

Hi, my name's Tom, I'm a sales graduate and currently I'm a field sales rep. Being a field sales rep, I'm out on the road most of the time, so I look after about 15 or 20 customers, wholesalers. One of my biggest achievements this year has been all around the KitKat World Cup campaign. So with one of my cash and carry's down near London, I arranged to install a football goal at the front of the depot and which we filled with two pallets of Kitkat, so about over a thousand cases of Kitkat into this goal, and every customer, every retailer, and caterer who walked into the depot saw this big display covered with all the point of sale material and picked up the KitKat, so over the course of one week we managed to sell two pallets, thousands of pounds worth of KitKat, just from having this display at the front of the depot.

In sales, it's important for us to sell to our customers, the majority of which are supermarkets, wholesalers and independent retailers. So it's then important that we help and support our customers in them selling it on to the shoppers, so the shoppers might not necessarily be the consumers, they might be buying it for friends and family, but we need to influence that, so we don't just sell it to the customers, we support throughout, so we can delight the shoppers and we can delight the consumers.

A sales graduate job is far from cold calling, because we look after and manage these accounts, we build up rapport with the customers, we build up a relationship which will help us in the future to get great business results. So my job is to visit these customers and manage their accounts, so I visit them for instance on a fortnightly basis, talk to them about some new promotions we've got coming up, talk to them about the new products and make sure they've got our full range and most importantly I make sure we maximise our visibility in those stores, so when their customers come in, the independent retailers, the corner shops, when they go in they see KitKat at the front and they can pick it up before they can pick up any of our competitors. So I guess on the average day I'm on the road about 7 hours, of which time I guess 2 or 3 is taken up by travelling to the customers and the rest of the time is in the cash and carry's, talking to the managers, talking to the buyers and making sure, as I said before, they have all our range and they're stocking them properly.

Once I get home I normally have about an hour or so's admin to do every night, which will involve sending photographs through, building presentations, working on projects that I'm doing and getting in contact with my team.

So at Nestlé they give you all the tools to do the job, you know I've got my company car, I've got my hand held device, I've got a tablet computer that I use at home, so I can connect to the Nestlé intranet anywhere in the country. I use my hand held all day throughout the store, recording information. It also doubles as a camera and a phone, so in my hand I've got all the information, all the resources that I need throughout the day.

I think one of the toughest things about the role is working from home and working on your own, you know you have to be very self-motivated, you have to be very self disciplined, you have to really be energised, and be enthusiastic to visit your customers as regularly as possible, and to really improve their business, which obviously they will improve ours. I think being resilient is very key as well; you have to take the good with the bad, and you're not always going to get the answer you're looking for, however it's how you react from that, how you bounce back onto your next customer.

Spending your first twelve months in the field is really invaluable; you learn at a grassroots level how the business works, how it operates; you speak to customers on a daily basis, so you have that contact and you can build that experience, and your time in the field will stay with you for your whole career.