

# Retail knowledge

**Level 1: Understanding how individuals and teams contribute to the effectiveness of a retail business (R/502/5780)**

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## **Introduction**

Our Skilled for Life resources are designed to provide you with ideas for delivering the unit content and engaging tasks and activities that will help learners work towards assessment.

The materials consist of stand-alone sheets that can be used in a range of ways to suit most situations. Whether you are working in a classroom or a less formal learning environment, with individual learners or with groups, it is hoped that you will find these sheets and the accompanying tutor guidance notes useful.

The sheets are in pdf format; they are downloadable and may be photocopied for use only within your institution. Alternatively, learners can access them on-screen – the write-in sections are interactive so that answers to activities can be recorded electronically.

Each sheet addresses one or more of the assessment criteria in the unit (A.C.s are clearly marked at the top of each page). Page 1 of each sheet provides a starter stimulus or introductory idea based around the suggested unit content in the specification; it can be used to explain key concepts, or as the basis for a discussion. You could use the stimulus to draw together key learning points and encourage learners to engage with the topic or concept from the outset. There is plenty of scope for you to introduce your own content or ideas as well.

Page 2 of each sheet includes tasks that will consolidate learners' knowledge and understanding and, in some cases, may provide evidence for assessment.

This tutor guidance document provides detailed suggestions for how to use each of the resource sheets in the unit, and includes tips and advice together with suggested extension activities, alternative ideas, useful reference sources and answers to activities where applicable.

## **Unit overview**

This unit aims to provide learners with knowledge and understanding of how both individuals and teams contribute to the success of a retail business. Learners will also be introduced to employment laws, the contract of employment and team building, as well as identifying their own skill set and exploring how it could be improved.

## **Learning and teaching activities in this unit**

### **Resource sheet 1: Why do you need this?**

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to the contract of employment; an example is given on the resource sheet.

Distribute the resource sheet and ask learners to identify the document shown. Then, initiate a discussion about the purpose of the contract of employment.

Learners should understand that the contract of employment is an agreement between the employer (in this case, the retail business) and the employee, and that it acts to protect both parties.

Continue the discussion to cover the content that will typically be included on the contract of employment. Provide guidance on key terms – such as notice period or salary – as necessary.

### **Activity 1: What is in your contract of employment?**

In the activity, learners must answer questions on the contents and purpose of a contract of employment to provide written evidence of their understanding.

### **Resource sheet 2: What can go wrong?**

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to the options open to employers and employees if either party breaks the terms of the contract of employment. The visual stimulus on the resource sheet suggests that, in this case, the contract of employment has not been observed.

Distribute the resource sheet and recap the contents of the contract of employment. Learners can use this information to explore the various ways in which the contract could be breached and, from there, the options available to both parties in the event of a breach. It may also be helpful to ask learners to consider their learning agreements, if these are

in place. How might they break these agreements? What would happen if they did not meet the terms of their learning agreements? What action might be taken? Many of the same issues can be applied to a retail environment.

Explain the significance of the line manager or supervisor, and the role of the human resources department in handling breaches of contract. You may wish to arrange for a visiting speaker, such as a human resources manager from a large retail business.

### **Activity 2: What should happen next?**

In this activity, learners are introduced to three individuals who work in retail. Each has a problem that represents a possible breach of their contract of employment. Learners must identify the appropriate solution for each scenario from the options given.

Provide support as necessary for complex words used in the activity, such as grievance and disciplinary.

### **Resource sheet 3: We all have the same rights**

The purpose of this sheet is to make learners aware of the legislation that protects individuals from harassment or discrimination in retail environments. The image on the resource sheet shows a group of people of varying age, gender and race. Learners are encouraged to recognise that the retail industry employs a huge variety of people; the rights of each of these individuals must be observed and protected.

Distribute the resource sheet and ask learners to consider examples of harassment and discrimination. What do they understand by these terms? What would they do if they were the victim of this kind of behaviour?

Expand the discussion to cover the retail environment. Encourage learners to explore examples of either harassment or discrimination that may occur in this setting. Video-sharing websites contain useful references: search for the film 'Disability in the workplace for learning and development' from training4Ltd, which explores what happens when a manager complains to HR about a new recruit in the department. As a positive counterpoint, search for the short film 'Piflover Disability Discrimination' for suggestions about how small changes in the workplace can enhance the experience of people with disabilities.

