

ALL OBSTACLES TO RETAIL SALES TRAINING NOW REMOVED

There are no longer any excuses for retail members of SAPMA not to send in-store sales staff for paint training, Nick Shave, chairman of the association's Retail Committee, stated in his annual report to the SAPMA AGM.

Shave says in the report that the reluctance of retailers to train sales staff had been blamed on the non-accreditation of the SAPMA training programmes, the cost of the training, as well as the loss of productivity while staff was attending training.

He said SAPMA had now provided solutions to all these objections as:

- * Retail video training modules can be used in-house at the stores or at employees' homes;
- * The video training programmes are accredited by the relevant Sector Education & Training Authorities (SETAs);
- * Online assessments of individual training progress can be provided immediately so that the student could move on to the next module;
- * Funding for the training is available from the Wholesale and Retail SETA once the retail member had completed a Work Skills Development Plan and applied for a training grant;
- * Funding is available for BBBEE rating score improvement; and
- * The in-store sales staff will be officially recognised as Professional In-Store Sales Specialists once all modules have been passed.

Shave's report says that a study was conducted by the US Retail Industry sector which proved that that paint had been commoditised by the large mass merchandisers, and that smaller retailers were unable to complete on price. "To counter this, the American retailers embarked on a programme of training their in-store sales personnel to offer an 'In-store Paint Specialist' service containing diagnostic advice to customers as well as guidance through the entire process of choosing the correct paint as well as purchasing the ancillary products needed to complete the job. Members should make use of the SAPMA sales staff training programme which is accessible on the SAPMA website at a very reasonable cost."

In his report, he also advised that SAPMA's accredited Applicators' Training Skills Programme would now also include a module on paint tinting. "As this is a most sought-after skill in the paint retail sector, SAPMA has decided to make this training available as a stand-alone module specifically designed for the paint retailer," Shave added.

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