

FIRE UP YOUR CAREER



The Job of a Retail Store Manager

[By Roshan Tolani]

Working as a retail store manager is challenging. Following company policy, the manager has to keep staff motivated and customers satisfied. Competition in the retail industry is making it difficult for managers to achieve store objectives. However, excellent rewards are available for those who are driven to achieve.

Job Profile

The primary responsibility of the retail manager is to take care of the day-to-day operations of the store. Although his or her tasks may vary depending on the size and location of the retail establishment, managers have to set work schedules, maintain inventories, ensure customer satisfaction, design the layout of store merchandise, and report to top management.

Duties

A retail manager's day-to-day responsibilities normally involve:

- **Customer issues:** assisting customers and responding to customer complaints, requests, queries, and comments.
- **Sales issues:** finding new ways to improve sales, meet sales targets, analyze figures, forecast volumes, and strategize.
- **HR issues:** recruiting, training, supervising, motivating, and reviewing staff, as well as resolving health, safety, and legal issues for the store.

- **Inventory issues:** maintaining stock levels, ensuring the quality of supplies, and supervising the quantity, type, and scheduling of orders.
- **Display issues:** planning the layout and design of displays.
- **Coordination issues:** acting as a link between management and staff.

Work Conditions

The retail store is a demanding and fast-paced workplace. Constant change and unpredictability are inseparable elements of retail work. Along with growth opportunities come deviations from normal work routines and more restrictions.

A significant number of managers spend most of their time on the sales floor rather than in the office. Frequent involvement with staff, interaction with customers, and observation of actual sales proceedings help retail managers more in their careers than sitting secluded in an office struggling with diagrams and charts.

A manager normally works 38 to 40 hours per week, including evenings and weekends, especially during busy periods near seasonal

holidays. Most managers have to work longer than their contract hours, and overtime pay is often unheard of. Managers need to accept having restricted social lives and less freedom, conforming to rigid dress codes, and dealing with intense pressure to perform if they want to enjoy the rewards and satisfaction that come with the business.

Attitude and Skills

The retail industry has always valued attitude and skill more than education. In fact, the industry follows the principle "recruit for attitude and train for skill." The retail store manager needs to possess the following career-specific and personal skills to be successful in the field.

Career-specific skills:

- Business and financial sense
- The ability to deal with difficult customers
- The ability to motivate staff
- The expertise to innovate
- The tact to enforce rules and regulations in the workplace

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- The motivation to get work done
- Familiarity with basic computer functions
- The capability to work under pressure for hours
- A positive and cheerful attitude
- Decision-making skills
- Leadership
- Integrity

Personal skills:

- Drive, enthusiasm, and initiative
- Communication skills

As the retail industry is booming, it makes sense to explore career opportunities and evaluate one's aptitude for work in the field.

ON THE NET

Retail Store Managers
www.careerprospects.org/Briefs/P-S/RetailManagers.shtml

Retail Manager
www.learn-direct-advice.co.uk/helpwithyourcareer/jobprofiles/profiles/profile139

Retail Store Managers
www.calmis.ca.gov/file/occguides/RETLSTOR.HTM

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