

Retail Store Manager interview checklist

Store manager hiring usually includes an HR screen, an interview with the area or cluster manager, often a store visit where you are asked to observe and suggest improvements, and a final round with the regional manager.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. Your store's sales are down compared with last month. How do you find out why?

What it checks: Whether you break sales into drivers like footfall, conversion and average bill value, and investigate with data before acting.

2. Tell me about a time you turned around a store or department that was performing poorly.

What it checks: Leadership shown with evidence, including diagnosis, actions, team involvement and measurable results, rather than a story about effort alone.

3. Retail store managers work weekends and festival days. Are you comfortable with that schedule?

What it checks: Realistic acceptance of retail working patterns, since weekends and festivals are the busiest trading days.

4. What are the main causes of shrinkage in a retail store, and how do you reduce it?

What it checks: Understanding of inventory loss from theft, errors and vendor issues, and practical controls rather than only blaming shoplifters.

5. Describe a time you had to deal with an underperforming or undisciplined team member.

What it checks: People management maturity: clear expectations, fair process and support, and following HR policy for repeated issues.

6. What salary are you expecting for this store manager role, including incentives?

What it checks: Whether you understand retail compensation structures, which usually combine fixed pay with store performance incentives.

7. How do you plan staff rosters so the store is covered during peak hours without overspending on manpower?

What it checks: Workforce planning based on traffic patterns and budgets, while keeping fairness and legal limits on working hours.

8. Tell me about a time you handled an angry customer on the shop floor in front of other customers.

What it checks: Calm handling of public complaints that protects the customer's dignity, the store's reputation and staff morale.

9. Why do you want to manage one of our stores rather than move to another retail brand?

What it checks: Research on the brand's format, customers and growth, and whether your experience fits their store model.

10. How do you make sure visual merchandising in your store follows the brand guidelines and still drives sales?

What it checks: Execution of VM standards and planograms, and whether you can link display decisions to sales results in your store.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Know your current or last store's numbers well: sales, footfall, conversion, average bill value, shrinkage and staff count, because area managers ask for specifics.
- Visit one of the brand's stores before the interview and note two good points and one improvement, explained respectfully.
- Prepare examples of handling a difficult customer, a staff discipline issue, a stock loss investigation and a festival sale.
- Revise core retail terms such as GRN, planogram, shrinkage, cycle count, ATV and UPT, and how each affects store performance.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave