

## 1.11: Key Roles in a Retail Business

### Learning Objectives

- Identify key roles within retail businesses

There are a myriad of roles within the retail environment. Before we take a deep dive into the career opportunities, let's explore why one would choose a career in retail. What are some of the reasons you are interested in retail? If you haven't considered it why might you consider it? As you watch the video below can you relate to what is said?



The retail industry offers diverse and unique career paths where you could work for some of the world's most recognizable brands. Many of the main goals of retail— be it sales and profitability, product innovation, or customer relationships—intersect with other career fields like marketing, finance, technology, loss prevention, merchandising and management. Whether in stores or corporate headquarters many of key roles in retail include internal coordination, planning and logistics, store operations, human resources / training, finance and administration, buying, marketing, logistics, and information technology.

Positions in the retail industry can largely depend on what the company or store is selling. All positions must have some knowledge or familiarity with the products they sell and the needs of customers. At the forefront of the retail team are entry-level positions that tend to have the most face to face time with customers and tend to make up the bulk of the workforce of a company. Positions at this level could be a cashier, stocker, front end or sales associate. Entry level positions do not require a worker to supervise other workers at the same entry level positions.


The next level up would be intermediate management that supervises entry level and other staff. With diverse roles and departments in the retail industry there is a need for distinct types of management to direct and accommodate different areas and departments:

- Human resource management
- Operations management or production management
- Strategic management
- Marketing management
- Financial management
- Information technology management (responsible for the management information systems)

Management in general is the act of engaging with an organization's human talent and using the physical resources at a manager's disposal to accomplish desired goals and objectives efficiently and effectively. Management comprises planning, organizing, staffing, leading, directing, and controlling an organization (a group of one or more people or entities) or effort for the purpose of accomplishing a goal.

One of the most important duties for a manager is effectively using an organization's resources. This duty involves deploying and manipulating human resources (or human capital), as well as efficiently allocating the organization's financial, technological, and natural resources. Since organizations can be viewed as systems, management can also be defined as human action, such as product design, that enables the system to produce useful outcomes.

## Basic Functions

 Mary Parker Follett: Management Visionary - Management Pocketbooks

### Mary Parker Follett quote:

Leadership is not defined by the exercise of power but by the capacity to increase the sense of power among those led. The most essential work of the leader is to create more leaders.

Management operates through various functions, such as planning, organizing, staffing, leading/directing, controlling/monitoring, and motivating.

- **Planning:** Deciding what needs to happen in the future (today, next week, next month, next year, over the next five years, etc.) and generating plans for action.
- **Organizing:** Implementing a pattern of relationships among workers and making optimum use of the resources required to enable the successful carrying out of plans.
- **Staffing:** Job analysis, recruitment, and hiring of people with the necessary skills for appropriate jobs. Providing or facilitating ongoing training, if necessary, to keep skills current.
- **Leading/directing:** Determining what needs to be done in a situation and getting people to do it.
- **Controlling/monitoring:** Checking current outcomes against forecast plans and making adjustments when necessary so that goals are achieved.
- **Motivating:** Motivation is a basic function of management because without motivation, employees may feel disconnected from their work and the organization, which can lead to ineffective performance. If managers do not motivate their employees, they may not feel their work is contributing to the overall goals of the organization (which are usually set by top-level management).

Depending on the size of the store and the company structure there will be different types and levels of managerial positions. Most organizations have three management levels: first-level, middle-level, and top-level managers. These managers are classified according to a hierarchy of authority and perform different tasks. In many organizations, the number of managers in each level gives the organization a pyramid structure.

Middle-level managers can include general managers, branch managers, and department managers. They are accountable to the top-level management for their department's function, and they devote more time to organizational and directional functions than upper management.

A middle manager's role may emphasize:

- Executing organizational plans in conformance with the company's policies and the objectives of the top management.
- Defining and discussing information and policies from top management to lower management.
- Most importantly, inspiring and providing guidance to lower-level managers to assist them in performance improvement and accomplishment of business objectives. These positions seldom involve any customer contact.

Some examples of middle management in the retail industry include:

- Merchandise Manager
- Assistant Store Manager
- Customer Service Manager
- District Sales Manager
- Food or Product department Manager
- Sales Manager
- Store or warehouse Manager

### Additional Resources

- For more information on management and theory, see [Principles of Management](#).
- For an extensive list of manager types and titles check out these articles on [Retail Job Titles and Descriptions](#) and [Types of Jobs in Retail](#)

## Contributors and Attributions

CC licensed content, Shared previously

- Management. **Provided by:** Wikipedia. **Located at:** <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management>. **License:** *CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike*
- Mary Parker Follett. **Provided by:** Wikimedia. **Located at:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mary\\_Parker\\_Follett\\_\(1868-1933\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mary_Parker_Follett_(1868-1933).jpg). **License:** *CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike*
- Middle Management . **Provided by:** Wikipedia. **Located at:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle\\_management](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_management). **License:** *CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike*

All rights reserved content

- Why Choose a Career in Retail - CEO, SVP, Marketing. **Authored by:** Sephora Life. **Located at:** <https://youtu.be/U74NtPa8AdQ>. **License:** *All Rights Reserved*. **License Terms:** Standard YouTube License

---

1.11: Key Roles in a Retail Business is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.