

# Research: Top Retail Sales Associates Job Requirements

The Jobdescriptionandresumeexamples, JDRE, team conducts a research to reveal the top employers' requirements for the retail sales associate role in the United States.

This includes the major skills, abilities, knowledge, personality/physical attribute, minimum education, and experience that most employers want applicants for the retail sales associate position to meet to be hired.

The research involves a study of job postings on the major job boards by 135 U.S. companies for the retail sales associate position across a wide range of retail stores, including grocery, luxury goods, jewelry, fashion, pharmacy, shoes, hospitality, furniture, gold exchange, and hardware stores.

## Research Data and Statistics

The findings from the study give the following data and statistics:

### Employers' Retail Sales Associate Skills Requirements:

The number and percentage of sampled employers requiring specific skills in their job postings are shown below:

SKILLS	NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS	PERCENTAGE %
Communication (written and oral)	92	68.15

Customer service	76	56.30
Interpersonal	50	37.04
Organizational	40	29.63
Problem solving	34	25.19
Multi-tasking	34	25.19
Basic computer	25	18.52
Basic math	20	14.81
Attention to detail	19	14.07
Sales	18	13.33
Prioritizing	15	11.11
Bi-lingual/Multilingual	9	6.67
Listening	6	4.44
Leadership	5	3.70
Negotiation	4	2.96
Time management	4	2.96
Manage, guide or supervise junior staff	2	1.48
Social Media	2	1.48
Proficient with peripherals, copier, fax, telephone and calculator	1	0.74
Persuasion	1	0.74
Phone etiquette	1	0.74
Planning skills	1	0.74
Phone etiquette	1	0.74

<b>Employers' Retail Sales Associate Abilities Requirements:</b>		
<b>ABILITIES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE %</b>
Work a flexible schedule	80	59.26
Working in a team	77	57.04
Accurately handle cash/Use Computerized cash register or point-of-sales system, calculator	70	51.85
Lift and/or move up to 15-50 pounds	47	34.81
Work in a fast-paced environment	45	33.33
Constantly stand, crawl, walk, squat, bend, kneel, twist, climb a ladder, reach, stoop	39	28.89
Maintain clean and safe sales floor or shop environment	37	27.41
Interaction with people in a professional manner	36	26.67
Provide information about products, e.g. advantages, benefits, and prices	35	25.93
Build rapport or relationship with customers	24	17.78
Follow specific instructions and procedures	14	10.37
Work independently	11	8.15
Willing to learn all facets of retail shop operation	11	8.15
Visual merchandising/Place and arrange items on all shelves and racks daily	11	8.15
Safely use office equipment and supplies, e.g. copy/printing machines, telephone, and photographic and video equipment	8	5.93
Utilize Microsoft Office products (i.e. Word, Outlook,	8	5.93

Excel, PowerPoint, etc.).		
Utilize retail tools and technological devices to foster sales	7	5.19
Easily adapt to organizational and environmental changes	7	5.19
Work in inclement weather conditions including but not limited to heat, cold, rain, dust, and noise.	4	2.96
Learn new products	4	2.96
Meet established sales, retention and customer experience targets.	3	2.22
Read, write	3	2.22
Identify trends through shopping the competition and other trend resources	3	2.22
Perform repetitive tasks with accuracy	2	1.48
Work in all areas of the shop	2	1.48
Obtain sales related licensure or registration	1	0.74
Work under pressure	1	0.74
Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.	1	0.74
Utilize all company training tools to maximize results	1	0.74
Report HR issues to manager or supervisor	1	0.74
Engage in upselling techniques	1	0.74
<b>Employers' Retail Sales Associate Knowledge Requirements:</b>		
<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE %</b>

Product knowledge	59	43.70
Basic knowledge of sales principle and techniques	9	6.67
Customer service standards and procedures	4	2.96
Inventory procedures	3	2.22
Knowledge of store layout and location of products	3	2.22
Basic Retail principles such as sales, stock and service delivery in stores	2	1.48
Role of merchandising in stores to drive results	2	1.48
Knowledge of Mobile Devices	2	1.48
Working knowledge of customer and market dynamics and requirements	1	0.74
<b>Employers' Retail Sales Associate Personality/Physical Attribute Requirements:</b>		
<b>PERSONALITY/PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE %</b>
Positive attitude	37	27.41
Friendly/Helpful /Caring	33	24.44
Self- motivated	28	20.74
Energetic	24	17.78
Ambition and passion for achieving goals or Result-oriented	23	17.04
Outgoing/Confident	15	11.11
Honest/Integrity	9	6.67
Creative	6	4.44
18 years or older	6	4.44

16 years or older	5	3.70
Work ethic	4	2.96
Passion for brand	4	2.96
Drive to learn and develop	2	1.48
Fair	1	0.74
Adaptable personality	1	0.74
Professional demeanor and appearance	1	0.74
Competitive spirit	1	0.74
<b>Employers' Retail Sales Associate Minimum Education Requirements:</b>		
<b>MINIMUM EDUCATION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE %</b>
High school diploma or GED	42	31.11
BS degree	3	2.22
Certification	1	0.74
<b>Employers' Retail Sales Associate Experience Requirements:</b>		
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE %</b>
Retail sales experience	77	57.04
Customer service experience	27	20.00
store operations experience	1	0.74
Cashier	1	0.74

Management	1	0.74
------------	---	------

## **Employers' Top Requirements for Retail Sales Associates**

Here are the top requirements that employers want job seekers to meet to be employed for the retail sales associate job, according to our research finding:



REQUIREMENT	PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS
Communication skill (written and oral)	68.15
Customer service skill	56.30
Interpersonal skill	37.04
Organizational skill	29.63
Problem solving skill	25.19
Multi-tasking skill	25.19
Basic computer skill	18.52
Basic math skill	14.81
Attention to detail skill	14.07
Sales skill	13.33
Prioritizing skill	11.11
Ability to work a flexible schedule	59.26
Ability to work in a team	57.04
Ability to accurately handle cash	51.85
Ability to lift and/or move up to 15-50 pounds	34.81
Ability to work in a fast-paced environment	33.33
Ability to constantly stand, crawl, walk, squat, bend, kneel, twist, climb a ladder, reach, stoop	28.89
Ability to maintain clean and safe sales floor or shop environment	27.41
Ability to interaction with people in a professional manner	26.67
Ability to provide information about products, e.g. advantages, benefits, and prices	25.93

Ability to build rapport or relationship with customers	17.78
Ability to follow specific instructions and procedures	10.37
Product knowledge	43.70
Positive attitude	27.41
Friendly/Helpful /Caring	24.44
Self- motivated	20.74
Energetic	17.78
Ambition and passion for achieving goals or Result-oriented	17.04
Outgoing/Confident	11.11
High school diploma or GED	31.11
Retail sales experience	57.04
Customer service experience	20.00

- **Communication Skill**

About 68% of employers sampled require applicants for retail sales associate role to have strong communication skill.

Sales associates need to be able to effectively communicate the features and benefits of their products to potential customers.

- **Customer Service Skill**

56% of employers require applicants to have customer service skill to be hired for the retail sales associate job.

Provision of top-notch customer service is important to retail stores. Sales associates need to be able to give their customers the best service possible to keep their patronage for their company.

- **Interpersonal Skill**

37% of employers require individuals seeking the retail sales associate job to have good interpersonal skill.

Sales associates mostly work with people of diverse backgrounds and so need to be able to effectively interact and relate with them and close deals.

- **Organizational Skill**

About 30% of employers want the sales associates they are hiring to have a good organizational skill.

Retail sales associates are expected to be able to keep the sales floor clean and organized.

- **Problem Solving Skill**

25% of retail stores require their sales associates to have good problem solving skill.

The job of the sales associate requires them to help customers resolve issues that may occur.

- **Multi-tasking Skill**

Also, 25% of employers require candidates for the retail sales associate position to have multi-tasking skill.

The sales associate needs to be able to perform multiple functions simultaneously to be effective in their job.

- **Basic Computer Skill**

About 19% of employers sampled say they want their sales associates to have basic computer skill.

The role of a retail sales associate involves working on computers, including inputting data into computers and using Microsoft Office package.

- **Basic Math Skill**

About 15% of employers require candidates for retail sales associate position to have basic math skill.

Math skill is necessary for sales associates to be able to effectively handle cash, including calculating change.

- **Attention to Detail Skill**

14% of retail stores require individuals seeking the role of sales associate to have attention to detail skill.

Sales associates need to be detailed oriented to be effective in their job, including arranging items on shelves.

- **Sales Skill**

13% of sampled employers require candidates to have sales skills to get the retail sales associate job.

A sales associate needs some sales skills to be successful in achieving sales target.

- **Prioritizing Skill**

11% of retail stores sampled require having prioritizing skill to be hired for the sales associate position.

Sales associates need to be able to prioritize their duties so they can get more important things done and achieve better result.

## **What Does a Retail Sales Associate Do?**

A retail sales associate is responsible for helping a store meet and exceed its sales goals and ensure customers continue to patronize their store.

See detailed [retail sales associate job description](#).

## **Conclusion**

The above research has revealed the important requirements, including skills, abilities, knowledge, personality/physical attributes, and experience that employers typically want candidates for the retail sales associate position to meet to be hired.

The data and statistics that have been generated are useful to both employers and job seekers.

Employers looking to hire for the retail sales associate role can apply the above data and statistics in preparing the job requirements for candidates to meet to be hired.

Also, individuals seeking to work as a sales associate can learn the common requirements to be hired for the position and improve themselves on them.