
MWR MANAGERS' OPERATIONS GUIDE

Ensure Merchandising Effectiveness

DO THIS TASK WHEN

- Establishing a new resale program and/or updating your current resale program/program plans.
 - Trying to increase sales in your resale program.
 - Planning a holiday or seasonal sales program.
 - Planning a sales program to turn over slow moving or out-of-season merchandise.
 - Planning a promotional sales program that features a specific line/brand of merchandise.
 - You are moving your sales items around your shop/store or changing sales area designs/layouts/arrangements to keep your customers interested, curious, and looking for new items.
 - Setting up your display areas to increase interest in your Program and its benefits.
-

REFERENCES

- Maximizing Golf Shop Profits Workshop©, Kathy Talbot Denton, E.T.C. (Education, Training, and Consulting), Inc., San Antonio, TX, 1995.
 - Softlines Merchandise Presentation Standards, Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), Human Development and Training Division, Dallas, TX.
 - Video and reference, Building A Winning Retail Strategy, Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto, Canada, 1997.
 - Video and reference, Maximizing Store Impact, Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto, Canada, 1997.
-

**SUPPLIES/
RESOURCES**

- Inventory list of all sales stock on hand and on order
- Inventory list of all sales and merchandising tools, signs, cabinets, props, frames, shelving, islands, supplies, etc.
- Usage data, such as sales by category/department
- Layout (drawings/sketches/floor plans, etc.) of your shop including vendor provided plans/layout
- Props, equipment, fixtures, supplies, furniture, and decorator items for theme layouts and sales events
- Books, videos, photos, drawings, publications, and brochures about interior design and retail layout for businesses
- Vendor catalogs and websites for merchandising equipment, fixtures, and supplies

**SUPPLIES/
RESOURCES**

- Typical office supplies
 - Computer with floor-planning, computer-assisted-design (CAD), spreadsheet, and word processing software
 - Simple drafting/drawing supplies including a tri-scale ruler, straight edge, drafting triangle, pencils, graph paper, compass, and drafting templates
 - Names of design consultants and merchandising display and supplies companies (talk with the Facilities and Acquisition Branch (N944) and your program manager CNIC).
-

**THIS TASK
IS DONE
CORRECTLY
WHEN**

- You prepare and execute a merchandising plan that includes:
 - An organization of related sales items/groupings by product categories.
 - A layout of your sales area with the location and amount of space needed for each sales item/grouping.
 - You prepare and execute an annual sales plan that includes:
 - Holiday or seasonal sales programs.
 - Periodic “sales” to turn over slow moving and/or out-of-season merchandise.
 - Periodic sales “promotions” featuring and offering specific lines or brands of merchandise.
 - Sales promotions/presentations/displays for special themes and holidays.
 - You are constantly moving and changing your merchandise, fixtures, decorations, signage, displays, highlights, props, and displays to keep your customers curious, interested, and looking for new items in your shop or sales area.
-

NOTES

When you started in FFR, did you ever imagine that, in addition to being able to “manage” your Program, you would also need expertise in merchandising?

This task is primarily for managers of MWR Programs that include a pro shop or other resale operation (e.g., golf, bowling, outdoor recreation, auto skills, aquatics, fitness, marina, etc.). *The steps in this task also work for the visual display of the rental equipment, checkout equipment, and similar services offered by other MWR Programs.*

Merchandising is the technique of displaying and promoting:

- the right *products*
- at the right *place*
- in the right *quantities*
- at the right *price*
- at the right *time*
- under the right *conditions*

This task deals with the actual visual display of merchandise and the supporting decor, fixtures, decorations, signage, displays, equipment, supplies, props, music/sound, lighting and furniture.

**NOTES
(cont.)**

Other *merchandising-related* tasks in your MWR Managers' Operations Guide include:

- Pricing competitively and achieving an acceptable return on investment (ROI)
 - Evaluate Fees, Prices, and Charges
- Ensuring and purchasing the appropriate quantities, styles, sizes
 - Procure Supplies, Resale Merchandise, Non-Personal Services, Equipment and Property
- Ensuring you project a positive Program image.
 - Create and Maintain a Focused Program Image
- Knowing what your competitors have, what they do, where they are located, who they serve, what they offer, how they buy, stock, advertise, merchandise and price, when they operate, and how they look (image)
 - Assess Competition
- Providing attractive, up-to-date, safe facilities, grounds, equipment, supplies, and vehicles
 - Establish & Monitor a Facility/FF&E Maintenance Program

- Advertising and promoting your Program's activities, events, products, services, and the values and benefits of your Program
 - Use Advertising/Publicity/Promotion Equipment

One of your important management skills is the selection of appropriate and applicable products and services of the right types, sizes, colors, patterns, models, with the right features, in sufficient (yet not excessive) quantities, and, with regard to "trends" and "fads."

Trends are core to your Program. Besides input from your customers and your operational and financial information, industry trend information shows you where to direct your Program. But remember: Your customers expect you to stay atop of and offer the latest "fads" in your Program.

**NOTES
(cont.)**

Prior to investing in fads, you need to identify its worth.

When a fad has the potential for a positive ROI, featuring these type resale products can be an opportunity to make a quick and sometimes significant financial return, while meeting and often exceeding your customers' expectations. Appropriate research will help you avoid *red herrings*.

The challenge in your buying/stocking, sales planning, promotions, and merchandising is to appeal to, attract, and retain customers who have all or some of these following diverse characteristics:

- Differing tastes and interests
- Differing cultural backgrounds
- Varied ages -- children of all ages to senior citizens
- Built-in entitlement beliefs
- Widely varying interests and needs
- Different budgets and spending attitudes/beliefs
- Enormous buying choices and opportunities
- Frequent relocation requirements due to military transfers

While accomplishing *effective* buying/stocking, sales planning, promotions, and merchandising may sound nearly impossible, these are among your many core business responsibilities. They will help you attract customers away from your competitors and gain loyalty.

By properly advertising, promoting, and attractively and effectively displaying up-to-date, quality products and services, you earn your customers' confidence.

**NOTES
(cont.)**

Your Program's image (how you look to, and are remembered by, your customers) is created, in part, by having the following:

- Professional and committed staff
- Customer service systems that achieve extraordinary customer service results
- Attractive, well-maintained facilities and grounds
- Quality and appropriate activities, events, products, services, equipment, machinery, supplies, and vehicles
- An effective marketing program
- A reputation for value pricing
- Effective marketing that includes:
 - Customer research
 - Advertising
 - Promotion
 - Publicity
 - Public relations
- Professional merchandising

As you consider, review, develop, or alter your merchandising plans, keep this in mind: In the U.S., women make the majority of purchasing decisions. Use this fact in your data-gathering as well as in your merchandising choices, designs, initiatives, and set-ups.

Your efforts to ensure merchandising effectiveness will be enhanced by working with professionals in your FFR marketing department, the Navy Exchange's visual merchandising staff, your vendors'/contractors' in-house design services, managers like yourself in your professional network, and with consultants who specialize in business imaging, merchandising, and in interior design/decoration for shops/stores/businesses, etc.

**NOTES
(cont.)**

While you may never have prepared written merchandising plans or sales area/department floor plans, this task will suggest easy ways to avoid a lot of back-breaking, trial-and-error labor and spending your decorating/merchandising/ promotional budget with less than terrific results.

You don't need special drafting skills to accomplish this task. Steps 3-20 describe the simple procedures for quickly drafting your floor plan(s) and illustrating the fixed features currently found in your sales areas.

