



NAMA Sales Competition: Preliminary Round

Problem

MGM has a supplier with ten railcars of a bulk corn starch which exceed what they can consume anytime soon in their food process. MGM buys the excess starch at a very attractive discount but since the starch is loaded in specialty railcars which are in short supply the company that MGM is buying the product from needs these railcars delivered to the destination, unloaded, and returned ASAP. It is not practical to transfer the product from the existing railcars onto other railcars or onto trucks at the origin, so it only makes sense to ship the loaded railcars to the end user (buyer) of the ingredient.

In this scenario, when MGM buys the loaded railcars they do not yet have a buyer identified for this specific ingredient so MGM's trader needs to cold call a list of potential dairy feed companies, pitch this product as a replacement product for corn, which the feed companies currently use, then sell and deliver the product as soon as possible to get the railcars empty and returned to the original shipper.

Corn starch has the right carbohydrate profile to replace corn in dairy rations, although it is not as easy to handle starch because it is a powder rather than a kernel. MGM plans to incent the potential buyer with a price that will make the starch a very attractive alternative, but even after saving \$25,000 the customer will be hesitant to want to accept the responsibility and extra time and effort required to handle the cheaper alternative feed ingredient. For MGM to return appropriate value for its time investment and for the empty railcars to be returned to the supplier in the agreed timeframe, this sale must be executed very quickly.

Challenge, should you choose to accept it:

You are a trader at MGM and you are assigned to make the sale. The judge is your customer and he is the ingredient buyer for a dairy feed company which has no prior relationship with MGM, nor a knowledge of its business. You must introduce yourself, and MGM, then create some quick credibility so you are afforded the opportunity to share your sales pitch, help the customer understand why they should be interested in the \$25,000 price incentive (\$2,500 per railcar load of starch) and be willing to invest all the additional effort required to substitute the starch for corn in their feed ration.

The contestant will be rewarded for:

- Your ability to establish professional credibility to a customer who knows nothing about your company.
- The message you share with the potential customer to help them recognize the opportunity as a desirable reward for the additional handling effort required.
- Your persistence to not accept a “not interested” response merely because the customer is not comfortable with who MGM is, why MGM has the product, and what may be wrong with the product that is not being openly stated.
- Demonstrating creativity. We don’t want to hear the “usual” approach which typically is not effective.
- You have 10 minutes to demonstrate confidence, execute your sales skills in a genuine and professional way, get the customer to understand and align with the opportunity, and potentially close the deal.