

Employability and Personal Development Assignment (LCLM4005)

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Task 1: Comparison of Store Manager Job Adverts

For this task, I analysed four Store Manager job adverts from major UK retailers including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Lidl, and Co-op. These adverts were selected because they represent typical requirements for store management roles in the retail sector.

The first key finding is that all four adverts emphasise strong leadership and people management skills. Every employer mentioned the need to manage, coach, and motivate a team of staff. This shows that being able to lead people effectively is essential for any Store Manager role. Similarly, customer service was mentioned across all adverts, with phrases such as "deliver excellent customer experience" and "ensure high standards of service."

Another common requirement is commercial awareness and the ability to achieve sales targets. Three out of four adverts specifically stated that Store Managers must understand profit and loss, control costs, and drive store performance. This suggests that Store Managers are not just team leaders but also need to think like business owners.

Health and safety, compliance, and operational standards appeared in all four adverts. Employers expect Store Managers to ensure that stores follow food safety laws, complete audits, maintain cleanliness, and keep accurate records. One advert from Sainsbury's mentioned "ensuring compliance with all legal and company policies," which reflects the importance of risk management in this role.

Communication skills were highlighted in three adverts, particularly the ability to communicate clearly with staff, customers, and senior management. Problem-solving and decision-making were also commonly mentioned, as Store Managers must deal with issues quickly and independently.

Some differences did appear. For example, the Lidl advert placed more emphasis on physical stamina and the ability to work in a fast-paced environment, while Tesco focused more on digital skills such as using reporting systems and analysing data.

Overall, the core skills required for Store Manager roles are leadership, customer service, commercial awareness, compliance knowledge, and strong communication. These are the skills I will focus on developing throughout my career.

Task 2: Self-Assessment and Evidence of Employability Readiness

SWOT Analysis

To understand my current employability strengths and areas for development, I completed a SWOT analysis focused on the skills identified in Task 1.

Strengths

My main strength is my extensive retail experience. I have worked in a supermarket for over seven years, including several years as a Sales Manager. This means I have practical knowledge of customer service, stock management, staff supervision, and compliance procedures. I am reliable and always complete tasks properly and on time, which managers and colleagues have consistently recognised.

I am also strong in communication and coaching. I have trained many new staff members and know how to explain processes clearly and in simple terms. I stay calm and professional even in busy or stressful situations, which is essential when dealing with customers or resolving team conflicts.

Another key strength is my attention to detail. In my previous role, I was responsible for checking temperature logs, food safety records, cleaning schedules, and health and safety compliance. I can quickly notice small issues before they become bigger problems.

Finally, I am organised and self-motivated. I can manage my own time effectively and work independently without constant supervision, which is important for Store Manager roles that require decision-making on the spot.

Weaknesses

One weakness I have identified is that in the past I tried to do everything myself because I wanted the store to be perfect. This sometimes meant I did not **delegate** tasks to my team as much as I should have. However, I have been working on this by trusting others with more responsibilities and supporting them to succeed rather than doing everything alone. Another area for development is my **written business communication**. While I am confident speaking to people face-to-face, I need to improve my ability to write professional reports, emails, and business documents, especially as Store Managers are often required to communicate with senior management and external auditors in writing.

I also recognise that my formal qualifications are still developing. Although I have strong practical experience, I am currently completing my Level 4 studies and plan to progress to a Bachelor's degree in Business Management. This will give me the academic knowledge to support my hands-on experience.

Opportunities

There are several opportunities available to me. The retail sector is growing, and many companies are looking for experienced managers who understand operations and compliance. My current studies at university will help me develop business theory and strategic thinking, which will be valuable as I move into more senior management roles.

I also have the opportunity to gain further qualifications in areas such as health and safety, food hygiene, and leadership, which are highly valued by employers in retail.

Threats

One potential threat is the increasing use of technology and data analysis in retail management. Many Store Manager roles now require digital skills such as using reporting software and analysing sales data. I will need to develop these skills to remain competitive in the job market.

Another threat is the high level of competition for Store Manager positions, as many experienced supervisors and assistant managers are also applying for these roles.

Evidence of Employability Readiness

I can provide several examples that demonstrate my readiness for Store Manager roles.

First, during an internal inspection at my previous supermarket, I identified that temperature records for fridges were not being completed correctly. Rather than panicking, I organised a team meeting, provided simple training, and created a step-by-step guide. I also introduced a daily supervisor check to ensure compliance. As a result, we passed the next inspection with 100% compliance. This shows my problem-solving skills, leadership, and ability to improve operational standards.

Second, I have successfully coached and trained multiple staff members, helping them develop their skills and confidence. Many of the people I trained went on to become supervisors themselves, which reflects my ability to develop others.

Third, my academic progress at university demonstrates my commitment to personal development and my ability to balance work and study. I am currently completing Level 4 Business Skills for the Workplace and will progress to a Bachelor's degree in Business Management in January 2026.