The trick is doing this quickly and creatively vice painstakingly and ultra-precisely. You will find you can use your floor plans for lots of things beyond planning your merchandising areas. You can use them for maintenance plans, security planning, traffic flow planning, utility (e.g., electricity, lighting, HVAC, plumbing) location information, etc.

Before starting this task, determine if these drawings or blue prints are already available in Public Works or another office.

This page left blank intentionally.

PROCEDURE

Step 1 Unless you are specially trained, gather some merchandising information and experiences BEFORE starting this task. (This step will save you time!)

Accomplish as many of the following as you feel necessary to tackle developing a merchandising plan for your Program:

- ☐ Examine the merchandising methods and strategies of local business establishments. Look at both competitors and non-competitors.
 - Review the steps in the task so you will recognize the methods and concepts while visiting other stores.
 - Take one or several colleagues or staff members out to visit local business establishments to identify various merchandising strategies.
 - Visit businesses that do exactly the same thing and those that provide the same “type” products or services, but are in a different type business than you (e.g., if you manage a golf pro shop, look at some local golf pro shops, but also look at sports stores, athletic specialty stores, clothing stores, general merchandise stores, department stores, etc.).
- ☐ Figure out (ask) why the store chooses to carry particular brands/lines/models, why the departments are where they are, and why the products are arranged as they are. (Be careful, don’t wear out your welcome.)
- ☐ Take notes and pictures, if it’s okay to do so.
- ☐ If available, obtain floor plans, drawings, etc.
- ☐ Find out who supplies the store’s merchandising equipment and supplies.
- ☐ Note how the colors, textures, lighting, signage, decorations, music, etc., set a tone, guide you through the store, and how it makes you feel (image). Are you at ease, impressed, intimidated, confused, turned on/off – and why?
- ☐ Review books, videos, photos, drawings, and publications, about interior designs for businesses, and merchandising equipment, fixtures, and supplies.
- ☐ Talk about merchandising with the Navy Exchange merchandising specialists and your vendors, suppliers, contractors, and your professional colleagues and peers who have experience in this area.
- ☐ Talk with the Facilities and Acquisitions Branch (N944) and your CNIC or

Regional Program Manager.

Step 2

Now that you've looked around other businesses, use the following points to examine your Program.

First Impressions:

- ☐ Is the signage effective?
- ☐ Is the entrance welcoming?
- ☐ If you have windows, are the displays appealing?

Store Layout:

- ☐ Can customers get into the shop easily?
- ☐ Do you have aisle structure?
- ☐ Are all areas of the shop easily accessible?

Presentation:

- ☐ Do you have your best products in the best locations of your shop?
- ☐ Is your merchandise presented so it is easy to shop?
- ☐ Do your presentations encourage impulse buying?

Signage:

- ☐ Are your signs neat and consistent?
- ☐ Do your signs help your customers find their way around the shop?
- ☐ Do your signs provide information to help customers buy?
- ☐ Is all the merchandise properly marked with price tags?

Displays:

- ☐ Do you have exciting in-shop displays?
- ☐ Are your displays themed?
- ☐ Do your displays encourage customers to examine the merchandise?
- ☐ Are your displays fully stocked?

Events:

- ☐ Does your shop provide any entertainment value?
- ☐ Do you/staff demonstrate how products can be used?
- ☐ Does your shop encourage your customers to become involved with the products?

Cleanliness/Sanitation:

- ☐ Are your displays, props, fixtures, racks, and shelves clean?
- ☐ Are your glass cabinets, doors, and mirrors clean?
- ☐ Are floors clean?
- ☐ Are restrooms, locker rooms, changing rooms, etc., clean and stocked?
- ☐ Is your merchandise clean and neat?

If all answers are YES, congratulations! Stop here. If in doubt, continue.

Step 3 Gather the materials that you will need to accomplish this task.

These materials will include:

- ☐ Basic drafting/drawing supplies including:
 - Tri-scale ruler
 - Straight edge
 - Drafting triangle
 - Pencils and erasers
 - Graph paper
 - Compass
 - Drafting templates, etc.
- OR-**
- A computer with easy-to-use software that will assist you in drafting floor plans and merchandise layouts
- OR-**
- A floor planning/design kit for commercial applications

- ☐ Copies of existing floor plans/plan-o-grams of the current layout of your shop's/store's sales areas, and/or sketches/layouts of each of your resale item groupings/departments

- ☐ Inventory list of all sales stock on hand and on order

- ☐ Inventory list of your sales and merchandising tools, signs, racks, cabinets, props, frames, shelving, islands, supplies, etc.

- ☐ Books, videos, photos, drawings, publications, and brochures containing illustrations and dimensions of merchandising equipment, fixtures, and supplies

- ☐ Books, videos, photos, drawings, publications, and brochures about interior designs for businesses

- ☐ Typical office supplies (e.g., pens , tape measure, scissors, sticky notes, tape, stapler, file folders, etc.)

- ☐ If available, floor plans, drawings, etc., from other "good" pro shops/sales areas.

Step 4 Identify your “low-traffic” times so you know the best time to measure the dimensions of your shop, merchandising supplies, props, furniture, equipment, etc.

NOTE: If your Program traffic is high during all hours of operation, you may have to accomplish this task before or after your regular hours of operation, or at a time when your Program is normally closed.

Ensure you have staff members available to help you measure, rearrange, move things, try out ideas, brainstorm, etc.

Accomplishing this during low-traffic periods will:

- Minimize customer interruptions/inconveniences.
- Shorten the time it takes to do this task.

Step 5 Identify each area where you currently display your resale merchandise, rental/check-out equipment, or service information.

NOTE: These may include a single room, several rooms, entryways, atriums, hallways, display windows/boxes, or perhaps something as simple as one or two display cabinets, a single under-counter area, or just a counter-top display.

Whatever the size, number, and dimensions of your display areas, be sure you are aware of each.

Step 6 Determine if you have other areas where you could better display your resale, rental, checkout merchandise, or services information.

NOTE: Take the time now, before measuring, drawing, rearranging counters and shelving, decorating, or moving stock, to decide if your current shop or display spaces are the best possible use of your overall facility. Don't let your imagination be handicapped by "that's how we've always done it" thinking.

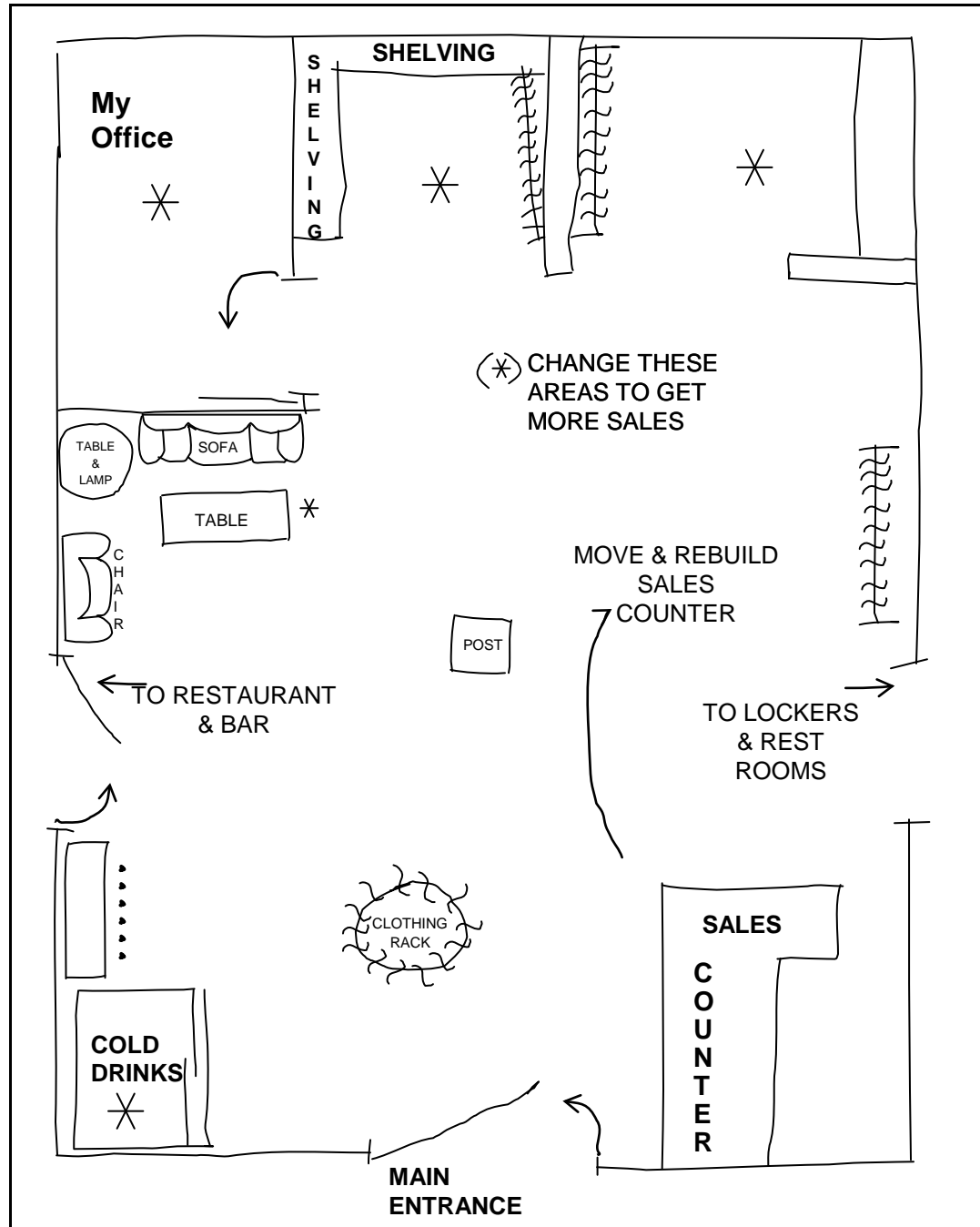
Look at your overall facility. Don't just think about how you've always seen it, but really look at it! Don't see it as it is, but rather, look for its potential.

Without getting into a major facility renovation or new construction, are there areas where you could better display your products and services?

IF:	THEN:
Your merchandising areas and/or furniture and equipment are in the best or only possible location within your facility	Continue with the next step.
You have the potential to significantly improve your merchandising/display area/environment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Talk with the Facilities Branch (N944) and your program manager at CNIC.2. Begin the renovation, repair, new construction processes per local and FFR headquarters policy.3. Delay immediate expenditures and efforts on new merchandising equipment, supplies, props, furniture, etc., until your recommended renovation, construction, or repair is completed.4. Continue with the next step.

Step 7 Make a very basic sketch of your resale shop floor plan on scratch paper.

Example:



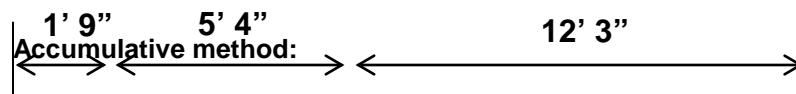
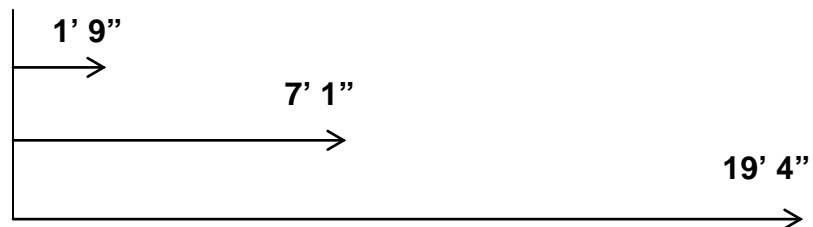
Step 8 Measure the essential and fixed features of your resale shop.

- All entrance(s) and emergency exits
- All doorways: (e.g., office, maintenance shop, dressing room(s), bathrooms, showers, locker rooms, closets, utility accesses, etc.)
- All windows: (e.g., main display windows (or front windows/window boxes/cabinets, side windows, observation windows, if any)
- Fixed columns, posts, dividers, partitions, etc.
- All fixed equipment, cabinets, shelving, etc.
- All merchandise areas
- Aisles
- Checkout counter

NOTE:

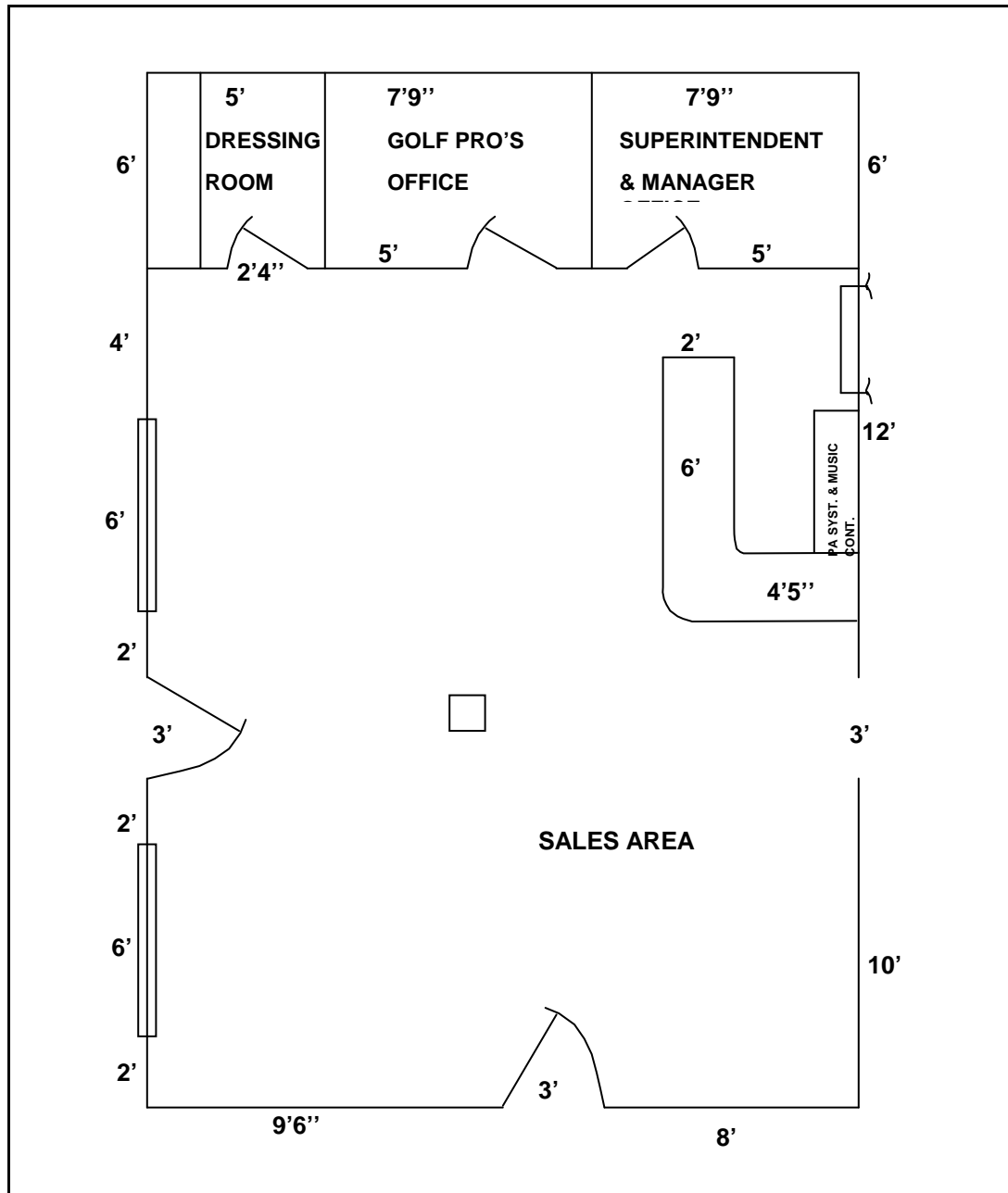
Use a base-line measuring system vice an accumulative one. You will have fewer errors in your floor plan. Measure each dimension along a wall from the same start point on the wall.

