COMPLETE PROFILE OF THE «IMPORT AND EXPORT SALES ASSISTANT» COMMON CERTIFICATION

Education and Culture
Lifelong learning programme
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IMPORT AND EXPORT SALES ASSISTANT

JOB DEFINITION

The import and export sales assistant contributes to the sustainable international development of the company through the marketing of goods and services in overseas markets and the optimising of purchases in the context of globalization.

PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT

This profession is practised in many different contexts :
- All industrial and commercial companies, particularly SME's
- Trading companies (distributors, wholesalers…)
- Service providers (transport companies, freight agents..)
- Consultants and support organisations (International Chambers of Commerce and Industry , Local government organisations)
- Companies providing international development support

LEVEL OF RESPONSABILITY

In the context of the company's international development, he or she is responsible for putting strategic decisions into practice and for coordinating international operations between the different functions of the firm and/or external partners. Thanks to his/her analysis and passing on of information, he or she enables the company to react to evolutions in its environment.

As a young graduate, the Import and export sales assistant
- collects all types of information from overseas markets and informs the information system to make strategic decision making easier
- looks for and detects purchasing opportunities for goods and services overseas
- prepares, carries outs and checks on the follow-up of import-export operations
- carries out these tasks with profitability, quality and customer satisfaction objectives in mind.

His/her efficiency is linked to competence in information and communication technology, practice of several foreign languages and intercultural openness..

Following a period of adaptation to the company and its culture, his or her knowledge of the techniques and practice of international trade and his skills will mean a rapid evolution to the posts of international sales representative or international buyer.

SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONNAL ACTIVITIES AND TASKS DEFINED IN COMMON

Activity 1: Carrying out studies and business monitoring
1. Permanent market monitoring (desk research)
2. Collecting information abroad
3. Preparing decision making

Activity 2: Export selling
1. Prospecting for elaborating adapted offers (pre-sales activities)
2. Selling
3. Following up sales

Activity 3: Import buying
1. Preparing the import buying activities (supplier database)
2. Support the buying negotiations
3. Following up the import buying activities

Activity 4: Coordinating services for successful import buying and export selling
1. Choosing service providers (insurance, logistics, financing etc)
2. Insuring administration of operations
3. Coordinating quality control / good business activities

Activity 5: Managing relations and contacts in different contexts and cultures
1. Producing messages integrating socio-cultural elements
2. Constituting and maintaining a pluricultural network of contacts

A detailed table of activities and tasks, with corresponding procedures, resources and expected results, is available.

DESCRIPTION OF THE JOB PROFILE IN TERMS OF ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

A1 CARRYING OUT STUDIES AND BUSINESS MONITORING		
T1A1- *Permanent market monitoring* *(desk research)*		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Internal information Communication leaflet of the firm Databases Information about customers, suppliers or services providers Commercial reports Studies and researches Technical documents Ethical charter Diaries, timetables **External information** Databases Legal documents and regulations Specialized press Markets surveys Information about competition, countries Professional directory	**Procedures** Constraints on time, information quality (in terms of ethics and legislation), cost of information,. Methods and protocols related to information (access, diffusion, update, confidentiality) **Methods** Research, selection and validation of the information using usual hardware and software.	Work station connected to the internal network of the firm with access to Internet, printer, scanner, Fax, telephone . Office software . Collaborative work tools . Working protocol for database search engine . Access rights . Subscription to specialized websites
Expected results		
Organised work List of priorities Relevant and up to date market information Respect of allocated time and budget Up to date and operational business information system		

T2A1 Collecting information abroad		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Objectives and description of the mission Addresses book in the target country Socio-cultural information of the target country Information to be detailed Cultural and professional codes of the target country Customers data Market datas	**Procedures** from T1A1 plus : Legislation and regulations from the country, cultural and professional codes **Methods** : Research, selection and validation of the information in an intercultural and travelling context using usual hardware and software.	Mobile equipment (mobile computer, mobile telephone, PDA, GPS, etc.) equipped for monitoring . Questionnaire processing software
Expected results		
Optimal information about new international trade and opportunities collected abroad Enlargement and maintaining of the contacts' network, trustworthy relationships Up to date business information system showing opportunities and threats		

T3A1 Preparing decision making		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Requirements statements Graphic charter Models for reports Study reports (prior or bought for this opportunity)	**Procedures :** Internal decision making procedures Handing over of the information **Methods :** Analysis, exploitation, presentation and diffusion of the information using adapted software and procedure.	. Office software . Collaborative work tools . Working protocol for database search engine . Questionnaire processing software
Expected results		
Action plan for collecting and processing information Selected relevant information Formulated requirements for the subcontracting of studies Action recommendations for decision makers		

A2 – EXPORT SELLING		
T1A2 prospecting for elaborating adapted offers (pre-sales activities)		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Description of the aims of the database Customers and prospects database Prospecting targets Information about customers and prospects Prospecting action plan Budget Technical documents Prospecting tools Mass mailing models Legislation and regulation constraints Prospecting guidelines	**Procedures :** Use of customer information Computing and freedom of information regulations Distribution norms (postal, electronic, etc.) Foreign language used by customers **Methods :** In international context : Target identification Choice of the prospecting methods Elaboration of prospecting tools Implementation of the prospecting Prospecting follow-up Analysis of results	Business relationship management software Customer relationship management software Digital Direct marketing software Fax mailing software, Graphics and publishing software Integrated telephone and computer software for prospecting
Expected results		
An appropriate, detailed and updated file of prospects A prospecting plan Implementation of a well-organised and effective communication plan toward prospects Prospecting assessment Prospecting follow-up An adapted offer		

T2A2 Selling		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Reports on the prospecting activities Tariffs and tariff conditions of the firm General selling conditions Model of contracts Selling plan/strategy Commercial conditions Ethical and cultural information about the targeted country Negotiation and selling supporting tools	**Procedures :** Selling strategy of the firm International commercial and administrative constraints (regulations…) **Methods :** Adapted offer to the customer's expectations Communication techniques taking into account cultural specificities Negotiating techniques in an international context Decision making	Mobile electronic equipment (laptop, mobile telephone, etc.) E-commerce websites Proposals software On line cataogue management software Customer relationship management software
Expected results		
Negotiating plan Negotiating tools Mastered piloting of the negotiation interviews Preparation of a contract formalizing agreements		

T3A2 Following up sales		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Commercial contracts Contracts with service providers Project planning charts Internal procedures for processing orders Tracing of orders Identification of incidents Quality indicators Customer files	**Procedures :** Tracing of orders Identification and follow-up of incidents Dealing with incidents, conflicts and disagreements Reporting Ethical rules **Methods :** Dealing with complaints, incidents and conflicts Decision making Development of customer loyalty	Automatic data exchange software (ADE) or digital exchange software (DDE) Logistics software Customer relationship management software
Expected results		
Follow-up and processing of orders Handling of setbacks Optimal quality of the customer service An updated customer file and business information system		

A3 IMPORT BUYING

T1A3 Preparing the import buying activities		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Internal information : Database of referenced suppliers Specifications of the buying offer General buying conditions **External information :** Directories, sourcing websites Standards and regulations related to the targeted market Data on third party certification for suppliers and intercultural information for countries	**Procedures :** Buying and call for tenders procedures (constraints in terms of delays, quality of the information, regulations, costs…) Sourcing **Methods :** Methods of selection, validation and information reporting using adapted softwares	Business relationship management data base with acces to suppliers Internet access Access fees to e-procurement websites and portals Information websites on countries and companies CD-Rom with regulation statements
Expected results		
Identified potential suppliers Creation of a potential suppliers database A selection of potential suppliers Updated information in the supplier database		

T2A3 Supporting the buying negotiations		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Specifications of the buying offer List of selected suppliers Offers received Market regulations (customs) Buying supporting tools General buying conditions Business and cultural information on source countries	**Procedures :** Elaborating the call for tender Sourcing **Methods :** Analysis, selection and validation of suppliers of scoring method Negotiation buying methods	Market place Spread sheet Software and web sites for tender for international offers
Expected results		
Elaboration and dissemination of a call for tender Analysis of offers received An optimal preparation of the buying meeting A preparation of decision making for the choice of suppliers		

T3A3 Following up the import buying activities

INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Follow-up table of purchases Performance indicators Suppliers database Buying contracts	**Procedures :** Carrying out contracts Handling of setbacks **Methods :** Administrative follow-up of the delivery Assessment of the suppliers' performance	Supply chain management software, scoring data software, order follow up software Digital mail box Phone, fax

Expected results
Efficient coordination and realization of the buying order An optimal handling of setbacks An assessment of the supplier's service efficiency Update of the suppliers database

