

1.13: Retail Management Requirements

Learning Objectives

- Categorize the general role requirements of a retail manager

Middle-Management Roles and Functions

As discussed earlier in this module many retail manager positions fall into the Middle-Management level. 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 Middle managers' roles may include several tasks depending on their department. Some of their functions are as follows:

- Designing and implementing effective group work and information systems
- Defining and monitoring group-level performance indicators
- Diagnosing and resolving problems within and among work groups
- Designing and implementing reward systems
- Supporting cooperative behavior
- Reporting performance statistics up the chain of command and, when applicable, recommending strategic changes

Because middle managers work with both top-level managers and first-level managers, middle managers tend to have excellent interpersonal skills relating to communication, motivation, and mentoring. Leadership skills are also important in delegating tasks to first-level managers.

Middle management may be reduced in organizations as a result of reorganization. Such changes include downsizing, 'delaying' (reducing the number of management levels), and outsourcing. The changes may occur in an effort to reduce costs (as middle management is commonly paid more than junior staff) or to make the organization flatter, which empowers employees, leaving the organization more innovative and flexible.

Front Line Management

At the front line, managers are often highly skilled and even functional specialists. A front line manager is best positioned when they focus on controlling and directing specific employees (think in terms of supervisors, team leaders, line managers, and project managers).

Skill Sets

A front line manager needs to have two distinctive skill sets: the interpersonal skills to manage people as well as the technical expertise to be among the front lines actively executing functional tasks. As a result, frontline managers are often highly valuable team members with the versatility to contribute in various ways.

Core skill sets for frontline managers can change depending on what function they are overseeing. However, on the interpersonal side they should be effective at:

- Communicating
- Observing and actively listening
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Prioritizing
- Aligning resources
- Organizing processes and tasks

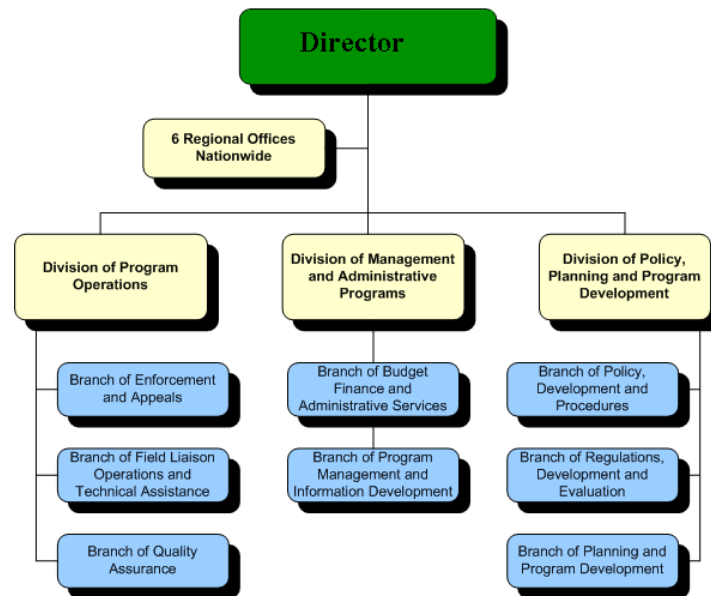
Responsibilities

Responsibilities of a frontline manager will therefore come in two flavors. The first is the expertise required to do whatever it is they are managing. If we are talking about an accounting manager, they must be able to balance the books and understand enough of everyone's specific function to fill the gaps. If it is a frontline manager on an automobile manufacturing facility, the manager should be aware of how to run most of the machines and how to assess the productivity of different positions (ideally from experience).

On the managerial side, frontline managers are often tasked with hiring, assessing performance, providing feedback, delegating functional tasks, identifying gaps, maximizing efficiency, scheduling, and aligning teams. As the primary point of contact for most employees, frontline managers must be careful listeners capable of understanding employee needs, removing blockers, and optimizing performance.

Functional Management

Besides the heads of a firm's product and/or geographic units, the company's top management team typically consists of several functional heads (such as the chief financial officer, the chief operating officer, and the chief strategy officer). A functional manager is a person who has management authority over an organizational unit—such as a department—within a business, company, or other organization. Functional managers have ongoing responsibilities and are not usually directly affiliated with project teams, other than ensuring that goals and objectives are aligned with the organization's overall strategy and vision.



Functional vs. general management: This chart shows a particular organizational hierarchy employing both general and functional management. Each functional manager is in control of a particular area of expertise—e.g., operations or policy and planning—and the general manager supervises all the functional managers.

General Management

General management focuses on the entire business as a whole. General management duties and responsibilities include formulating policies, managing daily operations, and planning the use of materials and human resources. However, general managers are too diverse and broad in scope to be classified in any one functional area of management or administration such as personnel, purchasing, or administrative services.

General managers include owners and managers who head small-business establishments with duties that are primarily managerial. Most commonly, the term general manager refers to any executive who has overall responsibility for managing both the revenue and cost elements of a company's income statement. This means that a general manager usually oversees most or all of the firm's marketing and sales functions, as well as the day-to-day operations of the business. Frequently, the general manager is responsible for effective planning, delegating, coordinating, staffing, organizing, and decision making to attain profitable results for an organization.