Capture the examples of harassment and/or discrimination as they arise. Consider each one in turn and introduce the supporting legislation; for example:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

### **Activity 3: Which law was broken?**

In the activity, learners are introduced to four individuals who work in, or are interested in working in, the retail industry. Each individual has a problem that illustrates an example of discrimination. Learners must identify the legislation that is designed to protect the individual from this discrimination.

Learners can draw lines on the activity sheet to connect the scenario to the relevant legislation. Alternatively, they may wish to cut out the cards and pair them correctly.

Provide support as necessary for complex words used in the activity.

### **Resource sheet 4: Who works here?**

The purpose of this sheet is to encourage learners to understand the range of roles and levels of responsibility within retail teams. The resource sheet presents learners with a scenario that is followed through in the corresponding activity. In this instance, learners are asked to consider the range of job roles at a large garden centre. However, if you wish to provide an alternative setting, the activity can be easily adapted accordingly.

Distribute the sheet and ask learners to suggest ideas for roles they might find at a large garden centre such as that shown in the image. Develop the activity by exploring the various teams operating within the centre. For example, there will be a customer facing team that includes till workers, sales assistants and shelf stackers. There is also likely to be a gardening team who produce the plant products. Learners should also consider less visible roles associated with the centre, such as stockroom assistants, delivery drivers, human resources and accountants.

It is important that learners recognise the variety of levels of responsibility, as well as roles. Each team of workers will have a manager or supervisor. If the garden centre is part of a chain of businesses, there will likely be a central head office.

If possible, you may wish to arrange for a visit to a local garden centre so learners can explore the roles available.

### **Activity 4: Building a team**

In the activity, learners are asked to plan for a new area that is opening at the garden centre. You may wish to dictate the products that will be sold in this area, although this is not vital. Suggestions could include:

- an area containing products for a seasonal event, such as Christmas, Halloween or the summer holidays
- an area containing a new type of product, such as garden furniture or ornaments.

Learners must work in pairs or small groups to determine the roles they will need for their new area. A suggestion is given; till worker. For each role identified, learners must suggest three key responsibilities associated with the job.

Learners are reminded on the activity sheet that they will need a team manager or supervisor, with corresponding responsibilities.

### **Resource sheet 5: Good teams**

The purpose of this sheet is to encourage learners to recognise the characteristics of effective and ineffective teams. The resource sheet uses the example of John Lewis, a retail business that follows a unique model whereby employees are considered partners of the business, sharing in the profits and key decisions about the company. Information about the John Lewis Partnership can be found online (see the Useful resources section on page 12 for further information).

Initiate a discussion about the features of effective teams. The John Lewis example can be explored if desired. Alternatively, other examples of successful teams could be used; for example, Team GB (the Olympic and Paralympic teams from London 2012).

Learners may have their own examples of teamwork, both good and bad, from previous employment or experiences in education. Encourage them to draw out what distinguishes good teamwork from bad; examples can be captured on a flipchart or whiteboard. How many of the examples are relevant in the retail environment?

### **Activity 5: How to work in a team**

In this activity, learners are presented with an incomplete board for a game of Snakes and Ladders. Effective teamwork will move them up a ladder and advance their counter. Ineffective teamwork will send them down a snake.

To complete the board, learners must give three examples of effective teamwork (in squares 6, 7 and 11) and two examples of ineffective teamwork (in squares 13 and 17). Once their board is complete, they can play the game!

### **Resource sheet 6: What's the message?**

The purpose of this resource is to allow learners to appreciate the different techniques for communicating effectively within a team. Successful, effective teams use clear, accurate communication and work with a shared understanding of their goals.

The sheet shows an example of the problems that can arise during the whisper game if either party is not speaking or listening carefully. Learners can play the whisper game themselves to see if they can pass a message accurately. If the message changes, encourage learners to explore why this might have happened and what the consequences might be if this happened in a retail workplace.

Alternatively, other games that explore communication techniques can be used, such as the blindfold game or charades. In the blindfold game, pairs of learners sit face to face and have a conversation with one of them blindfolded. The game helps to highlight how body language, eye contact and facial expressions are an important part of effective communication.

It is important in this context to discuss cultural differences affecting the ways in which we communicate; for example, in some cultures direct eye contact is seen as disrespectful.

### **Activity 6: The best way**

In the activity, learners are presented with five scenarios and a variety of methods of communication. They must select the most appropriate method for each scenario.