Baseline method:



Step 9 Record your room and feature measurements onto your “basic” sketch of your shop’s/store’s floor plan from Step 7.

Example:



Step 10 Using your measurements and “basic” sketch of your shop, draft, *in pencil*, a “to-scale” floor plan of your shop’s/store’s sales area(s).

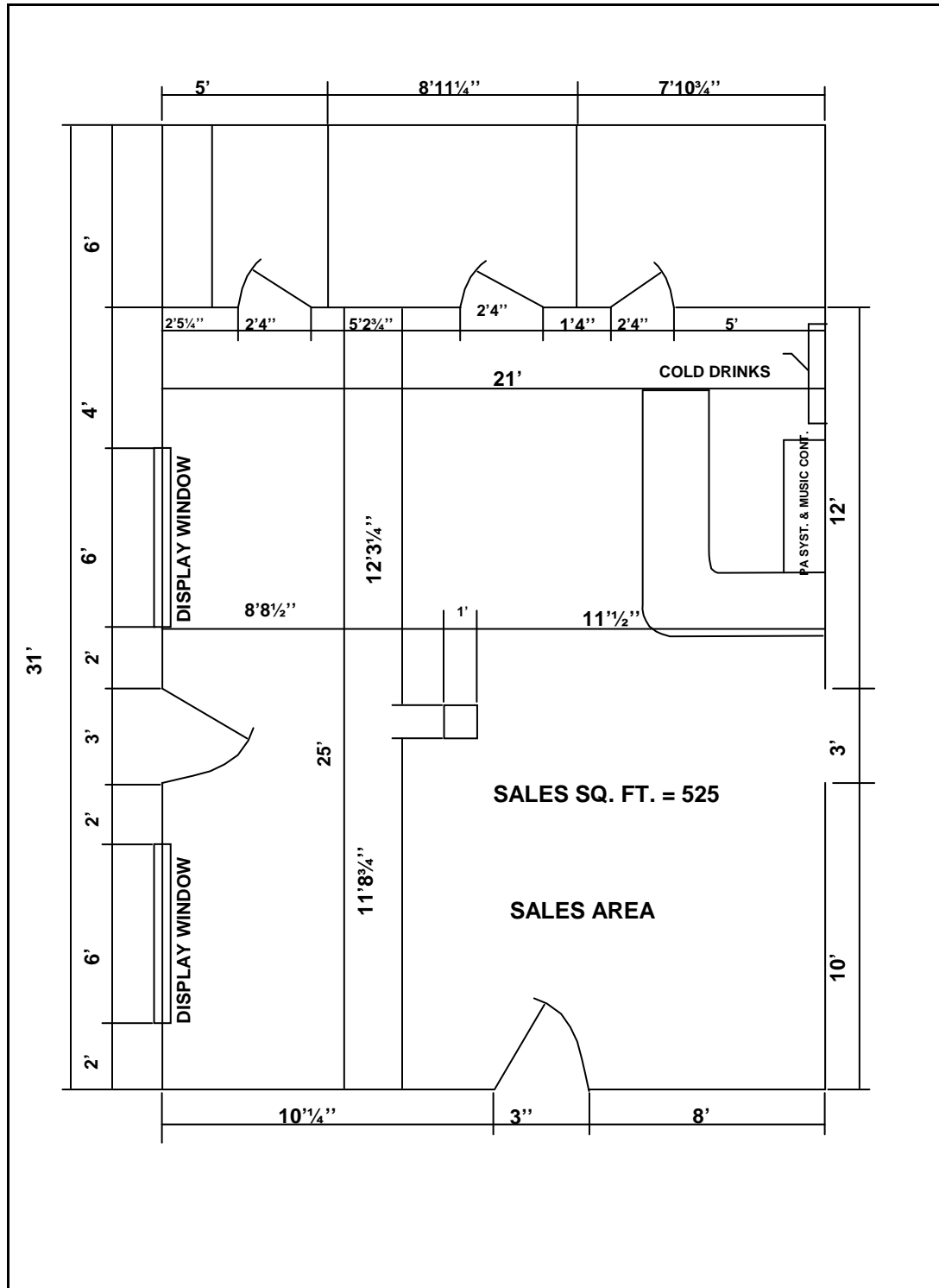
Ensure your sales area floor plan(s) includes the following structural/environmental elements:

- ☐ Main entrance(s) and emergency exits
- ☐ Main display windows (or front windows/window boxes/cabinets)
- ☐ Side windows
- ☐ Office entryway
- ☐ Supply/storage entryway
- ☐ Entry to maintenance shop, if applicable
- ☐ Dressing room(s)
- ☐ Entries to other areas of your facilities, if connected to shop or sales area. (e.g., locker areas, lounges, showers, and bathrooms, etc.)
- ☐ Observation windows, if any
- ☐ Fixed columns, posts, dividers, partitions, etc.
- ☐ All fixed equipment, cabinets, shelving, etc.
- ☐ All merchandise areas including aisles
- ☐ Checkout counter(s)

<p>NOTE: Your initial floor plan drawing should represent your shop or sales area showing the physical features you can’t move without renovating, reconstructing, or repairing the facility/area.</p>

See example on next page:

Example:



Step 11 Confirm that your “to-scale” floor plan contains all the “fixed” (unmovable) features that are in your shop’s/store’s sales area.

☐ Make corrections as applicable.

Step 12 Confirm the accuracy of all measurements represented in your “to-scale” floor plan.

☐ Make corrections as applicable.

Step 13 Finalize the floor plan by “inking” over your pencil draft.

NOTE: This draft and redraft, and ink over, as well as the eventual inclusion of your merchandising elements are made much easier with the use of floor planning software and/or a floor planning “kit.”

The graph paper in these “kits” typically has a write-on/wipe-off, laminated surface over the graph/grid. After locating your store’s walls and fixed features on the laminated surface with the provided adhesive marking tape, you then place your sales floor equipment, designs, tables, racks, furniture, shelving, etc., on the floor plan using the kit’s to-scale, die-cut, vinyl cutouts.

