

DCA JEWELER

NEWSLETTER OF THE DIAMOND COUNCIL OF AMERICA

DCA Publishes Revised Diamond Course

(Nashville, TN) The Diamond Council of America has announced completion of a three year project to update and revise its popular Diamond Course. DCA President /CEO, Terry Chandler, said the new version of the Diamond Course would be available to DCA member's students as of early May 2005.

The Diamond Council regularly monitors new developments in the jewelry industry, both technical and structural, and revises its courses every five years. The new version of the Diamond Course incorporates industry changes and technical information occurring since the original version was published in June of 2000.

DCA has completely restructured the academic model for the course; incorporating the latest in adult learning techniques. As a part of the academic "remodel" DCA has created an interactive component within the course to assist owners and managers in ascertaining that their students not only comprehend the material, but understand how to utilize the new knowledge in real life selling situations.

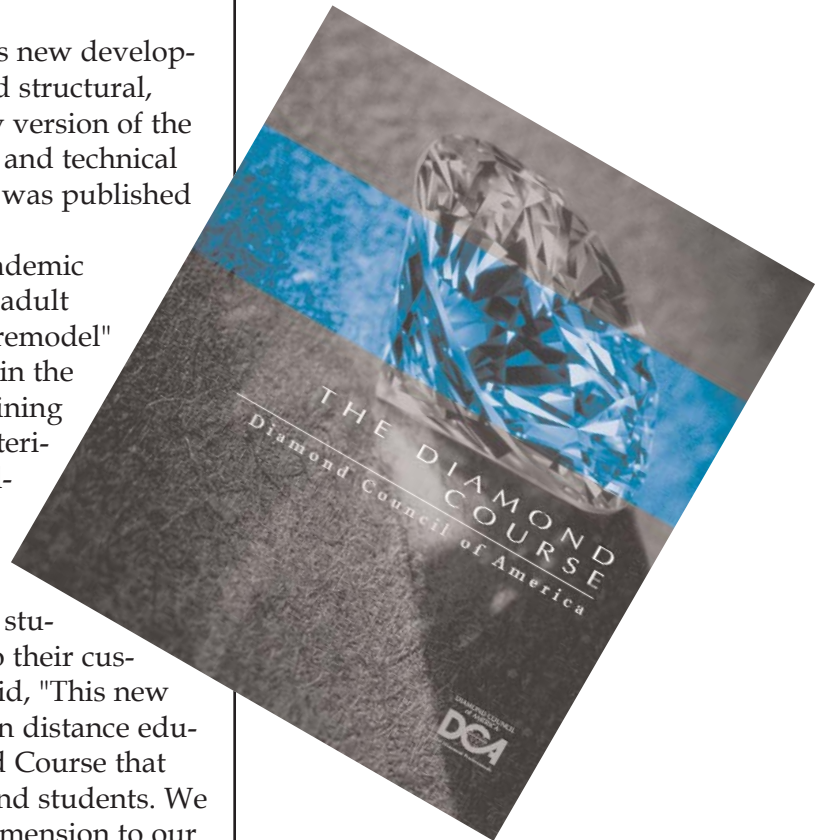
At four separate points in the coursework, students and managers review specific information from the course to make certain the student can accurately communicate the material to their customers. DCA President/CEO Terry Chandler said, "This new "phantom supervisor" concept is revolutionary in distance education and adds a "fail safe" step to the Diamond Course that will create an active dialog between managers and students. We feel certain this innovative component adds a dimension to our academic model that will allow students to greatly increase the use of course materials in day to day selling situations."

The revised Diamond Course, a collaborative effort between DCA and Performance Concepts, is comprised of twenty-two lessons, four sectional reviews, and a comprehensive final.

Members' students may order the new course through DCA's Nashville office for \$115.

