltd. is a multinational oil and chemical marketing company providing top quality products through a strong marketing base nationwide and a superior sales network. We are committed to our numerous customers both retail (filling stations) and customers (industries) and reputed for unbeatable customer service. Our resolve is to be one of the top three in the industry with returned on investment comparable with the best by the year 2000"[1]

1.1.1 Areas of Operation

Elf Oil Nigerian Ltd as earlier stated is involved in the marketing of:

a) Petroleum product: Refined petrol diesel and kerosine

b) Chemical product: Polymers industrial chemicals and insecticide.

c) Production and distribution of high quality lubricants ie engine oil)

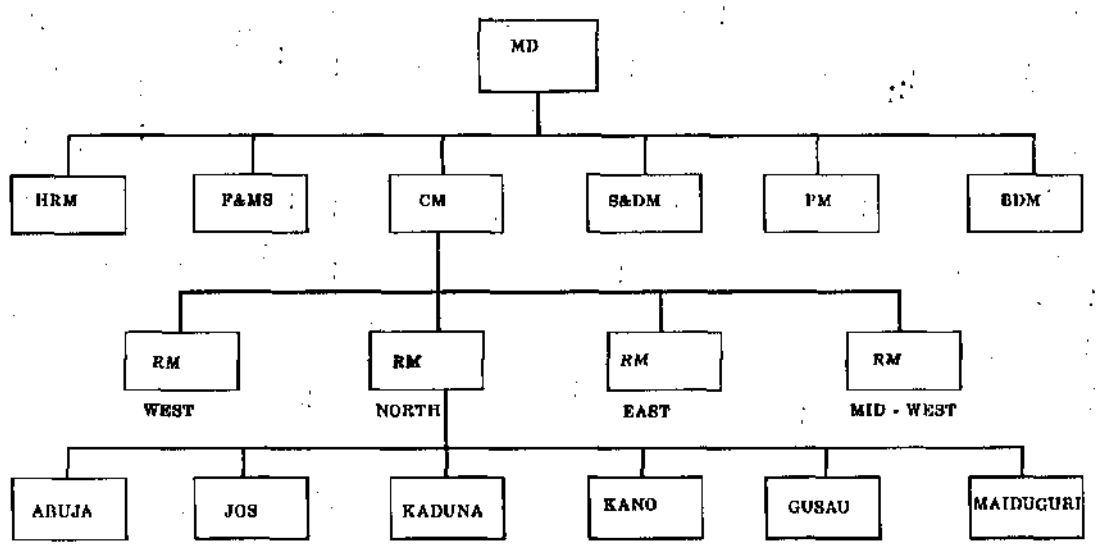
1.1.2 Company's Organization Set-up

The company is broken down into six major departments viz:

- Commercial
- Finance and Management Services
- Human Resources
- Supply and Distribution
- Production and Business Development.

The research work on the company will be concentrated on the sales force within the commercial department of the company.

Before the detail study into the management of the sales force, the organisational set up of the department is shown below:



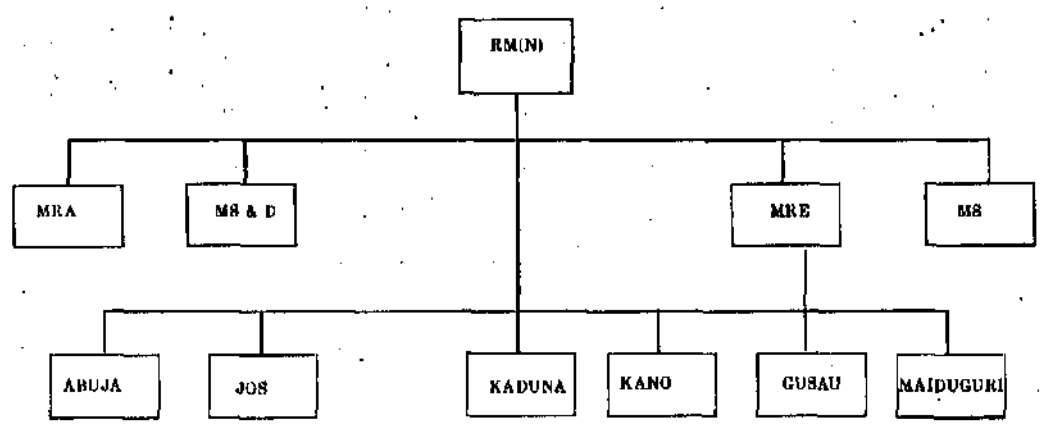
Source: Elf Oil Nigeria Limited

1.3 Retail outlets in the general marketing sense means physical point or premises at which petroleum products are retailed, usually associated with a specialized service or category of business. In Elf Oil the term simply means petrol filling stations ie the final point where motorist drive in and buy petrol. These outlets are standard in nature. The commercial department has the sole responsibility of co-ordinating the whole retail outlet network. This department is responsible for drawing up plan for the total network. Details of this will be discussed later in this chapter.

The commercial department is broken down into sales region (see organization) headed by a Regional Manager. Each region is also broken down into territories headed by sales representatives.

1.1.4 Northern Region

As the research cover this Sales Region, it is essential to discuss it in details (Organization chart below).



Source Elf Oil Nigeria Limited.

Source Elf Oil Nigeria Limited.

The Northern Region, with headquarters in Kaduna covers the whole of the northern states except Kwara and Benue states.

The Regional Manager (N) has under him line personnel viz:

Manager, Regional Account	-	MRA
Manager, Supply and Distribution	-	MS and D
Manager, Regional Engineering	-	MRE
Manager Sales	-	MS

The Kano District office is headed by Deputy Regional Manager with the location sales representative for Kano, Gusau, Maiduguri and Yola reporting to him.

Each of these Sales Representative has a number of retail outlets or petrol station as well as industrial consumers (eg Flour mill,s Nigerian Bottling Company etc) under his control.

1.2 THE ROLE, FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SALES REPRESENTATIVES.

The Sales Representatives in Elf Oil has certain roles, responsibilities and functions for the achievement of his sales objectives.

1.2.1 ROLES OF SALES REPRESENTATIVE:

- He is the intermediary between the company and dealers

- Interprets the company's rules and regulatons to dealers
- Co-ordinates the activities of the company within the area of his operation.

1.2.3 RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Responsible for the proper and effective management of his territory.
- He is responsible for ensuring strict compliance with companys rulers and regulations by dealers.
- He is responsible for the appointment and training of dealers; as well a station personnel.
- Responsible for acquisition and development of new sites ie identifying good locations for petrol filling station construction.
- He is responsible for the achievement of the set target or quota of his territory.

1.2.4 FUNCTION'S OF THE RETAIL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

- He ensures good house keeping in all retail outlets of his territory in line with company ruler and regulations.
- Ensures good and effective management of all retail outlets in his territory.
- Ensures that all safety procedures and guidelines of the company are adhered to in order to ensure accident free operations in all retail outlets.
- Ensures adequate stocking of all petroleum products in all outlets.
- Ensure good customer service in all retail outlets through the implementation of the Elf's size points of service.

- Periodic appraisal of the performance of each retail outlet against set targets.
- Monitoring and reporting competitor's activities in his territory with regards to sites, developments and their sales performance.
- Ensures that the company operators in his territory within the industry guidelines, etc.

1.3.1 SALES FORCE SELECTION, RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

The selection of Sales Representatives in Elf Oil Nigeria Ltd.. The normal procedure for selection is through adverts which may be internal or external or both. The advert will specify the qualification required, the discipline of study, age limits and other requirements. On receipt of application, applicants are screened to select the best qualified candidate for the jobs advertised. The selected applicants are invited for interview. At this invitation the company's standard application forms are now completed and submitted.

The Human Resource Department in collaboration with the commercial Department is responsible for the selection and recruitment of the sales force.

RECRUITMENT

1.3.2 The selected candidates sometimes may be within the company, ie staff already working in the company and wants to change to the sales department.

External candidate are usually selected, graduates from University or already working in the sales department of other companies.

The interview is usually in two stages:

- Written aptitude tests
- Oral test.

a) Written Aptitude Test: In the written tests, general written questions are asked. Those who pass the written tests are now invited for the oral interview.

b) Oral Interview: During the oral interview, questions specifically, on the vacant jobs are asked. At the end of the final interview the best candidates are selected for the sales job.

1.3.3 THE TRAINNING OF SALES REPRESENTATIVE

The training of Sales Representatives is the responsibility of the training division, headed by the Manpower Development and Training Manager. Training of Sales Representatives usually conducted within and externally. For fresh Sales Representatives, the initial training is usually organized internally, in the form of induction. In other to acquaint the new employes with the company's rules and regulations, different departments and their operational activities.

This is followed by specific job training which includes actual field training with experienced Sales Representatives. Refreshment courses are also organized for existing field Sales Representative to refresh them on their sales jobs. Other courses are also organised through external consultants on other field, eg managerial skills, territorial management and other management development courses.

However, it was identified that training of Sales Representatives is a continuous process

and about 5% of the sale budget is devoted to training.

The Commercial Department has been found to be given good attention to training, which is evidenced in efficiency of the sales force. For instance about 20 Sales Representatives were able to sell even 7000 million litres of petroleum products in 1996, indicating a 20% growth in the retail sales industry.

1.3.4 SALES BUDGET, PLANNING, AND IMPLEMENTATION

As any other company, Elf Oil also set as sales budget target as to what the company will sell that year.

1.3.5 SALES BUDGET PLANNING

Sales budget are set at the corporate level and broken to regions. Each region on receipts of its target now breaks it down by territories or sales excess. Every retail Sale Representatives now break down his target to each retail and industrials outlet.

Sales budget planning is two-way, inputs at the end of each year or quarter are received from each territory through the region to the head office. The input from the Sales Representative of each territory is usually based on historical data, ie. sales of previous y ears and projects based on economic trends.

The other way of sales budget planning is that the head office draws up a projection for the company based on previous historical data and future economic trends. These targets, are

now broken down and sent to each region. Each region now breaks down to each territory or sales area. The Sales Representatives of each area or territory now breaks it down to each outlet.

1.3.6 IMPLEMENTATION

The actual Sales budget or target implementation is at the field. This is actually done by the Sales representative who are involved in the daily execution of the sales activities through one, the supervision of the dealers who do the actual selling at the filling stations and two, direct sales to industrial users.

