

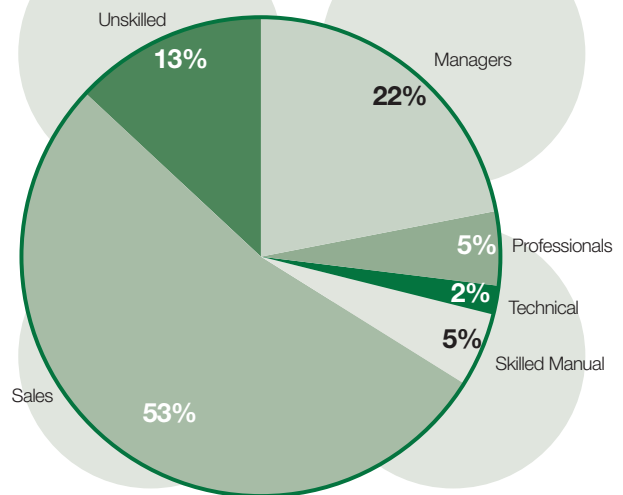


## Retail Sales and Customer Services

### What's happening?

- The retail sector accounts for more than 10% of jobs in England. Tesco is the UK's second-largest employer after the National Health Service.
- Hertfordshire has significant employment in retail back office occupations as well as shop floor/customer service occupations.
- Employers report a need for improved skills in ICT, oral communication, customer handling, team working and personal attributes.
- Formal qualifications are not always necessary - candidates can learn on the job. Retailers are often more interested in attitude, reliability, experience and skills.
- Shops and stores remain the dominant way of shopping throughout the UK, despite the growth of internet based shopping.
- For some consumers there is a degree of unhappiness with global brands and mass consumption. This has led them to seek out ways of buying goods which are produced locally or regionally. This has led to a growth of outlets such as farmers' markets (now numbering around 600 in the UK).
- There are approximately 57,000 telesales operators employed in the UK. The largest employers are finance and retail companies and distribution centres.

### Who does what?



Source: Labour Force Survey 2006, © Crown Copyright. Figures are for England

### Numbers employed locally

Hertfordshire	61,900
London & South East	806,500
Great Britain	2,940,500

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, 2005, © Crown Copyright. Figures do not include the self-employed, people under 16 or trainees without a contract of employment. Figures are rounded to nearest hundred.

### How much will I get paid?

Remember – many jobs will demand minimum entry qualifications. Those earning high salaries are usually well qualified and experienced and will continue to learn throughout their working life.

	Average annual salary
Retail/Wholesale/Customer Care Manager	£47,688
Sales Assistant, Checkout Operator, Telephone Salesperson	£14,656
Call Centre Agent, Customer Care Assistant	£15,806

Source: Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings 2005, © Crown Copyright. Salary rates have been calculated using the average, gross pay (before deductions) for full-time workers in the UK.



## What we think will happen

- Over a quarter of a million new jobs are expected in the sector through to 2012.
- Hertfordshire is predicted to need around 8,000 new entrants to the industry each year.
- Sales and customer service occupations are expected to be the main beneficiaries of projected employment growth in this sector.
- Although in recent years many call centre jobs have been outsourced to overseas facilities, the trend now, among many UK companies, is to bring these operations back to the UK.
- The key drivers to change in the sector are consumer confidence, e-commerce, ICT progression, price competition, regulations and the ever-increasing importance of customer services. All of these things will have an effect on the way people work and the skills needed.

## Is this you?

- Well organised
- Good communication skills
- Enjoy working with people
- Customer service focused

## Some job suggestions

- Buyer/Purchasing Officer
- Customer Service Manager/Assistant
- Visual Merchandiser
- Personal Shopper
- Training Officer

## Next steps...

### If you're serious about this type of work - FIND OUT MORE!

Use your Connexions area or visit your local Connexions Centre or One Stop Shop for information about jobs; qualifications; local training; further and higher education; skills and personal characteristics; rates of pay and working conditions; local, national and international employers.

## Really useful websites and resources!

The Retail Sector Skills Council

– [www.skillsmartretail.com](http://www.skillsmartretail.com)

The British Retail Consortium – [www.brc.org.uk](http://www.brc.org.uk)

Apprenticeships – [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) or call the **helpline on 08000 150600**

E-Clips (information about careers and lifestyle issues)

– [www.connexions-hertfordshire.co.uk](http://www.connexions-hertfordshire.co.uk)

Fast Tomato (interactive careers guidance)

– [www.hertsft.com](http://www.hertsft.com)

Jobs4u (careers database)

– [www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u](http://www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u)

Working in Booklets – case studies of people in a variety of jobs. Try your Connexions area, or download them from [www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com). Go to careers>career resources>download publications>Working In.

## What local students did in 2006

In 2006 a total of 1,383 Year 11 local school leavers entered full-time employment or work-based training. Of this number, 151 went into retail sales and customer service related work. Source: Connexions Hertfordshire 2006.

**Please contact your Connexions Personal Adviser for further information and advice.**

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**The information in this leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats. Contact the Information Team on 01462 704 914.**

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