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DIAMOND COUNCIL
of AMERICA



The Diamond Professionals

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Terry W. Chandler



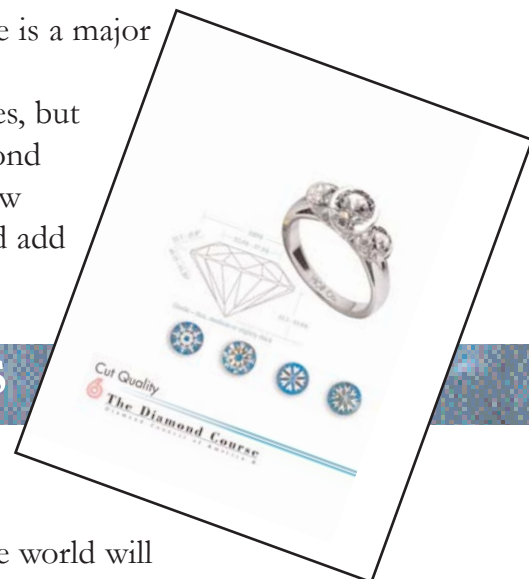
Terry W. Chandler

I am extremely excited about the publication of our revised Diamond Course! DCA remains committed to high standards and quality education for our members' students and has produced a course, in this latest version, that is current, effective and revolutionary in academic design.

The new academic model creates what I like to call a "Phantom Supervisor". This novel concept puts managers, owners, and students, face to face throughout the student's progress through the course, to make certain the material has been comprehended accurately and that the student can easily relate their new knowledge to customers.

My goal continues to be the practical application of DCA's course materials to effectively communicating with customers to increase sales. The new interactive component in the revised course is a major step towards achieving that goal.

I encourage DCA members to enroll not only new associates, but urge you to allow students who have completed the original Diamond Course to re-enroll in this latest version. It contains a wealth of new knowledge and information that will enhance their selling skills and add to their confidence on the sales floor.



FROM PERFORMANCE CONCEPTS

Kate Peterson

I'm a firm believer in the adage that all the knowledge in the world will never make your register ring. Making sales - particularly in today's environment of sophisticated products and even more sophisticated customers, requires a unique blend of information, confidence and skill. Therein lies the winning formula for the Diamond Council of America's programs. DCA's latest effort underscores once again a firm commitment to the most important person in our business - the customer! We know that it's simply not enough to teach salespeople about the product. The very best training programs in our industry today are designed to teach salespeople how to sell the product - how to take relevant and important information, combine it with a store's culture and unique selling proposition and master the skill necessary to translate it into confident, persuasive presentation. The newly revised Diamonds Course delivers all that - and much more.our members' associates increase sales.

I encourage DCA members to utilize this extraordinary tool and make The Colored Gemstone course a central part of their training and education programs.



President/CEO
Performance Concepts, Inc.

The Best Education for Jewelry Sales Professionals

When the Diamond Council and Performance Concepts began to plan the revision of The Diamond Course, we realized we had an opportunity to create the best education program available for jewelry sales professionals. The first edition of the course gave us a strong foundation on which to build. DCA had gained experience in distance education, and its vision for the future had also expanded. Performance Concepts had moved forward in training

development and industry analysis. With these advantages, we were confident we could produce the right program for today's jewelry retailing.

New Knowledge and Skills

Although The Diamond Course was first published in 2001, the diamond world has changed tremendously since then. Sources and supply channels, the variety and prevalence of treatments, the production and availability of synthetics, the prominence of branding, the debate over cut quality, the social and political issues surrounding diamonds - all of these are very different today than they were only a few years ago.

Addressing the new realities was a top goal in the revision. We wanted to provide DCA students with the most up-to-date and accurate information, and we wanted to make sure they had all the skills needed to use that information effectively.

The core content part of the revision involved most lessons in

the course, and several took extensive work. Notable changes include:

Lesson 5. Cut Shape and Style - Added a section on branded diamond cuts and how to present this growing product category.

Lesson 8. Treatments, Synthetics, and Simulants - Updated the entire lesson to reflect numerous developments in this area. Expanded the section on representation and disclosure to provide detailed guidelines for a retail setting.

Lesson 10. Deposits and Sources - Updated production figures and added a section on conflict diamonds, which was vetted by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee.

Lesson 13. The Diamond Industry - Rewrote the lesson to reflect shifts in supply channels, distribution networks, and trade center activity since 2000.

Lesson 17. The Selling Process - Expanded discussion of basic steps and techniques; covered additional topics like promoting your store and sale turnover; added a section on understanding and utilizing sales measurements.

Lesson 19. Customer Service - Expanded the section on Client Development to provide a complete overview and action plan for this vital activity.

Lesson 21. Security - Added a discussion of the USA Patriot Act and the responsibilities it assigns retail

jewelers. (JVC vetted this, too.)