The successful implementation of target is dependent on effective implementation of the roles, responsibilities and function of the Sales Representatives.

At the end of the planned period actual performance is compared against budget, if the budget is achieved, reasons for achievements are highlighted, if there are shortfalls, reasons for failure are identified and corrective steps taken against future occurance. Even if success is achieved, more strategies are planned for greater achievement.

1.4 ASSUMPTIONS

Two assumptions have been postulated in this study:-

a) That the Elf oil Nigeria Ltd occupies a leadership position in the oil industry in this country, and by implication therefore, acts as a price leader.

b) That despite the pre-absence of sellers' market, consumer satisfaction appears to be

uppermost in the company's policy and decision making machinery, hence the establishment of regions in various places to serve many different markets.

1.5 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The present day Sales Manager must be a good planner. His principal task is to plan and organise an efficient and effective sales force and to plan the selling effort which makes him to spend 60-80% of his time in the office rather than in the field. This change has brought about the recognition of four field for modern sales management. They are:

a) Improvement of individual production. This deals with the effectiveness and the quality of the field of sales force. This has always been personal contact with the man in the field, it means the filed salesman has greater delegation and responsibility. The improvement of the productivity of the field salesman will require the selection training and development, supervision, compensation and motivation of the sales force.

b) **Competition**

Another problem confronting sales management is competition. Today their are more people selling product and services than making them. As the income of consumers diminishes with high rate of inflation and reduction in total purchasing power of the consumer; more people have less to spend as they choose, hence

competition becomes keener.

The consumer has a variety of alternative production to choose from. In view of available alternatives, the consumers go for cheaper alternatives that can give then the same satisfaction. It has become necessary that sales management re-examine the product offerings, sales policies selling techniques, channels of distribution and company practices in the height of fierce competition.

c) **Increasing Technology**

Another problem facing present day sales management is technology. Today's Sales Managers must acquaint themselves with the use of electronic data processing for business operations. This is the present situation in developed countries e.g UK, USA, etc. high technology is now used for marketing, information findings, and inventory control, etc. The present salesman should be able to know the technical aspects of the product he is selling in terms of specifications, and efficiency etc.

c) **Increasing Cost of Production**

Management is conscious of the high distribution cost and the need to reduce it. The more the channels of distribution involved, the higher the cost. There is the need to reduce the channel of distribution to the ultimate consumer, the more the channels, in the final analysis the final consumer price is very high compared to production cost.

The major problems confronting the sales force management are centred around the marketing mix, i.e. distribution, pricing, promotion and the product itself. The effectiveness of the manipulation of the marketing mix determines, to a great extent, the success of any sales programme.

The Elf oil Nigeria Ltd, for instance, reaches its consumers through various institutions: the sales representatives, sales managers, and distributors. There are bound to be problem associated with this effort; the way the management view its customers will greatly influence its policy. To the consumers, are the Elf oil services adequate or inadequate? What are their reactions to the inflationary trends? The existing products may need further improvement to meet the customers' taste.

Above all, the major problem confronting the Elf oil Nigeria Limited, is that of an accute competition arising from the proliferation of oil industries in the country today.

1.5.1 SALES FORCE: OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The Objectives:

The sales force is part of the marketing mix and, as such, is capable of achieving marketing objectives much better than other tools in the marketing mix. Many companies have described their sales force objectives in different ways. Sales force objectives for a company could be that company charges its sales representatives to be responsible for selling, installing and upgrading customer computer equipment. Another company may probably want his sales representatives to be responsible for developing, selling and protecting accounts.[2]

The Sales-Force Objectives for the Elf oil Nigeria Limited, are as follows:

i) Prospecting: Sales representatives are expected to find and cultivate new customers.

ii) Communicating: Sales force is supposed to be skillful in communicating information about the company's products and services to be existing and potential customers.

iii) Selling: Sales representatives are expected to be effective in the art of salesmanship, that is being effective in approaching, presenting, answering objectives and closing sales.

iv) Servicing: Sales forces must provide various services to the customers, including consulting on their problems, rendering teaching assistance, arranging financing, and expediting delivery.

v) Information Collection: Sales representatives are supposed to carry out some market research and intelligent work, and supply sales on their customer calls.

vi) Allocating: Sales representatives are expected to evaluate customer profitability and advise the company on allocating scarce products to their customers in times of product shortages.

The Elf oil Nigeria Ltd. is specific in spelling out norms for how much time that should be spent on each activity. It makes sure that its sales representatives spend more, say 80% (Eighty percent) of their time with current customers and 20% (Twenty percent) with prospects. Prospects are those enlisted to become customers of the company. The sales representatives are supposed to spend (85% (Eighty-five percent) of their time selling the company's products - and 15% (Fifteen percent) on research and intelligent work.

"Sales norms are established so that sales force would not be tempted to spend most of its time selling established products to current account to the utter neglect of other important

market development activities."

In addition, the Elf oil Nigeria Limited requires its sales representatives to carry out more marketing tasks in order to produce the Budgeted sales volume thereby increasing profits for their company, vis avis the customer satisfaction. The Elf oil Sales force is also expected to be skillful in analysing sales data, measuring market potential, gathering market intelligence and developing market strategies and plans.

The Strategies:

Once the company has established sales force objectives, it is equally ready to tackle the problems of sales strategies. "The Elf oil develops its sales-force strategies through the undertaking of the customer buying process, and how it can best position itself if it sees competitors pursuing the same business."

To this effect, two main types of selling situations have been established:

i) Sales representative to buyer, a situation whereby a sales force talks to a single prospect or customer in person or over the phone.

ii) Sales representative to buyer group. Here a sales force appears before a buying committee to make sales presentation about a specific product.[3]

Thus we can see a sales force as match-maker, bringing together the company and the customer personnel. He has the responsibility of initiating and facilitating interactions between various people in the buying and selling organizations. "In order to succeed, sales forces need the unanimous supports of the top management, technical people, customer service representatives, and the office staff such as sales analysts, other expediters, and secretarial personnel."

Having classified the types of selling situation it must perform, they embarks upon the use of 'direct sales force', which consists of full-time paid employees who work exclusively for the company. This sales force category includes:

a) Inside Sales Personnel - who conduct business from their offices, using the telephone and receiving visits from prospective buyers.

b) Field Sales Personnel - who travels and visits customers. They transact their business mainly in the fields.[4]

1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the research work are to:

1) Identify the importance of the sales force in an oil marketing oriented organization like Elf Oil Nigeria Ltd.

2) Examine the procedure for selecting, training and motivating the sales force in the company.

3) examine the role of the sales force and its contribution to the overall profitability of the company.

4) Investigate how properly the sales force is motivated.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is to cover the activities of the sales force in Elf Oil Nigeria Ltd. Limiting the study to the Northern Region i.e Kano district. The research study is made on the general management of the sales force in any marketing oriented organization highlighting the roles and functions of the sales force. The study will also try to look

at the sales force contribution to the profitability of the organization. Research books will be consulted on the study.

1.8 DEFINATION OF TERMS

i) Management

The generic term employed to designate those executive tasks in any business which ensures that resources are utilized in such a way that preplanned corporate objectives are met.

ii) Sales management

This is defined as the planning, organizing, directing and controlling the activities of sales personnel.

iii) Sales Manager

An executive responsible for planning directing, controlling and organizing the activities of sales force.

iv) Marketing

The performance of all business activities directed at accelerating the movements of goods and services from manufacturers to consumer with the aim of satisfying their needs or wants at a profit sales.

v) Sales force

Group of sales men who contact potential buyers of goods or services and attempt to persuade consumers to buy items to be sold..

vi) Retail Outlet

Physical point or premises at which petroleum products are sold in Elf Oil Nigeria Ltd. It is used to describe petrol filling stations.

vii) Follow-up

Completing necessary details on delivery of goods by the sales representatives.

viii) Closing

Recognising specific and signals from the buyer including physical actions, statements such as asking the prospects for an order.

ix) Prospects

Finding out new customers by slaes representatives.

x Inside Sales Personnel

Those who conduct business from their offices, using the telephone and receiving visits from prospects buyers.

xi) Field Sales Personnel

Those who travel and visit customers. They transact their business mainly in the fields.

xii) Target

Reflecting the Sales volumes specified for a particular period.

1.9 CHAPTER ONE REFERENCES

1. Elf oil (1987), "The Success Story of Elf oil Nigeria Ltd pp.2.

   b) Elf oil (1987), "At a Glance," pp.1 - 4.

2. Philip Kotler (1980), Principles of Marketing, pp. 566-567 Prentice Hall London.

3. Stanton, W.J. (1981): Fundamentals of Marketing, pp. 401-409 Heineman Publishing Co. London.

4. Gene, R.L. et al (1979): "Social Marketing: Its Ethical Dimensions, PP. 29 - 36 Macmillian Publishing Ic. New York.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Every company irrespective of her size has the fundamental task of finding, training, developing, and motivating of people to undertake roles or selling of the want to achieve her objectives. The people who are selected to undertake these tasks of selling for company are at the very spear head of its selling activities, and their importance in contributing to the company's overall profitability cannot be over estimated.[1]

Under the present dispensation highly competitive conditions exist in all economics of the world. Only few companies can market goods and services without the aid of efficient sales force. Therefore the Salesman is the representative of the company to customers and the outside world. People form their opinions about the company from the way the salesman conducts himself and his negotiation skills. The salesman in most cases operated under little control over his activities because he is independent.

Over the past years there has been complete re-orientation of the marketing thinking it is now recognised that no matter how technical or non-technical the product is, the success of its sales is dependent on the ability of the sales people to convince the prospects or habitual buyer. The good of all marketing is to increase profitability by offering wants satisfaction to the market overall the long run. Personal selling is the major promotional method used to achieve this sales objectives.[2]

Personal selling is the most effective way of generating a sales, compared to advertising, whose effectiveness cannot be easily accessed. In personal selling the salesman can tailor his sales preparations to fit the needs, motives and behavior of the customer. Also the salesman can have direct contact with the customer, by so doing he can access the reaction of the customer and adjust to his needs, whereas in advertising most of the cost is devoted to sending the message to people who may not be the real prospect. In personal selling the actual sales can be made while advertising can attract attention and rouse desire but may not get buying actions.