### **Resource sheet 7: What's good about being in a team?**

The purpose of this sheet is to explore the benefits to the individual of working as part of an effective retail team. The visual stimulus provides hints as to what these benefits might be and can be drawn out in a discussion; for example:

- Pound signs, representing profit to the business
- Happy faces, representing employee satisfaction, high motivation and career progression
- A computer, representing the sharing of information
- A pen and paper, representing training and development opportunities arising from business success
- A light-bulb, representing the generation of ideas

Capture ideas about benefits on a flipchart or whiteboard. Learners should be encouraged to recognise that effective teamwork benefits the employee, the business and the customer.

### **Activity 7: Benefits for all**

In the activity, learners are presented with a series of benefits and must decide whether each represents a benefit for the person (i.e. the retail employee) or the business. They can indicate their answer by placing a mark in the appropriate column.



#### **Extension activity**

To further explore the benefits of working as a team, a scenario is given below:

Syed works in a catalogue shop. In order to serve customers promptly, he has to work with Amy and Daniel. They retrieve the stock and bring it to him to give to the customers.

Customers have complained that they are waiting too long. Syed speaks to Amy and Daniel. They need to work out how they are going to improve the situation.

Learners should consider the scenario in pairs or groups before answering the following questions:

- 1 How could the team work more effectively?
- 2 What are the benefits to the business if they decrease customer waiting time?
- 3 What are the benefits for Syed, Amy and Daniel?

### **Resource sheet 8: Why work to get better?**

The purpose of this sheet is to allow learners to understand the importance of developing their own skills and performance, and the reasons why the retail business will also benefit from this.

You can introduce the topic by asking learners to identify the skills they may need in a retail business; for example, communication, use of IT, teamworking, and practical skills such as wrapping and packing, manual handling or visual display.

Learners should then be encouraged, via group discussion, to recognise the many reasons for improving their skills and performance. The visual stimulus introduces the popular metaphor of the gold star for good performance. Distribute the resource sheet and ask learners to identify the 'gold stars' in this context. What are their rewards for working to improve their skills and performance? How can they benefit from doing this? Examples might include promotion or progression, an increase in self-confidence/motivation, increased responsibility or greater job satisfaction.

Build on the discussion by asking learners about the potential benefits to the retail business and the customer.

### **Activity 8: Development wall chart**

In this activity, learners will create a wall chart for display. The wall chart will list the reasons why improving skills and performance benefits both individual employees and the retail business they work for.

The activity sheet provides a planning template. Learners can populate the table with their individual suggestions about possible benefits. Once they have completed their planning, they can make the wall chart. Learners can create individual charts or form small groups with other learners in order to pool their suggestions. Each group can then produce one wall chart for display.

### **Resource sheet 9: How can you work to get better?**

The purpose of this sheet is to introduce learners to the different methods available for reviewing and improving the performance and skills of individual employees.

Distribute the resource sheet and ask learners to consider the methods they can use to improve their performance in a retail environment. The personal development plan shown on the resource sheet is one suggestion. It may be helpful to consider how their progress is monitored in other areas, such as their learning. Examples could include tutorials, meetings and assessments.

Learners should be encouraged to recognise that development can happen in small or large increments, and that short- and long-term goals allow them to break their development plan into achievable chunks.

## **Activity 9: Have a goal**

In the activity, learners are presented with scenarios from three individuals working in a retail setting. Each individual would like to develop their skills. The learner must make suggestions as to how they could review and improve the performance of these individuals. They are not asked to come up with individual suggestions. Instead they must concentrate on general strategies that will be of use in all of the scenarios.



### **Extension activity**

To build on their understanding of the review methods used, learners can undertake their own self-assessment. This could include the setting of short- and long-term goals, a personal skills audit, a SWOT analysis (skills, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) or the creation of a complete personal development plan, based on the retail career they are interested in pursuing.

