

Types of Job in Retail

There are nine job areas that cover the multitude of career options in the retail sector:

- Store Operations
- Human Resources / Training
- Finance and Administration
- Buying
- Customer Contact Centres
- Marketing
- Logistics
- Information Technology (IT)
- Automotive Skills

These nine areas are common in all categories of retail, from grocery stores to fashion outlets.

Store Operations

The majority of jobs in retail fall under the heading of Store Operations - these are jobs which deal with the smooth running of the store and the physical selling of merchandise. Positions include Management and work on the shop floor such as a Sales Assistant or Department Manager. One of the top jobs in this area would be Director of Operations.

Jobs that fall within Store Operations include:

- Director of Operations
- Regional Manager
- Area Manager
- Store Manager
- Assistant Store Manager
- Floor Manager
- Department Manager
- Assistant Department Manager
- Supervisor
- Senior Sales Assistant

- Sales Assistant – general, beauty consultancy, lingerie fitting, visual merchandising, bakery, butchery, fish mongering, fresh produce
- Style Advisor / Personal Shopper
- Trolley Pusher / Shelf Filler / Cleaner/

Possible Career path in Retail Operations:

Saturday Job - Assistant Sales Person - Sales Assistant - Supervisor - Department Manager - Deputy Store Manager - Store Manager - Area Manager - Regional Sales Manager - Regional Director

Human Resources and Training

Human Resources and Training involves the development and implementation of policies relating to the effective use of human resources within an organisation. Whatever the size or type of business, all organisations are required to have policies in place that cover areas such as working practices, recruitment, pay, conditions of employment and diversity.

The HR function should help to ensure that the organisation employs the right balance of staff in terms of skills and experience, and that training and development opportunities are available to employees to enhance their performance in order to achieve the organisation's objectives.

Jobs that fall within Human Resources and Training include:

- HR Director
- HR Manager
- Personnel Manager
- HR Assistant
- Training Director
- Training Manager
- Training Officer
- Recruitment Officer

Job vacancies appear in a number of places, including several personnel and training journals. People Management, published fortnightly, is sent to all those professionally qualified in the field of people management and development. Although many of the jobs advertised in it are at middle and senior levels of responsibility, it gives a good indication of current jobs and salaries.

Also, you'll get an idea of what employers are looking for and what career progression is possible.

Finance and Administration

A career in corporate finance means that you may work for a company to help it find money to run the business, grow the business, make acquisitions, plan for its financial future and manage cash on hand. You might work for a large multinational company or a smaller player with high growth prospects. Responsibility can come fast and your attention to detail and problem-solving skills will get put to work quickly in corporate finance. Jobs in corporate finance are relatively stable providing that you maintain an excellent standard of work - attention to detail is vital. The key to performing well in corporate finance is to work with a long view of what is going to make your company successful. Many would argue that corporate finance jobs are the most desirable in the entire field of finance.

Jobs that fall within Finance and Administration include:

- Finance Director
- Finance Controller
- Financial Analyst
- Credit Manager
- Chief Accountant
- Accountant
- Clerks
- Audit Manager
- Procurement Manager
- Tax and Treasury Manager

Buying

The main role of a retail buyer is to successfully purchase attractive merchandise ensuring the price, quality and availability are able to meet customer needs. By fully understanding the customers' wants and needs, buyers are able to maximize profits and provide a commercially viable range of merchandise at competitive prices.

The role of the buyer is demanding yet rewarding. Although support is provided it does involve considerable responsibility and autonomy. The ability to multi-task, prioritise work and meet strict deadlines are key requirements of a role that requires competency in a wide range of other analytical, motivational and leadership skills.

Jobs that fall within Buying include:

- Merchandiser
- Assistant Buyer
- Buyer
- Senior Buyer
- Head of Buying

Customer Contact Centres

Call centre operators, also known as contact centre operators, normally work in the customer services department of an organisation maintaining regular contact with customers by telephone, email, SMS messaging, fax and post. The work normally involves selling goods and services, or providing information and advice. Much of it is done by accessing and updating customers' records via a computer database. Contact centres respond to and solve problems which their customers have encountered in both products and services whilst shopping from their stores or websites. They may replace products and / or refund the customer where the product or service did not meet the customer's expectations or compensate them in some way within the scope of their customer service policy.

Marketing

Marketing Executives in this field are involved in promoting and selling fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) and products to the public, usually via the retail trade. FMCGs are typically high-volume, low-value items with high public visibility and short life span, such as food, drink, confectionery, toiletries, and household goods.

Marketing Executives work on various projects to support the brand/marketing manager in developing brands and promoting existing products, raising public awareness of the client's products through advertising campaigns and in-store promotions and building brand loyalty.

