

# Credential Handbook

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For the NRF Foundation's Retail Industry Fundamentals,  
Customer Service and Sales, Business of Retail, and Retail  
Management Credentials

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## About the NRF Foundation

As the philanthropic arm of the National Retail Federation, the NRF Foundation builds the bridge between a growing industry with hundreds of thousands of open positions and job seekers around the country. Through education, training, scholarships and experiences for job seekers of all ages and backgrounds, we help more people take their first steps toward promising careers.

The NRF and NRF Foundation share the real story of retail, celebrating the breadth and diversity of opportunities in an industry that offers a career for millions, and a first start for millions more. The NRF Foundation is the 501(c)(3) nonprofit arm of the National Retail Federation and is funded in part by generous donations from retail industry supporters.

## Welcome

Dear RISE Up Candidate,

On behalf of the NRF Foundation, I want to congratulate you on joining the millions of people whose lives have been changed through retail. We're here to help job seekers like you (no matter your age, background or education level) take the first steps toward great opportunities.

We've worked with dozens of retailers and nonprofits to create the RISE Up (Retail Industry Skills and Education) program -- to help people gain the skills and confidence they need to land jobs in retail and launch their professional growth. Our curriculum is aligned with industry standards, and earning these credentials will help you stand out from other applicants as you grow your career.

I'm so excited you are on your way to earning your RISE Up credential, and I cannot wait for you to share your success story.

Sincerely,



**Ellen R. Davis** | President, NRF Foundation | SVP, National Retail Federation

## Benefits of Earning a Credential

Earning a credential has many benefits. Some of them include:

- Expanding your knowledge and increasing your skills
- Building professional credibility and gaining a competitive advantage
- Enhancing your job opportunities and increasing your earning potential

## The Credentials

The nationally-recognized, professional credentials signify that the person who earns them has demonstrated that they have the knowledge and skills noted as important to successful employment in best-practice, high-performance companies in the retail industry. A person can earn credentials in the areas of customer service, sales, retail as a business and the management of a retail operation.

The credentials are voluntary. The NRF Foundation awards the Retail Industry Fundamentals certificate as well as the certification in Customer Service and Sales, The Business of Retail, and Retail Management solely to indicate that the individual who earns it has demonstrated knowledge and skills noted as important to successful employment in the retail industry.

Organizations or individuals who choose to incorporate the assessment or certification as a condition of employment or advancement do so at their own initiative. The NRF Foundation advises that such organizations or individuals must determine for themselves that their criteria and methods of determining qualifications for employment meet their needs and comply with all laws and regulations applicable to them.

## Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a RISE Up credentials, you must pass the required assessment AND you must:

- Be at least 15 years old
- Be in good standing with your employer, school, or training program

## Process Overview

**The first step for learners is to create an account. This can be done [here](#)**

Learners will need to complete the online application form and submit it. Once their application has been approved, learners can use their account to purchase materials through the bookstore tile on the learning portal. Live-proctored exams should be scheduled through the learner's partner organization.

Exam feedback is immediately available following their live-proctored exam.

# Credentials Information

## Retail Industry Fundamental

The objectives for Retail Industry Fundamentals include: highlighting the possibilities of a career in retail, getting learners excited about the career possibilities, and giving them the confidence needed to apply for and get a job in retail. The credential is aimed at training and advancing both entry-level retail associates and first-time job seekers in the retail industry.

### Learning Objectives

Understanding the principles of retail  
Knowing the range of opportunities and diversity of retail careers and determine which one aligns with personal goals  
Understanding basic customer service skills  
Defining retail operations in various retail environments

### Course Topics

Welcome to Retail  
Customer Service and Sales  
Retail Operations  
Career Fundamentals

### Training Information

The Retail Industry Fundamentals training program has different delivery options. The classroom-based, instructor-led program takes around 9 hours to complete. The self-led online training option takes around 7 hours to complete.

### Pricing

\$99 - online curriculum and exam  
\$99 - textbook and exam  
\$135 - blended learning option  
(textbook, online curriculum, exam)  
\$35 - exam only  
\$25 - exam retest  
\$65 - textbook

### Exam Info

50 multiple-choice questions  
(unproctored exam) delivered in 3 parts:  
Part 1: 16 questions  
Part 2: 17 questions  
Part 3: 17 questions

# Customer Service and Sales

The Customer Service and Sales curriculum was designed to increase awareness of, and improve skills related to, frontline work in a retail environment. The Customer Service and Sales course covers ability to learn about products or services, assess and meet customer needs, educate customers, and provide ongoing support. The certification is appropriate for anyone interested in obtaining a job or pursuing a career in retail and other industries that value customer service and sales skills.

## Learning Objectives

Understanding skills needed to provide excellent customer service

Assessing and meeting customer needs

Understanding the value of products and services and explain that value to the customer

Demonstrating the sales skills, customer service skills, and professionalism needed to show potential and then advance in a retail position

Identifying, applying for, interviewing for, and attaining an entry-level retail position

## Course Topics

Retail Industry Overview

Know Before You Sell (knowing products and services and knowing the customer)

Selling and Service

Performing Your Best

What's Next?

## Training Information

The Customer Service and Sales training program has different delivery options. The classroom-based, instructor-led program takes around 36 hours to complete. The self-led online training option takes around 14 hours to complete.

## Pricing

\$115 - online curriculum and exam

\$115 - textbook and exam

\$155 - blended learning option  
(textbook, online curriculum and exam)

\$55 - exam only

\$25 - exam retest

\$65 - textbook

## Exam Info

75 multiple-choice questions (proctored exam, live on-line or in-person), timed for 90 minutes. Secure, online delivery only.

Exam questions will be randomized and displayed differently for each exam. Learners will receive a pass/fail upon completion of the exam. Learners who are not successful will receive a breakdown of their strengths and weaknesses, as per the exam blueprint. Score reports are printable.

# The Business of Retail

The Business of Retail focuses on the economics of the retail industry. The program provides an understanding of what it takes to run a retail business, the concepts of marketing and merchandising products effectively, as well as skills required to calculate profit and loss. The certification is appropriate for anyone interested in advancing in their retail career, managing a retail operation, or pursuing an entrepreneurial path.

## Learning Objectives

Describe the retail ecosystem as a business and understand the retail profit model  
Understand the inventory life cycle and inventory control  
Explore merchandising and marketing processes  
Understand loss prevention  
Recognize workplace safety issues

## Course Topics

Welcome to the Business of Retail  
Retail Operations  
Marketing and Merchandising  
The Retail Profit Model  
Building Your Career

## Training Information

The Business of Retail training program has different delivery options. The classroom-based, instructor-led program takes around 28 hours to complete. The self-led online training option takes around 11 hours to complete.

## Pricing

\$135 - online curriculum and exam  
\$135 - textbook and exam  
\$175 - blended learning option  
(textbook, online curriculum and exam)  
\$75 - exam only  
\$25 - exam retest  
\$65 - textbook

## Exam Info

75 multiple-choice questions (proctored exam, live on-line or in-person), timed for 90 minutes. Secure, online delivery only.  
Exam questions will be randomized and displayed differently for each learner. Learners will receive a pass/fail upon completion of the exam. Learners who are not successful will receive a breakdown of their strengths and weaknesses, as per the exam blueprint. Score reports are printable.

# Retail Management

The Retail Management and Operations course is designed to engage new sales managers or assistant managers, and retail managers who would like to better understand the retail industry. This curriculum is geared toward recently hired/promoted managers, students studying to be retail managers, and job seekers interested in becoming retail managers.

<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understand how the retail industry works</li><li>Understand the areas of accountability for retail management</li><li>Understand how the role of the manager impacts the success of a retail business</li><li>Determine level of interest in pursuing a career in retail</li></ul>
<b>Course Topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Operations</li><li>Merchandising</li><li>Customer service and sales</li><li>Human Resources</li><li>Financial reporting</li></ul>
<b>Training Information</b>	<p>The classroom-based, instructor-led training takes around 40 total hours. The online training suite takes around nine hours.</p>
<b>Pricing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>\$65 - textbook</li><li>\$85 - exam</li></ul>
<b>Exam Info</b>	<p>90 multiple-choice questions (proctored exam, live online or in-person), timed for 120 minutes. Secure, online delivery only.</p> <p>Exam questions will be randomized and displayed differently for each learner. Learners will receive a pass/fail upon completion of the exam. Learners who are not successful will receive a breakdown of their strengths and weaknesses, as per the exam blueprint. Score reports are printable.</p>

## Assessment Exams

The assessments are based on the exam blueprints/Job Task Analysis found on the NRF Foundation website. Experts and work analysts with firsthand knowledge of the workplace studied these standards and all of the data collected over time to develop a “blueprint” for this assessment. They determined, using all of the data at hand, the areas that are most important to be included in the assessment and what emphasis should be given to each.

Workers who are familiar with one or more of the NRF Foundation industries and occupations write and review questions for the assessment. Question writers include frontline workers, managers, instructors, curriculum developers and training providers. NRF Foundation makes every effort to select question writers and reviewers who respect and value diversity and will consider the diversity of the workforce and candidates with respect to work environments, race, ethnicity, gender, disabilities, age and other factors.

## Assessment Site Conduct

### **The following items are prohibited during the exam**

Notes, Books or other materials | Cell phones and smart devices | Web searches or other tabs/windows

### **Some guidelines are listed below:**

- Students must present a valid, government issued ID.
- Students cannot leave the room at any point during their exam.
- Students have 90 minutes to complete their Customer Service and Sales, and The Business of Retail exams. They have 120 minutes to complete the Retail Management exam. The exam will be automatically closed once time is up.
- Retail Industry Fundamentals is untimed.
- All exam sessions are closed-book events.

## Diversity and Inclusion

The NRF Foundation embraces diversity and values the creation of opportunities for everyone. The NRF Foundation does not discriminate against applicants on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status.

## Accommodations

To accommodate a student’s disability, a request form may be faxed to (570) 961-4642 or emailed to [ADArequest@pennfoster.edu](mailto:ADArequest@pennfoster.edu) for evaluation at least a week prior to exam. The request for accommodation form can be found [here](#).



# Sample Questions and Answers

## Retail Industry Fundamentals

1. What item is a retail service?

- A. Jewelry warranty
- B. Jewelry cleaner
- C. Gold necklace
- D. Silver bracelet

2. Grocery stores sell goods, including food and beverages, to customers. Which of the following is not a likely a job position at a grocery store?

- A. Customer service representative
- B. Restaurant host
- C. Assistant store manager
- D. Cashier

3. From the list below, select the business that is part of the retail industry.

- A. Department store
- B. Doctor's office
- C. Car repair shop
- D. City park

**Answers:** 1. A | 2. B | 3. A

## Customer Service and Sales

1. Which of the following is the standard definition of a retail ecosystem?

- A. An interconnected system of approaches for meeting the goal of retailing, which is to provide customers with the merchandise and services they want.
- B. A group of stores that work together collaboratively to serve customers' needs.
- C. A team of store employees who help each other.
- D. A set of technological systems that work together in order to make sure all products in a retailer's inventory are tracked and accounted for.

2. What is the best way to learn about new merchandise in your store?

- A. Check with co-workers to see what they know about the products.
- B. Ask customers to explain what they know about the products.
- C. Read the labels and packaging information on the new products.
- D. Call the vendor or manufacturer and ask about the products.

3. Joe sells a customer a new freezer for his garage. The customer wants it installed, but the store does not offer installation service for freezers. Which of the following is the BEST response?

- A. "All you have to do is simply plug it in. It does not need any special hook-ups."
- B. "We offer installation on some items, but freezers are not included."
- C. "I am sorry for the misunderstanding, but you do not need installation service for this unit."
- D. "Unfortunately, we do not install freezers, but I will show you exactly what you need to do so you can do it yourself."

**Answers:** 1. D | 2. C | 3. D

## The Business of Retail

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### 1. The majority of retailers are:

- A. Independently Owned
- B. Corporations
- C. Franchises
- D. Online Only

### 2. Juliana is stocking shampoo on the sales floor. She finds a bottle that has a hole and is leaking shampoo, and throws it out. She then continues stocking and moves on with her day. Which of the following would then be true?

- A. The inventory system's numbers would still be accurate.
- B. The number of shampoo bottles in the inventory system would be too high.
- C. The number of shampoo bottles in the inventory system would be too low.
- D. The inventory would need to be counted manually.

### 3. If you see a spill of food or liquid on the sales floor, what's the first thing you should do?

- A. Call for a custodian or maintenance person to clean it up.
- B. Find a mop or broom and clean it up yourself.
- C. Find out who was responsible for causing the spill.
- D. Stand near or over the spill to direct traffic away from it until it can be cleaned up.

**Answers:** 1. A | 2. B | 3. D

## Retail Management

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### 1. A retailer's goal relating to store merchandise loss is to:

- A. Prevent shoplifting
- B. Observe shoplifting
- C. Detain shoplifters
- D. Prosecute shoplifters

### 2. Deceptive pricing occurs when:

- A. Markdowns are not clearly marked on the ticketed item.
- B. Observe shoplifting
- C. Detain shoplifters
- D. Prosecute shoplifters

### 3. A scale of benefits is allowed in which of the following groups of policies?

- A. Layoff and promotions
- B. Discharge and discipline
- C. Bonuses and perks
- D. Recruitment and access to training

**Answers:** 1. A | 2. A | 3. C

## Learner Attestation

I confirm that I will answer all of these questions truthfully. I understand that any untruthful answer may jeopardize my eligibility for receiving, maintaining or renewing the credential.

I agree to represent the credential only as described in the “Representation of the Credential” requirement listed in the application.

Further, I agree to satisfy all requirements for earning, maintaining, and renewing the credential; to comply with all policies listed in the Candidate Handbook and to notify NRF Foundation if at any time I no longer satisfy any of the requirements for the credential. I also understand that the credential, if earned, may be revoked at any time for my violation of any of the requirements and policies in the Candidate Handbook.

I agree to allow my name and the then-current status of my credential to be confirmed to any potential or actual employers and to any NRF Foundation partners supporting the Rise Up program.

## Exam Blueprints

**The Retail Industry Fundamentals credential exam**  
consists of 50 questions covering three major work areas.

Work Area	Percent of the Assessment
Learn about the retail industry and product cycle	15
Develop skills to provide quality customer service	20
Develop selling skills to meet customer needs	20
Understand how the retail business works	35
Preparation for roles in retail	10

## The Customer Service and Sales credential exam

consists of 75 questions covering five major work areas.

Work Area	Percent of the Assessment
Learns About Products or Services	15
Develops Selling Skills to Meet Customer Needs	22
Educates the Customer	33
Furthers Customer Service Skills	24
Prepares for Selling	6

## The Business of Retail credential exam

consists of 75 questions covering four major work areas.

Work Area	Percent of the Assessment
Furthering Your Customer Service Skills	8
Preparing for Selling	21
Sales Follow-up Plan	17
Operations and Inventory Management	54

**The Retail Management credential exam**  
consists of 100 questions covering five major work areas.

<b>Work Area</b>	<b>Percent of the Assessment</b>
Administrative and Financial Accountability	19
Operations	20
Human Resources	18
Merchandising	19
Selling and Services	24



**Contact Us**

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