Personal selling can be successful with only and efficient and effective sales force. The sales force also get the direct reaction of customer on the product they sell. Sales people therefore can be considered as the intermediary between their companies and the customers. They advice the company on what the customers needs and how these needs can be satisfied.

It is for this reason that the sales job of today is different from that of yester years. As part of the implementation of the marketing concept in modern time marketing, we see a new breed of sales people. The new marketing concepts is not selling what the firm produces but what the consumers wants, the new breed sales people interpret customers' want and relay them back to the firm so that appropriate products are developed to meet the need of consumers. The new breed sales people are now engaged in a total selling job, servicing customer and territorial sales managers acting as observers of the market as may feed back marketing information to their management. The role of the new breed sales man is divergent, they are persuaders, service people, information gatherers, expenditures, coordinating problem definers, customers-ego-builders.

Historically, Marketing developed as society moved from one stage of human self-sufficiency to the point where trade was needed. Trade developed when there was division of labour, factory industrialisation and urbanization of the population. Marketing is practised today in all modern nations, regardless of their political philosophy. United state of America for example, marketing has developed to its highest level, because America has an economy of abundance backed by superior technologies.

The philosophy of the marketing concept is built that a company should be

(1) Profit oriented

(2) should strive for profitable sales volume

(3) Co-ordinate all its marketing activities.

Marketing management is the vehicle which is used to activate the marketing concept. As marketing practices developed with economic advancement the job of the salesman continued to be vital to the growth of the well being of the work nation economy. The selling methods employed continually change with these development to meet the needs of changing industries in a changing economy and technology. The prolifiration and increase in the number and size of corporations operating nationwide has made possible for salesman to handle economic responsibilities.

The high level of education of customers, couple with experience and more anwareness of the products they are buying now call for more educated, highly skilled and technically oriented salesman on the products they sell. In most case these customers attempt to test the competence of the salesman knowledge and experience. It is for this reason that the modern salesman must be learned and experienced enough to make good sales presentations and overcome any difficulty.

2.1.1 SALES FORCE DEFINED

"Every organization has one or more people who have responsibility for contacting and selling to prospects and customers. We refer to this group of people as Sales force. Sales force therefore is a collection of persons men and or women whose primary responsibilities are contacting and selling the company's products and services to prospects and customers."[3]

Sales forces are found not only in business organizations but also in non profit oriented organizations. College recruiters represent a sales force arm of the college seeking to sell prospective students coming to that college, churches form membership committee who are responsible for attracting new members. The lower River Basin Authorities in Nigeria consist of agricultural specialists who try to educate and sell farmers on using the latest technology. Hospitals, museums and other organizations use a staff of fund raisers to contain prospective donors and selling them on supporting the organization.

The traditional term used to describe persons in the sales force is 'salesmen' but nowadays, the term has become obsolete because of the increasing women who have taken up sales responsibilities. Although the traditional term, salesmen, will occasionally be used where and when appropriate; we will use the conventional term, "Sales representative" and "Sales persons". Many other terms such as account executives, Sales consultant, field representative, manufacturers representative, agent, service representative and marketing representative have come into use to describe people who work in sales.

Sales representatives are typically pictured as loving sociability inspite of some recent evidence that many sales representatives actually dislike it. Sales force are often criticized for aggressively forcing goods on people inspite of the fact that buyers often search out sales

representatives. "Actually, the term sales representative covers a broad range of positions in our economy, within which the differences are often greater than the similarities."[4]

McMurry's classification of sales positions (THE MYSTIQUE OF SUPER-SALESMANSHIP, 1961 PP. 114-117) are as follows:

i. Positions where the Sales persons job is predominantly to deliver the products, e.g. milk, bread, fuel, etc.

ii. Positions where the sales person is predominantly an inside-order-taker, e.g. the haberdashery sales person standing behind the counter.

iii. Positions where the sales person is also predominating an inside order-taker, but works in the field, as the packing house, soap or spice sales persons does.

iv. Positions where the person is not expected or permitted to take on order but is called on only early to build good will or to educate the actual or potential user. Food in this group of sales force are the distiller's 'missionary persons or the medical dealer, representing an ethical pharmaceutical house.

v. Positions where the major emphasis is placed on technical knowledge, e.g., the engineering sales of tangible products like drinks - beers and soft drinks.

vi. Portions requiring the creative sales of intangibles such as insurance, advertising services or education. These practices are seen above, move along a spectrum, ranging from the least to the most creative topics of selling. The earlier jobs call primarily for maintaining accounts are taking orders while the later require limiting down prospects and creating new sales. On the whole the discussion will be primarily concerned with the creative types of selling.

Personal selling is the most effective tool at certain stages of the buying process, particularly in building up buyers preferences, convictions and actions. Personal selling, when compared with advertising, had three distinctive qualities:

i. **Personal Confrontation:** Involves an alive, immediate and interactive relationship between two or more persons. Each persons is able to observe each other needs and characteristics at close quarters and make immediate adjustments.

ii. **Cultivation:** Permit all kinds of relationship to spring up, ranging from a matter of fact selling relationship to a deep personal friendship. In most cases, the sales person must use art to woo the buyers. The sales force will at times be tempted to put on pressure to get on order but will normally keep the customers long. Keen interests at hearts.

iii. **Response**: Makes the buyer feel under some obligations for having listened to the sales talk or using up the sales representative's time.

The buyer has the greater need to extend and respond, even if it means saying, "thank you".

These distinctive qualities come at Cost. Personal selling seems to be the company's most expensive contact and communication tool, all over the world, looting companies millions of naira yearly, e.g. in 1977, American firms spent well over (₦100) a hundred million of naira on personal selling.

2.1.2 HISTORY OF SALES FORCE

Everyone lives by selling something. Selling is one of the world's oldest professions. Paul Herman describes the discovery of a Bronze Age (1000BC) training salesman sample case as "A old wooden box, 26 inches in legth, containing in specialy hollowed compartments, various types of axe, sword blades and buttons".[6]

Early sellers and traders, though, were not always held in high esteem. The Roman word for salesman means " cheater" and mercury, the god of cunning and boated was regarded as the patron deity of merchants traders. The buying and selling of commodities flourished over the centuries and became institutionalised in market town. With time, peddlers began to carry goods to pair in their homes and thus served those who were not able to get to the market towns.

The first salesmen in the United States were the Yankee peddlers (pack peddlers) who, beginning in the late 1700s, carried such things as clothing, spicers, household and wares from distributors and manufacturing centres in the East Coast Colonies to sellers in the western frontier regions.

The pack peddlers would also trade with the Indian, receiving fur in exchange for knives, beads and ornaments. Many of the traders came to be regarded as shrewd un principled tricksters who would not think twice about putting sand in the sugar dust in the pepper, and chicory in the coffee. They often sold coloured sugar water as "medicine" guaranteed to cure all possible diseases.

In the early periods of 1800s, some of the peddlers began to use house-drawn-wagons to stock heavier goods such as clock, dishes, furniture, weapons, and ammunitions. Some of these wagon peddlers settled down in frontier villages and opened the first general stores and trading post. It became customary for some of the larger relatives to travel once or twice a year to the market major city to replenish their stocks. "Eventually, wholesalers, and manufacturers began to employ greeters, or drummers, who would seek out retailers in their hotels and invite them to visit the particular displays of their respective employers"[7] These drummers began to employ increasingly insistent techniques to attract attention to their firms, such as meeting incoming trains and ships, and even riding out to meet incoming merchants so as to beat their competitors to the draw. In time, this pursuit of one-upmanship led drummers to travel all the way their customers' places of business, and these early travelling salesman became as an *important part in the United States Marketing System in the late 1800s Prior to 1960, there were* about one thousand travelling salesmen, many of whom were primarily credit investigators who collected credit data, collected on part account, and only secondary took orders for goods. By 1870, the number of travelling salesmen had increased to about seven thousand, and in 1880., it salesmen was about ninety-three thousand.

"One of the first businessmen to develop modern selling and sales management techniques was John Henry Patterson sow who was widely regarded as the factor of modern salesmanship. At the age of forty, Patterson bought controlling interest in a company that manufactured one of the earliest cash registered and which later became known as the National cash Register Company (NCR).

He built this small, barely surviving firm into the market leader of the cash register industry controlling at one time 90% of the market. The key to his successes was that of professionalizing the sale management function. He would ask his best salesmen to demonstrate sales approaches to the others. The best sales approach would be written down and printed in a "sales primer", and distributed to all NCR salesmen to be followed to the letter. This was the beginning of the canned sales approach. In addition, Patterson assigned his salesmen exclusive territories and sales quotas to stretch their efforts. His company held frequent sales meetings that served double purpose of sales training and play. In between the sales meetings, he sent his salesmen regular communications on how to sell.

One of the young men whom Patterson trained was Thomas J. Watson who later founded IBM Patterson had truly shown other companies the way to turn their sales forces into effective instruments for growth and profit"

Part of sales force strategy is how to structure the companys sales force in order to have maximum impact on market. This is relatively simple if the company sells only one product hire to one end-using industry with customers found in many locations. the answer then would be the use of a territorial- structured sales force. The case would, however change if the company sells many different product to many types of customers. Here, the company might have to develop product structured sales forces. these alternative structures are briefly discussed the later part of the study.

2.2 SALES MANAGEMENT IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY.

Sales management can be simply defined as organizing directing, controlling recruiting training and motivating of the field selling effort within the planned marketing strategies [8]

The management of the sale forces is entirely the responsibilities of the sale manager, who is responsible for recruiting training, motivating controlling and co-ordinating all the activities of the sales force of any organization be it in a developing economy such as Nigeria. Sale force management keep on changing moving from sales product orientation to customers orientation. In the early years, sales was focused on what the firm has to offer and the salesman were only selling what the firm had produced. Today because of the existence of a wide range of products giving the same satisfaction, the selling effort has moved to customer focus, i.e finding out what the customer want and producing the product to meet the specific needs of the customer at a profit.