Alternative job titles are frequently used, e.g. Assistant Brand Manager or Assistant Product Manager.

Jobs that fall within Marketing include:

- Marketer
- Information Analyst
- Loyalty Campaign Manager
- Brand Manager
- Events Planner
- Packaging Designers
- Marketing Plan Planner
- Design Planner
- Customer Insight Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Marketing Director
- Head of PR

- PR Assistant
- Fair-trade Ranging Strategist

Logistics

Logistics is the UK's fifth biggest industry employing 1.7 million people across 65,000 organisations. The industry is essential to the efficient performance of the UK, touching every business and household. It involves the movement, handling and storing of goods through a variety of modes of transport including rail, road, air, deep sea, short sea and waterways across 11 different supply chains.

These supply chains are:

Automotive, Chemical & Petroleum, Clothing & Footwear, Construction, Electronics & Electrical, Food & Drink, Furniture & Furnishings, Paper & Printing, Pharmaceutical & Healthcare, Utilities and Third Party Logistics.

Key benefits of working in logistics include:

- You work independently and as a key member of a team
- You work in an industry that is crucial to us all
- This is a career that gives you real responsibility
- Gain a range of skills and qualifications as your career progresses
- Logistics gives you the opportunity to travel - even globally
- You can start at any level and work your way up
- You can work in Logistics whether you are a school leaver, a graduate, unemployed or a career changer
- Job security – work in an industry that needs more people not less
- The work is well paid compared to similar jobs in other sectors
- A flexible career - with part-time or full-time opportunities

Jobs that fall within Logistics include:

- Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) Driver
- Van Driver
- Warehouse / Distribution Manager
- Warehouse supervisor / operative
- Administrative Assistant
- Transport Supervisor
- Supply Chain Manager
- Human Resources Officer
- Health & Safety Officer
- Contract Manager

- Shipping Clerk
- Mechanic / Technician
- Motorcycle Despatch Rider
- Marketing and Communications Manager
- Packer
- Porter
- Transport Clerk
- Logistics Director
- Courier
- Accountant
- Distribution Manager
- Removals Clerk

These are just a selection of the many varied roles available in Logistics. For further information visit www.careersinlogistics.co.uk or www.skillsforlogistics.org

Information Technology

Information systems managers install computer systems, ensure that backup systems operate effectively, buy hardware and software, provide the ICT technology infrastructures for an organisation, and contribute to organisational policy with regard to quality standards and strategic planning.

Information systems managers work in every size of organisation in every industry and service sector, usually with a staff of technicians, programmers and database administrators reporting to them.

Within the ICT sector actual job titles are dependent on the employing organisation.

You might, for example, be a service delivery manager in a software house or a data processing manager in an end-user organisation.

A day working in IT could include:

- Evaluating user needs and system functionality;
- Ensuring that ICT facilities meet the needs of individuals and projects;
- Planning, developing and implementing the ICT budget, obtaining competitive prices from suppliers, where appropriate, to ensure cost effectiveness;
- Scheduling upgrades and security backups of hardware and software systems;
- Researching and installing new systems;
- Ensuring the smooth running of all ICT systems, including anti-virus software, print services and e-mail provision;
- Ensuring that software licensing laws are adhered to;

- Providing secure access to the network for remote users;
- Ensuring the security of data from internal and external attack;
- Providing users with appropriate support and advice
- Managing crisis situations, which may involve complex technical hardware or software problems;
- Mentoring and training new ICT support staff;
- Keeping up to date with the latest technologies.

Automotive Skills

The automotive sector is made up of nearly 600,000 employees UK-wide and over 50% of these employees are employed in Vehicle Sales, Parts Distribution and Supply and Motorcycle Sales.

Approximately a quarter of all employees in the sector work as technicians, with a total of a third in skilled occupations. Sales and administration staff account for two-fifths of the total, with around 10% being owners or senior managers. The remaining 10-15% includes professional and elementary occupations.

Fourteen industry-defined activities cover all types of vehicle, with businesses typically carrying out more than one activity.

Jobs that fall within Automotive Retail include:

- Fast fit operations (tyres, exhausts, batteries, etc.)
- Parts distribution and supply
- Vehicle sales
- Vehicle rental and leasing (self drive or with driver)

These are just a selection of the many varied roles available in Automotive Skills. For further information from the Institute of the Motor Industry, visit www.motor.org.uk

For further information please contact anne.richardson@skillsmartretail.com
Skillsmart Retail Ltd, 93 Newman Street, London, W1T 3EZ, Tel 020 7462 5060, Fax 020 7462 5061,
contactus@skillsmartretail.com, www.skillsmartretail.com