

# **Instructional Materials: Principles of Marketing MKT201; Spring 2016**

## **Introduction**

*Principles of Marketing*, MKT201, is an introductory, core requirement course in the business degree curriculum. There is not a prerequisite for this course. As *Principles of Marketing* forms the foundation of advanced marketing courses and business learning, it is important for students to understand the key marketing terms, concepts, and theories. Although I must help them acquire requisite knowledge, I believe it's important for the students to be able to apply, analyze, and evaluate these terms, concepts, and theories—in addition to being able to explain them on an exam.

## **Marketing Concept Being Presented**

Today's marketing is all about creating customer value and building profitable customer relationships. A company makes four customer-driven marketing strategy decisions: (1) dividing markets into meaningful customer groups (segmentation), (2) choosing which customer groups to serve (targeting), (3) creating market offerings that best serve targeted customers (differentiation), and (4) positioning the offering in the target customers' minds, relative to competing products or services, on an important attribute (positioning —*the topic of the unit I am presenting*).

## **Session and Course Learning Objectives**

Learning, activities, and assignments for this unit on positioning will address session-specific and overall course learning objectives. Learning objectives for the positioning session are: (1) define product positioning, (2) explain how companies position products against competitive offerings, and (3) analyze real-world marketing scenarios. This session addresses the course learning objectives that students will: (1) explain the significance of key marketing terms and concepts in a variety of marketing situations, and (2) analyze real-world marketing challenges faced by a company or a brand. These two course learning objectives align with Fink's *Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, and Human Dimension* attributes of Significant Learning.

## **Approach**

So they may digest and reflect upon the material, and come to class prepared with questions, students are asked to read the positioning chapter text and complete a written, open-ended question homework

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assignment *prior* to class. Students also bring their responses to class. The reading and homework assignment are augmented by informative class discussions and presentations intertwined with real-world stories to communicate marketing concepts and principles to the group. As I strive to meet the needs (visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic) of each type of learner a couple of times per topic, a variety of instructional delivery methods are incorporated in this session. This approach follows the theory that “learning is more thorough and is retained better if multiple modes are used to input and process information.” Instructional materials included in the session on positioning are: (1) homework-turned-pop quiz, (2) PowerPoint slides with notes, (3) positioning map in-class group exercise, and (4) “3-2-1 Minute Paper” Classroom Assessment Technique (CAT).

Using the PowerPoint slides, I begin the session with a visual and aural review of the three elements of a customer-driven marketing strategy previously discussed, then introduce the fourth aspect of the strategy: positioning. After presenting the positioning session's learning objectives and defining product positioning, I turn the discussion to positioning maps—defining positioning maps and explaining how companies can utilize them in determining a product's positioning against competitive offerings. To facilitate learning and make the concept more tangible, a color model of real-world positioning map is used.

### **Active Learning Activity: Small Group Product Positioning Map**

According to research in active learning, students learn more and retain their learning longer if they acquire it in an active rather than passive manner. As having students engage with the material is an important part of the learning process, the attached in-class positioning map group exercise affords the students the opportunity to practice utilizing a real-world marketing tool. This hands-on activity also provides a bridge between abstract and concrete learning, and can aid in the students' development of a more complex approach to learning. Although this exercise has the learning objective of the students applying the positioning map concept just covered in class and explaining how companies position products against competitive offerings, the activity also serves to break up the lecture and refocus the class, give visual and kinesthetic learnings an opportunity to better understand the material, provide an opportunity for students to get to know each other better, and practice working in a group. This activity will follow the “think-pair-share” model as students will first think about the positioning map exercise by themselves, then discuss with members of their small group, then present and discuss as a group in

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class. Although the positioning map itself will not be graded, the participation and discussion will count towards the “class participation and attendance” grade and will be assessed using the “Class Participation and Attendance” rubric given to the class at the beginning of the semester. This active learning exercise highlights Fink's *Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, and Human Dimension* (being able to discuss marketing terms with others).

After discussing the results of our group positioning map exercise and answering any questions, our session concludes with an interactive story that illustrates the marketing concepts in action and reveals a real-world, modern marketing situation faced by Dunkin' Donuts. Through a visual, aural, and read/write approach, students learn that Dunkin' Donuts successfully positions its products as “low brow” and “everyman” and targets not the Starbucks “coffee snob,” but the “average Joe.” Mixing the session's assignments and in-class discussions with individual learning, small group work, and whole class participation addresses those who are comfortable learning alone and those who prefer working in large, active groups.

### **Assessment**

Pivotal to the teaching process is having an accurate assessment of how much of the material the student understands. At different points in the course, I ask students to demonstrate mastery by answering questions or showing what they have learned. The attached homework assignment speaks to Walvoord's approach of “creating incentives for students to do “first exposure” work (for instance, reading) before they come to class, so that class time can be used for discussion, practice, and feedback.” Students are given the reading and homework assignment on product positioning *prior* to its class session. These written, short-answer homework questions are brought to the class session on product positioning. This homework assignment, which becomes an in-class, open-notes pop quiz, helps me gauge the students' ability to explain the significance of key marketing terms and concepts—a course learning objective. After the class, students complete a written “3-2-1” Minute Paper CAT so I may assess if they understand the concepts and theories presented.

By administering the attached “3-2-1” CAT, I can learn what concepts the students understand, which points the students found the least clear or most confusing in the lesson, and determine how to most

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effectively move forward with that material in class. For students who are reluctant to participate and ask questions during class, this CAT is a safe environment in which they may ask questions and disclose uncertainty on the material. This CAT also offers the students the opportunity to reflect on their learning. Through this CAT, I can understand the depth and pace of student understanding and adjust my teaching strategies to better assist in their learning.