It is in line with the new selling approach that sales force management is giving new approach. These new approach are taken in three steps as shown below

1. Designing the sales force

a. Sales force objectives

b. Sales force strategy

c. Sales force structure

d. Sales force size

e. Sales force compensation]

2. Managing the sales force.

a. Recruiting selecting sales representatives.

b. Sales force training

c. Directing and co-ordinating the sales force

d. Motivating the sales force

e. Evaluating the sales force

3 Improving sales force Effectiveness

a. Sales force training

b. Negotiating

c Relationship building skill"[9]

The basic success of the sales manager will depend on his successful ability to properly follow the steps in Designing and managing his sales force.

The sales manager in developing economic have failed because of the incompetence in following these steps properly. It is mainly because they do not have the basic managerial approaches. Many sales manager today in Nigeria are faced with these problems because they rose gradually through the ranks and here no training skill to back them up.

Developing economies are often faced with product shortages and so the sales force find themselves with nothing to sell, and some times management feels there is need for only few salesmen forgetting other roles the sales men can perform, e.g. counselling unhappy customers, communicating to customers campaigns plan to remedy these shortages.

As companies move towards market orientation their sales force need to become more market focused and customer oriented. The new generation salesmen should know how to provide customers' satisfaction and company profitability. They should be able to analyse sales data, measure market potentials, market intelligence reports and developing new strategies and plans.

2.3.1 SELECTION

No matter how well established the organization is in terms of products offering, if the organization does not have a clearly well defined procedure for recruiting, selecting, training, directing and motivating the field sale force, the organization is bound to fail.

At the heart of a successful sales force operation is the selection of an effective sales force. The company must have a proper guideline for the selection of salesmen. Some of these procedures are, asking customers the traits they would like salesmen to possess. Another approach could be to look at the traits common to successful salesman already in the company.

In our past present day developing economy, many organization have not been able to select the right calibre of salesmen because of lack of proper guidelines for their selection the basic traits of a good salesman should be spelt out before any selection is conducted. However, many marketing experts have identified some of the traits required.

McMurry wrote that "the possessor of an effective sales personality is a habitual wooer, an individual who has a compulsive need to win and hold the affection of others". The basic traits he listed were "a high level of energy, abounding self confidence, chronic hunger for money, well established habit of industry and a state of mind that regards each objection, resistance or obstacle as a challenge".[10]

2.3.2 The Importance of Careful Selection

"At the start of a successful sales force operation is the selection of effective sales representatives"[11] The performance levels of an average and a tope sales representative are quite different. Personnel selection is the most important, in the writer's opinion, activity in the management processes in any organisation. This is true whether you are managing a sales force, an atheletic team, a college faculty, a political party or any other group. carrying this philosphy close home, your happiness and success in life depends, to a great extent, on how well you do in selecting your mate. So also your pleasure, as a manager, depends very much on how well you do in selecting an effective sales force for your organization.

"Several benefits accrue from having a good sales selection programme. First, it increases the company's chances of getting the type of sales representatives needed. This is important because there is a shortage of good sales people, and they are hard to come by. secondly, when running a sales force, sales manager's performance can be no better than the material he or she has to work with. No matter how well managed a sales force is, if it is distinctively inferior in quality to that of competitor, the competitor will win out. Thirdly, if a sales force is well selected, many other tasks in sales management, such as training and supervision, are made easier, and fourthly, a well selected sales force will be more productive, and will build better customer relations than a poorly chosen group."[12]

There are three major steps in sales force selection. These steps are as follows:-

a) Determine the number of type of people wanted. This step includes the preparation and a written job description. Management must also determine what specific qualifications that are needed to fill the job as it is described.

b) Recruit an adequate number of applicants.

c) Select the qualified persons from among the applicants.

Qualities of Good Sales Representatives

The key to success in the first step is to establish a proper hiring specifications, just as if the company were purchasing equipment or supplies instead of manpower. To establish these specifications, management must first know what the particular sales job entails. This calls for a detailed job analysis and a written description. It should include specific statement regarding job duties and applicants' qualifications. This written description will later be invaluable in training, compensation and supervision.

Determining the qualifications needed to fill the job is the most difficult part of the selection function. we still do not know exactly all the characteristics that make a good sales person. We cannot measure to what degree each quality should be possessed, nor do we know to what extent an abundance of one can offset the lack of another.

Over the years, many myths have arisen about what traits lead to success in selling. A good sales force or representative is supposed to be aggressive, extroverted articulate, well-groomed, and endowed with a great physique. Yet in actual fact, many outstanding sales people have been mild-mannered and introverted. Other good ones have been somewhat articulate and carelessly dressed. Many good sales people are of the average or even small size.

The search for the qualities that make a good sales person continues. Some companies have analysed the personal histories of their past sales representatives in an effort to determine the traits common to successful (unsuccessful) performers.

However, one psychologist, Robert McMurry (in his mystique of supersalemanship, 1980) who has worked extensively in Sales Management, concludes that people who are

outstanding sales successes inevitably possess the following taits:-

i) A high level of energy

ii) A bounding self-confidence

iii) A chronic hunger for money, status, and the good things in life.

iv) A well established habit of industry

v) The habit of perserverance - each objection or resistance is a challenge.

vi) A natural tendency to be competitive.

Mc-Murrcy maintains that,"the sine-qua-non of sales success is an intangible, largely intuitive sensitivity to people. Super-sales people are, in effect, quite habitual and constnt wooers. They have an inherent flair for winning the acceptance of other"[13]

In another approach to the question of what makes the quality of a good sales representative, Mayer and Greenberg, "What makes a good salesman", 1964, pp.69 conclude; "After some years of research, that two personating traits are basic to salesman success: (a) Empathy- ability to identify with customers and their feelings. Ego-drive - The personal need to make a sale, as a measure of self-fulfillment, and not just for the money".

2.3.3 RECRUITMENT: According to Kotler (1991) "At the heart of a successful sales force operation is the selection of effective sales representatives. The difference in performance between an average and a top sales representative can be considerable. One survey revealed that the top 27% of the sales force brought in over 52% of the sales. Beyond the differences in sales productivity are the great wastes in hiring the wrong persons. The average annual sales force turnover rate for all industries is almost 20%. When a sales person quits, the cost of finding and trainning a new salesperson plus the cost of lost sales - can run as ₦80,000 to ₦75,000. And a sales force with a lot of new people is less productive."[14]

After management develops its selection criteria, it must recruit. The personnel department seeks applications by various means, including soliciting names from arrest current representatives, using employment agencies, placing job and contacting college student. Kotler asserted that few students wants to go into selling as a career the reluctant ones give such reason as "Selling is a job and not a profession" "It calls for deceit if the person wants to succeed" and "there is insecrutity and to much travel" To counter these objectives, companys recruiters emphasize starting salaries and income opportunities.

Recruitment methods also differ from company to company depending on the type of products it sells. The method of recruitment of consumer goods will differ from that of highly technical products, e.g. industrial equipments, e.t.c. Even though the basic methods may be the same, the technicalities will differ.

2.3.4 Training Sales Representatives: An Over-View

In the past, many companies were used to sending newly employed sales representatives out into the field almost immediately after hiring them. The sales representatives then would be supplied with a pack of samples, order books and instructions to sell. "Training programmes were considered luxuries. A training programme meant large outlay for instructors, materials and space; the payment of basic salary to a person who was not yet selling; and lost opportunity because he or she was not in the field.

But nowadays, a reverse is the case because newly selected sales representatives can expect to spend from a few weeks to many months in the limbo state known as training. The median training period in weeks is twenty-eight in industrial products companies, twelve in service companies and four in consumer product companies. In some companies, such as steel or data processing companies, the new sales representatives are not on their own for two years."[15]

Other companies expect their sales representatives to spend fifteen per cent of their time each year in additional training. The annual sales - training for a major U.S. Corporation, for instance, can run into millions of naira. Several factors have convinced sales management that extended training may add more value than cost. The sales representatives of today are selling to more cost-conscious and value-conscious buyers. Furthermore, they are selling a host of products, often loosely related, and sometimes technically complex. More reports are expected of these people.

The purpose of the training is to create the following knowledge, skills and attitudes in the sales forces:-

i. The sales representatives should know the company and identify with it. Most companies devote the first part of the training programme to describing the history and objectives of the company, the organizational set up and lines of authority, the names of the chief officers, the companies, the financial structure and facilities, and the company's chief products and their sales volume.

ii. The sales representative should know the company's products. The sales train is shown how the products are produced, and how it function in various uses.

iii. The sales representative should know customers' and competitors' characteristics. He is introduced to different customers and their needs, buying motives and buying habits. He learns about the company's and competitors' strategies and policies.

iv. The sales representative should learn how to make effective presentations. He it trained in the basic principles of salesmanship. Part of the training time is used to develop the sales representative's personality and impersonal skills. In addition, the company outlines the major sales arguments for each product, and some go so far as to provide a sales script.

v. The sales representative should be introduced to field procedures and responsibilities. The sales representative should know how to divide time between active accounts and potential accounts; how to use the expense account, prepare reports and routine effectively.[16]

Principles of Salesmanship

One of the major objectives of sales training programme is to train the company's sales personnel in the art of selling. The sales training industry today involves expenditures of millions of naira in training programmes, books cassettes, and other related materials.

All of the sales training approaches are designed to convert a sales person from being a passive order taker to an active order getter. Order takers operate on the following assumptions:

a) Customers are aware of their own needs;

b) They cannot be influenced or would resent any attempt at influence;

c) Customers prefer sales representatives who are courteous and self-effacing.

In training sales persons to be order getter, there are two basic approaches; a sales - oriented approach and a customers-oriented approach. The first one trains the sales person to be adopted in the use of high-selling techniques, such as those used in selling encyclopedias or automobiles. The technique includes overstating the product's merits, criticising competitive products, using a "slick" canned presentation, selling yourself and offering some concession to get the order on the spot. The assumptions behind this type of selling are that:

i) The customers are not likely to buy except under pressure;

ii) They are influenced by a "slick" presentation and ingratiating manners;

iii) They will not regret the transaction after signing the order, or if they do, it does not matter.

The second approach attempts to train sales personnel in customer problem solving. Here the sales person studies the customer's needs and wants, and proposes profitable solutions to his/her (customer's) problems. For example, a sales representative would examine the customer's problem and propose a plan that would solve that problem. Thus the sales person does what is good for the customer, not what is immediately good for himself. The assumptions behind this approaches are that:

a) Customers have latent needs that constitute opportunities for the sales representative;]

b) They appreciate good suggestions;

c) They will be loyal to the sales representatives who have their long-term interests at heart.

Surely the problem solver is a more compatible image for the salesperson under the marketing concept than the hard seller or order taker.

Most sales training programmes view the selling process as consisting a set of steps that the sales representative has to carry out, each involving certain skills. These steps are sometimes referred to as sales force activities.

Sales Force Activities

"Sales force activities consist of process steps that sale representatives are expected to carry out, involving certain skills:-

i) Prospecting and Qualifying:- The first step in the sales process or sales activities is to identify prospects. Although the company can supply leads, the sales representatives also need skill in developing their own leads. Leads can be developed though asking current satisfied customers, for the names of other potential buyers, cultivating other referral sources; such as suppliers, dealers, and bankers; joining organizations where there is a high probability of meeting or learning about new prospects; engaging in speaking and writing activities that are likely to increase the salesperson's visibility; and using the telephone and mail to track downleads.

Sales representatives also need to know how to screen the leads to save time on poor leads. Prospects can be qualified by examining their financial ability, volume of business, special requirements, location and likelihood of continued business. The salesperson should phone or write to prospects to see if they are worth pursuing any further.

ii) Preapproach:- This step involves the salesperson in learning as much as possible about the prospect company (what it does, who is involved in the purchase decision) and its buyers. He can consult standard sources, acquisitance and others to learn about the company. The salesperson could design call objectives to qualify the prospect, or gather information or make an immediate sale. He might decide on personal visit, a phone call or letter. On the whole, the salesperson should think well on the best timing and overall strategy to use.

iii) Approach:- Involves the sales force in knowing how to meet and greet the buyer to get relationship off to a good start. It consist of how the salesperson looks, the opening lines, and the follow-up remarks. The salesperson's looks include his/her appearance, manners and mannerisms. The salesperson is encouraged to wear clothes similar to what buyers usually wear, such as open shirts and no tie; to show courtesy and attention to the buyer, and avoid distracting mannerisms such as pacing the floor or staring at the customer. The opening line should be positive and pleasant, such as, "Mallam Mohammed, I am Fred from the MBA Company. My Company and I appreciate your willingness to see me. I will do my best to make this visit profitable and worthwhile for you and your company."

This could be followed by some light talk to further the acquaintance, some key questions, or the showing of a display or sample to attract the buyer's attention and curiosity.

iv) Presentation and Demonstration - after getting acquainted and 'sizing up' the buyer, the sales representative attempts to tell the company 'story' to the buyer, showing how the product will make or save money for the buyer. The sales representative covers the features of the product but concentrates on selling the benefits. The aim is to demonstrate the want-satisfying characteristic of the company and its products. The salesperson will then follow the AIDA formula in presenting the product: get Attention, hold Interest, arouse Desire and obtain Action.

Companies use three different styles of sales presentation. These are:

a) The Canned Approach: This is a memorised sales talk covering the main points deemed important by the management. It is based on stimulus - response thinking, i.e. the buyer is passive, and can be moved to purchase by the use of the right stimulus words, pictures, terms and actions. Canned presentations are used primarily in door-to-door and telephone cold conversing.

b) The Formulated Approach: This is also based on stimulus response thinking, but attempts to identify early the buyer's need and buying styles, and then use a formulated approach to this type of buyer. This is not canned but follows a general plan of a formulated presentation.

c) The need-satisfaction Approach - does not start with a prepared presentation designed to sell the customer but rather a research for the customer's real needs. The customer is encouraged to do most of the talking so that the salesperson can grasp the customer's real needs

and respond accordingly. The need-satisfaction approach call for good listening and problem-solving skills.

Sales presentations can be improved considerably with various Demonstration aids, such as booklets, flip charts, slides, movies and actual product samples. To the extent that the buyer can participate by seeing or handling the product, he or she will better remember its features and possibilities.

v) Handling Objectives - Customers will almost always pose objections during the presentations or when asked to place an order. The customer's sales resistance is due basically to either psychological or logical form.

Psychological resistance may include resistance to interference, preference for established habits, apathy, and others. The logical resistance takes the form of objections to the price, delivery schedule, certain products or company characteristics.

To handle these objection, the salesperson should use such techniques as maintaining a positive approach, trying to have the buyer clarify and define the objections and questioning the buyer in such a way that the buyer has to answer his or her own objections.

The salesperson needs training in the broader skill of negotiation, of which handling objections is a part.

vi) Closing - Here, the sales representative attempts to close the sales. Some salespersons never reach this stage or they do not do it well, perhaps because they lack confidence in themselves or their company or product.

Salespersons should be trained to recognize specific closing signals from the buyer, including physical actions statements, or comments and questions signaling a possible readiness to close. Salesperson can now use one of several closing techniques such as:

Asking the prospects for an order

Asking whether the buyer wants A or B

Getting the buyer to make minor choices or

Indicating what the buyer will lose if he does not order.

The sales representatives may offer the buyer specific inducements to close, such as a special price; an extra quantity at no charge or even a gift.

vii) Follow-up: This is necessary if the salesperson wants to ensure customer satisfaction and repeat business. Immediately after closing, the sales representative should attempt to complete any necessary details on delivery time, purchase terms, and other matters. He should consider scheduling a follow-up call when the initial order is received to make sure there is proper installation, instruction, and servicing.[17]

Directing Sales Force

The new sales representative is given more than a territory, a compensation package, and training - he is given supervision. Supervision is the fate of everyone who works for someone else. It is the experience of the employer's natural and continued interest in the activities of their agents. Through supervision, employers hope to direct and motivate the sales force to do a better job.

Companies differ in the extent to which they try to prescribe what their sales reps should be doing. Much depended on the nature of the selling job. Sales representatives are paid mostly on commission and are expected to hunt down their own prospects.
they are generally left on their own. But those who are salaried and must cover a definite set of accounts are likely to receive substantial supervision.

A major purpose of supervision is to help the sales representatives use their time effectively and efficiently. The effective use of the time means that the sales representatives make sound decisions on which customers and prospects to spend the time on in the first place. "The efficient use of time means that the sales representatives are able to plan their call time so as to maximize the ratio selling to non-selling time.

a) Developing Customer Target and Call Norms: Most companies classify their customers into account types, such as A, B and C, reflecting the sales volume, profit potential and the growth potential of the different accounts. They establish a certain number of calls per period that their sales force should make to each account type. Thus A account may receive nine calls a year, B, six calls and C, three calls. The exact level that are set depend upon competitive call norms and expected account profitability.

The real issue here is how much sales volume could be expected from a particular account as a function of annual number of calls made to that account.

b) Developing Prospect Target and Call Norms: Companies often like to specify how much time their sales force spend prospecting for new accounts. For example, sector Freight wants its sales representatives to spend 25 per cent of their time prospecting, and to stop calling on a prospect after three unsuccessful calls.

It is quite necessary to set up a minimum requirement for the canvassing of new accounts because, if left alone, sales representatives will spend most of time in the offices of current customers who are better known quantities, and upon whom the sales representatives can depend for some time.

c) Using Sales Time Efficiently: Sales representatives should know how to schedule the planned sales calls and use their time efficiently. One tool is the preparation of an annual call schedule,. showing which customers and prospects to call on, in which months, and which activities to carry out. The activities include such things as participating in trade shows, attending sales meetings and carrying out marketing research projects. The other tool is time- and -duty-analysis to determine how to use sales call time more efficiently. The sales representatives time is spent in the following ways:-

(i) Travel - travel time is the time spent in travel between rising in the morning and arriving at a lodging in the evening. Travel time can be cut down by substituting faster for slower means of transportation, recognizing however, that this will increase costs. Some companies encourage air travel - commercial or private - for their sales forces in order to increase the ratio of their selling to total time.

ii) Food and Breaks - Some portion of the sales force's workday is spent in eating and in taking breaks. If this involves dining with a customer, it will be classified as selling time, otherwise as food and break time.

(iii) Waiting - consists of time spent in the outer office of the buyer. This is "dead" time unless the salesperson spends it to plan or to fill out reports.

(iv) Selling - is the time spent with the buyer in person or on the phone. It breaks down into "social talks" and "selling talks".

(v) Administration - is a miscellaneous category, consisting of the time spent in report writing and billing, attending sales meetings, and talking to others in the company about production, delivery, billing, sales performance and others.

Helping the sales representatives to use their time more efficiently takes the form of training them in the effective use of the telephone, simplifying the account keeping or record keeping forms and requirements, using the computer to develop the call and routing plans, and supplying them with marketing research reports on the customer."[18]

Motivating Sales Representatives:

"A small percentage of sales representatives in any sales force can be expected to do their best without any special prompting from management. To them, selling is the most fascinating job in the whole world. They are ambitious and selfstarters.

But the majority of sales representatives as nearly every sales force require personal encouragement and special incentives to work at their best level, more especially in the creative field selling for the following reasons:

(a) The Nature of the Job - The selling job is one of frequent frustrations. Sales representatives usually work alone, their hours are irregular and they are often away from home they confront aggressive competing sales representatives; they an inferior status relative to

buyer; and they at times loss large order that they have worked hard to obtain.

(b) Human Nature - Most sales persons operate below capacity in the absence of some special incentives. They will not "kill themselves" without some prospect of financial gain or social recognition.

(c) Personal Problems - The sales representatives, like everyone else, is occasionally preoccupied with personal problems such as sickness in the family, marital discord and/or debt.

Management can affect the morale and performance of sales force through its organizational climate, sales quotas and positive incentives."[19]

Organizational climate describes the feelings that the sales representatives get from their company regarding opportunities, value and reward for a good performance.

Some companies treat sales representatives as if they were of minor importance to the organization, while others treat their sales representatives as the prime movers and allow unlimited opportunity for income and promotion. The quality of personal treatment given sales representatives by the management is an important aspect of the organizational climate. An effective sales manager keeps in touch with the members of the sales force through regular correspondence and phone calls, personal visits in the field, and evaluation sessions in the office. At different times, the sales manager is the sales representative's boss, companion, coach and confessor.

"Sales quotas are set by many companies for sales representatives, specifying what they should sell during the year and by product. Their compensation is often, though not always,

related to their degree of quota fulfillment. Sales quotas are developed each year in the process of developing annual marketing plan."[20] The company first decides on a sales forecast that is reasonably achieved. This becomes the basis of planning production, workforce - sizes, and financial requirements. The management establishes quotas for all of its regions and territories which typically add up to more than the sales forecast. Sales quotas are set higher than the sales forecast in order to stretch the sales managers and salespeople to their best efforts. If they fail to make their quotas, the company may make its sales forecast.

Each District Sales Manager takes the assigned quotas and divides them up among the sales representatives. According to Heckert (1946) "Actual experience with sales force quotas, as with all standards, will reveal that sales representatives react to them somewhat differently, particularly at first. Some are stimulated to their highest efficiency, others are discouraged." Some sales executives place considerable emphasis upon this human element in setting their quotas. In general, however, good men will in the long run respond favorably to intelligently devised quotas, especially when compensation is fairly adjusted to performance.

Positive Incentives - Companies use a number of positive motivator to stimulate sales force effort. Periodic meetings provide a social occasion a break from routine, a chance to meet and talk with 'company brass', and a chance to air feelings and to identify with a larger group. Companies also sponsor sales contests when they want to spur the sales force to make a special setting effort above what would be normally expected. Other motivator include honours and awards, profit-sharing plans, and vacations with pay.

2.3.5 EVALUATION OF SALES REPRESENTATIVES

"Management obtain information about its sales representatives through number of channels. Probably the most import source of information is to the sales representative's periodic reports. Additional information is obtained through personal observation, customers' letters and complaints, and conversations with other sales representatives. A distinction can be drawn between reports that represent plans for the future and those that represent write-up of completed activities. The best example of the former is the sales person's work plan, which most sales representatives are required to submit for a specified future period, usually a week or a month in advance. The plan describes the calls they will make and the routing they will use."[21] These reports serve the purposes of encouraging the sales force to plan and schedule their activities, informing management of their whereabouts, and providing a basis for comparing their plans with their accomplishments. Sales representatives can be evaluated on their ability to plan their work, and work their plans. Occasionally, management contracts individual sales representatives after receiving their plans to suggest improvements. [22]

Companies do require their salespersons to draft an annual territory marketing plan in which they outline their programme for developing new accounts and increasing business from the existing accounts. "The formates vary quite considerably: while some ask for general ideas on territory development, others ask for detailed volume and profit estimates. This type of report casts sales representatives into the role of market managers and profit centres."[23] The plans are studied by their sales managers and become the basis for rendering constructive suggestions to sales representatives and developing branch sales objectives and estimates for higher-level management.

Several reports are used by the sales representatives to write up their complete activities and accomplishments. The best known type is the 'call report' in which the records pertinent aspects of his dealings with customers, including competitive brands used, best time for calling, degree and type of assistance, and future account promise.[24]

Call reports serve the objectives of keeping the sales Management informed of the salesperson's activities, including the status of the customers' accounts, and providing information that could be useful for future call. Sales representatives also report expenses incurred in the performance of selling duties, of which they are partly or wholly reimbursed. "The objective from the management standpoint is primarily to exercise and control over the type and amount of expenses and secondarily to have the requisite expense data for income-tax purposes. It is also hoped that the sales representatives will exercise more care in incurring expenses when they must report them in detail. Additional reports may include reports on new business, local business and economic conditions."[25]

These various reports supply the raw data from which sales management can extract key indicators of sales performance. The key indicators which the management may carefully watch are:

1) Average number of sales calls per salesperson per day.
2) Average sales call time per contact
3) Average revenue per sales call.
4) Average cost per sales call.

5) Entertainment cost per sales call.

6) Percentage of orders per hundred sales call.

7) Number of new customers per period;

8) Number of lost customers per period;

9) Sales force cost as % of total sales.

Formal Evaluation of Performance

The Sales forces reports along with other reports from the field and the manager's personal observations supply the raw material for formally evaluating members of the sales force. Formal evaluation procedures lead to three benefits: First, they lead Management to develop specific and uniform standards for judging sales performance. Second, they lead management to draw together all its information and impressions about individual sales representative and make more systematic, point by point evaluations. And third, they tend to have a constructive effect on the performance of sales representatives. The constructive effect comes about because the sales representative know that they will have to sit down one morning with the sales manager and explain certain facets of their routing or sales call decision of their failure to secure or maintain certain accounts. [27]

"Types of Evaluation

There are four principal types of evaluation of the sales force's performance, and these are salesperson - to - salesperson comparison, current-to-past-sales comparison, and the qualitative evaluation of sales representatives, and quantitation type of evaluation.

(a) **Salesperson to Salesperson Comparison** - One type of evaluation frequently made is to compare and rank the sales performance of the various sales representatives. Such comparisons, however, can be misleading. Relative sales performances are meaningful only if there are no variations from territory to territory in the market potential, workload, degree of competition, company promotional effort, and so forth. Furthermore, sales are not the best denominator of achievement. Management should be interested in how much each sales representative contributes to net profits. And this cannot be known until the sales representatives' sales mix and sales expresses are examined. A possible ranking criterion would be the sales representative's ratio of actual contribution to company net profits to potential contribution to company net profits. A ratio of 1.00, for example, would mean that the sales representative delivered the potential sales in his or her territory. The lower a sales representative ratio, the more supervision and counseling he or she needs.

(b) **Current-to-Past-Sales Comparison** - The second type of evaluation is to compare the sales representative's current performance with his or her past performance. This should provide a more direct indication of progress.

The sales manager, from the comparison, can learn many things about his sales representatives. The sales manager may discover that his sales representative's total sales increase every year for two or three consecutive years. This is an indication that the salers representatives are not doing badly.

(c) **Qualitative Evaluation of Sales Representatives**

The evaluation usually extends to the salesperson's knowledge of the company, products, customers, competitors, territory and responsibilities. Personality characteristics can also be rated, such as general manner, appearance, speech and temperament. The sales manager can also consider any problems in motivation and compliance. Since an almost endless number of qualitative factors might be included, each company could decide what would be most useful to know. It also should communicate these criteria to the sales representatives so that they are aware of how their performance is judged, and can make an effort to improve it.

It would be better if the entire performance evaluation could be based only on quantitative factor, thus minimizing the subjectivity and personal bias of the evaluator, but it not possible this way.

There are many qualitative factors that can influence the performance of a sales representative, and they are worth considering: These factors include:

(i) The sales representative's knowledge of the products, company policies, and the competition.

(ii) The management of the sales representative's time and the preparation for calls.

(iii) Customer relations

(iv) Personal appearance and health;

(v) Personality and attitudinal factors such as co-operation, resourcefulness, and ability to analyse logically, and make decisions.

(d) **Quantitative Evaluation of Sales Force**

Sales performance should be evaluated on the basis of both input (or efforts) and output (or result). A person's productive effectiveness is a combination of the two-output as measured by sales volume, gross margin, etc. and input as indicated by call rate, counselling activities, etc.

In a performance evaluation, the importance of output factors is readily recognised. Sometimes, however, the values of input factors is underestimated. Actually, the analysis of input factors is often effective in locating trouble spots. If a person's output is not satisfactory, very often the course lies in the handling of the various input factors over which the salesperson has control.

Some output factors (results) that ordinarily are quite useful as bases for evaluation are as follows:

(a) Sales volume - by products, customer group etc.

(b) Sales volume - as a percentage of quota or territorial potential.

(c) Gross margin - by product line, customer group, etc.

(d) Orders:

Number,

Average size - naira volume

Batting average - orders divided by calls.

(e) Accounts:

Percentage of accounts sold

Number of new accounts called on and sold.

The following are some useful input factors (effort) to measure:

(a) Calls for per day (call rate)

(b) Direct selling expenses, as a percentage of sales volume or expense quota.

(c) Non-selling activities:

Advertising displays set up

Number of training sessions held with dealers and/or distributors.

One key to a successful evaluation programme is to appraise the salesperson's performance on as many different basis as possible. Otherwise, management misled. A high daily call rate may look good, but it tells nothing about how many orders per call are being written up. A high batting average (orders divided by calls) may be comauglaging a low average order size or a high rate volume on how profit items. "[28]

2.4 CHAPTER TWO REFERENCES

1. FREDRICK RUSSEEL et al, (1969): Testbook of Salesmanship PP. 68-70. Mifftein Company, London.
2. BERTUAND CAUNFIELD, (1950): Salesmanship - Principles and practices, P6 Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, New York.
3. DAVID MAYER AND GREENBERG, (1964): What makes a good salesman P8 Harvard Business Review Press U.S.A.
4. DAVID K.R. AND WEBSTER F.E.(1968): Sales Force Management PP 383-389.The Rolnad Press Co, Face Press New York.
5. PHILIP KOTLER (1980): Principle of marketing PP 564 - 565. Prentice Hall London.
6. BELASCO, J.A. (1966): ,The Salesman's Role Revisited, PP6-11 Heineman; London.
7. WALKER et al, (1975): Organisation Determinants of the Industrial Salesman's Role Conflicts PP. 32-39. Good Year publishing Co. Inc., Britain.
8. PAUL HERMANN, (1954): Conquest by man , P 39 Houghton Mufflin Co. Ohio.
9. THOMAS AND MARVA HELDEN, (1962): The Lengthening Shadow P. 44 Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliff, New Jersey.
10. BOLLING, C.(1970): Sales Management P. 145 - 149 publishing Co. Gnicimati Ohio.
11. PHILIP KOTLER,(1988): Principle of marketing P. 170 Prentice Hall London.
12. Mc MURRY (1961): The Mystique of Super Salesmanship P. 68.
13. MARVIN A. JOLSON (1975): The Under Estimated of the canned sales presentation P. 75-78 Irwin, Inc Georgetown Ontario.