Overall, my combination of practical retail experience, people management skills, and ongoing academic development shows that I am ready to take on Store Manager responsibilities and continue progressing in my career.

Task 3: Employment Goals and Personal Development Plan (500 words)

Based on the weaknesses identified in my SWOT analysis, I have set clear short-term and long-term employment goals and developed a personal development plan to address these areas.

Short-Term Employment Goals (Next 12–18 Months)

My first short-term goal is to secure a Store Manager position in a reputable retail company such as Tesco, Sainsbury's, or Co-op. This is important to me because it will allow me to take full responsibility for a store's operations, build on my existing experience, and demonstrate my ability to lead a team independently. It aligns with my career aspirations because Store Manager experience is essential for progressing into senior retail management or Area Manager roles in the future.

My second short-term goal is to improve my delegation skills. Although I have already started working on this, I want to build confidence in trusting my team with important tasks and giving them the support they need to succeed. This is important because effective delegation is a core part of leadership, and it will help me manage my time better while also developing my team members' skills.

My third short-term goal is to improve my written business communication skills. Many Store Manager roles require writing reports, emails to senior management, and incident documentation. By improving this skill, I will be able to communicate more professionally and effectively in writing, which will make me a stronger candidate for promotion.

Long-Term Employment Goals (2–5 Years)

My long-term goal is to progress into an Area Manager or Regional Manager role, where I would be responsible for overseeing multiple stores and supporting Store Managers to achieve their targets. This is important to me because I enjoy coaching and developing others, and an Area Manager role would allow me to have a wider impact across several teams and locations. It also aligns with my interest in strategic thinking and business operations, which I am developing through my university studies.

Another long-term goal is to complete my Bachelor's degree in Business Management and potentially pursue further qualifications in leadership or operations management. This will give me the academic knowledge and credibility to compete for senior management roles in retail or even transition into consulting or public sector roles in the future, which is a personal aspiration of mine.

Gibbs reflective cycle:

1. **Description:** I thought about my skills to meet the requirements of a store manager.
2. **Feelings:** I was feeling confident but aware of the gaps during the particular of my course over the last 8 weeks in the UWTSD.
3. **Evaluation:** I have had a good learning experience enabled me to identify my own some professional weaknesses. Therefore, develop a Personal Development Plan
4. **Analysis:** My presentation and communication got better during the Interview role practice in the current module.
5. **Conclusion:** I need further professional development within the area of business written communication & delegation skills.
6. **Action Plan:** Improve representation, writing and data skills.

Personal Development Plan

To achieve these goals, I have created a personal development plan with specific actions, timelines, and measures of progress.

Goal 1: Improve Delegation Skills

Action: Attend a leadership or management training course focused on delegation and team empowerment. I will also practise delegating at least two significant tasks per week to team members and provide them with feedback and support.

Timeline: Complete a course within the next 6 months. Practise delegation immediately and review progress monthly.

Resources: Online leadership courses (e.g., LinkedIn Learning, Coursera), feedback from current manager or mentor.

Measure of Progress: Positive feedback from team members, improved team performance, and personal reflection on workload balance.

Goal 2: Improve Written Business Communication

Action: Enrol in a business writing course or workshop. I will also practise writing professional emails and reports regularly and ask my university tutors or manager to review and provide feedback.

Timeline: Complete a course within 6 months. Practise writing weekly.

Resources: Business writing courses (online or university workshops), feedback from tutors and managers, business writing templates.

Measure of Progress: Improved grades on university assignments, positive feedback from managers on written reports, increased confidence in writing.

Goal 3: Develop Digital and Data Analysis Skills

Action: Learn how to use retail reporting systems and data analysis tools such as Excel and Power BI. I will complete online tutorials and apply these skills in my current role by analysing sales data and creating simple reports.

Timeline: Complete basic Excel and Power BI courses within 9 months.

Resources: Free online courses (e.g., Microsoft Learn, YouTube tutorials), practice datasets from work.

Measure of Progress: Ability to create sales reports independently, positive feedback from managers, successful use of data to identify trends or issues.

Goal 4: Secure Store Manager Position

Action: Apply for Store Manager roles, update my CV to highlight my leadership experience and training achievements, and prepare for interviews by practising common questions and examples.

Timeline: Apply for roles within the next 3–6 months. Aim to secure a position within 12 months.

Resources: Job search websites (Indeed, company career pages), CV review from university career services, interview practice with mentors.

Measure of Progress: Number of applications submitted, interviews attended, and ultimately securing a Store Manager role.

Conclusion

By following this personal development plan, I will address the weaknesses identified in my SWOT analysis and work towards achieving my short-term and long-term employment goals. I am committed to continuous improvement and believe that these actions will help me become a more effective leader and progress successfully in my retail management career.