Enhanced Training



Mike Ross

Besides new knowledge and skills, the revised Diamond Course offers enhanced training. At four key points in

their coursework, students must complete a detailed Training Evaluation form, review it with their store's owner or manager, and submit it to DCA. (There are special arrangements for owners and managers who take the course.)

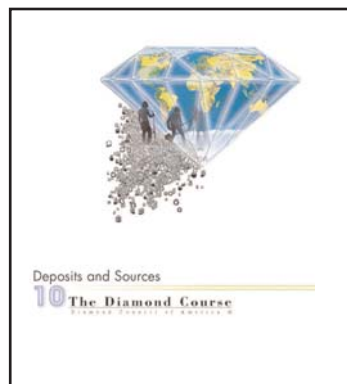
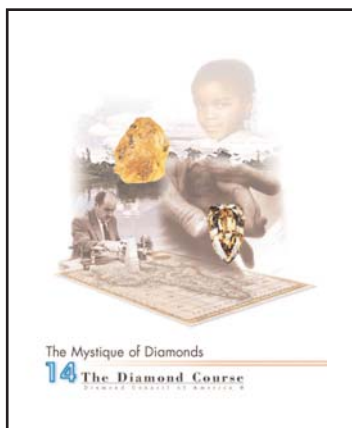
The new Training Evaluations ensure that students can take the knowledge and skills presented in the course, and apply them to "real-life" job responsibilities. These innovative educational components build on another unique feature of The Diamond Course - its Lesson Follow-Up Checklists.

Positioned at the end of every lesson, the checklists allow stu-

dents to practice what they learn, and help them become familiar with their store's products, services, policies, and procedures. For example, one follow-up item for the selling lesson instructs

students to select diamond jewelry from their inventory and practice translating features into benefits.

No other course offers the kind



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of targeted training embodied by the Lesson Follow-Up Checklists.

However, the checklists are independent learning exercises, and a need for formal evaluation was identified during DCA's most recent accreditation review by the Distance Education and Training Council.

DCA has been accredited by the Council since 1984, and successfully completed the latest review in January 2005. The process included an examination of DCA's courses by an outside committee of educators and subject specialists. The committee suggested that employers sign-off on Lesson Follow-Up Checklists, and we adapted the suggestion when we revised The Diamond Course.

The Training Evaluations make minimal demands on busy management schedules, but add greatly to the course's practical value. By creating a structured way for store owners and managers to monitor their associates' learning progress - specifically as it relates to job performance - Training Evaluations take the effectiveness of The Diamond Course to a truly exceptional level.

Still Focused on Selling

While The Diamond Course can benefit almost all jewelry professionals, it was designed for those actively engaged in selling, and we were careful to maintain this focus in the revision. The 22 lessons that make up the course are divided into three main sections - Need to Know, Nice to Know, and Professional Skills - reflecting a sales associate's priorities and job responsibilities.

The Need to Know section

(Lessons 2 through 8) supplies product knowledge that students will use in a high percentage of sales presentations. This section discusses the 4Cs and diamond jewelry. It also covers diamond treatments, synthetics, and simulants - topics every jewelry professional should be familiar with today.

Nice to Know (Lessons 9 through 14) presents background information that will boost stu-

dents' confidence and supply answers to questions some customers ask. This section follows the story of diamonds from formation to the sales counter, and ends with a look at diamond's special mystique.

Professional Skills

(Lessons 15 through 21) offers guidelines for successful selling and for functioning as a member of the store's team. This section covers professional development, caring for diamonds and diamond jewelry, the selling process, use of selling tools, customer service, product display, and security.

The Clear Choice

The Diamond Council and Performance Concepts are extremely proud of the new edition of The Diamond Course. We think we succeeded in producing an educational product that is unrivaled. More importantly, we feel confident that the revised course will meet the needs of DCA's members and students, enabling them to succeed in a challenging marketplace. Following its revision, the Diamond Course is now the clear choice in education for jewelry sales professionals.



DIAMOND COUNCIL
of AMERICA



The Diamond Professionals
3212 West End Avenue
Suite 202
Nashville, TN 37203
phone 615-385-5301
toll free 877-283-5669
fax 615-385-4955
www.diamondcouncil.org

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