14. THOMAS S. ROBERTSON & RICHARD (1968): The Sales Process: An Open System Approach P. 49-50 Prentice Hall, Inc Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

15. ROBERT McMURRY (1961): The Mystique of Super Salesmanship PP 114. Booz, Allen And Hamitton New York.

16. PHILIP KOTLER, (1991): Principle of Marketing P. 267-270 Prentice Hall, Lonndon.

17. Mc MURRY (1968): Dynamics of Sales Organization PP. 12-18 Booz, Allen and Hamitton New York.

18. DAVID MAYER GREENBERG (1964): What makes Good salesman PP. 119-125. Harvard Business Review Press U.S.A.

19. PHILIP KOTLER,(1980): Principle of Marketing PP 561-581 Prentice Hall, London.

20. DAVID S.H. (1972): The Short-term marketing plan P. 53-60 Prentice Hall, Inc. England New Jersey.

21. STANLEY, J.P. AND EARL L. B (1970): Sales Forecasting Practices An Appraisal PP 54-60.

22. POKEMPUER S. J AND BALLEY, E.L (1970): Sales Forecasting Principle: An Appraisal P 54 - 60 Urbans University of Illionois Press.

23. PHILIP KOTLER (1980): Principle of Marketing: P 584 - 586 Prentice Hall, London.

24. JAMESCOX: (1978): Sales Methods: P 64 New York, AMACOM.

25. SEKELY J.B(1978): The Marketing Audit: Method, Problems and Perspective P 37-41. Macmillian Publishing, Co. United Kingdom.

26. ALFRED R.O.(1978): The Marketing Audit: Method Problems and Perspectives PP 37-41 Hill Book Co. Inc., U.K.

27. FREDRICK RUSSEEL: Testbook of Salesmanship 1969 PP 8-10 Mffein Company, London.

28. JAMES, A.B. The Salesmanship Role 1966 PP 6-11 Houghton Mifflin Co. Ohio.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 DATA SOURCE

For the purpose of the study, the research employed the two major ways of generating data for a research, namely primary and secondary sources of data collection.

These primary data was obtained from the management of ELF oil and its field sales force by the researcher himself through the research instruments. They consisted of original information gathered for the purpose of this study. To accomplish this mission, the method of primary data collection used was the administration of questionnaire. In addition, interviews were also conducted with some of the respondents, most especially with the managers and staff of ELF oil Nigeria limited.

Similarly, Secondary data were also made use of and these consisted of information that already existed, having been collected for similar or other purpose by ELF oil limited the sources of this information consisted of the company's journals and pamphlets. This in essence, helped the researcher to marry the various information and facts gathered form other sources together.

3.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Two important instruments used for this research work are questionnaire and interview.

(a). Questionnaire: a sets of quessionaire was compiled and administered by the researcher. The objective of this was to enable the researcher collects relevant information on the

management of sales force in ELF oil limited the form of these questionnaires include diclotomons (yes\No) and multiple choice these various forms where used to give room for flexibility on the part of the respondents.

3.3 SAMPLE SIZE

A sample size of fifty (50) respondents where selected for the administration of questionnaire, this include the Northern Regional manager for ELF, Deputy Regional managers, territorial sales representative for Abuja, Jos, Kaduna, Kano, Gusau , Maunder and Yola who are directly involved in the field of operations of the company, other are Sales Assistants and other company staff directly or indirectly involved in sales.

3.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher intended to investigate into the sales force activities in the art of selling and marketing, and how their activities are guided towards achieving the company's objectives and goals, hence the title, Sales Force Management. "The sales force activities in the field include:-

Prospecting;

Communicating;

Servicing;

Collecting information, and

Allocating scarce products.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the data collected from the field and analysed for interpretation.

Some of the major issues covered by questionnaires focused mainly on:

a) Sales force recruitment

b) Sales force training

c) Sales force motivation

d) Sales budgeting and planning

e) Competition

Oral interview covered areas on:

a) Competitors performance

b) Staff remuneration

c) Customer service in retail outlets of elf oil vis-a-vis competitors.

d) Quality of staffing in the oil marketing companies

4.2 SALES FORCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Out of fifty questionnaires distributed to respondent. 46 were returned representing 92%.

Forty people were orally interviewed and all responded to all questions representing 100%.

The questionnaires completed by the field sales force of the company are used to evaluate how well managed is the sales force. The data is analysed under the following headings.

a) Recruitment

b) Trainning

c) Motivation

d) Enumeration

e) Target setting/planning.

4.2.1 RECRUITMENT

The questions asked on recruitment was, what is the source of recruitment in the company? Is internal, external or both? 30 respondent. (65%) said that the source is internal. 12 (26%) respondent that recruitment is done externally. While 4(9%) respondents said that both method of recruitment are used. However the major source of recruitment is internal ie staff who have stayed long and have acquire additional qualification are converted to do sales jobs. That means that based on this research, the bulk of the sales force are recruited from within the company.

4.2.2 TRAINNING

The question asked was whether the company conduct the training of sales face internally, externally or both 34,(74%) respondent that training is conducted both internally and externally. It was found that the company has trainning school for both the company sales force

and other staff. However, the company occasionally provide external training for the sales face with some training consultants. The questions was lap asked if training has a nay significant impact on the sales of the company. All respondents (100%) agreed that it has an impact.

Suggested Answer	No of Respondent	%
Internal	12	26
External	-	-
Both	34	74
Total	46	100

4.2.3 MOTIVATION

The question of how well motivated is the sales force?

Suggested Answer	No of Respondent	%
Well motivated	30	65
Fairly motivated	14	31
Not motivated	2	4
Total	46	100

The research or from the responses found are that the sales force is well motivated 30,(65%) responded that the sales force is fairly motivates while 2,(4%) responded they are not well motivated. There responses were based on what the respondent feels obtains in competing oil marketing companies.

Motivating Salesforce in Elf Oil Kano District

Supervision: The job of supervision of sales in Kano District, rests squarely in the hands of the District Sales Manager. He undertakes tour to see the sales representatives in their various territories. He cross-checks their call documents and gives advice where necessary. The Sales Manager encourages his sales representatives to communicate with his office regularly, reporting their sales activities with their different distributors and individual customers.

Motivation - "The Elf Oil plans welfare facilities for its employees including the sales force. These facilities include the award of Secondary and University scholarship to deserving children of its employees, the provision of a fully-staffed clinic, which caters for the health needs of the sales force, the management of staff canteen and a lively house magazine.

Other forms of incentives include fixed amount which is usually in the form of salary which is intended to satisfy the sales representative' need for some stability of income. The variable amount takes the form of commission, bonus, and profit sharing. The variable amount is intended to stimulate and reward greater efforts. Expense allowances are intended to enable the sales representatives to undertake the selling efforts that are considered necessary or derivable. Fringe benefits, on the other hand, are paid vacations, sickness or accident benefits, pensions and life insurance and are intended to provide security and job satisfaction to the sales force and other workers in Elf oil.

4.2.6 REMUNERATION

The question asked was: Is the sales force compensation commensurate with the performance of the sales when compared with competing oil marketing firms?

Suggested Answer	No of Respondent	%
Well compensated	34	74
Fairly compensated	12	26
Not well compensated	-	-
Total	46	100

From the respondents, it was found that 34(74%) fell that the sales force compensation is commensurate with their performance while 12(26%) of all the respondents fell that they are just fairly compensated in relation to what obtain in competitive firms. The researcher feels that since compensation is essential to good performance, the company should motivate its high profile and also strive for improvement to elicit still higher performance from the sales force.

4.2.6 BUDGETING SETTING/PLANNING

This is also very vital to the researcher, since budget setting and planning is essential to successful selling and the planning method adopted.

Suggested Answer	No of Respondent	%
Upward planning	20	43
Top down planning	15	33
Both	10	24
Total	46	100

Of the 46 respondents, all of the 100%) agreed that the sales force is involved in the budget setting/planning process of the company.

In the planning procedure adopted by the company, 20(43%) respondents indicated that upward planning is adopted by the company, 15(33%) respondent indicated that top down planning is used while 10(24%) respondent indicated that both methods are used. This is today that the company uses both methods. Inputs on budget setting/planning are received from the filed and incorporated into the top management budget setting /planning process.

4.3 ORAL INTERVIEW

As earlier mentioned, 40 people were orally interview and all responded, representing 100%.

The oral interview was conducted on:

a) Remuneration of staff.

b) Customer service in retail outlets of elf oil in relation to competitors.

c) Quality of staffing of the station staff ie (pump attendants)

4.3.1 REMUNERATION

The general opinion of all respondents is that in terms of staff remuneration, it is adequate compared to what obtains in other oil marketing companies. However, it was their feeling that the company can do better in terms of station staff remuneration.

4.3.2 CUSTOMER SERVICE

The general opinion of all respondents in terms of customers service in the network (petrol station) is that the service in most elf oil petrol station is as good as in some competitors' outlet like TOTAL, Mobil and AP. The general opinion is that customers' service in elf oil station is very good.

4.3.3 QUALITY OF STATION STAFF

The question of the quality of station staff (pump attendants) was asked. The general opinion of all respondents was that elf competers favourably with TOTAL, Mobil and Ap in terms of quality of staff.

4.4 Findings

The research conducted has revealed that there are six major steps by which sales force can be managed into achieving the company's aspirations, goals and objectives. The six major steps are:

(a) **Establishing sales force objectives** - Investigation revealed that sales force, being part of the marketing mix, is capable of achieving certain marketing objectives better than other tools in the marketing mix.

"As companies have become more market oriented, they require their sales forces to carry out more marketing tasks. The traditional view of the sales force is that they are supposed to produce the targeted sales volume while the company worries about profits."

Their training consists primarily the learning of the art of salesmanship. The conventional view is that salespersons are supposed to produce customer satisfaction and also company profits. They should be skillful in analysing sales data, measuring market potential, gathering market intelligence, and developing marketing strategies and plans.

(b) **Designing Sales Force Strategy** - The research studies show that sales force can be efficiently and effectively managed by designing sales force strategy. The researcher discover that sales force strategy can be developed by the company through understanding of the customer buying process and how the company can best position itself against competitors pursuing the same business. The first thing to clarify here is the type of selling situation that must be handled by the sales force. "There are five types of selling situations:

* Sales representative to buyer - here, a single sales representative talks to a single buyer, prospect or customer in person or over the phone.
* Sales representative to buyer group - there, a sales representative appears before a buying committee to make a sales presentation about a specific product.
* Sales team to buyer group - here, a sales team such as the (company officer) sales manager, sales representative, etc, make a sales presentation to a buying group.
* Conference selling - here the sales representative brings resource people from his company to meet, and discuss problems and mutual opportunity with one or more buyers.
* Seminar selling - here, a company team of technical people conducts an educational seminar for a technical group in a customer company."

