

**BASIC MARKETING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT:
HOW MUCH DO STUDENTS REMEMBER?**

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ABSTRACT

Among the objectives for the first marketing course is acquainting students with basic marketing concepts. This abstract presents the initial findings of a four year study of students in upper-level marketing courses to assess student recall of these basic concepts.

Without recall, let alone understanding, students are poorly prepared to move on to upper-level marketing courses or to understand the implications of marketing for other areas of business; they are unlikely to be successful without the basics. Several studies have identified and rank ordered the major concepts of marketing. Three core concepts are consistently ranked highly: the marketing concept, the marketing mix, and market segmentation.

To assess recall, students in upper-level marketing courses were asked short questions about basic marketing concepts on the first day of class. All students had completed a marketing principles course. Their responses were evaluated for indications that they had some idea what the concepts dealt with.

As responses accumulated, it became possible to place students into three groups: marketing majors, business students with majors in other business disciplines, and non-business students (mostly journalism).

Responses were evaluated only for recall of the concepts. Three evaluations evolved: "A" = Substantial recall; "C" = Partial recall; "F" = Lacking recall.

Marketing Concept	A (Row %)	C (Row %)	F (Row %)	Total (Column %)
Marketing	38 17.5%	65 30.0%	114 52.5%	217 55.1%
All Other Business	6 3.9%	32 20.9%	115 75.2%	153 38.8%
Non-Business	2 8.3%	1 4.2%	21 87.5%	24 6.1%
Overall	46 11.7%	98 24.9%	250 63.5%	394 100.0%

The marketing concept question dealt with attaining organizational objectives through customer satisfaction.

Marketing Mix	A (Row %)	C (Row %)	F (Row %)	Total (Column %)
Marketing	97 58.8%	32 19.4%	36 21.8%	165 55.7%
All Other Business	47 41.2%	24 21.1%	43 37.7%	114 38.5%
Non-Business	9 52.9%	1 5.9%	7 41.2%	17 5.7%
Overall	153 51.7%	57 19.3%	86 29.1%	296 100.0%

"A" recall demanded naming all four parts of the marketing mix; "C" level demanded only two or three.

Market Segmentation	A (Row %)	C (Row %)	F (Row %)	Total (Column %)
Marketing	47 38.8%	40 33.1%	34 28.1%	121 62.4%
All Other Business	12 19.4%	32 51.6%	18 29.0%	62 32.0%
Non-Business	1 9.1%	7 63.6%	3 27.3%	11 5.7%
Overall	60 30.9%	79 40.7%	55 28.4%	194 100.0%

The market segmentation question required saying something about putting customers into groups.

The findings were disappointing. All groups evidenced low-to-modest levels of recall; non-marketing students performed worse to much worse than marketing majors who were none too high. Marketing students probably do no better in other business disciplines. Questions of interest: Do we cover so much material that basic concepts get lost? Do we promote short-term memory by using multiple choice tests? Can we do better? As an astute reviewer stated: "Only when principles courses are designed to promote critical thinking will we hope to produce better students." We would appear to have a challenge ahead if this study is representative!