



MBA 8995 Special Topics  
Selling Ideas at Work: One on One  
Spring 2011 Rochester Course ID 72664

CourseDetails: 3:00-6:30 4/29 and 5/13  
9:00-12:00 4/30 and 5/14

Prerequisites: MBA student (non-MBA graduate student with college consent)

Professor: Dr. Stephen B. Castleberry  
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Moodle Site: <https://moodle.umn.edu/course/view.php?id=14801>

Office Hours: Before or after class or by appointment

Course Description: The primary objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of, and development of skills in selling ideas at work.

Outcome Goals: Utilizing the skills developed in the course (building relationships, adapting, planning, presenting, responding to objections, obtaining commitment, and follow through) students should be able to effectively sell an idea at work to an individual.

Required Reading: Articles provided on Moodle.  
Note: PowerPoint slides are on Moodle.

Grade Determination: Course participation 50%  
Paper 50%

## COURSE OUTLINE

For my course policies, see <http://www.d.umn.edu/~scastleb/policies.html>

Date	Topics/Assignments
F 4/29	<p><b>See Moodle for required course preparation and assignments that are due.</b></p> <p>Selling Ideas (what, to whom) and Building Relationships</p> <p>Adapting to the unique social style of the "buyer"</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Planning for the one-on-one meeting (why plan, goals, practice methods)</p>
S 4/30	<p><b>See Moodle for required course preparation and assignments that are due.</b></p> <p>Engaging in an effective meeting (starting, tying to the person's needs, assessing reactions and adapting, strengthening the presentation)</p> <p>Helpfully responding to objections and concerns</p> <p>Obtaining commitment to the idea</p>
F 5/13	<p><b>See Moodle for required course preparation and assignments that are due.</b></p> <p>Practice skills 1 x 1</p> <p>Classroom discussion on skill sessions</p> <p>Effectively following through after the meeting</p>
S 5/14	<p><b>See Moodle for required course preparation and assignments that are due.</b></p> <p>Final skill sessions and take-aways</p> <p>Practice skills 1 x 1 using your paper as the scenario (Confidentiality agreements will be signed by all)</p> <p><b>Paper due on Moodle site on Monday, May 16 at 8:00 am</b></p>

### Absolute Deadline for Course Work

In order for me to complete the grades by the deadline for UMD, you must complete any course activities by this time: May 16 at 8 am. Any course activity after this time won't be included in calculating your grade. Thanks in advance for your assistance in helping me meet the UMD grade deadline.

# Course Participation

“Classroom Participation” does not mean attempting to be the center of attention. I will grade you on the following aspects of classroom participation:

- \$ active listening (including appropriate nonverbal communication)
- \$ treating other students with respect and courtesy
- \$ indicating your desire to participate by raising your hand
- \$ being on time to class and attendance at all class sessions
- \$ being an active participant in group and class exercises
- \$ engaging effectively in role plays as a seller and as a buyer
- \$ avoiding engaging in non-class related activities during class. For rules with regard to cell phones and laptops see my policies: <http://www.d.umn.edu/~scastleb/policies.html>

# Course Paper

**Purpose.** We could talk all day about how to sell ideas at work. But it will be more meaningful if you actually go through the process of selling an idea you have in mind. That way, you can “try on” the tools and techniques and theories you’ll be learning in this course. You can see what would work and what wouldn’t work for you.

If you choose an actual idea you would like to sell, an added benefit of this paper is that it allows you to plan and strategize for how you would go about selling it.

**Selection of Idea.** You can choose any idea for the project, as long as it is something that could be sold at work. Unit 1 gives many examples of the kinds of ideas that are sold at work. Chances are, you have one or more such ideas that you would actually like to sell where you work. Feel free to use one of them. On the other hand, you may be hesitant to share details about a real-life situation. That’s fine. You are free to choose any idea to sell at work. It can be real or something totally made up or something that is real, but for which you have disguised the situation in some way. I leave that completely up to you. Just make sure that from the start, you choose something you’re going to be comfortable writing about and turning in to me.

Don’t choose as your idea anything that has to do with your home or personal life (e.g., getting your spouse to agree to a vacation). Don’t choose as your idea something you would like to sell to a friend or relative (e.g., selling a time share unit to your neighbor). Keep it in the business or organizational realm.