A4 COORDINATING SERVICES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPORT BUYING AND EXPORT SELLING

T1A4 Choosing service providers

INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Internal information : Database of existing service providers Main contract to be carried out Buying and selling procedures of the firm **External information :** Offers from service providers Information on service providers Issued by third party certifiers Professional directories	**Procedures :** Recruitment of service providers (taking into account constraints in terms of delays, quality of the information, regulations, costs…) Establishment of service provider contracts Current standards and regulations Ethical and quality charter of the firm **Methods :** Methods of selection, validation and recruitment of service providers Decision making using adapted tools	Websites and portals of service providers Electronic administration software CD-Rom with regulation statements

Expected results
Selection of appropriate and reliable service providers for all operations to be externalised Optimal follow-up of the service providers' activities

T2A4 Insuring administration for operations		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Documentary transaction files Main contract Choices of the firm in terms of insurance, carrier, forwarding agent, financing… Performance indicators	**Procedures :** Administration procedures for import or export operations Standards (quality) Ethical rules **Methods :** Choice of incoterms and calculation of associated Taking into account of legal constraints Decision making	Automatic data exchange management software (ADE) or Digital data exchange software (DDE) Supply chain management software
Expected results		
An efficient, effective, up to date and traceable administration of the buying and selling activities An optimal exchange of information with internal and external parties enabling an optimal communication and data processing		

T3A4 Coordinating quality control / good business activities		
INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Reporting on incidents Contracts with service providers Follow-up documents of activities Commercial contracts and documentary transaction files Gantt charts or similar project planning charts Service providers' data base	**Procedures :** Quality control Follow-up of operations Procedures for managing and solving setbacks **Methods :** Project planning Management of service providers Management of risks Decision making	Supply chain management software Digital mail box Telephone, printer
Expected results		
An efficient management of activities Partners and working processes complying with the most recent quality criteria and international standards Respect of business best practices An optimal exchange of information to internal and external parties, in order to create an optimal working processes and output		

A5 MANAGING RELATIONS AND CONTACTS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS AND CULTURES

T1A5 Producing messages integrating socio-cultural elements

INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Objectives of the mission Sociological, cultural and professional information Network database (organisations, partners, people) Models for professional communication and models of professional practices Precise description of the relationship	**Procedures :** Professional and cultural codes from the foreign country concerned Firm and partners' communication protocols **Methods :** Group and network communication techniques in a multicultural context and in a foreign language	Office software Business contact relationship management database software CD rom with templates for EDM (electronic data management) Phone, fax, printer Professional dictionaries

Expected results
A good understanding of professional practices and sociological, economical and cultural environment of countries Diffusion of useful information on various countries' business practices towards the collaborators concerned An optimal use and adaptation of communication techniques depending on the person and situation An adequate oral and written communication in the required foreign language, respecting the codes and norms of the foreign country concerned

T2A5 Constituting and maintaining a pluricultural network of contacts

INFORMATION	PROCEDURES (to respect) AND METHODS (to use)	HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
Network database (organisations, partners, people) Precise description of the relationship (aims, human and material means) Budget of the operation Performance indicators Follow-up or piloting tools from partners	**Procedures :** Time and budget constraints Managing business contact protocols Intercultural communication codes **Methods :** Techniques of communication, animation, meeting piloting, organisation of events Persuasive communication in a foreign language	Multimedia Presentation software Electronic mailbox Business contact database management software Video projector, sound system Office software Collaborative work tools

Expected results
An available up to date database and network of business contacts An optimal and trustful network of relations

Descriptive table of the common reference units			
Certification units	Skills (S)	Competence (C)	Knowledge(K)
CU1 : International marketing			
CU11 : Market research and market planning on foreign markets	CU11S1 Collecting information through permanent market monitoring (desk research) and field research abroad and checking reliability CU11S2 Analysing and selecting relevant commercial information and regulation constraints about foreign markets CU11S3 Formulating requirements for the subcontracting of studies and following up on the studies on foreign markets CU11S4 Proposing a general outline for a concrete action plan based upon the commercial policy of the company and the SWOT analysis CU11S5 Making a summary and communicating to superiors to prepare decision making	CU11WC1 Organising and planning work activities, being autonomous CU11WC2 Being alert to opportunities and threats CU11WC3 Applying commercial insight	**1 International marketing** 1.1 Introduction to marketing 1.2. Market principles and structure 1.3. Marketing plan 1.4. Monitoring and Market studies 1.5. Export « swot » 1.6. Internationalization strategies 1.7. Internationalization support networks **2 Computing** 2.1. Information research techniques **3 Environment** **3.1 Economic** 3.1.1. Economic, human and social indicators 3.1.2. Development and international trade indicators 3.1.3. Insertion of national into international economy 3.1.4. Principles of organisation of international exchanges 3.1.5. Principal trends of world exchanges **3.2.Geopolitic** 3.2.1. Different zones 3.2.2. Country risks and rating 3.2.3. Identities 3.2.4. Natural and human resources **3.3.Laws and regulations** 3.3.1. Legal system 3.3.2. .Regulations fields (norms, certification, exchange regulations)