Step 14 Make 10-15 “working” copies of your finalized, “to-scale” floor plan showing ONLY your shop’s/store’s “fixed” features.

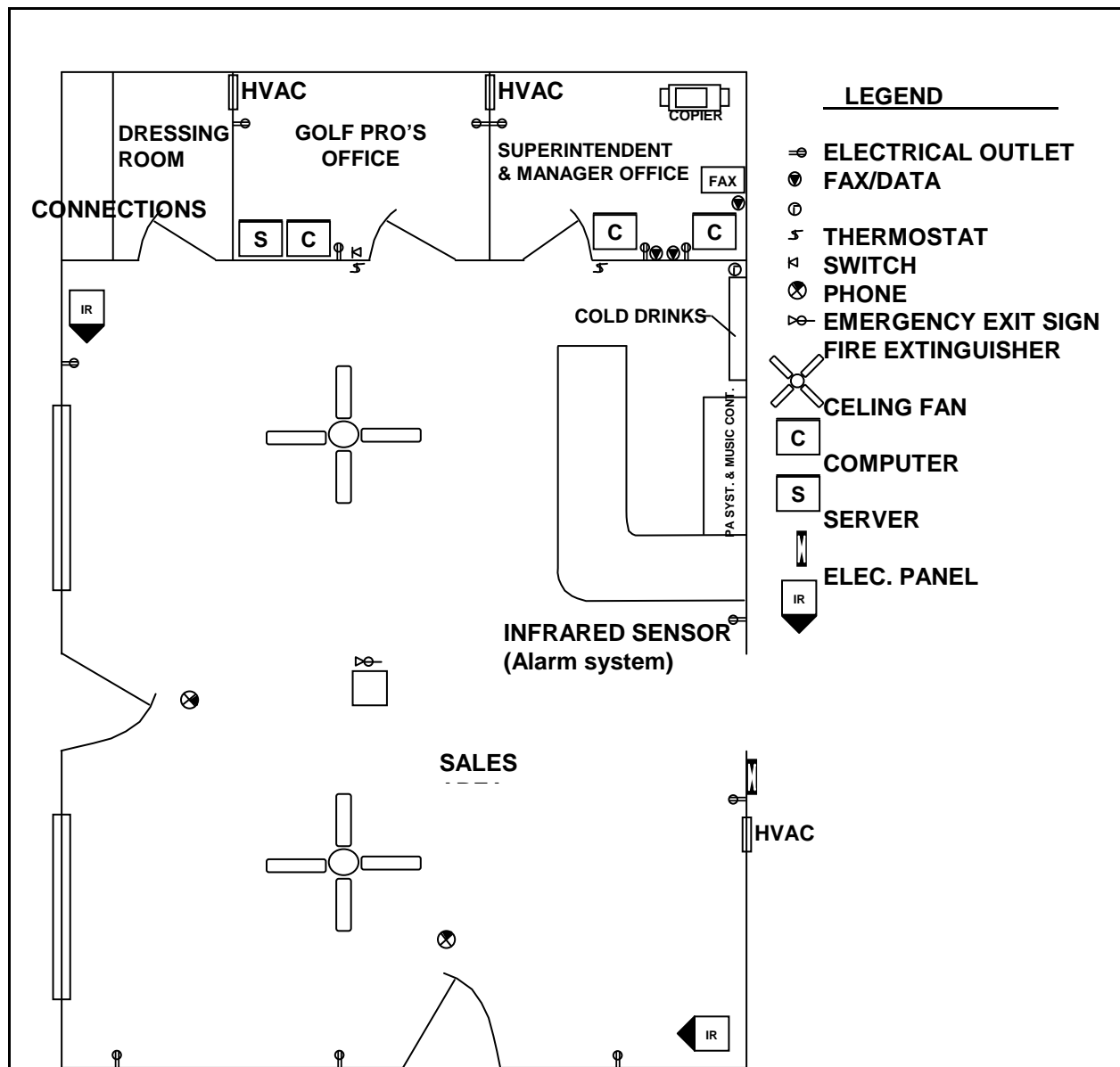
NOTE: You will be able to use these to illustrate the locations of various utility and operational systems that are useful for maintenance, safety, security, operational, and traffic pattern planning applications.

You can also use copies to “plan” various merchandising schemes and seasonal promotions before beginning a major relocation of the actual physical items in your shop. This will save you time in the long run!

Step 15 File your “master” floor plan in a protective folder and store it where it will not become damaged.

Step 16 Indicate the location of the following items on one “copy” of your floor plan.

- Electrical receptacles
- HVAC returns and outlets
- Lighting controls
- Fans
- Junction boxes
- Security/alarm controls
- File server
- Copier
- Utility/communication closets
- Telephones
- Security cameras
- Lighting fixtures
- Wiring trunks
- Fire extinguishers
- Computer terminals
- Fax machine
- Refrigeration units
- Safe



Step 17 Repeat Steps 7 through 16 for each of your sales areas.

- Also consider your maintenance/outfitting shop if you do/could/should use this area to merchandise your products and services (e.g., golf and bowling's equipment rigging, sizing, drilling, repair shop).

NOTE: If your customers are permitted entry into these areas to meet their rental/purchase/check-out needs, then this may be an area in which you could merchandise some of your products.

If your customers are traditionally restricted from these areas, rethink the "tradition." Ask yourself why this space could/should not be used to expand your shop or sales areas.

Step 18 Review your inventory list of the equipment and supplies you currently own and use to display your merchandise to remind you of your merchandising equipment and supplies options. **(See list of merchandising fixtures/ supplies/displays shown at the end of this task)**

IF:	THEN:
You do NOT have a list of your merchandising equipment	Prepare one.
You have a list that is NOT up-to-date	Add, change, or delete items on your inventory as applicable.

Step 19 Measure the dimensions of each of your non-fixed merchandise display items.

NOTE: These include your cabinets, tables, shelving, islands, racks, T-bars, ring racks, mannequins, frames, props, signs, supplies, etc.

Measure the length, width, and height dimensions of each of these merchandising items and record the dimensions on your inventory of merchandising supplies and equipment.

You will use these dimensions to prepare "to-scale" layouts.

Once measured and recorded, you will not have to repeat this step.

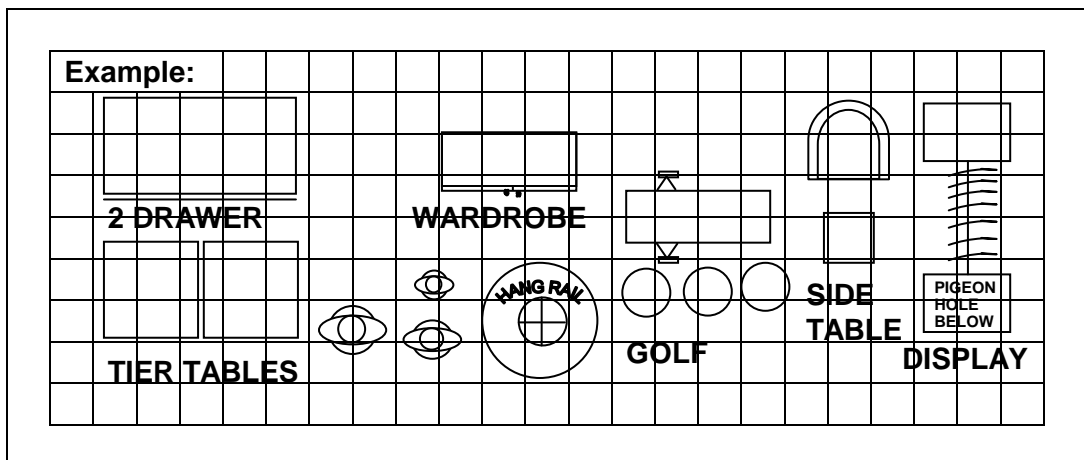
Step 20 Draft each merchandising item you measured in Step 19 onto graph paper that has same scale you used to draft shop's/store's sales area floor plan.