**Depth of Paper and Layout Requirements.** The paper could go on forever, if you’re not careful. Please don’t let it. I’ve indicated the suggested page length of each section below. **The total paper (not counting the appendix) must not exceed 8 pages.** These suggestions assume you are following my requirements for the paper which are the following:

- \* single-spaced
- \* 12-point Times New Roman font
- \* 1-inch margins all around
- \* page numbers included
- \* bullets points to help organize your points

**Grading.** The paper is graded on the following points:

\* Grammar/directions: Extent to which you use correctly spelled words, correct phrasing, and follow the required outline and directions exactly. I generally count off one point for each of these errors. That can really add up fast, so please have someone proof your paper carefully.

\* Extent to which you provide all of the required information (e.g., list at least 15 strong, unique objections).

\* Extent to which you correctly relate to the course material (e.g., correct use of terminology covered in the course).

You must use the **bolded** headings and subheadings shown here in your paper.

Title Page (include a phrase that summarizes your selling situation (e.g., "Selling a New Pipeline Assessment System to my Manager," your name, your email address, and the date)

## **I. Background information** (about 1/2 page)

### **A. Organization and situation** (5 points)

Provide background information about the company or organization you work for as well as the situation as it currently exists. If your idea is replacing something that is already in place, give me the details about what is currently being used (but don't give me the pros and cons here; that belongs later in the paper).

### **B. The idea you're going to sell** (5 points)

Provide information about the idea you are going to sell (e.g., what it is, how it would work, how the decision makers or others might use or implement it). This should be written in easy-to-understand language for someone who is not an expert in the area (i.e., don't just copy this out of a brochure or technical product description). Don't put the pros and cons of your idea here; that goes later in the paper.

## **II. The decision maker you will be selling to in this face-to-face presentation** (about 1/2 page)

Note: While you may be making a number of presentations to various people and groups in order to sell your idea, what I'm interested in here is just the individual decision maker you will meet with in this single presentation.

### **A. The decision maker** (10 points)

Include the title (and brief job description) of the decision maker, and tell me her/his social style.

### **B. Decision maker's needs** (10 points)

Bullet point information about the decision maker's needs with regard to the idea you're selling.

### **C. What you've done so far with the decision maker with regard to your idea** (5 points)

Bullet point what you have done, if anything, with the decision maker up to this point about your idea (e.g., previous meetings or phone conversations; material you have sent him or her to look at; conversations with the decision maker's receptionist, etc.).

## **III. The decision maker's options** (about 1 page)

Help me understand the options the decision maker has with regard to your idea.

### **A. The status quo (what is currently being done)** (5 points)

No need to fully describe this again, since you've already done so. Just provide the strengths and weaknesses of maintaining the status quo. Use a table format.

1. Strengths
2. Weaknesses

**B. Your idea** (5 points)

No need to fully describe this again, since you've already done so. Just provide the strengths and weaknesses of your idea. Use a table format.

1. Strengths
2. Weaknesses

**C. Direct competitor to your idea** (5 points)

Briefly describe a competing idea to your idea. (Note: This is not what is currently being used.) Use a table format.

1. Strengths
2. Weaknesses

**IV. Objectives for the actual face-to-face meeting with the decision maker to sell your idea** (about 1/3 page) (10 points)

Provide a clear, concise statement of your goals for the face-to-face meeting (do not include any goals for any non-face-to-face meetings or what will happen after this face-to-face meeting):

**A. Primary goal**

**B. Minimum goal** (this must be something you absolutely can accomplish in the meeting)

**C. Optimistic goal**

**V. The face-to-face meeting itself** (about 2 pages)

Provide the following information about the meeting in which you will sell your idea to the decision maker:

**A. The Place and Time** The place and time you would like the meeting to occur and why you think this would be the best. (5 points)

**B. Sell the Idea** Bullet point how you plan to sell your idea during this actual meeting. (Note: Include any visuals that you would use to sell your idea in the appendix.) (25 points)

**VI. Objections** (about 2 pages) (25 points)

Include a strong list of possible objections (minimum of 15). Number them. Use 1st-person singular form of pronouns and verbs (i.e., "I don't like . . ."). Under each objection, tell how you would helpfully respond to each. Use 1st-person style for your responses.

**Appendix** (use whatever number of pages you need) (25 points)

Include here any visual aids you would use to sell your idea. Include actual PowerPoints, charts, tables, graphs, testimonials, maps, etc. These should be complete and ready to actually use in a real meeting.