

FIRE UP YOUR CAREER

Exciting Careers in Retail

[By Nihit Aurora]

If you want to work in an industry that is dynamic, then retail will offer you the right career options. A simple look at the statistics is convincing enough. In the United States, the retail industry is among the largest employers in the country, employing a workforce of nearly 15 million. This accounts for around 12% of all employment in the country.

The United States also has some of the largest retail chains in the world, including Wal-Mart, K-Mart, and Home Depot. In the United States, Wal-Mart alone employs about 1.3 million associates and brings in around \$310 billion in sales annually. Single-store businesses also contribute to the retail economy in the United States, accounting for more than 95% of all retail business in the country. Although they generate less than 50% of retail sales, they are still a vital component of domestic retail business.

Therefore, pursuing a career in the retail industry is an attractive proposition. Employment in retail is also very flexible as most employers offer both part-time and full-time employment opportunities. Retail jobs offer relatively stable employment compared to jobs in other industries since retail is all about consumers' wants and needs. So long as people continue to procure goods and services, there will always be retail employment opportunities.

The retail industry offers a variety of entry-level, executive, managerial, senior, and board-level positions. Top-performing department store managers can expect to make around \$70,000 per year.

Acquiring skills can make a big difference in the retail industry. Experience is also a major asset when it comes to moving up the retail career ladder. Many employers look for teamwork and communication skills, dedication, courtesy, initiative, enthusiasm, multitasking capabilities, and the ability to interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Most people wrongly believe that retail industry jobs consist only of cashier, sales associate, and store executive positions. On the contrary, the retail industry offers a variety of positions in retail marketing, advertising, operations, loss prevention, finance, human resources, IT, merchandising, and other areas.

It is not essential for retail professionals to hold college degrees in retail. Many individuals are promoted solely on the basis of merit and experience. However, a college degree can help one attain a corporate executive, store manager, senior, or board-level position. Many colleges in the United States offer associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree programs in retail, retail marketing, retail sales, and merchandising.

Many individuals feel that the advent of e-commerce will set the retail industry

back. In contrast, the retail industry has successfully implemented e-commerce as part of its retailing strategy. Almost every retailer today has an e-commerce-integrated website. This has enabled consumers to order merchandise from retailers online. Therefore, e-commerce has complemented the retail industry in many ways. This trend has created many jobs for IT professionals with knowledge of retail, as well.

Many professionals view retail as an exciting career destination because of the unlimited growth potential in the industry. A combination of the right skills, qualifications, experience, and business acumen will help you tap into the unlimited opportunities in today's retail industry.

ON THE NET

Retail Fact Sheet
www.nrf.com/content/foundation/RetailFactSheet.pdf

The National Retail Federation
www.nrf.com

About Careers in the Retail Industry
retailindustry.about.com/od/jobs/a/blcareers.htm

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs, and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.