- ☐ Label each illustration inside or beside the item's borders so that you know which items the illustration represents.
- ☐ Cut these out and save in an envelope. Store with the copies of your store's floor plans. You will use these to visualize various merchandising arrangements.
- ☐ Ensure you have an illustration cutout for each of your merchandising devices. (See example below Note.)

NOTE:

These steps are less tedious if you use any of the following:

- Software designed to layout business floor plans and to locate typical "business" furniture. An added advantage of these programs is that some of them can provide 3-D representations of your space(s). And some of the programs will allow you to "experiment" with color and design schemes, other than just the location of items on the floor.
- Design "kits" that use to-scale, laminated floor plan bases and to-scale, die-cut symbols representing traditional business/merchandising furniture.
- Professional design and merchandising consultants, including those in the various FFR branches at CNIC headquarters.



Step 21 Use the following industry merchandising guidelines when preparing your merchandising layouts and plans.

- Use recessed, adjustable eyeball, and/or track lighting and natural lighting. Avoid fluorescent lighting and the resultant “discount store look.”
- Use light colors and smooth and/or soft textures to enhance the feel and perception of spaciousness, especially if your shop is small.
- Use darker, richer tones and textures if your shop or sales areas are larger. Either way, ensure your colors and image match.
- Provide easy listening background music. It is “impression” music and should match your theme/image. Don’t let your staff or customers select “contemporary/favorite” music types or radio stations. Your merchandising area is a sales/business location, not a staff recreation area.
- Select appropriate, easy listening music to align with holiday and seasonal events.
- Ensure your sales/checkout counter is located in the most efficient/effective site in your shop. While not “traditional,” the sales/checkout counter should **NOT** be at the front of the shop. Instead, it should be at the back, in the middle, or at least halfway toward the back. This will cause customers to walk by your merchandise/displays and increase sales substantially. The location of your sales counter area will be dependent on many variables in your facility.
- Avoid the “cluttered” look. If it looks like a mess, it is and if you can’t find it, your customers surely can’t. Arrange your shop to ensure plenty of aisle and display space. Turn over your merchandise and run specials to get rid of out-of-season stock and old hard goods. Replenish stock frequently to avoid cluttered look.
- Provide dressing rooms for customers to try on and view the merchandise. Ensure your dressing rooms are CLEAN, spacious, safe, well-lit, and provide at least one full-length mirror, An opposite wall mirror is better. If space is an issue, use unisex-dressing room with key lock.
- Ensure you have adequate storeroom space to receive and store goods and prepare them for display on your sales floor, tables, racks, etc.

Step 22 Using your current inventory lists of your resale merchandise, classify your merchandise into related sales groups or departments.

- An example of related groups or departments for a golf pro shop could be:
 - Men's apparel
 - Women's apparel
 - Hard goods
 - Miscellaneous
- Be sure to consider your on-order and seasonal items, as well as your current inventory.

Step 23 Determine the amount of space needed for each sales group or sales department.

There are two ways to determine the amount of space:

- Sales space based on the percent of total sales for that department (e.g., men's apparel sales divided by total pro shop sales)
- Another method is based on the basic stock you plan on carrying in a particular department and the calculation of the amount of physical space needed for display and reserve stock.

<p>NOTE: Visit your competitors. You may not know what percentage of sales a group or department is allotted, but you can see how much physical space is provided (needed) to display and stock each sales group or product line.</p>
--

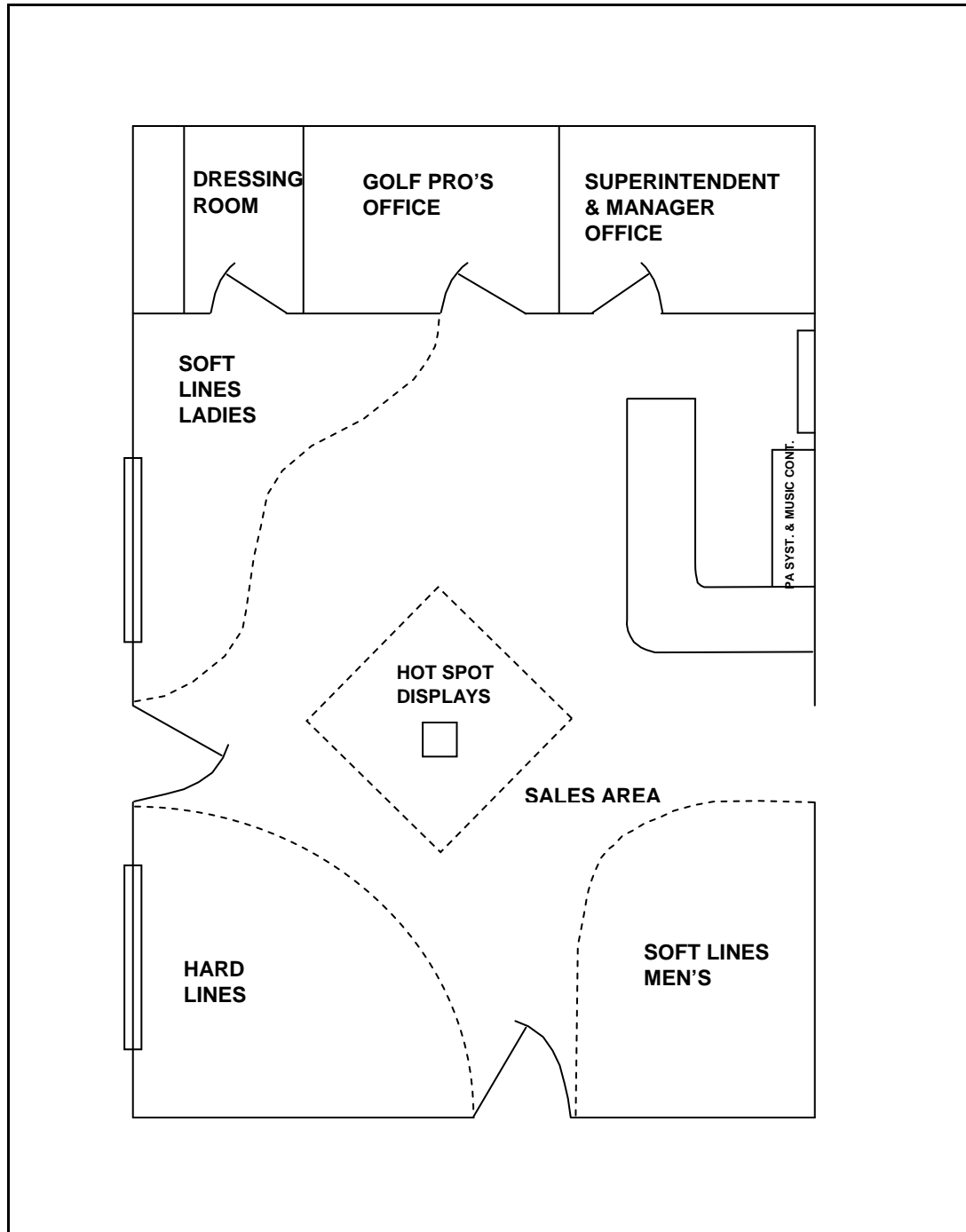
Step 24 Select appropriate sales locations for each sales group or sales department with regard to the following factors.

