



Retail Sales Positions: Which Ones Pay the Most?

What do you think is the best paying retail sales job? Take a guess. If you said automobile sales, you are correct. According to the latest figures available, the automobile dealer makes more per hour than virtually any other retail sales worker. This has remained consistent for several years.



When looking at the highest paying retail jobs, the automobile dealer is followed by building materials dealers, clothing store salespersons, and department store salespersons. Building materials dealers are, on average, paid less than \$10 per hour. Their duties can include anything and everything that is required in the building material business. From loading the material to issuing refunds to customers, this is a do-it-all type of position.

Next is the clothing store salesperson, who also makes less than \$10 per hour. This is another occupation that may require more than just the selling of clothing. Helping to unload the trucks that deliver the merchandise to the store, displaying it on the sales floor, and anything in between are normally the requirements for this position. Department store sales is the next best paying, however this does not pay more than \$10 per hour on average either. The only difference between this position and the clothing store position is that the department store sells many other items in addition to clothing.

The Automobile Dealer

The automobile dealer is not subject to any certain qualifications when it comes to opening their business. The ability to get a business license and the finances to set up are generally all it takes to get started.

Often the automobile dealer will put in long hours, generally not working the typical 9 to 5 unless the dealership is very large and he or she can afford to employ management to take care of the dealership when he or she is away.

Depending on the size of the dealership, the automobile dealer will make sure his or her employees are instructed on all aspects of the equipment they sell or, in the case of a small dealership, will be well versed in this area personally. A large dealership may have training for employees to keep them up to date on the ever-changing world of automobiles.

Since this is a sales position, the automobile dealer as well as any employees must have a good customer service attitude, neat appearance, and the communications skills necessary for the position. A background check may be another requirement.

The Clothing Store Salesperson

Clothing store salespersons do not just sell clothes all day long, they are also responsible for many aspects of the store. The typical day for this position will include handling returns and exchanges, wrapping gifts, and making sure the store is clean and there are no items on the floor. Marking prices and reductions, placing new merchandise on the sales floor, and knowing what items are on sale are all part of this position. Keeping inventory of the merchandise, stocking clothing racks and shelves, arranging displays, and keeping price signs up to date are some of the many responsibilities that will keep a clothing salesperson busy between sales.

The security of his or her area is another part of the clothing store salesperson's job responsibility. Keeping an eye out for suspected shoplifters is one way to help to curb the high losses associated with retail sales.

The attitude of a candidate for this position is always of extreme importance. Since consumers spend millions of dollars every year on retail items, customer service must be excellent. Repeat business and good feedback are two of the most important things to retail establishments. If they are not responsive to their customers' needs, they will get neither.

Employment opportunities are usually good for this type of position because this occupation has a high turnover rate. The down side to being a retail clothing salesperson is the hours. This is definitely not your 9 to 5 job. Weekends, nights, and holidays are all times you can expect to work, because these are the peak times for sales.

The Department Store Salesperson

This position is similar to the retail clothing salesperson. The department store salesperson is responsible for either



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a specific department within the store or an area of the store (unless, of course, you are the manager of the store). However, a salesperson in a department store will do a variety of jobs.

Department store salespersons are responsible for assisting other employees with unloading their merchandise when it comes in, sorting it by department, and getting it to the sales floor in the shortest time possible. Most stores have a time line for this process, and are usually done within 24 hours. The philosophy is that the longer merchandise sits in the stockroom, the more money is lost.

The stocking of shelves and displays is another requirement of this position. Ordering supplies, helping customers, wrapping gifts, making sales, and performing register duties all play an important role in the day to day life of a department store salesperson.

Although the positions mentioned above may have many additional requirements, this is a basic idea of the duties for which they are responsible.

The following are the top ranked states for retail sales positions in the United States.

1. California
2. New York
3. Pennsylvania
4. Illinois
5. Florida
6. Texas

Although many other states provide competitive salaries for these positions, the above named are the best states for retail sales jobs as reported to the retail management industry in the last year. The trend in retail sales seems to be leaning towards high tech items. According to the Retail Advertising and Marketing Association, the highest selling item categories for customers age 13 to 28 were technology, fashion, and luxury items.

There is no doubt that the retail industry makes plenty of money from consumers. The month of June showed consumer spending over \$350 million on retail items across the United States.

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