			3.3.3. International legal frameworks 3.3.4. Fiscal, customs regulation **4 Management tools** 4.1.Statistical analysis (descriptive statistics and prevision methods) **5. Communication** 5.1.Professional written communication
CU12 : The business information system	CU12S1 Using appropriate techniques in picking up available information in all forms CU12S2 Organising and pricing the collecting and information handling process CU12S3 Using and updating a database of business contacts CU12S4 Updating and enriching regularly the business information system CU12S5 Communicating in order to prepare the decision	CU12WC1 Critical information monitoring	**2 Computing** 2.2.Making of and composants of a hardware / software architecture 2.3 Electronic communication tools and collaborative work 2.4. Data security 2.5. prospects and clients data base **5. Communication** 5.2.Cost and efficiency of information 5.3.Information management
CU2 : Export selling			
CU21 : Prospecting and customer/partner follow up	CU21S1 Identifying and selecting targets according to the specific characteristics of foreign markets CU21S2 Assessing the value of existing clients CU21S3 Organising prospection and communicating in a foreign language with potential foreign clients/partners CU21S4 Analysing, assessing and following up the prospection CU21S5 Constituting, managing and updating a reliable, multicultural network of contacts	CU21WC1 Communicating with contacts, using and enlarging his professional network CU21WC2 Being loyal and securing the company's interests CU21WC3 Working in a team	**1. International Marketing** 1.8. Prospection plan 1.9. Market demand 1.10.Commercial and financial credibility of prospect and client 1.11 Customer service quality assurance 1.12 Sales network support, distributor and agent **5. Communication** 5.4. Oral communication : face to face and telephone interviews, sales discussions 5.5. Written communication : commercial correspondence **6. Foreign languages**

	CU21S6 Animating the network of contacts and sales		
CU22 Negotiating	CU22S1 Formulating a suitable offer CU22S2 Preparing and organising the sales mission CU22S3 Negotiating in a foreign language with a foreign client/partner	CU22WC1 Listening actively, empathizing	**1. International Marketing** 1.13. Appropriate offer according to customer's expectations **7. Negotiation** 7.1. Negotiation strategies and techniques 7.2. Sales supports and pitches, 7.3. Commercial reporting **4. Management tools** 4.2. Costs, margin, price and tariffs 4.3. Statistical analysis of sales 4.4. Customer value analysis 4.5. Sales and treasury budget 4.6. Invoicing, VAT **6. Foreign language**
CU3 : Import buying			
CU31 Identify potential suppliers and sourcing	CU31S1 Identifying potential suppliers CU31S2 Selecting potential suppliers	CU31WC1 making a working plan and list of priorities CU31WC2 Paying attention to quality standards and norms	**8. Marketing for suppliers** 8.1. Buying policy and organizing buying 8.2. Sourcing and procurement 8.3 Market place, buying platform, auctions on line, e-sourcing 8.4.Selection and assessment of potential suppliers 8.5. Decision making support tools for choosing suppliers
CU32 Organising the negotiation	CU32S1 Sending a buying offer to pre-selected suppliers CU32S2 Preparing and organising the negotiation with a foreign supplier CU32S3 Assessing offers and suppliers	CU32WC1 Being loyal and secure the company's interests (Adopter une attitude loyale et savoir préserver les intérêts de son entreprise)	**8. Marketing for suppliers** 8.6.List of requirements /mission statements 8.7 International calls for tender 8.8 Customs, risk management 8.9.Tools and methods for assessing and comparing offers and suppliers 8.10. Purchase contract 8.11 General buying conditions

			4 Management tools 4.7 Managing supply 4.8 Purchasing costs 4.9 Buying budgets 4.10 Financial assessment of supplier 7. Negotiation 7.4. Purchasing negotiation
CU4 : Managing international trade operations			
CU41 : Choosing service providers	CU41S1 Selecting existing or new service providers for international trade operations (insurance, logistics, financial) CU41S2 Making a qualitative and quantitative analysis of different service providers according to the defined criteria CU41S3 Assessing service providers performance CU41S4 Communicating and negotiating with potential service providers CU41S5 Providing elements for establishing service providers contracts in consultation with relevant departments of the company		2. Computing 2.7 Commercial and export management software 2.8. EDE (Electronic Data Exchange), Web EDE, EDM (Electronic Data Management) 9 Management 9.1. Decision making 9.2. Project management 10. International trade techniques 10.1 Support services and service providers 10.2 Selection criteria of service providers 10.3 Internal or external management of services 10.4. Piloting support services
CU42 : Managing the international business administration	CU42S1 Managing the coordination the buying and selling administration CU42S2 Keeping track of document files (import and export) CU42S3 Identifying setbacks, applying alternative and appropriate solution to overcome setbacks	CU42 WC1 Making sure the work plan is carried out according to appropriate procedure to avoid problems CU42 WC2 Allocating time and resources CU42 WC3 Liaising with relevant parties	10 International trade techniques 10. 5. International logistics, 10.6. Incoterms 10.7. Means of transportation, tariffs, and selection, contracts 10.8. Documentary management 10.9. Means and techniques of payment 10.10. Financing of commercial operations and export sales 10.11. Customs management 10.12. Risks and cover techniques (non payment, exchange, transport, non conformity) 10.13. Sales and distribution contract law in an international context

	CU42S4 Carrying out quality control CU42S5 Assuring Service Relationship Management (SRM)		10.14. Export tariffs and offer 10.15. Settlement of disputes 10.16. Intellectual property, patent and trade mark **4. Management tools** 4.11. Accounts, results, cash flow 4.12. Follow up tables 4.13. Financial maths **9 Management** 9.3. Planning, and time management
CU5 Working in a multicultural context			
CU51 Business foreign language A	CU53S1 European language portfolio – level B2		
CU52 Business foreign language B	CU53S1 European language portfolio – level B2		
CU53 Intercultural management and communication	CU53S1 Collecting, analysing and selecting relevant information about worldwide practices in business CU53S2 Distinguishing the context of the relationship with contacts using socio-cultural elements CU53S3 Constituting, managing and updating a reliable, multicultural network of contacts CU53S4 Animating the network of contacts and sales	CU53WC1 Using experiences, evaluations and good practices CU53WC2 Being sensitive to cultural differences in business behaviour	**11. Intercultural management and communication** 11.1. Intercultural communication models 11.2. Intercultural management models 11.3. Managing multicultural teams (interpersonal communication, meetings, group communication) 11.4. Cultural practice (customs) **3 Environment** 3.3.5. Legal framework for individual and group relations at work (labour law) **1. International marketing** 1.13. Animating the sales network (agents, importers, final distribution, virtual teams, pay, motivation, stimulus, control of objectives)

CONSULTATION ON TRAINING PROGRAMMES

To enable mobility with recognition of learning outcomes gained in another system it seems advisable to give indications about the training programme. The principle recommendations concern:
- A clear link between certification units and the training programme. A simple means would be to make the training units /modules correspond exactly to the certification units.
- Grouping within a fixed time period of some subjects teaching/ lessons to facilitate mobility over a short time period. This grouping of subjects would be referred to as training modules.;
- A suggested time duration for these modules taking into account that they can be subdivided and that they can cover either time in training centres or work placements in companies.

Indicative table of the training programme

Certification Units Sub units	Training units (modules)	Number of hours
UC1 International Marketing		
UC11 Market research and market planning on foreign markets	International Marketing	112
UC12 Business information system	Managing Information systems (MIS)	112
UC 2 Export Selling		
UC 21 Prospecting and customer/partner follow up	Customers canvassing	140
UC 22 Negotiating	Export Negotiating	140
UC3 Import Buying		
UC31 Identifying potential suppliers and sourcing	Bying	112
UC32 Organising the negotiation	Import Negotiating	112
UC4 Managing International Trade Operations		
UC41 Choosing and working with service providers	International trade operations	168
UC42 Managing the international business administration	International Business Administration	168
UC5 Working in a Multicultural Context		
UC51 Business English language A	Business English language A	140
UC52 Business foreign language B	Business foreign language B	140
UC53 Intercultural management and communication	Intercultural management and communication	84
TOTAL		**1438**