Once the company has clarified the types of selling it must perform, it can use either a direct or a contractual sales force. The Elf oil limited uses a direct sales force. As part of its sales force strategy, Elf has structured its sales force on the territorial basis.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 SUMMARY

The researcher commenced the research work with an introduction of what selling is and its importance. The role of the sales person is paramount since he is in direct contact with the customers the sales person is always seen by the customer as the company's representative. Any opinion formed about his company is based on how he presents himself. The product he sells can be accepted or rejected based on his selling skills or ability.

However, over the years, selling skills are for changing because of the increase competition as a result of the large range of identical products available in the market. It is in this regards now that the selling techniques is moving from market to customer orientation. It therefore calls for greater aggressive and efficient selling skills from salesmen. The more skillful the salesperson is in adopting selling techniques, the more he can sell for his organization.

The researcher attempted to identify a statement of the research problems, recognizing four key areas in modern sales management, namely:

i) Improvement of individual productivity

ii) Competition

iii) Increasing technology

iv) Increasing cost of distribution

In conducting the research work the research used two main sources of data collection:

i) use of questionnaires

ii) oral personal face to face interview.

The main source of data for the research work were both primary and secondary. The primary source was directly from the company on which the research was conducted, ie elf oil Nigeria Limited, while books written on sales force management by different authors were also consulted.

The researcher also, as the core objectives of the research work, tried to bring out the aims and objective of the research study which are:

a) To identify the importance of the sales force in marketing oriented company like elf oil Nigeria Limited.

b) To examine the procedure for selecting, trainning, and motivating the sales force.

c) The role of the sales force and its contribution to the overall profitability of the company.

d) To investigate how properly the sales force is motivated

e) To compare the sales face of elf oil Nigeria Limited and that of competitors.

Part of chapter one of this work focused on the general background of the company. In the study of the sales force management of the company with particular reference to the Northern Region the main ares of the study were as already highlighted: the importance of the sales force, the procedure for their selection, training and how well they are motivated.

In the causes of research, it was found that the sales force plays a vital role to the overall profitability of the company. They are involved in the actual selling and therefore generate the money for the company. The sales force with almost twenty sales men in 1997 were able to make a sale of more than 740 million litres of petroleum products with a 5.2 gross profit of more than N50 million contribution to the company. This in itself shows that the sales force plays the major role in the profit of the company.

As to the selection procedure for the sales force, 65% of the questionnaires responded that the major force of selecting salesmen is internal, while 26% said it is external.

The research also attempted to find out the trainning procedure for the sales force. 26% of the respondents said the training is internal. The company has a training school that handle the training of the sales force which include trainning on the field. 74% indicated that the training is both internal and external.

The study also looked into whether the sales force motivation is commensurate to their performance. From both the questionnaires and oral interviews, it was found out that the sales force is adequately compensated compared to what other competitors do to their sales force. 74% of the respondents answered that the sales force is adequately motivated and 26% responded that they are fairly motivated.

As compared to the sales force of other competing marketing companies, Elf oil salesmen are top in terms of quality. A look at the quality of the pump attendant (station staff) in comparison to other oil marketing companies, those of Elf oil were out eh average because oral interview conducted revealed that the quality of their service is fair compared to TOTAL, MOBIL and AP.

This is an area that the companies has to address because customer service is very vital in any selling situation.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The research was conducted with a view of looking into how well managed sales force can contribute to the profitability of a marketing oriented company like Elf oil Nigeria Limited. Since the main aims and objectives of the research work is to identify the importance of the sales force, examine the procedure of selecting and training and how well they are motivated. At the end of the day, the researcher attempted to identify the strength and weakness of the company and offer necessary suggestions for improvements.

The key areas of strength identified:

1. The company has a large well experienced and well organised sales force.
2. The quality of the sales force is high, compare to other oil marketing companies.
3. The company has well organised training department, and adequate attention given to the training of its sales force particularly the training of new salesmen. However, the training of experienced salesmen should be done externally through provision of adequate founds the key areas of weakness identified by the researcher is that network requires more attention.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher found it necessary to make the following suggestions and recommendations:

1) The researcher recommends that more effective management techniques, planning, organizing, directing and control of the sales force should be maintained and improved upon even though it exists.

2) The quality and calibre of the sales force already existing should be maintained, even though the research already shows that it is commendable in the company.

3) The quality of the sales force training within the organization should be improved upon by localizing the external training of the sales force, e.g training the sales force in institution like ASCON, ITF training centers, external training consulting firms, Despite the high cost of training abroad the sales force, especially the experienced ones should be trained abroad for managerial job on selling.

4) Another recommendation of he research is that the compensation of the sales force which was found to be in adequate could still be reviewed. If the straight salary method of compensating salesmen is to be maintained, additional incentives should be added to it, based on excellent performance. If a salesman is not adequately compensated for extra-ordinary performance, his performance will gradually decline.

It is also observed by the researcher that there are so many salesmen in the field for too

long (over 6 years) they should be promoted and given higher responsibilities. If they are not promoted, they should be compensated in such a way that it is motivating, that is internally equitable and externally competitive in the eyes of the sales personnel.

5) The observation made by those orally interviewed, showed that the quality of the pump attendants (station staff) is fair compared to competitors sales assistants. They required to be retrained on good customer service.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. ALFRED, R. O. (1978): The marketing Audit: Methods, Problems and Perspectives New York Face Press. PP 37 - 41.
2. BERTUAND CAULFIELD, (1950): Salesmanship: Principles and Practices, Sir Isaac Pitman and Song New York P 6.
3. BELASCO, J. O. (1966): The Meeting Audit: The Salesman's Role Revisited, Heineman; London.·PP 6 - 11.
4. BOLLING, C. (1970): Sales Management South Western Publishing Co. Cincinnati Ohio PP 145-149
5. DAVID MAYER and GREENBERG, H. M. (1964): What makes a Good Salesman; Harrord business Review Press U. S.A.
6. DAVID, S. H. (1972): The Short-Term Marketing Plan. Prentice Hall, Inc. New Jersey PP69-73
7. DAVID K. R. and WEBSTER F. E. (1968): Sales Force Management The Rohnard Press Co Face Press N. Y.
8. FREDRICK RUSSEL et al, (1969): Textbook of Salesmanship Houghton Mifftein company, London.
9. GEVE, R. L. et al (1979): Social Marketing: its Ethnical Dimensions Mcmillan Publishing Inc; New York.
10. JAMES, A. B. (1966): The Salesmanship Role McGraw-Hill Book Coy (U.K) London
11. JAMES COX (1978): Sales Method New York Amacom.

12. MARVIN, A. J. (1975): The Underestimated potential of the Canned Sales Presentation PP 75-78 Printic - Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.,

13. Mc MURRY (1961): The Mystiquw of Super-Salesmanship Kent Publishing Company, A Division of Wadsworth Inc.

14. Mc MURRY (1968): Dynamics of Sales Organization John Wiley and Sons Inc.

15. Mc MURRY and ARNOLD, J. S. (1968): How to binds a dynamic Sales Organization Business Books Ltd London

16. PAUL HERMANN, (1954): Conquest by Man Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jerssey.

17. PHILIP KOTLER (1980): Principles of Management Prentice Hall, London PP 564-565

18. POKEMPUER, S. J. and BALLEY, E. L. (1970): Sales Forecasting Principles: An Approach to Urbana, University of Winos Press.

19. SEKELY J.B(1978): The Marketing Audit: Method, Problems and Perspective P 37-41. Macmillian Publishing, Co. United Kingdom.

20 STANLEY, J.P. AND EARL L. B (1970): Sales Forecasting Practices An Appraisal PP 54-60.

21. STANTON, W.J. (1981): Fundamentals of Marketing. pp. 401-409 Heineman Publishing Co. London.

22. THOMAS, S. R. and RICHARD L. S. (1968): The Sales Process: An Open System Approach Prentice Hall, Inc Englewood Cliffs N. J.

23. THOMAS AND MARVA HELDEN,(1962): The lengthening Shadow, PP 44 Kent Publishing Company Boston.

24. WALKER et al (1975): Organisation Determinants of the Industrial Salesman's Role Conflicts PP. 32-39. Good year Publishing Co. Inc, Britain.

25. Elf Oil Ltd (1987): "The Success Story" pg. 2.

26. Elf Oil Ltd(1987): "Elf Oil At a Glance" PP 1-4.

APPENDIX

Sir,/Madam

I am Femi Oladujoye, a Post-graduate student of the Dept of Business Administration, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. I am conducting a research on management of sales force in an oil marketing company, and I wish to solicit for your assistance in respect of the following questions.

Please note that the exercise is strictly for academic pursuit and any answer given will be restricted for that purpose. Thank you.

Please provide the appropriate answer by ticking or filling the gaps.

SECTION A

Name of Respondent . . . . . .

Sex . . . . . Male[ ] female[ ]

Marital Status . . . . . .

Nationality . . . . . .

State of Origin . . . . . L.G.A.....

Educational Qualification . . . . . .

Company working for . . . . . .

Section or Dept . . . . . .

Rancor position in the company . . . . . .

SECTION B

1. How long have you been in the sales Department in your company?

   1-5yrs [ ] 6-10yrs [ ]

   11-15yrs [ ] 16-20yrs [ ]

2. How well organized is your sales Department?

   Very Good [ ]

   Good [ ]

   Poor [ ]

3. How do you rate the quality of your company's sales force?

   Very Good [ ]

   Good [ ]

   Poor [ ]

. How do you compare the quality of your sales force to that of your competitors?

   Very Good [ ]

   Good [ ]

   Average [ ]

   Poor [ ]

5. eight leading major oil marketing companies which one has the best sales force?

Total [ ] National [ ]

A P [ ] Unipetrol [ ]

Texaco [ ] Mobic [ ]

Agip [ ] Elf [ ]

6. What is your company's source of recruitment?

External [ ]

Internal [ ]

Both [ ]

7. How down your company conduct her sales force training programme?

External [ ]

Internal [ ]

Both [ ]

8. Does training has any significant on your sales force performance?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

14. Which is the best method of compensation for your company's sales force?

a. Salary only [ ]

b. Salary pas commission [ ]

c. Commission only [ ]

d. Salary pas percentage of target achieved [ ]