Factors to consider in selecting location of merchandise departments:

- ☐ Ensure the sales items with the highest producing capacity are located in the most valuable location – near an aisle or entrance with high foot traffic (e.g., name brand clothing, hats and caps, golf gloves, golf balls, etc.).
- ☐ Locate “impulse purchase” items in your most valuable sales spaces. These are the sales items, which your customers buy at the spur of the moment. These purchases are unplanned. These type items usually appeal to personal taste and are usually moderate to low-price items (e.g., logo golf balls, repair tools, ball markers, snacks, jewelry, gift items, sunglasses, etc.).
- ☐ Locate “demand” items in your shops'/store's remote sales areas. These are the products that meet a need that your customers specifically come into the shop to buy. In most cases, these are usually medium to high-priced items. These items are placed in remote locations so that your customers will have to walk past impulse items (e.g., clubs, golf bags, shag bag, hand cart, golf shoes, etc.).
- ☐ Locate “convenience” items in the most accessible locations. These are sales items that have low unit value, but are purchased frequently (e.g., tees, ball markers, bug repellent, band aids, sun screen, etc.).

Step 25 Indicate these sales areas on your floor plans. See example below.

Example:



Step 26 Develop internal layout of merchandise within a department.

NOTE: Apply the same factors that you used for sales area/sales department locations to the location of merchandise “*within*” a sales area/sales department.

- Impulse
- Demand
- Convenience
- Sales-producing capacity

You will need to determine the amount of space and the location for each sales item.

You need to decide what items you want to feature and how you will display those items.

Consider the following factors while making location and design decisions:

- ☐ Create an immediate positive image.
- Your customers will decide whether to buy products in your shop within the first 5-10 seconds.
 - Ensure the first thing they see when they come in the main entrance of your shop is a full standing display of your featured higher ticket clothes items on a mannequin/form (e.g., sweater, shirt, and shorts/pants/skirt, with glove and golf shoes, etc.). This creates an air of excitement – “a hot spot.”

NOTE: Be sure you have open space for this hot spot. It should not impede doorway traffic. If too close to the door, this display loses its impact.

- Locate some of these featured items for sale at the foot of the display.
 - Identify additional areas for “hot spot displays” throughout the shop.
- ☐ The first third of the sales space in any department is the most valuable.

**Step 26
(cont.)**

- ☐ The wall is a highly visible selling/display area. Slat-walls with straight arms or hangout fixtures are used on wall displays.
 - Arrange merchandise in a symmetrical/balanced display.
 - Use repetition of similar items/colors to create impact.
 - For best impact, use the entire wall-to-ceiling for merchandise and visual display. Merchandise beyond the reach of customers should be a duplication of those within reach.
- ☐ Fixtures are your primary sales/display area. When using fixtures, consider the following:
 - Fixtures should be flexible and movable.
 - Do not use more fixtures than the spacing will allow.
 - Spacing for fixtures should be 30-inches between fixtures (garment-to-garment) and 60-inches from wall fixture to the adjacent floor fixture.
 - As you add sales space include more fixtures. Plan on 33 square feet for a four-way fixture.
 - Floor positioning of fixtures should be grid method or in rows perpendicular to the main aisle/back wall to enhance merchandise visibility.
 - Featured fixtures along aisles should be angled towards aisle and not shop entrance. This way merchandise will have the same visibility to customer coming from either direction. These racks should be rotated frequently to give the perception of new merchandise.

**Step 26
(cont.)**

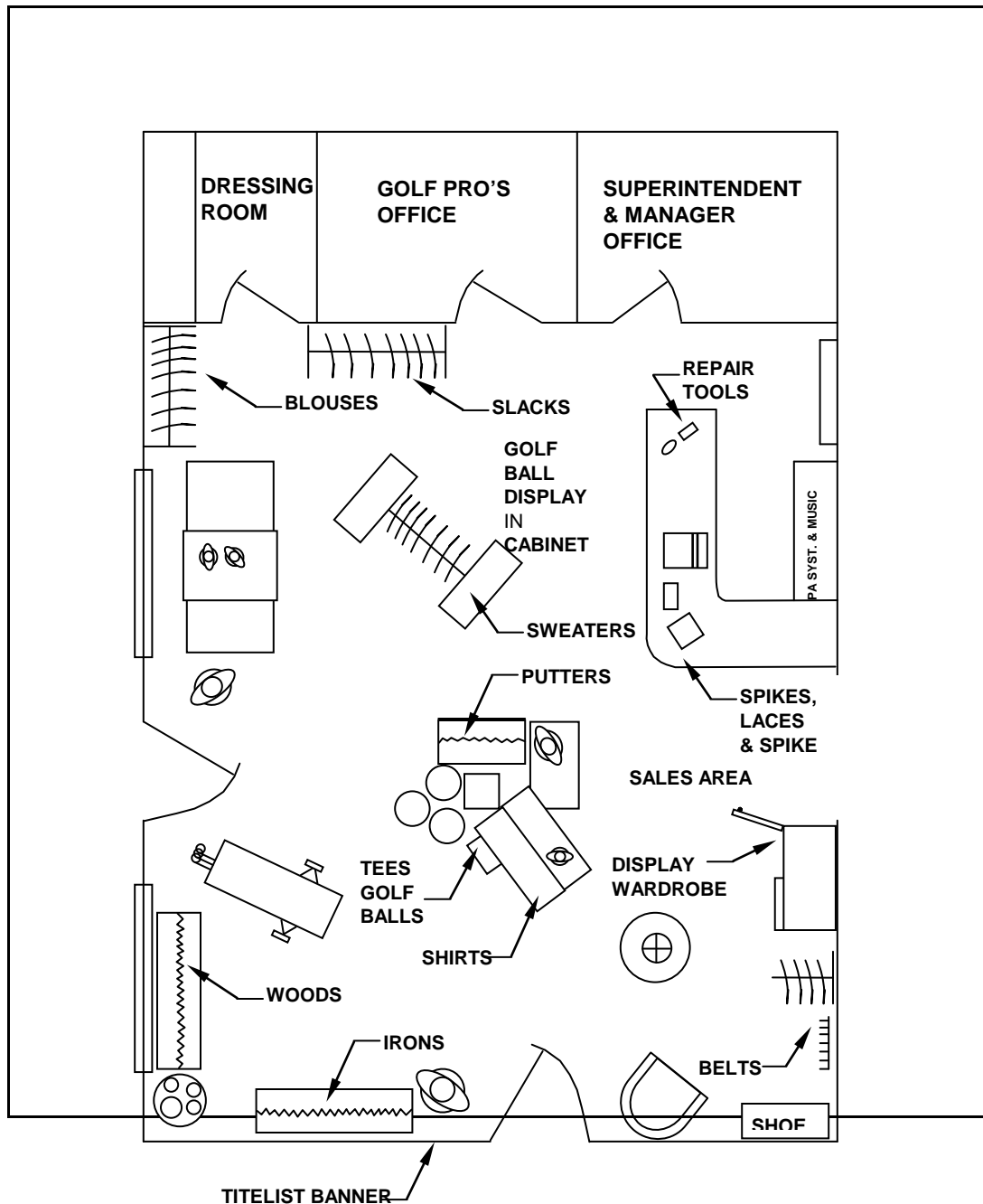
- Tiered/nesting tables are used for folded merchandise (shirts, sweaters, pants, shorts) with a mannequin/form display on the top table/shelf.
 - Four-way fixtures are used to feature coordinates and separates that form coordinated outfits.
 - Rack-toppers with two "T-bars" are used to display accessories, such as ball caps and golf gloves.
-
- ☐ Clothes should be in logical sequence with tops always above the bottoms (e.g., shirts/sweaters displayed above shorts/pants/skirts).
 - ☐ Colors should be displayed light to dark left to right. Hang print colors and fold solid colors.
 - ☐ Spacing on racks is 1/2 inch per garment and all pants items no higher than 4 inches from the floor.
 - ☐ Sleeve lengths should be the same on displays.
 - ☐ Sweaters should be displayed laying flat with small size on top to each larger size in sequence below. Use self-adhesive size-labels to display size to customer and reduce the customer having to dig through stack to find appropriate size.
 - ☐ Stacks of pants should also have self-adhesive size labels.
 - ☐ Signage should be used to provide customer information that cannot be communicated solely by the merchandise. Signs should always be professionally printed – NEVER use handmade signs. All signs should be displayed in a sign holder.

