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Security Guards at Retail Stores by [Charles Willis](#)

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Retail stores need to hire security companies for many reasons including loss prevention, store security, rule enforcement and many more. The store management relies on the security company to analyze security threats and to devise a security plan accordingly. Post orders should be provided for the security guard to execute the security plan, to establish security behaviors and to give the security guard instructions for the case of emergency. A guard not only provides peace of mind to store owners, store managers and their staff and customers, but it also ensures that they can focus on their core business.

The job of a retail store officer is complex and multi-faceted and requires many important skills. The security guard must be able to communicate effectively as he is in constant contact with customers and store employees. He must possess impeccable report writing skills, because his loss prevention responsibilities will include writing reports for the store's records, but also providing authorities with reports to be able to prosecute possible perpetrators. Customer service skills are especially important, because the security guard will be perceived as a member of the store team, therefore he must uphold the image and reputation of a customer service oriented store.

A security guard at a retail store must be flexible and willing to provide customer service beyond his regular security responsibilities. Many retail stores are located in difficult areas and customers and employees may request to be walked to their car. In many instances the security guard will be asked to count inventory and to assist with outgoing and incoming shipments. The officer must be punctual and reliable. In many cases the guard is part of the store opening procedures, which often require dual custody for high value merchandise or the presence of security personnel for the opening of safes. If the security guard is late or not present he will not only prevent the store from opening on time, but the sense of security of the store personnel might be affected as well.

For all the reasons above it is imperative to choose the security company that store owners hire very carefully. As the security and many procedures in the stores might depend on the security guard and the security company doing their job correctly and with care, hiring the right security company will ensure execution of the right customer service behaviors and reliable service. The right security company will provide store owners with a security consultant, who will understand the store's procedures and will be the direct contact person for the store manager. The security company will also employ a security supervisor, who is responsible for supervising the security officers and is familiar enough with detailed store procedures to fill in for the security officer in the case of emergency. Many retail stores depend greatly on the performance and reliability of their security provider, therefore the decision to hire a security company should be made with care and preparation.

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