

Wholesale Manager

Introduction

Wholesale managers organise staff and control the flow of goods within a wholesale business. They are often responsible for negotiating with manufacturers and other suppliers, stock control, finance, storage, transport and the sale and marketing of wholesale goods.

Work Activities

Wholesalers buy goods in large quantities from manufacturers, and supply them to retail organisations (from small shops to national supermarket chains) as well as to hotels, restaurants and businesses. You often specialise in particular types of goods, for example:

- groceries
- wine
- furniture
- electrical goods
- clothing

You sometimes import goods from manufacturers in other countries.

As a Wholesale Manager, you will organise and control the flow of goods and supervise the duties of staff in a wholesale organisation. Some wholesalers have cash and carry warehouses, where retailers and other organisations come to buy goods. Others deliver goods to customers' sites.

Wholesale Managers are ultimately responsible for the receipt, correct storage, sale and despatch of goods at the right time and in the right quantities. Modern warehouses can be highly automated and often computerised. You will analyse information provided by electronic point of sales networks.

You also use computerised scheduling, warehouse management and stock control systems. You must make sure that you always have enough stock (but not too much); you negotiate with suppliers to get the best deal possible.

Wholesale Managers in cash and carry warehouses deal face to face with customers, for example, if a customer has a query or a complaint.

You also deal with financial matters, negotiate contracts for transport, and put into practice procedures for achieving greater efficiency. Wholesale Managers are also responsible for the recruitment, supervision, motivation and, sometimes, training of staff.

Many wholesale operations run 24 hours a day, and you might need to work unsocial hours to meet with night shift staff. You also work some evenings and weekends.

Being able to read, write and speak Welsh may be an advantage when you're looking for work in Wales.

Personal Qualities and Skills

To become a Wholesale Manager, you will need to be:

- able to make quick decisions
- a good organiser; you should be able to plan and prioritise tasks to meet deadlines
- able to motivate people
- numerate
- able to solve problems



Pay and Opportunities

Pay

The pay rates given below are approximate.

- Starting: £19,500 - £22,000
- With experience: £25,000 - £30,500
- Senior Wholesale Managers earn £35,000 - £41,000

Salaries might include bonuses, depending on the size and location of the operation.

Hours of work

Wholesale Managers usually work 40 hours a week. However, depending on the operation, you might be required to work in the evening, at weekends or to be on-call.

Where could I work?

Employers are wholesale organisations, and manufacturers who offer a wholesale service to others.

Opportunities for Wholesale Managers occur in and around cities and larger towns throughout the UK, sometimes on industrial estates.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies are advertised in local/national newspapers, on job boards and employers' websites, on Find a Job and at Jobcentre Plus.

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

Some people enter management positions after working in wholesale, retail or supply chain administration or operations. Larger organisations recruit trainees with A levels or a degree. Applicants with a degree in business studies or a related area might have an advantage.

Training

Large companies usually run their own in-house training schemes. These involve placements in a variety of selling and sales support departments, such as stock control and information systems, buying and provisions. To complement this, trainees might attend courses on management skills, technology and communication.

A great way to get into this career is through an internship. Take a look at our information article 'Internships', for more details.

If you would like some training, Pearson offer a level 3 diploma in warehousing and storage. This course has a range of units, which include:

- providing leadership for your team in logistics operations
- supervising the receipt, storage or dispatch of goods
- taking responsibility for health, safety and security in your team
- checking stock levels and stock records
- allocating and checking work in your team
- inducting new colleagues into a logistics operation
- recruiting, selecting and keeping colleagues
- building and managing teams
- responding to problems
- improving performance
- principles of food safety supervision in logistics

Other courses could be available in your area.

For Wholesale Managers selling food items, the Institute of Grocery Distribution offers training courses and workshops.

General management courses and professional qualifications are offered by the Chartered Management Institute.

Work Experience

Some entrants have related qualifications and have developed relevant skills by working in transport or distribution. Working as a Storekeeper or Warehouse Operative/Team Leader would be really useful for this career.

Progression

Wholesale Managers in smaller locations can progress to management posts in larger ones, and then to Area Manager and head office management roles.

Qualifications

Qualifications vary between management training programmes. It is possible to enter the industry with some GCSEs and progress to a management position, although this is a lengthy training route.

Larger companies run training programmes for entrants with A levels, an HND or a degree.

For entry to a degree course in any subject, the usual minimum requirement is:

- 2/3 A levels
- GCSEs at grade C/4 or above in 2/3 other subjects

Alternatives to A levels include:

- BTEC level 3 qualifications
- the International Baccalaureate Diploma

However, course requirements vary so check prospectuses carefully.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A level.

Adult Opportunities

Age limits

It is illegal for any organisation to set age limits for entry to employment, education or training, unless they can show there is a real need to have these limits.

Skills/experience

Some entrants have related qualifications and have developed relevant skills by working in transport or distribution. Working as a storekeeper or warehouse operative/team leader can lead on to entry into management-level posts.

Distance learning

There are degree and postgraduate courses in business available by distance learning.

The Open University offers foundation degrees in business and management.

Statistics

- 11% of people in occupations such as wholesale management work part-time.
- 7% have flexible hours.

Further Information

Contact individual employers.

Contacts

- **Open University (OU)**
Tel: 0845 3006090
Website: www.open.ac.uk
- **People 1st**
Address: 4th Floor, 93 Newman Street, London W1T 3EZ
Tel: 020 7462 5060
Email: info@people1st.co.uk
Website: www.nsaforretail.com
- **Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD)**
Address: Grange Lane, Letchmore Heath, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 8GD
Tel: 01923 857141
Email: askigd@igd.com
Website: www.igd.com

Related Careers

- Builders' Merchant
- Builders' Yard Assistant
- Butcher - Wholesale