### **Useful resources**

Resources include the following:

- Local retailers, who may be able to provide visiting speakers such as human resources managers to talk about retail job roles and responsibilities
- Job centres, who may be able to provide a speaker to talk about retail job roles and responsibilities
- Local garden centres, where learners can find out about the different job roles and responsibilities available
- Books such as:
  - Cox R, Brittain P: *Retailing – An Introduction*; FT Prentice Hall 2004, ISBN 0273678191
- Trade journals such as:
  - *The Appointment magazine* – for information on retail roles, responsibilities and basic employment legislation
  - *Retail Week* (published by Emap) – for features on all types of retailers

### **Websites**

- Video-sharing websites: search for 'Disability in the workplace for learning and development by training4ltd' – a short video illustrating what happens when a manager complains to HR about a new recruit
- Video-sharing websites: search for 'Piflover Disability Discrimination' – a short public information film from 2006, demonstrating how

small changes in the workplace can make it a lot easier for a disabled employee to do their job

- <https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person> – information from GOV.UK about disability rights
- <https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights> – information about personal rights from GOV.UK, including discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality or disability
- [www.johnlewispartnership.co.uk/content/cws/resources/faqs/general.html](http://www.johnlewispartnership.co.uk/content/cws/resources/faqs/general.html) – information about the John Lewis partnership
- <http://www.thegardencentregroup.co.uk/careers> – for information on career opportunities within the garden centre industry
- [www.skillsmartretail.com](http://www.skillsmartretail.com) – the Sector Skills Council for Retail, including statistics on jobs, businesses and sales
- [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) – an independent organisation that provides advice and conciliation services for employees and employers
- [www.sandstone.co.uk/successful-team-building](http://www.sandstone.co.uk/successful-team-building) – advice and resources for successful team building

## Answers to activities

### Activity 1: What is in your contract of employment?

- 1 Learner's own answer. Suggestions could include: pay, working hours, holidays, sickness conditions and notice period.
- 2 Learner's own answer, although learners must recognise that the contract of employment is an agreement between the employer and the employee, and that it is designed to protect them both.

### Activity 2: What should happen next?

Claire came in late four days in a row.	Start disciplinary procedures.
Marta is a shelf stacker. Every day at work, her supervisor asks her to clean the toilets. He doesn't ask anyone else.	Start the grievance procedure.
Pawan has a 28-day notice period. His employer asks him to leave in 10 days.	Sue for breach of contract.

### Activity 3: Which law was broken?

Sam works at a Cash & Carry Warehouse. He is in a wheelchair. On his first day, he sees there are steps up to the toilets. He can't get to them.	Disability Discrimination Act
Leela went for a job as a fork lift driver. She didn't get the job because they wanted a man.	Sex Discrimination Act
Dave won't let Amir answer the phone. He thinks Amir's English won't be good enough.	Race Relations Act
Dot is 60. She got more interviews when she took her date of birth off her CV.	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations

### Activity 4: Building a team

Learner's answers will vary. An exemplar is given below:

#### **Roles:**

- Till worker
- Supervisor
- Storeroom assistant

#### **Responsibilities:**

Till worker:

- Takes payment
- Packs up goods
- Gives change

Supervisor:

- Makes sure everyone knows what to do
- Monitors everyone's performance
- Supports the team

Storeroom assistant:

- Checks deliveries
- Puts goods into correct storage area
- Makes sure there is enough stock for customers

### **Activity 5: How to work in a team**

Learners' answers will vary.

- Examples of effective teamwork could include: working to common goals; considering other team members; listening to other team members; encouraging other team members; motivating other team members; team loyalty; providing constructive criticism; communicating clearly.
- Examples of ineffective teamwork could include: being inconsiderate of other team members; a lack of motivation; a lack of encouragement; poor communication; working to different goals.

### **Activity 6: The best way**

- 1** Ask
- 2** Phone
- 3** Phone / Email
- 4** Staff rota / (Ask)
- 5** Listen

### **Activity 7: Benefits for all**

<b>Benefit to...</b>	<b>...the person?</b>	<b>...the business?</b>
Save time	✓	
Increase profits		✓
Increase efficiency		✓
Help each other	✓	
Share ideas	✓	
Solve problems	✓	
Learn from each other	✓	
Motivate teams	✓	
Share tasks	✓	
Keep staff		✓
Good company image		✓

Note: most of the above examples will benefit both the individual and the business. Learners should be able to explain their choice if questioned.

### **Activity 8: Development wall chart**

Learner's own answer. Benefits could include: employees are able to do their job more effectively; motivation; progression; promotion; high employee morale has a positive impression on customers; job satisfaction; personal fulfilment; financial benefits; etc.

### **Activity 9: Have a goal**

Learner's own answer. Suggestions could include: setting short-term and long-term goals; training to improve skills; appraisals; personal skills audits, etc.