While both general and functional management involve similar skills (interpersonal skills, communication, multitasking, etc.), the critical difference is that a functional manager often "zooms in" to one particular aspect of a broader operational paradigm. The general manager must be more of a jack-of-all-trades, understanding enough about various different gears in the machine to ensure it is running properly.

Mintzberg's Management Roles

Mintzberg defined ten management roles within three categories: interpersonal, informational, and decisional. Management is incorporated into every aspect of an organization and involves different roles and responsibilities. Henry Mintzberg (1973), the

Cleghorn Professor of Management Studies at McGill University, defined ten management roles within three categories: interpersonal, informational, and decisional.

Each of the three categories embraces the different roles.

Interpersonal

1. **Figurehead:** symbolic head; performs a number of routine duties of a legal or social nature.
2. **Leader:** motivates and activates subordinates; performs staffing, training, and associated duties.
3. **Liaison:** maintains a self-developed network of outside contacts and informers who provide favors and information.

Informational

1. **Mentor:** seeks and receives a wide variety of special information (much of it current) to develop a thorough understanding of the organization and environment; emerges as the nerve center of internal and external information for the organization.
2. **Disseminator:** transmits information received from outsiders or from other subordinates to members of the organization. Some information is factual; some involves interpretation and integration of diverse value positions of organizational influences. Disseminating what is of value, and how, is a critical informational role.
3. **Spokesperson:** transmits information (plans, policies, results, etc.) within and outside of the organization; serves as an expert on the organization's industry.

Decisional

1. **Entrepreneur:** searches the organization and its environment and initiates improvement projects to bring about change; supervises design of certain projects as well.
2. **Disturbance Handler:** takes corrective action when the organization faces important, unexpected disturbances.
3. **Resource Allocator:** allocates the organization's resources; makes or approves of all significant organizational decisions.
4. **Negotiator:** represents the organization at major negotiations.

A manager's job is never static; it is always dynamic. At any given time, a manager may carry out some combination of these roles to varying degrees, from none of the time to 100 percent of the time. Throughout an individual's working life, a person may hold various management positions that call upon different roles.

No one person can be all things to all people. While these ten roles are highly useful in framing organizational leadership, to expect one person to fill each role in a large organization is impractical. Instead, astute hiring managers will hire people with one or two specific roles in mind, thereby creating a team of managers capable of handling the wide variety of challenges in the business world today.

Managing Organizational Priorities

Defining Agendas

An agenda, particularly from the perspective of an organization or business, is loosely defined as a organized approach toward accomplishing a series of objectives or discussing a series of points. Agendas are most commonly used in short-term settings, such as meetings or a given week's work plans; however, they can also be used as a longer-term strategic planning component.

Business Application

In business, agendas are used to ensure everyone knows what will be discussed in meetings. Agendas should be distributed well before the meeting or discussion to ensure individuals attending have time to prepare their discussion points and to familiarize themselves with what others will be discussing. Reading the agenda in advance ensures that the overarching goals of a given meeting are clear and understood by all participants prior to the discussion.

Agendas may also be used as a means of highlighting current progress and projecting future progress. This type of agenda provides a timeline and tracking mechanisms for participants involved in a given project and may or may not require onsite meetings. Agendas showing project progress are often used by contractors and those in the field of project management.

Keeping Minutes

Agendas are also used broadly in the political and public domain, where meetings held by public institutions, NGOs, or political groups are approached and organized via a given agenda. Public companies have a more important relationship with agendas than private companies, as they are usually required to record meeting minutes. These minutes are essentially a verbatim record of what

was discussed and are made available for public viewing and consideration. As these discussions are accessible by any and all stakeholders, the outline and preparation of a valid and relevant agenda is of particularly high importance.

Relevance to Management

Skilled managers construct and implement agendas in organizational settings. Building an agenda requires broad familiarity with all critical components of a given department, project, or organizational objective. Creating a relevant agenda and distributing it to concerned parties in a timely fashion requires organizational ability, communication skills (including the ability to write clearly and concisely), and strategic know-how (knowing what to discuss and in what order). Managers must also be skilled in controlling the pace, tone, and trajectory of discussions at meetings. Agendas are an excellent tool for organizing thoughts and leading discussion.

Following agendas requires a similar set of managerial skills. Ensuring follow-through and keeping employees on task and on schedule requires an ability to multitask—to oversee various aspects of a given operational area simultaneously. Good managers can balance the various interests, operations, and technical skills of a given team to ensure the objectives and timelines set forth in the agenda are carried out.

? practice questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/9131>

Contributors and Attributions

CC licensed content, Original

- Retail Management Requirements. **Provided by:** Lumen Learning. **License:** [CC BY: Attribution](#)

CC licensed content, Shared previously

- Management Levels and Types and Additional Roles and Skills of Managers. **Provided by:** Boundless. **Located at:** <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-management>. **License:** [CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike](#)

1.13: Retail Management Requirements is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

- 1.13: Retail Management Requirements is licensed [CC BY 4.0](#).