

4 Strategies to Succeed in Sales

Preparing today can set you up for the future — just ask this National FFA Career Development Event individual winner and National FFA corporate partner. — By Jodi Helmer

Aliyah Scarlato is a freshman on the pre-law track at the University of California, Los Angeles. Although the Galt-Liberty Ranch FFA Alumna doesn't plan to pursue a career in sales, participating — and taking top honors — in the 2024 National FFA Agricultural Sales Career Development Event (CDE) helped put her on the path to success.

"FFA and its competitions helped me a lot with public speaking," says Scarlato. "I don't think I would have done a lot of the things I do now without the organization."

As you grow your skills, apply these top tips from Scarlato and Jami

Photography: Courtesy of Aliyah Scarlato

[CAREER SUCCESS]

Limestall, the digital learning enablement lead at Bayer.

1. Do your research.

Learning all about a product is the first step in a successful sale. Scarlato "sold" pig feed at the state competition and Kubota equipment at the national competition. To prepare for her sales pitch, she reviewed product information, studied company websites, watched YouTube videos and went on industry tours.

"Being able to apply the knowledge of seeing [the product] in person was something I did a lot during the sales presentations," she says.

2. Practice.

There's more to sales than knowing the specifications. Limestall encourages students to research how the product helps customers.

"It's about getting the general information then letting [students] practice the sale," she says.

3. Build rapport.

"A mistake is not looking at the needs and wants of the customer and just throwing information at them," Scarlato says. Instead, take time to make small talk and get to know your customer to build their trust.



In addition to securing the top participant award, Aliyah Scarlato helped her team receive second place honors during the 97th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis.

4. Stand out.

In FFA competitions, judges hear similar sales pitches from multiple members. Scarlato says projecting confidence and engaging in conversation make a presentation memorable.

"Being a helpful, personable and confident character who genuinely wants to build a connection with them is a lot better than just pushing a product," she adds.

Start Selling

Scan this code to access "Entering the Sales World," an interactive lesson created by National FFA in partnership with Bayer, to help apply what you've learned.



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