

CAREER GUIDE FOR RETAIL SALES PERSON

SOC Code: 41-2031

Pay Band(s): 2,3,4 and 5 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Sell merchandise, such as furniture, motor vehicles, appliances, or apparel in a retail establishment.

Retail Sales Person positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Retail Operations Career Group](#):

[Retail Specialist I](#)

[Retail Specialist II](#)

[Retail Manager I](#)

[Retail Manager II](#)

[Retail Manager III](#)

While Retail Sales Person within the Commonwealth are all located within the Retail Operations Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Administration and Office Support](#)
[Stores and Warehousing Operations](#)
[Procurement](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Retail Sales Person commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
2. Using mathematics to solve problems.
3. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
4. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
5. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
6. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

7. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
8. Teaching others how to do something.
9. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Retail Sales Person commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Knowledge of:

1. Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
2. Principles and methods for showing, promoting, and selling products or services. This includes marketing strategy and tactics, product demonstration, sales techniques, and sales control systems.
3. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
4. Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
5. Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
6. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

Abilities

Note: *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Retail Sales Person commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Ability to:

1. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
2. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
3. Use your abdominal and lower back muscles to support part of the body repeatedly or continuously over time without 'giving out' or fatiguing.
4. Identify and understand the speech of another person.
5. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
6. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
7. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).

Tasks

Note: The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Retail Sales Person. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.

1. Greet customers and ascertain what each customer wants or needs.
2. Open and close cash registers, performing tasks such as counting money, separating charge slips, coupons, and vouchers, balancing cash drawers, and making deposits.
3. Maintain knowledge of current sales and promotions, policies regarding payment and exchanges, and security practices.
4. Compute sales prices, total purchases and receive and process cash or credit payment.
5. Maintain records related to sales.
6. Watch for and recognize security risks and thefts, and know how to prevent or handle these situations.
7. Recommend, select, and help locate or obtain merchandise based on customer needs and desires.
8. Answer questions regarding the store and its merchandise.
9. Describe merchandise and explain use, operation, and care of merchandise to customers.
10. Ticket, arrange and display merchandise to promote sales.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The Retail Sales Person occupation has **Enterprising** and **Social** characteristics.

Enterprising — Enterprising occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business.

Social — Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Generally licensure is not required for Retail Sales Person positions in state government.

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Labor provides the following information:

Whether selling shoes, computer equipment, or automobiles, retail salespersons assist customers in finding what they are looking for and try to interest them in buying the merchandise.

There usually are no formal education requirements for this type of work, although a high school diploma or equivalent is preferred. Employers look for people who enjoy working with others and who have the tact and patience to deal with difficult customers. Among other desirable characteristics are an interest in sales work, a neat appearance, and the ability to communicate clearly and effectively. The ability to speak more than one language may be helpful for employment in communities where people from various cultures tend to live and shop. Before hiring a salesperson, some employers may conduct a background check, especially for a job selling high-priced items.

Traditionally, capable salespersons without college degrees could advance to management positions. Today, however, large retail businesses usually prefer to hire college graduates as management trainees, making a college education increasingly important. Despite this trend, motivated and capable employees without college degrees still may advance to administrative or supervisory positions in large establishments.

The Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) is a primary user of the Retail Specialists. A high school education is preferred by the ABC for retail specialist, but is not required. Also actual sales experience in retail environment such as convenience store, grocery store, department store is preferred, but not required.

The usual career path is part time (hourly) → Acting for Assistant Manager (hourly only) → Assistant Store Manager A or B (two levels) → Store Manager A, B (possibility of Remote Manager) or Dual Operation (three levels) → OJT Trainer → Regional Manager.

Agencies provide their own on-the-job training.

Examples of training provided by the ABC for the Retail Specialist I follow:

- Retail 101 – basic retail operation information for all part time hourly employees.
- Acting for Assistant Manager – only hourly employees, who have expressed a desire for greater responsibility and are capable of performing a listing of day-to-day activities to assist the Manager or Assistant Manager activities.
- Safety training to promote safe work practices is provided periodically.
- Educational reimbursement is available depending upon budgetary resources.

Examples of training provided by the ABC for the Retail Specialist II follow:

- High Performance Management Training (retail management skills, performance assessment, human resources policies and laws (EEO, ADA, FMLA, VSDP, etc.).
- Informal on-the-job training by the Manager or Regional Manager.
- Safety training to promote safe work practices is provided periodically Recruitment Opportunities.
- Educational reimbursement is available depending upon budgetary resources.

More information on career opportunities at the ABC is provided at <http://www.abc.state.va.us>.

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees

particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example: **Retail Sales Person**

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES
2	Retail Specialist I
3	Retail Specialist II

PAY BAND	MANAGER ROLES
3	Retail Manager I
4	Retail Manager II
5	Retail Manager III

Sample Career Path

Retail Specialist I

The Retail Specialist I role provides a career track for the retail sales person performing entry level to advanced level functions involving the sale of merchandise and services. Customer service with the general public ranges from general customer assistance to using detail product knowledge and merchandising displays to advise customers on appropriate purchases.

Retail Specialist II

The Retail Specialist II role provides career tracks for supervisors and assistants to managers. Responsibilities involve the supervision of a small retail outlet or assisting the manager of a larger retail outlet to sell merchandise and services. Supervisors and assistant managers perform the same or similar duties of the subordinates they supervise. May perform other administrative duties including procurement of merchandise, mail order and shipment of merchandise and providing input concerning staffing and other human resource issues.

Retail Manager I

The Retail Manager I role provides a career track for managers of retail functions involving the management of a retail outlet to sell merchandise and services. Managers plan and direct retail operations, often delegate daily operational activities to subordinate supervisors and staff, and perform daily retail activities as needed. May manage one or more small remote retail outlets in addition to primary retail outlet.

Retail Manager II

The Retail Manager II role is for managers that plan and direct large-scale retail operations, delegate daily operational activities to subordinate supervisors and managers. May manage one or more remote retail outlets or a dual operation of a separate special purpose facility at the same location in addition to a primary retail outlet.

Retail Manager III

The Retail Manager III role provides a career track for managers performing administrative and managerial duties in directing a multi-facility retail outlet operations in colleges or universities; or in directing a number of regionally dispersed and statewide remote small to large-scale retail outlets or a dual operation of a separate special purpose retail outlet at the same location in addition to a primary retail outlet. Duties range from planning and directing to recommending opening, relocating or updating outlets, to applying and maintaining policies and procedures.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)

http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page

Virginia Employment Commission
<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop
<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network <http://www.vacrn.net/>