Some uses for signs include:

- Advertising merchandise with sale pricing
- Unadvertised, in-store, promotional merchandise with sale pricing
- Value-priced merchandise
- Advertising merchandise with new/improved features
- Showing your price in comparison with your competition's price

Step 27 Illustrate your internal layouts on your floor plans and/or on vendor provided plan-o-grams.

Example:



Step 28 Develop special promotional/theme events for your resale program.

<p>NOTE: You should always have holiday, seasonal, sales and theme/special events planned one year in advance, just as you do your Program activities and events.</p>
--

Things to consider in planning your theme events are:

- ☐ Keep a perpetual calendar filled in with all major holidays, seasonal, special, community, and FFR-wide events.
- ☐ Create a collection of props for theme events.
- ☐ Visit your competitors or other major retail operations to observe their promotions, sales, props, fixtures, signage, and their theme and special ideas to apply to your Program.
- ☐ Have fun with displays. The attitude and excitement you reflect will be infectious.
- ☐ Involve your staff and other Programs in your planning and execution of themes and events. Make it a team effort.
- ☐ Don't hesitate to sell/trade your display props (to other programs/ businesses) and replace them with something new.
- ☐ Make an effort to contact local reps and order props from catalogues.

Step 29 Illustrate your seasonal and promotional layouts on your floor plans or on vendor provided plans.

- Maintain a file of your seasonal and promotional plans, ideas from catalogs, notes from trade-shows, vendors, and what you've seen in other businesses.

Take photos of your display areas for future reference.

Step 30 Ensure your staff maintains the following merchandising elements every day.

Image:

- ☐ Is the shop and entrance clean?
- ☐ Are the windows clean and well lit?
- ☐ Is the overall shop consistent and easy to read?
- ☐ Does the store smell inviting?
- ☐ Is your background music appropriate?

Layout:

- ☐ Are the aisles clean and uncluttered?
- ☐ Are sightlines maintained, allowing customers to see into and throughout the store?
- ☐ Are fixtures positioned to allow adequate room for the customers to comfortably shop and browse?
- ☐ Do focal points command the attention that draws customers into the depths of the store?
- ☐ Is the cashier's desk/check-out area neat and orderly?

Presentation:

- ☐ Is there something new and exciting at the front of the shop to greet customers?
- ☐ Is merchandise well organized and located in its proper places.
- ☐ Are your presentations neat, powerful, and easy to shop?
- ☐ Is merchandise positioned to encourage impulse sales?
- ☐ Do your fixtures tell a positive story?

Signage:

- ☐ Are your departments/sales areas well identified?
- ☐ Are your signs positioned at levels customers would expect to find the information?
- ☐ Are torn, taped, negative, handwritten, outdated signs removed from the selling floor (FOREVER!)?
- ☐ Are your promotional or advertised items well identified?
- ☐ Do your signs provide customers with important facts?

**Step 30
(cont.)**

Displays:

- ☐ Are your displays neat, dusted, and properly arranged?
- ☐ Are displays well lit?
- ☐ Is color used to draw attention to your displays?
- ☐ Is additional stock of the merchandise used in the display located nearby?
- ☐ Do the displays add appeal and romance to the merchandise?
- ☐ Do your staff members just sit/lounge around the sales/counter area or do they continually move around providing customer service and maintaining the shop?

Events:

- ☐ Do you have an event happening today?
- ☐ Are you prepared for today's events?
- ☐ Is there entertainment value in areas of the store where customers must wait?
- ☐ Are there opportunities, even informally, to demonstrate products for your customer?
- ☐ Do your presentations and displays encourage interactivity?

Cleanliness/sanitation:

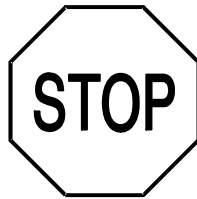
- ☐ Are all your displays, props, fixtures, racks, and shelves clean?
- ☐ Are your glass cabinets, doors, and mirrors clean? (Clean these daily.)
- ☐ Are your floors clean? (Vacuum daily or more often if necessary.)
- ☐ Are your displays fully stocked? (Restock depleted merchandise items.)
- ☐ Is all the merchandise properly marked with price tags?
- ☐ What is the condition of your merchandise? (Reposition, refold, and/or realign merchandise that has been moved by your customers or staff.)

Step 31 Monitor your sales program/store during regular and special events to talk to/observe staff, customers, and vendors.

Use this opportunity to interact with all your key players.

You want to:

- Assess reaction to displays/special promotions.
- Observe traffic flow/patterns.
- Ask questions to identify interests, needs/wants, and discover what other stores they use.
- Observe sales and customer service techniques of your staff.



Congratulations! You've completed this task.

MWR Managers' Operations Guide

Your merchandising equipment and supplies may include:	
Bags	Lighting and Light Fixtures
Banners	Literature Displays
Barrels	Locks and Cables
Belt and Tie Displays	Mannequins and Mannequin Alternatives
Boxes	Metal, Wood, and Synthetic Shelving
Brochure Holders	Mirrors
Casters	Pegboard and Pegboard Hardware
Christmas/Holiday/Seasonal Items	Pennants
Clips	Pins
Contest Boxes	Poster Displays and Frames
Counters	Props
Counter Displays	Racks
Crates	Ribbons and Bows
Custom Counters/Displays	Security Systems, Items, and Hardware
Easels and Risers	Shoe Displays
Forms	Showcases and Showcase Locks
Garment Covers & Bags	Showcase Risers
Gift Wrap and Tissue	Sign Holders
Glass/Acrylic Cubes and Connectors	Signs and Sign Cards
Glass/Acrylic Shelving	Size Dividers
Grid	Slat wall and Slat wall Accessories
Hardware	Spinners
Hanger Helpers and Hangers	Steamers (for clothes)
Hang rails	Tables and Nesting Tables
Hat Displays	Turntables
Hooks	Wall Systems
Jewelry Displays	Warehouse/Stockroom Shelving
Label and Tagging Guns, Tags, and Labels	Waterfalls
Letter boards	

Consult with your purchasing agent for companies that specialize in merchandising display equipment and supplies.

This page left blank intentionally.